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BEYOND SHADOWPLAY
The Body and the Visual

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STATEMENT

I declare that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university, and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except when due reference is made in the text.

Hazel A. Duncan

SYNOPSIS

This thesis investigates body images in relation to the diverse visualities evident within the Asia-Pacific region. It considers various cultural practices in relation to tensions and contradictions surrounding globalism, modernism, the ideal Western body image, and Western determinations of knowledge and truth.

Re-articulating the nexus between subjectivities, ideology, and the production and function of images in the postmodern, postcolonial world, this thesis seeks to replace linguistic determinations of the visual and the authority given to interpretation and rationalism with theoretical consideration of embodied seeing and experience, reactive states, energies, and sensations. The visual is considered as an intelligence of the senses, with imagery a powerful engagement of that amorphous field designated mind-body. Arguing for the value of diversity in both culture and art, the thesis advocates thinking of visual culture as embodied, affective practice, and promotes contemporary art as an engaging realm of oppositional values and alternative experiences useful for thinking about bodies, cultures, belief, and knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Introduction

This thesis seeks to invigorate thinking about the interplay between actual pictures of bodies and the postmodern play of subjectivities, marking both its distance from, and its indebtedness to the older figure of the Subject. It constitutes a critical rejection of imagery as secondary to the formulation of ideas. It questions our assumptions of Plato's casting of imagery as shadowplay, a deception which works on the fallibility of the senses, and it argues for a revisioning and broadening of theoretical frameworks normally applied to instances of viewership within the contemporary image world.[1]

Contemporary European philosophic traditions seem to be fundamentally antioculareentric (Jay, 1994) with 'insight' (truth in the form of disembodied mental constructs, performed physiologically) always superior to sight (considered a physiological process though governed by experience, context, expectation, feelings and memory). The visual image (a manifestation of thought and knowledge) is determined as the re-creation of sight.

In the West, the Platonic tradition and its Cartesian reformulations have long been embedded in a struggle centered on spiritual, moral concerns and truth. Martin Jay's tracing of iconoclastic intellectual traditions and fixations on the

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[1] Plato's allegory of the cave describes prisoners in the dark, who, ignorant of the real in the cave and the outside world/ideal, take shadows for reality (Part 7, Book VII of the *Republic* and retold again later). The description, "...between the fire and the prisoners runs a road, in front of which a curtain wall has been built, like the screen at puppet shows between the operators and their audience, above which they show their puppets" (Plato, 1968: 278) resonates with all kinds of audience viewing. The allegory is employed here to show how image viewing within contemporary media spectatorship tends to be placed in opposition to the illuminations of the ideal.

visual within contemporary theory, shows that generally images tend to be abhorred as all too fascinating. The power of the visual image is subscribed to the eye/body's propensity to be tricked, seduced, distracted, and led astray.[2] In the Cartesian separation of matter and spirit-thought-mind, and though the eyes directly open the brain to the world of light, sight is aligned to the 'wayward' senses, the base material world. In this kind of oppositional discourse, it is pure thought, rational and illuminatory, that pursues truth and ratifies knowledge.[3] Visual images are deemed illusions, and not merely in the sense of *imperfect* renderings of an ideal or pure real, but as shadows of the real, deceptions tied to purchase, persuasion, or false consciousness.[4]

Given the ongoing proliferations of the contemporary visual, and the promise of future technologies to further engage audiences in extreme, immersive ways, such maneuverings around the truth of the visual begin to look somewhat like what Andrew Ross once posited as the political futility of traditional theory, the old "platonically discrete" consensus of intellectuals (Ross, 1989: 210).[5] In order to address and take part in the "contest for that new impure space which is neither organic nor mechanical, neither manual nor mental" (213), Ross proposes "a politics of knowledge," capable of identifying and responding to

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[2] Plato's position on the visual might seem contradictory or ambivalent at times. Summers, for instance, suggests that at the end of the *Timeas* (47a-c), Plato gives praise to sight: "Vision is the cause of the greatest benefit to us, inasmuch as none of the accounts now given concerning the universe would have been given if men had not seen the stars or the sun or the heavens" (quoted in Summers, 1987: 32). Jay argues that here Plato indeed links vision with the creation of human intelligence in contrast to the other senses that were, in the context of anti-Sophism, placed with man's material being. But, he says, Plato's 'vision' is that of inner-vision, in that Plato insists we see "*through* the eyes, not *with* them, warning us "against the illusions of our imperfect eyes" (Jay, 1994: 26-27).

[3] 'Higher' abstract orders of thinking (though open to all kinds of exigencies and learning, and incorporating visual imaging) are rarely connected to experience or embodiment.

[4] Summers contends that in the *Republic* (VI.501) Plato suggests that some kinds of painting could look to the ideal for he compares the 'philosophers' state to "the fairest painting" fashioned after "justice, beauty, sobriety and the like as they are in the nature of things". See Summers (1987) for a detailed and rigorous examination of written texts from the Greek period up to and including the Renaissance period. Summers reviews the Platonic tradition and its advocacy of a "divine and natural art", and also describes the rise of naturalism in relation to early positions on aesthetics and the senses.

[5] Ross observes, "The claim of disinterested loyalty to a higher, objective code of truth is, of course, the oldest and most expedient disguise for serving the interests of the powerful" (Ross, 1989: 216). Examining the social determinations of traditional intellectuals and their exercise of power and authority, Ross looks at the traditional intellectual's demonization of new technologies and the apparently "monstrous mass cultures to which they give birth" (209).

opportunities for reformation, and "the task of modernizing cultural resistance" (ibid.).[6]

In theorizations of the visual, there is much that is contested and contradictory, and a multitude of models of visuality whose only common aspect, as Jay observes, is their distrust of the visual.[7] In this apparent "frenzy of the anti-visual" (Jay, 1994:149) images are designated as enchantments and inherently deceptive, only then to be discounted in contemporary theory as 'agents of effect', since any effect is uncertain.[8] Images may be seen to have some power, yet it is argued that they do not matter. When effects are indeed acknowledged, they tend to be opposed by abstract ideas or by assertions of the resistant power of the mind.

Poststructuralist understanding is that knowledge is produced discursively; Stuart Hall and the Birmingham school argue that images are part of discursive formations operating in fields of ideological contention.[9] In keeping with these propositions, but resisting an entirely relativist view, this study questions certain

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[6] Following Foucault, Ross proposes that intellectuals position themselves very specifically within ongoing social movements which today operate as a decentralized opposition, and which challenge traditional idealism and their histories of heroic individualism. This 'politics of knowledge', a Haraway-style 'cyborgian politics' would employ the media and communication analysis approach (Laswell's formulation) of 'who said what to whom' (and how, and why, and with what effect), alongside a re-articulation of popular culture and its pleasures "which a training in political rationality encourages us to devalue" (Ross, 1989: 231).

[7] See Jay (1994) for a comprehensive investigation into philosophical accounts of visuality. See chpts. 1 & 2 for a history of pre c19th European visualities within philosophy, and their links with visualities within art practices. Jay identifies periods where the visual was seen as revelation, illumination, and tracks the rise of c19th regimes of spectacle and surveillance linked to modernity. He shows how theorists from Bergson to Lyotard, in a "welter of overlapping attitudes, arguments, and assumptions", evidence an "extraordinary sensitivity" to the visual alongside "a palpable loss of confidence in the hitherto "noblest of the senses" " (Jay: 1994: 588). See also Foster (1988) and Adler & Pointon (1995) for accounts of diverse visualities in art. See Nelson (2000) for accounts of visualities across different kinds of imaging practices and a broad range of cultures up to, and including the Renaissance. See Pinney's recent history of visualities observable in Indian posters, postcards, and prints, "an experimental zone where new possibilities and identities are forged" (2004: 8).

[8] Jay reworks the term "frenzy of the visible" used by Comolli to indicate an intensification of human vision by technological means. Comolli proposed that "The second half of the nineteenth century lives in a sort of frenzy of the visible. It is of course the effect of the social multiplication of images" (Comolli, 1985: 122). This term has also been used by Williams to describe "a logical outcome of a variety of discourses of sexuality that converge in, and help further to produce technologies of the visible", "ever more visible filmic bodies", and "the enhanced vision of spectators" (Williams, 1990: 36). This logical outcome (of what Foucault (1978) identified as new forms of body knowledge) is pornography, "wherein the elusive and prurient "truth" is located in increasingly more detailed investigation of women's bodies" (Williams, 1990: 36).

[9] Morley and Chen, discussing Stuart Hall's work, describe ideology as "the mental framework – the languages, the concepts, categories, images of thought, and the systems of representation – which different classes and social groups deploy in order to make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the way society works" (Morley and Chen, 1996: 26-7).

assumptions, objectives, and conventional modes of analysis used in theorizing the visual. It contests the notion that "meanings can only be shared through our common access to language" (Hall, 1997: 1) and it problematizes the differentiation between the mechanistic treatment of vision as a 'natural process' and visuality as a 'cultural practice' (Foster, 1988). The approach is in line with Janet Ransom's (1993) contention that a Foucauldian model of subjectivity and discourse needs to address experience if it is to satisfactorily address political agency, that is, "how power penetrates subjectivity" (Brooks, 1997).

As a counter to what all too often seems to operate as a lingering impasse in the theorizing of imagery and contemporary culture beyond systems of representation or signification, this thesis invokes the idea of vision as an intelligence of the senses, with imagery as a powerful form of conceptualization engaging that amorphous field designated mind-body.[10] In examining representations of the body, it argues that images are complex phenomena and that a theorization of affective viewership needs to be interwoven with other forms of theorizing the visual.[11]

Visual culture is an embodied practice as much as a social or even economic practice. Images register bodily, while images of the body, in a play of shadow and mirroring of the compelling experience of human embodiment and interaction, are powerful sites for the production of subjectivities. The body, the name signifying a fundamental yet commonplace entity, has become a locus for contemporary Western theory.[12] Its designation as a problematical object of

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[10] 'Concept' might be deemed a 'textual' constructs, not 'visual', but this assumes that thought can exist without some representation when it is more that the representation of words/written texts is usually not conscious, and that the image is some automatic, given, 'happening' rather than an idea production. As this thesis will argue, this is not even true at the level of seeing. The production of an image is a manifestation of conceptual ideas and processes, while the 'experiencing' of an image also involves all kinds of matching with prior concepts (as with seeing generally).

[11] For theorization of the politics of representation see Wallis (1984), Burgin, et al. (1986), Michelson (1988), Rose (1986), Pollock (1988), Bartky (1990), Martin-Barbero (1993), Bordo (1993, 1997), Stratton (1996), Cherniavsky (2000), Sturken & Cartwright (2001), Sontag (2001) For theorization of the representations of the body see Brettle & Rice (1994), Pulz (1995), Betterton (1996), Schneider (1997), Warr & Jones (2000), Mirzoeff (1995, Greer (2003), and Miglietti (2003).

[12] See Feher, Naddaff, & Tazzi, (1989) for recent Zone publications, parts 1-3, focused on the body, especially Duden's (1989) extensive annotated 'repertory' of writings useful for a history of the body. See also the comprehensive bibliography compiled for research purposes for 'Beauty and the Body in film, television, and popular culture', *Velvet Light Trap*, spring-march, 2002, pp. 81-94, listing over 2500 books and articles, most published since the mid 1980s.

academic research can be seen as an outcome of the Greco-Judeo-Christian tradition in which corporeality has either been idealized and contained as in the cults of the Virgin Mother or ethereal saints, or, as a prime site of sinfulness, appetite, and desire, damned and repressed. The Cartesian mind-body continues to dominate contemporary efforts to rethink the body, but the mind-body also appears to be a problem in and of itself. This study suggests that limits of awareness and conscious analysis also create difficulties in thinking about visual processes, visuality, and the reception of images. Rational, semiotic de-coding of image meaning, framed by a distanced analysis of a distanced seeing, is posited as inadequate to account for the visual as embodied experience; the explorations of sensory intelligence and affectivity in this thesis seek to contribute to the recent revival of interest in the theorization of feeling and emotion in response to the shift from signification to post-signification that marks out postmodern culture and poststructuralist theory.[13]

In this thesis, propositions about the interplay of embodied practices, and images of bodies, are placed within the broader global arena of the contemporary Asia-Pacific, and in relation to concerns about Western image practices and the commodity culture that accompanies development capitalism. It looks particularly at certain tensions and contradictions surrounding the legacy of the naturalistic Western body image, and it revisits discourses on cultural formation and conceptualization. There has been a massive explosion of Western image technologies over the last two hundred years, and, with the development of satellite and Internet transmissions, an exponentially accelerated global circulation of images, predicated on naturalized Western representational traditions is manifest in the disjunctive, hybrid discourses of the postmodern mediascape. It would seem vital that these events and impacts are explored across different visual traditions, forms, and contexts, and considered in respect

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[13] See Damasio's (1995, 2003) differentiation of emotion and feeling. Theorization of emotion in visual cultural studies and allied fields is often framed within Freudian psychoanalytic perspectives (see for instance, Mulvey 1989/1975, Theweleit, 1989/1977, Twitchell, 1985), which, like so many other key theoretical psychological and sociological discourses around the sexual and gendered body have been reflective of essentialist repressive thinking, (Foucault,1980/78) but there have been other approaches, some generated by the exploration of desire and language (see Barthes, 1975, Kristeva, 1980/1975, 1984), some by new propositions in science (see Gardner, 1985; Damasio, 1995), and some that sought to rethink artistic practice (Witkin, 1974). What appears to be a new area of theoretical preoccupation with sensation and emotion along the lines of Langer's (1957) analysis of affectivity, is signaled perhaps by Deleuze's, writings on cinema (see Deleuze, 1989) and his sustained discussion of the paintings of Francis Bacon, translated into English in 2003 (see Deleuze, 2004/1981). See Lingis, 1984, 1989, 1994; Mayne, 1993; Shaviro, 1993; Williams, 1990, 1995; Bright, 1998; Elkins, 1998; Mel, 2000; for recent examples of this return to sensation and performance.

to cultural contestations and transformations despite epistemological problems and limits.[14]

Both the human fascination for images ⸱ ᵎ the apparent or consequential power of images have long attracted critical attention. Yet, for all that has been written on the image in what has been called 'the pictorial turn' in theory, image description still tends to be determined linguistically, or framed according to the primacy of language.[15] This thesis advocates the recognition of images as forms of knowledge, social investment, and cultural employment contiguous with language texts, even though very different in character and the ways they are experienced.[16] Arguing for an understanding of images as contrived, constructed phenomena, as well as the rethinking of meaning, translation, reality, and truth, this study eventually takes a line of flight away from rationalist consideration, textual analysis, and the privileging of sight, toward presence, reactive states, and energies.[17]

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[14] To pursue understandings about the way images are fabricated toward certain effects through their aesthetic and formal structures, and in various cultural or psychological realms, is to confront all sorts of evidential problems, and to encounter the limits and provisional nature of knowledge.

[15] W. J. T Mitchell argued that momentous and specific cultural and historical shifts in the late 1980s ushered in a new media transparency and a diffusion of ideological meaning. Mitchell presents the idea of 'a pictorial turn' as a sequel to the 'cultural turn' thirty–five years ago. He observes that where prior studies of the visual evolved within cold war 'narratives of paranoia and melodrama" (Mitchell, 1994: 366), they now need to incorporate those instances where illusion and reality collide (his examples are the Rodney King trials and the Anita Hill/ Clarence Thomas hearings, and the films *Do the Right Thing*, *JFK*). In the collapse of "the distinction between news and melodrama, surveillance and spectacle", media codes no longer determine meaning. According to Mitchell, transparency, "a dialectical effect of total television", is created through the visibility of "randomness, improvisation, and accident" in media presentation and its overt visual persuasions (367-368). Elkins (2003) notes that Mitchell's notion of a 'pictorial turn' has achieved "wide currency" but for denoting the pictorial nature of society, rather than his problematizing of spectatorship and linguistic models.

[16] This has affinities with Layton's (1981) and Wolff's (1981) idea of art objects as social agents that extend the maker or user's agency. Gell (1998) argues that an art object is often an index of the maker's bodily presence, and that the causality of art objects may be traced through the disturbances they leave in their wake. Gell also proposes that artworks affect actors in four kinds of ways: physical, psychological, aesthetic, and semiotic. Gell's theory is significant because he emphasizes not the status of the object, but the agency that constructs such social importance, and he sees ritual as behaviour that needs to be related to the participants' understanding of their own agency. See Heywood (1997) for similar arguments.

[17] Consideration of language-like aspects and functions of images is still relevant. Adler & Pointon, discussing art images, show the structuralist origin of this 'language' designation: "Language is here understood to mean a system of signs produced in a particular set of circumstances and involving repetitions and encodings of the kind to which societies attribute specific meanings either consciously or unconsciously" (Adler & Pointon, 1993: 125). See Langer (1957) and Goodman (1978) for comprehensive discussions of the relations of language and art properties. See Layton (2003) for a review of the debates around art as language/communication and the arguments that semiotics is of value when used beyond a linguistic model (Gell, 1998).

Theorizing Images of Bodies

To examine an image in its complexity, as *phenomenon* rather than *logos*, that is, an event-object rather than a coherent idea, is to look at effects generated through the various gazes adopted toward the object that is called an image. Though an image-object is made to invite certain kinds of lookings, it may not be directed toward some rational logical determination of deducible and certain meaning. Considering other possibilities and other kinds of knowledges, means contesting certain theoretical orthodoxies centered on meaning and the politics of production.[18] These approaches have been described by Barbara Stafford as the "powerful, entrenched, and now institutionalized epistemocracy" (Stafford, 1993/91: 2) that privilege the structures of language and intellectual values as determinants of meaning and significance.[19]

This thesis draws on art history particularly as means of locating specialized knowledges about the visual, about representation and perception, and different modes of knowing. From the late c19th to the mid c20th, theories of body representation in art history can be found embedded in the category of iconography. These tended to focus on style, expression, and the exploration of aesthetic systems in so far as they reflected humanist and spiritual values.[20] By the early c20th, representation and signification generally became disputed or

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[18] This thesis acknowledges the usefulness of Marxist conceptions of cultural value, hegemony, and resistance; it seeks to investigate areas though that are excluded or discounted in the analysis of economic and political structures of power. See Elkins' (2003) critique of Cultural Studies, Art History, and studies in Visual Culture, in which he addresses current theoretical orthodoxies as they affect studies of the visual. He particularly decries what often appears to be a dutiful, unthinking referencing of Barthes, Benjamin, Lacan, and Foucault, and provides myriad examples of other theorists who might be more relevant for visual studies. He also identifies some of the other concerns appearing in this thesis: the locating of the visual within a broader global context, taking scientific understandings (and debate) into account in relation to experience of the visual, seeing, recognition and response, and he also argues for incorporating visual practice and the producer into the study of the visual.

[19] This thesis will argue, utilizing the neuropsychological arguments of Antonio Damasio (1995), that the feeling domain, and the body-ground have a large part to play in unconscious processes of recognition, making meaning, and giving significance.

[20] Humanist theory in art is notably exemplified by Kenneth Clark's, *The Nude: A Study of Ideal Art*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960/1956. For a rich account of the humanist tradition see Erwin Panofsky 'Art as a Humanist Discipline' (1940) in *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, New York: Doubleday, 1955. For an extended discussion of human form within art history see, in the same collection of essays, Panofsky's 'The History of the Theory of Human Proportions as a Reflection of the History of Styles' (1921). See Holly, M. A., *Panofsky and the Foundations of Art History*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984 for a critical appraisal. Classical scholarship argued for the maintenance of traditional values and representational modes, arguments that in the 1930s would be reproduced in both the cultural policies of the Soviet Union and the Nazi government in Germany, where classicism would be re-invoked as a marker of high culture and of civilization.

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propositional territory, and abandoned by many modern artists.[21] Even those who continued to work with the human figure such as Matisse, or those Constructivist artists seeking an art production relevant for the proletariat, were largely focused on formal compositional structures, or ideas of dynamism and transformation. Whether subject to purist concerns, or universalist, socialist ideas that subordinated the individual subject to the whole, the modern body in art was abstracted and integrated within a formal ground of pattern and structure. By the 1950s however, 'body' was re-instated directly as a central concern, as 'body art', but in a problematic or propositional sense, often employing neodada/conceptual strategies for critical and often transgressive provocations.

In the mid c20th, just as radical art was amplifying and opposing representational practices of mainstream culture and high art, psychological and cognitive discourses on how images achieve their effects conjoined with humanist and formalist perspectives of art theory.[22] In structuralist or semiotic analyses of mass culture and popular media, discourses on the image of the body were mapped in socio-political terms, and in ways that would privilege (and perhaps empower) the viewer rather than the text-image, or its producer.

By the time John Berger's 1972 television program *Ways of Seeing*, (and his subsequent publication of the same title) became widely known in the English-speaking world, a politics of representation was fast becoming a critical focus in visual theory[23]. Marxist analysis had challenged humanist presumptions that

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[21] See Breslin (1993) for an account of the absent body in Abstract Expressionism, and Froman (1993) for an account of the foundational energy/being of the painting body in Abstract Expressionism.

[22] See for instance, Malraux (1953/1947); Arnheim (1954); Ehrenzweig (1970/1965); and Gombrich (1968/1960). These approaches can be seen as in keeping within the structuralist project to determine meaning, as in the work of Levi-Strauss (1972/1958); Barthes (1973/1957, 1977); Leach (1976); Eco (1979); and Hall (1980).

[23] The field of visual theory, with many of its key theorists now deriving from non-visual domains, differs from Cultural Studies in the ways in which it formulates its premises, the constitution of its subject, and its intersection with art theory and art history, media studies and visual communication. Cultural studies, just as irreducibly hybrid in its origins, its methodology and even its focus, is perhaps more political in its objective of critical intervention, and its featuring of the work of theorists such as Gramsci (1971) and has more ethnographic emphasis, but the two fields are sometimes merged within the term 'Visual Culture'. See Elkins (2003) who avoids the term Visual Theory in a sustained examination of differences and focus of Cultural Theory, Art History. Elkins examines the appearance and usage of the term, 'Visual Culture' which, as he points out, designates a field of study when visual culture is really the object of study, though the evidence he puts forward (for instance, W. J. T. Mitchell choosing to set up a course in 1995 called 'visual culture') does not necessarily show that it has been used to designate a field. Elkins perpetuates the confusion by using it himself as a means of differentiating it from the field he is advocating which is a broader discipline, 'Visual Studies'. My own preference is 'Visual Theory' for the theoretical and critical study of visual culture, with the term Visual Studies

privileged establishment culture and identified the investments within various cultural practices and the manufacture of value-added status of culture (Benjamin, 1977a/1931, 1977b/1936, 1982/1934; Malraux, 1974/1950; Bourdieu, 1965, 1993/1968). Berger employed both formalist and Marxist analysis to unmask embedded naturalisms in patriarchy and capitalism within art and the images of commerce. This dialectical approach to textual interpretation had been precipitated by Germaine Greer, and by Elizabeth Baker and Thomas Hess (1971), and was contemporaneous with the work of many feminist theorists examining body and gender representation within art history and screen studies, such as Linda Nochlin (1970, 1972), Laura Mulvey (1972) and Carol Duncan (1972, 1973).[24] The Marxist politics of the image was to become an orthodox framework with Griselda Pollock (1977) and others ratifying this critical system for feminist work on images of women. Erving Goffman (1959, 1976) and Judith Williamson (1978) too, developed this approach within cultural studies and sociology. Its counter-practice perspectives helped Lucy Lippard (1976) to theorize seventies' feminist art, and enabled RoseLee Goldberg (1979) to describe a history and a radical politics of body and representation observable within c20th art practice, and to recognize performance art of the sixties and seventies as an oppositional practice

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reserved for the broader field that includes practical studies and production, and visual communication and design theory (like Elkins), but terminology is as much subject to political-institutional agendas, especially administrative pressures for visible change, as any systematic denotation. 'Image Studies' is another title that Elkins also mentions. 'Art Theory', 'Image Theory', and 'Image and Text,' are also used for various tertiary course descriptions.

[24] Greer's *The Female Eunuch*, London: Paladin, 1971/1970 contains descriptions that are particularly suggestive as a model for Berger's analysis of the representation of women in European art. See for instance 'The Stereotype' for Greer's evocations of material tangibility and the patriarchal fantasies of possession/indulgence: "What happened to woman in painting happened to her in poetry as well. Her beauty was celebrated in terms of the riches which clustered around her: her hair was gold wires, her brow ivory, her teeth gates of pearl, her breasts alabaster veined with lapis lazuli, her eyes as black as jet. She was for consumption; other sorts of imagery spoke of her in terms of cherries and cream, lips as sweet as honey and skin as white as milk, breasts like cream uncrudded, hard as apples" (Greer, 1971: 57). Nochlin's seminal essay *'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?'* was first published in *Art News*, vol. 6 , Jan, 1971, and later in the definitive *Woman as Sex Object: Studies in Erotic Art, 1730-1970*, New York: Art News Annual 38, Newsweek, 1973, which she co-edited with Thomas B. Hess. Included in this anthology was her 1972 *Eroticism and Female Imagery in Nineteenth-Century Art*, written as a course introduction, which cited and further developed some of Berger's arguments. See Mulvey's 1972 essay on the fetishist content at work in the images of women in the paintings of Pop artist, Allen Jones, 'Fears, Fantasies and the Male Unconscious', *Spare Rib*, feb. 1973, reprinted in Mulvey (1989). See Broude & Garrad (1982) for an anthology of feminist art scholarship 1971 - 1979, including two essays by Carol Duncan, 'Happy Mothers and Other New Ideas in Eighteenth Century Art' presented at the College Art Association in 1972, and published in *The Art Bulletin*, 55, dec. 1973, pp. 570-83, and 'Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting', published in *Artforum*, dec. 1973, pp. 30-39.

manifesting critical responses and counter-narratives to mainstream and commodity culture.[25]

The psychosexual analysis of representation, focused on the politics and pleasures of the gaze, was another outcome of Marxist-feminist theorization.[26] Initiated by Mulvey (1975), it is as an approach still significant within those realms of cultural theory that work with screen or text based analysis, interpretation and viewership.[27] Though theorization of body representation in postmodern consumer culture tends to focus on sexual representation and gender politics, developments in postcolonial theory extended understandings of the investments involved in Western representational practice and the concomitant forces of domination, co-option, resistance and re-adaptation at work in response to the impacts of Western globalization.[28] Anthropological, and postcolonial and poststructuralist studies continue to problematize all efforts to universalize meaning, translation, and reception within emergent globalism, and have helped make Otherness a central rather than marginal issue for critical theory (Pines, 1989).[29] Despite the postmodernist emphasis on 'the play of the image' and 'the eclipse of the real,' the relations of representation and subjectivity remain a key focus for art and visual theory.[30] Questions around agency and subjectivity now engage with issues of embodiment and phenomenological discourses, the interaction of representation of bodies with

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[25] See Griselda Pollock's classic article 'What's Wrong with Images of Women' *Screen Education*, no, 24, 1977. See Steinman (1986), Sayre (1989), Marsh, (1993), Schneider (1997) for critical surveys of body performance work.

[26] See Kipnis (1988) for a critical discussion of the relations of Marxism, psychoanalysis and feminist theory in relation to popular culture and aesthetics.

[27] See for instance, Doane (1980, 1982), Silverman (1986), Creed (1993), Fer (1993), Shaviro (1993), Kaplan (1997), Neale (1983), and Huyssen (1986).

[28] For theorization of consumer culture body representation see Myers (1986), Ewen (1988), Stratton (1996). For seminal and key theorizations of postcolonialism see Said (1978), Stam & Spence, (1983), Bahbha (1983), Appadurai (1986), Gabriel (1989), Trinh T. Minh-ha (1991), Spivak (1988), and Anderson (1992).

[29] See for instance Clifford (1986, 1988), Mattelart, & Mattelart (1992), Ballerini (1993), Jenks (1995), Chow (1995), O'Hanlon (1995), Welchman (1995), Kaplan (1997), Mirzoeff (1998), Worsely, (1999), Mel (2000), Benson (2000), Layton (2003). For theorization of the Other see Fabian (1983), Graham-Brown (1988), Wallace (1990), Langton (1993), Hall (1997).

[30] The term 'postmodernist' suggests a critically engaged self-reflexive inquiry and can be differentiated to some extent from the term 'postmodern' as pluralism, appropriation and pastiche, or even surface stylization, or 'crisis', or a new set of relations manifesting between capitalism and subjectivity. The use of the term 'postmodern' as a temporal marker for significant cultural changes post-1968 is not so useful in discussing art because many works have postmodern characteristics predating this period, or can be seen as having some causal influence, or as pre-empting new directions for mainstream culture.

actual bodies, with self-constitution, and particular cultural histories of looking and remembering.[31] Laura Kipnis observes,

> "Inasmuch as the subject is itself an ideological category, the question of its hypervisibility must be profoundly political; not withstanding that the field of the visual, as Lacan makes clear, is itself bound up with the constitution of subjectivity. Visibility is a complex system of permission and prohibition, of presence and absence, punctuated alternately by apparitions and hysterical blindness" (Kipnis, 1988: 158).

Over the last decade body theory has developed rapidly - and there seems no conceivable end to its permutations since, in a direct refusal of essentialism, it tends to frame its project as a mapping of social constructs which are under continuous reformation and transformation, always in a state of becoming. Queer theory reframed traditional exclusionary discourses on sexuality toward an understanding of the breadth of sexual variation by looking at contemporary subversions that 'refunction' the gendered, sexualized, racialized, ethnicized body (Butler, 1993). These moves also reasserted the depth of struggles over determination and the othered body and expanded on histories of subjectivity.[32] Queer theory's exploration of marginalized body practices and body cultures centered on difference and performance, and reinvested issues of body representation, and identification with new critical and political relevance connecting the emancipatory implications of performance to specific cultural production of all kinds.

The tendency of orthodox studies of culture to frame culture in abstract socio-economic terms effaces the specificities of embodied experience. Jane Gallop has

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[31] Grosz points out that when the body, in all its specificity, comes to center-stage in analysis, it exposes those "phallocentric assumptions which have hidden the cultural and intellectual effacement of women; it helps to problematize the universalist and universalizing assumptions of humanism, through which women's - and all other groups' - specificities, positions, and histories are rendered irrelevant or redundant" (Grosz, 1994: ix). De Beauvoir (1952), Dworkin, (1974), Foucault (1977), Irigaray, (1980), Butler (1990, 1993), and Grosz, (1994) have been influential in instigating these questions of interrelationship. See Bordo (1993, 1997), Becker (1995), Durham (1998), Duke & Kreshel (1998) for studies of the correlations between advertising, body shape, and women's self esteem. See Bordo (1997) for an argument on the marginalization of feminist theorizing of the body: "while men are the cultural theorists of the body, only women have bodies" (Bordo, 1997: 198). Jane Gallop (1988) said much the same at a guest lecture she gave at Monash University in the early 1990s, discussing the way she tended to be regarded by men as her body rather than as theorist. For histories of looking and remembering see Leder (1990), Lingis (1994), Petro (1995), Lury (1998), Bloom (1999).

[32] See Heath (1981), Bhabha (1983), Berry (1984), Gallop (1988), Lingis (1994), Brettle & Rice (1994), Grosz & Probyn (1995), Straayer (1996), Bright (1998), Munoz (1999). See also Andrew Ross (1989) chp. 5 'Uses of Camp' for a background to Queer cultural politics and theory.

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noted that "Rather than treat the body as a site of knowledge, a medium for thought, the more classical project has tried to render it transparent and get beyond it, to dominate it by reducing it to the mind's idealizing categories" (Gallop, 1988: 5). Elizabeth Grosz (1994), describing how the physical lived body has been effaced institutionally and politically, points out that when the subject-body is taken into account, it tends to be postulated as some genderless universal figure defined mostly by class, with its experience and values circumscribed by male norms.

Anything that was once portrayed under the aegis of humanism, as natural, functional and transparent in its relation to truth and reality invites investigation and reinterpretation. Much of contemporary theory, in the wake of revisionary analysis of cultural practices and infrastructures initiated by Marxism, feminism and poststructuralism, is still engaged in a rethinking and rewriting of universalist propositions. Such counter-discourses, in rejecting all essentialisms for pluralism, variation and difference tend toward cultural relativity, and refuse all biological references or groundings. Donna Haraway, applying her "acid tools of critical discourse" (Haraway, 1988: 577) to absolute relativism as well as objectivity, has warned, as does Grosz, that reducing everything to discursive cultural construction means the body gets lost, becoming nothing more than "a blank page for social inscriptions" (591).

Insisting that certain kinds of scientific research have an important place in critical endeavors, Haraway has argued that feminists need to demand from science "a better account of the world" (579), a contingent and analytic kind of positivism that would insure that biological accounts of sex exist in "productive tension" alongside accounts of gender. For Haraway all kinds of bodies and meanings are to be found not just within the conversations and codes which constitute cultural discourse, but also in the intersections of science, medical research, and technology.[33]

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[33] Given the considerable disciplinary divide, the warranted wariness of humanities for science's lack of critical and ethical reflectivity, and the difficulty of assessing and contextualizing extremely specialized information, this remains an extremely rare practice. There has been a marked decline in cultural contextualization of image practices, visual thinking studies, since the ascendancy of cultural relativism in postmodernism. For examples of early writings on art and the visual that reference scientific and psychological studies see Gombrich (1968, 1972, 1981), Arnheim, (1954, 1970), Ehrenzweig (1970), Brothwell (1976), Alland (1977), Washburn (1983), Deregowski (1984). Critiques of science have tended to displace what were once radical studies into visual communication production theory, where recent writing tends to build on this earlier work. See Massorini (2002) for a comprehensive, and expanded psychological account of visual

In investigating the relations of body and imaging in relation to subjectivity, the images of science are likely to play a part. But in looking at subjectivity, the mechanistic understandings and findings of science may be worth considering propositionally in relation to cultural observations and critical analysis. The different governance of the humanities and sciences (Rorty, 1979; Grosz, 1994) mean that the seeing/thinking of an image has been traditionally divided between the mechanical/ chemical/ cellular/ genetic operations and the cultural/ intellectual aspects of reception, looking, and interpretation. In science, the visual as an object of scientific study tends to be defined in terms of stimulus rather than culture, or in ways that are incommensurable with the general tenor of critical theory. Yet both the humanities and the natural sciences, as Grosz puts it, "share a common refusal to acknowledge the distinctive complexities of organic bodies, the fact that bodies construct and in turn are constructed by an interior, a psychical and a signifying view-point, a consciousness or perspective" (Grosz, 1994: 8).

Engaging with Imaging and Affect

Traditionally, engaging critically with images meant a distancing from the effects images have on their viewers. The body as "a sensing, an internal-external orientating centre of perception, not just perceived, but perceiving" (Merleau-Ponty, 1993/1961: 123), and its embodied reactions, aesthetic impact, and expressive and experiential aspects, were not so much contained as ignored. Merleau-Ponty blamed this on the insensitivity of science and its emphasis on data collection, as it looks "on from above, and thinks of the object in general" (122). With the ascendancy of the determinative Neo-Marxist anti-humanism, interpretive practice tended to examine images in terms of ideological effects

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imaging, and a critique of its limitations, including psychology's tendency to rigidity in formulating its propositions and understandings. Theorization of the body and its representation within psychology has often been extraordinarily narrow in relation to contemporary practices and different image cultures. Liam Hudson's (1982) analysis of the psychological significance of the nude in art, for instance, looks mainly at conservative academic art and some early twentieth century figurative works in Cubism and Expressionism. His propositions completely ignore a century of avant-garde practice and its critical stance toward traditional body portrayal, as well as the highly specific field of body art that developed in the early seventies, as well as the psychologically informed studies from screen and visual theory. Engagement with psychological studies has recently reappeared in such writing as Stafford's (1993) comprehensive study of medical illustration; Hayles (1999) documentation and critique of the development and politics of the anti-body realm of cybernetics; and Kaplan's (1997) investigations of the cultural unconscious at work in medical handbooks on cosmetic surgery which use Caucasian and youth norms as the universal standard for beauty. For a more contentious kind of science referencing see Hersey (1996) who uses determinist studies on sexual selection from science and sociobiology to mount an evolutionist argument of cultural pressures influencing breeding toward ideal beauty.

determined by cultural institutions and capitalist imperatives. Arjun Appadurai argues that the banishing of psychology in domains anthropology and sociology has produced "a kind of split subject".[34]

Lawrence Grossberg (1988), commenting on what Jameson has called "the waning of effect" in contemporary culture, argues that contemporary ideological structures seem incapable of making sense of certain affective experiences, because they cannot be represented, having been determined elsewhere. The split is, he proposes, an experiential one. We may experience ourselves intelligibly, ideologically, but these realms "are increasingly unrelated to our affective lives, that they cannot speak to them".[35] What constitutes an effect is sometimes hard to recognize. For all the conscious awareness of the fictional nature of virtual images in the post-industrial age, representation often appears naturalized, treated as if it were self-existent and self-evident, corresponding to something in the world out there. Benjamin (1977b/1936) suggested that modern perception incorporated an unconscious optics, its meaning and effect residing in the object as much as the perceiver. We are not always aware of what attracts us, or how much we have internalized the 'opinions' of the image, or how much we have become dependent on the experience produced by certain kinds of lookings. In recent moves from linguistic-centered theory to discourse theory, there have been efforts to reassess the function and value of aesthetics and pleasure within a politics of culture (Studlar, 1985; Grossberg, 1988; Williams, 1990; Regan, 1992; Turnbull, 1994), but as Worsley (1999) argues, there has been much left out in terms of linking culture with material practice. The making or authorship of the image, the 'who' behind the image, difficult anyway to pin down in the collaborative culture of today's image industries, is particularly disregarded in analysis, or seen as somehow incorporated within institutional and cultural descriptions.

The eliding of the producer of image or text is concomitant with the privileging of the reader or viewer in textual analysis and in reception studies. It would

[34] As a way of reconnecting with psychological considerations, Appadurai recommends Zizek's Lacanian writings as valuable in that they illuminate "the peculiar ironies of certain ideologically charged situations ... (and their) disciplinary habits" (in Bell, 1999: 38).

[35] Grossberg argues that with the loss of historically constructed positions in "an economy of meaning" that once defined difference between events and experiences, "(T)he result is that our affective existence is increasingly defined by the collapse of the difference between the extremism of terror and the nullity of boredom, between the terror of boredom and the boredom of terror, between the uncontrollability of affect and its absence" (Grossberg, 1988: 184).

appear to derive from the need to explore agency and interpretation beyond celebratory accounts of the maker's individual achievements in the humanist mythology of the artist-as-genius still so prevalent in the popular domain.[36] This romantic narrative now converges with today's media celebrity cults and those capitalist marketing practices to do with 'talking up the artist' as a means of enhancing their commercial and investment appeal. Yet the modernist focus on individual creativity and originality, while useful for judgments of innovation in art practice, seems like an idea that came from elsewhere once art practice is scrutinized.[37] Art and the applied arts have always been, and still are, taught via copying methods, appropriation, applying eclectic approaches, and include crafted, designed processes. Cultural producers and imagemakers reference themselves to other art works, and work reactively, or responsively; and despite the pervasive value given to individualism, they often work collaboratively. Within art practice, there is little connection between the influence, significance, character or level of achievement of an artwork, and heroic struggle toward originality or greatness – though such narratives may well be incorporated into artist's motivational or aspirational self-imaging.

The exclusion of producers from image discourses in visual theory points to certain politically determined paradigms that continue to efface both the making process and the image as a conceptualization and practice, grounded in the body. It allows images to be defined as symbolic practices sundered from material practice, as if symbolization functions as some kind of abstract essence that may slip from one kind of practice/technology or to another.[38] Though a study of

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[36] Narratives of the artist–genius may be traced from Benvenuto Cellini's self-promoting c16th biography to c19th Romantic heroicism evident in modernist conceptions of the artist and championed in some c19th and early c20th writings on art. This celebration of the artist-hero is not explicit in art writings of the period though. See anthologies of art writings (such as Franscina & Harrison, 1982; Harrison and Wood, 1992) that give a sense of the diverse and specific interests of artists and art writers. See Holt (1966) for a collection of art writings, artists' writings, and writings about art by connoisseurs, patrons, or lovers of art which, when compared, show the very different investments and interests at work.

[37] As with propositions of the advent, practice, and apparent death of the avant-garde, these concerns may be more indicative of theoretical constructs, humanist ideals, and marketplace agendas than the practice of art.

[38] My argument here is that while it is possible to see how different material practices contain similar symbolic ideas after they have been produced, and then in how that changes in different contexts, this does not address the image-object effect and the role played by its material form. My argument follows the materialist perspectives of Walter Benjamin (1977a, 1977b, 1982) who recognized the object-character of cultural production and connected meaning and effect to technological practices, and to social, cultural, and political contexts. In this context, see Buck-Morss' (1991) elucidation of Walter Benjamin's 'Arcades Project' which addresses the materiality of symbolization and the fetish character of objects and images as produced by capitalism. See also

the perspectives of producers is beyond the province of this particular thesis, image practice is here constituted as an active force (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/1980, 1996) with the image a contrived object able to conjure up bodies by deploying particular techniques/knowledges toward specific effects and outcomes. The question then becomes not how images 'look', but what they can 'do' (Forge, 1970; Pinney, 2004).

Visual images, with few exceptions, are authored, purposeful conceptions. They are also fabrications, whether 'handmade' (that is, produced bodily) and tactile, or whether recorded photographically or electronically, or whether entirely 'computer generated' (that is, computer artist generated). Though the content and meanings attributed to an image may be centered on the interpretations and responses of the viewer, all its constitutive elements, consciously or otherwise, have been selected, constructed, organized, manipulated, or emphasized in the making. Myriad other possibilities are suppressed, contained or omitted in what has been termed "a dialectics of emphasis and exclusion" (Massorini, 2002). For anyone working in everyday image-making domains, it makes no sense to speak of the absence of the author (Barthes, 1968; Levi-Strauss, 1978), or the insignificance of the text (Fish, 1980), or that the image 'makes itself' (Baudrillard, 1983). This is not to say that viewers relate only to what the imagemaker presents or that they necessarily recognize the producer's intended purpose, or respond accordingly. Nor does the realization of any production necessarily reflect the producer/artist's intention. Despite all efforts to codify or determine the visual, whether toward some semiotic logic or market predictability, there are always contingencies mitigating all expectations of producers and their aspirations. Yet leaving image producers out of cultural descriptions is to refuse an area of knowledge and practice that specializes in the employment of images. Even when the producers get it wrong, cultural or communication projects still operate as real world attempts to constitute, to form subjectivities.

Professional imagemakers are sensitive to, and may even instigate ongoing shifts in associative networks of public and personal meaning. When working toward an audience, they will be attempting to guess/play out every possible reaction or interpretation as the work develops. They also engage in a continual re-

Taussig (1993) who re-engages with the relations of magic, mimesis, 'primitivism' and material practice.

invention of the power of effects, as the novelty of new images wears off, and as responses start to desensitize. From the producer's point of view, the challenge is not only to produce works that captivate and re-captivate the viewer, but to differentiate them from other works to some degree. Success in such a complex enterprise can be extremely elusive and is not likely to be reducible to technical, structural, formalist, or semiotic analyses, (Elkins, 1998) or institutional factors or funding support. Why is one text/film/art work/television programme more appealing, more powerful, more persuasive than another, even when story or production aspects are similar, or the audience is largely the same? If agency can be located in the viewer's response and the dissemination of his/her interpretation of that image, and in the behavioural choices available, then it also has to be locatable in the maker's responses and investments throughout production, in the fact of the production, beyond, but including its craft. It might for instance, have much to do with the maker's ability to probe the limits of the currently imaginable. Producers are always enacting the role of probable spectator/s (other artists, the 'art world') as they develop their work.

The Politics of Images/ Do Images Matter?

Any analysis of 'appeal' would seem to require an examination of psychological, aesthetic, and cultural pleasures. This is addressed to some degree in studies of visualities and reception which take into account practices of looking and of making and the consequences of image 'effects have been central to ongoing social and academic debates.[39] The problem is that there are no clear cut causal influences that can be observed within any such social spheres of human behaviour, though correlation of certain attitudes, conditions, experiences and behaviours continues to reinforce concerns over particular kinds of media exposure and practices.[40] Reception studies originally centered on the thesis of

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[39] Elkins (2003) in his review of the visual theory disciplines and related fields and all kinds of historical and current visual practices, world-wide, argues for a visual studies discipline that would be inclusive and culturally broad and draw on science findings in relation to seeing, recognition and response. He also advocates image practice and production as part of such a field of study. Some of this, he shows, already exists institutionally, but is left out of orthodox theoretical studies in relation to other practices and cultures.

[40] Public and sometimes academic debates move between 'right to see – right to express' stances and concerns that images may corrupt or influence society. For instance, though the recent debate about films like *Baise-Moi* centers mostly on the rights of audiences to choose what they see, with the cinema designated a private space, the controversy stems from what this film shows. The graphic rape images of the film do not just make visible a 'sight' some would prefer not to witness; the film is considered to glamourize such images, to feed a cult of violence that may spill out into reality. The argument is that such productions create an appetite for brutality, revenge, or murder.

the cultural consequences of US media imperialism, with Schiller (1976) showing that 65% of world communications originated in the US., and Nordenstreng and Varis (1974) showing in their UN commissioned study that US television shows dominated other countries. Hollywood film, supported by global distribution infrastructures and sophisticated technologies, has dominated much of cinema experience since the 1930s.[41] What all this means though in terms of subjectivity and identity, is much debated (Ang, 1991), and a new theoretical position relevant to reception theory has become apparent with the Frankfurt school thesis losing ground.[42] Where Horkheimer and Adorno argued that "Films, radio and magazines make up a system which is uniform as a whole and in every part. Even the aesthetic activities of political opposites are one in their enthusiastic obedience to the rhythm of the iron system" (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1973/1944: 120), the mass media is still seen as significant, but only influencing some people some of the time, in keeping with vagaries of the heterogeneous audience. Effect is considered unpredictable and subject to

Certainly there seems to be an increase in the production and consumption of extreme, trauma-laden, arousing, stimulating, 'immersive' images. There also seems to be currently, an epidemic of internet users downloading images that show sexual abuse of children. Most studies on media effects are focused on scenes of violence, and look for evidence of increased aggression in everyday behaviour, or insensitivity, or loss of empathy, or an inability to develop relationships after exposure to such scenes. My own view is that studies of obsessive behaviours need to figure more strongly in all such investigations, taking into account all kinds of psychological compulsions including fixations on anxiety and trauma, and consider the possibility that an appetite for violence, debasement, abuse, cruelty, horror in viewing might be symptom more than effect.

[41] There are three broad positions on effects. In communication and media studies, arguments that mass media has little or no effect (for example, Lodziak, 1986; Abercrombie et al., 1980), are allied to the view that though media has considerable potential for influence, there are also all kinds of resistances to it (Hall & Jefferson, 1976; Mattelart & al., 1984, 1988; Fiske, 1984; Brown, 1989; Nava & Nava, 1990). These resistance-libertarian positions oppose the technological determinism of the Frankfurt school, including those who continue to argue that Western media is not only overwhelming, (Baudrillard, 1983; Postman, 1987; Ahmed, 1992) but is also an inherently debasing experience, with global cultural colonization inevitable (Schiller, 1976; Tunstall, 1977; Wallerstein, 1990). There is a parallel grouping of stances in sociological and educational research that conducts ethnographic research on effects and reception, or utilizes experimental and psychological findings on media and behavioural change. Studies that dismiss the media's impact (Klapper, 1960, Schramm et al., 1961), and those that show active resistance by viewers (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Brown, 1976; Rubin, 1979), contrast with descriptions of the compelling nature of media (Foster, 1979; Singer et al., 1980). When broader cultural questions are looked at, much of this reception research and theorization focuses on analysis of content and programming of media 'produced elsewhere' but whose impact on local values is then largely assumed.

[42] See Mattelart & Mattelart (1992) for a recent overview of theories of the media. Poster has described the Frankfurt School thesis as a maintenance of the autonomous logocentric subject, "either that subject existed or it dissolved" (Poster: 1992: 10). See Huyssen (1986) for a critical exploration of the relations of mass culture and modernism, particularly the chapter 'Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism's Other'.

conflict, resistance, and contradiction (Ang, 1991, Skovmand & Schroder, 1992).[43]

Postcolonial theorists, while emphasizing the political potential of audience mediation, resistance, and the possibilities of co-option and re- adaptation within the complex play of cosmopolitan late capitalism (Appaduai, 1992; Shohat, 2003), remain concerned about media expansion as an extension of Western dominance (Daryush, 1992, dé Ishtar, 1994) (and find themselves sometimes in the company of fundamentalist, nationalistic or new traditionalist opposition to Westernism).[44] Cultural dependency tends to be seen still in political-economic-financial and ideological-cultural terms, but its theorization has now been expanded to include other dimensions such as immigration-ethnic aspects, media-content and import-flows, and technology-production (Appadurai, 1996). Transnational advertising tends to be seen as the main mode of Western influence (Frith, 2003), particularly that transmitted via direct broadcast satellite (even though other earlier dominant modes are still increasing their reach into local markets via US free trade agreements).

Theorization of effects at this macro-level tends to focus on interdependencies between the global and local, with recognition that though a core of industrial nations are central in globalization, there are also semiperipheral developments (Wallerstein, 1991), with the major redistribution in the world economy located in the manufacturing and corporate centers of the Asia-Pacific (Friedman, 2002). Though Jonathan Friedman and others have argued, in view of the asymmetries of capital flows, industrialization, and decentralization, that globalization only operates on the level of co-ordination of world markets, other theorists reject this kind of economic-centered analysis, and are engaged in

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[43] Concerns about US imperialism have dissipated in the face of an apparent loss of national affiliation given the development of transnational media operations and, I would argue, the success and normalizing of global American consumer culture. Increased local television production seems to mitigate the unidirectional programming of direct satellite broadcast (Schneider & Wallis, 1988) and formations of global culture, while the influence of the media in relation to subjectivity is considered something beyond observation, or extremely complex, (Reeves, 1993), or even ultimately unknowable (Hartley, 1992). In cultural studies the unified category of audience is now discredited (Ang, 1996). Audience has been examined as an object of power/knowledge (Hall, 1986; Ang, 1991, 1996) with viewership requiring specific description and location with attention being given to the differentiation of audience (Chang, 1987, Ang. 1991, Pribram, 1988, Kaplan, 1997) though the unknowability of audience is also asserted (Hartley, 1992).

[44] See Dirlik (1997) for a critique of poststructural postcolonialism in which the fetishization of "difference" is shown to collude with individualism.

the rethinking of the relations of subjectivity and technology in terms of implications for cultural homogenization and resistant practices and so-called creative economies.[45]

Early Marxist theorists argued that the visual media reinforce hegemonic power by naturalizing and masking ideology and they ratified the notion of the persuasive and formative image.[46] Its effects, including the structuring/ suturing of relations between subject and object, were seen as determined by view and viewpoint. From the seventies onwards, this became a central tenet, and in art it led to the employment of various ideological counter strategies that attempted "to challenge the regimes of representation that govern a society" (Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1991: 2). Agency and the possibility of resistance remain central in debates about self-determination. Hebdige's (1979) opposition to the determinist arguments of the Frankfurt school in his study of subcultural rebel identities and their visible, active resistances to mainstream socialization invigorated a divide on the possibilities of agency and self-determination. Humanists, traditional Marxists, and many feminists, developed and still hold to determinist views, while poststructuralists, some neomarxists, and most postfeminists, tend to argue for an active, resistant or empowering engagement with media. Given the question of agency remains contentious (Mayne, 1993; Poster, 1995), how, or to what extent the influence of imagery and media override other avenues of formation seems to have been set aside. Many theorists, looking at late capitalist developments, are highly critical of previous terms of reference, the

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[45] Friedman argues instead that we have 'global systems', and that globalization, presented as a utopian discourse, is a representation of the transnational cosmopolitan elite living in their small world over vast expanses of territory who then imagine the world to be free of borders. He points out that though a nation might be hybrid or multicultural for instance, that its inhabitants' experience may be largely monocultural. He asks "Why should the introduction of national foods, books and images into a transnational group turn it into something entirely or even partially new for its inhabitants?" Why should any addition to the sum of cultural things (imply) a new culture" (Friedman, 2002: 21-22). He argues that usually when something new is assimilated, that real difference is reduced to common difference, recontextualized "as predictable, expected, and thus without its radical otherness" (22). This is a crucial debate. See Watson (1997) for a counter argument and evidence that shows even the introduction of new kinds of food has far reaching effects on behaviour, especially when it is ubiquitous, and when heavily promoted as a 'cultural experience' linked to other aspirations. See Ortiz (2002) who insists that borders, symbolic and geographic, remain significant for 'cultural integrity', and that the crucial integrating movement is not globalization, but modernization which cuts across all historical formations. He argues that indigenous tribal peoples must defend themselves from border expansions" (59), or they disappear. See also Penley & Ross (1991), Haraway (1992), Guattari (1992, 1993), McQuire (1998), Lury, (1998) for some other possibilities in the relations of subjectivity, technology and means of production.

[46] This is not to say that they agreed on what was the preferred kind of cultural approach. See Jameson, Fredric, (ed.), *Aesthetics and Politics*, London: New Left Books, 1977 for a documented overview of the debates between Brecht, Lukács, Benjamin, Bloch, and Adorno.

privileging of behaviouralist models, and generally suspicious of the moral agendas observable in research conducted in communication and education fields.[47]

These various positions wrestle with the limits of self- constitution and the possibilities of the individual exercising personal power despite his/her unconscious interpellation by institutional forces (Althusser, 1971) or his/her self-positioning as subject in line with dominant social discourses, (Foucault, 1977, 1980), and the seduction of the contemporary media, (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1973/1944; Ewen, 1982, 1988).[48] The idea that images have the power to influence subjectivity is supported, and problematized, within propositions of the reception of images as a complex, contradictory, ambiguous, and perverse process (Barthes, 1975, 1984/1980; Mulvey, 1981; Barrett, 1980, Hartley, 1992)[49]. It is also inherent in the idea of 'resistance' (Morely, 1980), or the making use of images for empowerment, even though textual determination of meaning has in some quarters, been set aside in favour of the active viewer (Fiske & Hartley, 1978, Fish, 1980).[50]

Public and media debates over media influences, visibly fuelled by media-induced anxiety and fear (Mellancamp, 1997) remain an ongoing and highly charged discourse focused on the need for clear unassailable evidences or causal relations.[51] The *how* in the social is not amenable to positivist methodology

[47] See, for example, Young (1986), Bee (1989), Leiss et al., (1990), Buckingham (1993).

[48] See for example Penley & Ross' (1991) anthology of studies of active, oppositional, and subversive audience/cultural makers and producers.

[49] On the power of images influencing subjectivity see Barthes (1973/1957), Mulvey (1975), Williamson (1978), Ewen & Ewen (1982, Root (1984), Betterton (1987), Ewen (1988), Stafford (1993), Grosz (1994), Bordo (1993, 1997), Durham (1998).

[50] In a humanist reworking of the power of the individual, Catherine Lumby's (1994, 1997) determination of female viewers as taking only what they want from media, reflects studies of the creative, subversive 'make-do' of sub-cultural groups such as those by Penley & Ross, (1991), and constitutes a strategic rejection of the passive woman. In contrast, Meenakshi Durham (1998) challenges such sovereignty by demonstrating a contradictory media address that is utterly homogenous in its sexualization of the female body. She points to the absence of any content or representation that might work toward self-determination of gender, sexuality, or personal interests, and the invisibility of any subject, information, or style of representation that might empower women.

[51] It might be possible, for instance, to show 'scientifically' that cigarette smoke drawn into the lungs is physically damaging, but what might be observable in the physical world is not the same for the social world. Attempts to show how cigarette advertising creates the desire to smoke, or that fashion photographs of thin models in teen magazines cause anorexia in young girls, or that pornographic images contribute to the degradation and abuse of women by men, or that insulting stereotypical representations perpetuate racist imaginings and oppression, are unlikely to achieve scientific or critical validity beyond correlation.

though.[52] Tomlinson argues that the relationship between media and culture is "a subtle interplay of mediations" (1991: 61). Any validation and interpretation of the complex interactions of self-constituting behaviour (Rorty, 1979) depends on cognitive and strategic thinking in conjunction with authorized methods of critical scholarship and interpretation. Any proposition of relationships and effects in the formation of subjectivity has to be seen as a culturally grounded assessment.[53]

While popular pleasure has been validated and is now seen as crucial in theorizing the politics of culture (Grossberg, 1983, 1988), the poststructuralist proposition of endless meaning and interpretive freedom is contested by understandings of social and cultural practice, and the limits of self-constitution.[54] The viewer is recognized as divided, and subject to the contradictory pleasures at play in consumer images and the mass media, which raises the question of how pleasure (or perversion) might be recuperated for political and personal empowerment.[55] The uncertainty of language and meaning is seen as a site not only for pleasure, (Barthes, 1975/70, 1984), but also disruption and subversion (Weedon, 1987; Grosz, 1990; Grosz & Probyn, 1994; Straayer, 1996).

Mapping Relations

In some recent writing, propositions of ideological effect, intellectual opposition, or creative 'take', with the viewer conceived as a producer, raise cognitive and phenomenological questions about the influence of various

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[52] Though positivist objectivity relates more to the study of physical phenomena, science, as Haraway (1988) puts it, still counts. Yet science research that attempts to validate theories to do with the everyday, is beset with difficulties not the least because variables are enormously difficult to identify, let alone isolate and examine. There are inherent difficulties in describing and analyzing inner processes, or seeking behavioural correlates to introspective accounts to do with meaning or formative processes. Scientific objectivity relies on the documentation of observations that can be checked/repeated and verified, but neither observation nor replicability are particularly applicable to mental phenomena. And observation and interpretation of data are embedded in all kinds of cultural and political assumptions.

[53] Subjectivity is represented in a variety of models and approaches initiated by theorists as diverse as Nietzsche, Freud, Horkheimer & Adorno, Lacan, Barthes, Althusser, Foucault, Fanon, Mulvey, Kristeva, Irigaray, Cixous, Deleuze and Guattari, Haraway, and Butler. See Mansfield, (2000) for an overview. It is a field that incorporates Marx's c19th thesis on the alienation of humanity from nature, George Simmel's turn of the century observations on the modern urban self that sees itself as the stranger, the alien, psychoanalysis, and pheneomonology. There has been a re-emergence of contestations (Cadava, 1991) over the utility of the concept of the unified Subject, and thus of subjectivity, as an object of scholarly inquiry.

[54] See, for example, Blumer et al. (1985), Ang (1996).

[55] See Stallybrass & White (1986), Penley & Ross (1991), Lumby (1994), Turnbull, (1994), Grosz & Probyn (1995), Bright (1998).

technologies of seeing and imagemaking practices on subjectivity, and how influences beyond those amenable to consciousness, take place via imagery.[56] In Merleau-Ponty's (1993) ontological explorations of image-making and subjectivity, and contemporary studies of embodiment and cognition (Csordas, 1994, Damasio, 1995, 2003), reception is constituted as an ever-shifting plethora of somatic experience, semantic association, and desire, that can be mapped onto behavior, rather than confined to the bare framework of rational thought.

In proposing certain relations between formation of self, image production and image reception, there can be no synthetic paradigm in which all theoretical differences are resolved. Nevertheless it is critical that questions of representation continue to be explored in methodical ways so as to chart cultural patterns and even propose some general economy of visual production, and to more fully appreciate the powerful ideological effects of the image in relation to the contingencies of time, place, and to cultural and socio-economic specificities. This thesis makes no claim for a definitive truth or a purer analysis, but works towards Haraway's (1988) call for 'a better account' from a clearly situated viewpoint; it is also a *contingent* account that seeks to modify a specific and temporal reality built by previous studies.

There are clearly limits to this particular enterprise. As a recipient of published knowledges that have already been defined in particular ways within the dominant paradigm of our time, and operating as a critical interpreter of these knowledges, I am subject to institutional and cultural determinants and constraints. There are also bound to be limits to what can be described or accounted for epistemologically in looking at cultural practices; there may be much that is beyond theoretical categorization, and incommensurable with Western imaginings.

Textual analysis of material produced outside one's own culture can also be perceived as the outsider speaking to and for insiders, and risks re-enacting some authoritative omnipotent positioning. When such concerns are taken to mean that there is no valid commentary possible by anyone outside a culture, or

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[56] See, for example, Betterton (1987), Adler & Pointon (1993), Goldstein (1994) , Pultz (1995), Bright (1998), Sturken & Cartwright (2001).

outside the circumstances pertaining to production, the bigger risk may be that of silencing; there is nothing said here that cannot be contested. It is not possible to speak authoritatively or authentically *for* cultures, even one's own; theory, politics, and culture are all sites of hegemonic contests (Gramsci, 1971; Anderson, 1992). Theory as intellectual conversation (Rorty, 1979; Habermas, 1989) is more the approach taken here. The field of academic discourse may be an unequal one, yet discussion can open up spaces for reply, debate, and exploration.[57] Perhaps one day, knowledge might be built more on interchanges (Attwood & Arnold, 1982) rather than observation, but all cross-cultural endeavor involves continually reflecting on, and working with, the dilemmas of interpretation and authority.

Crossing Knowledge Boundaries

The Asia-Pacific is the general object site in this study, discussed in relation to broader Euro-American and global practices. Home to the major proportion of the world's inhabitants, the plenitude of cultural forms inscribed by the name Asia-Pacific allows extensive comparative studies of visual representation, of Eurocentrism, and of cultural difference. Studies that work toward better descriptions of contemporary structures, cultural power, and social boundarization within changing global relationships have particular relevance for productive understandings of Australia's cultural diversity, and the changes in its relations with Asia-Pacific countries and cultures in this area. Somewhat contentiously, Australia posits itself as part of the Asia-Pacific region, a conception formulated as 'Australia in the Asia-Pacific', but not '*of* the Asia Pacific'. It is a construction taking place through old stereotyped and racist memories or imaginings still circulating in various forms and crystallized in populist and reactionary political activism.[58] In looking for ways to defuse cultural and ethnic conflict (Dirlik, 1997), better understandings of the play of representation may assist some new approach to the apparent non-negotiables within cultural collisions. If the invisible can be made visible, instances of resistance and subversion may become more effective for critical interventions

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[57] Yeatman distinguishes between, in academic discourse, advocacy as a 'speaking for' as an accountable practice that works toward the opening up of public spaces for self-representation, and self-advocacy, a form of appropriation revealed as a form of "the Imperial project of self-aggrandizement through appropriation of the identity of others" (Yeatman, 1993: 242).

[58] In Australia, this has been exemplified by the emergence of Hansonism and the One Nation Party, and the ease with which racist imaginings have been co-opted in the incarceration of Middle Eastern boat refugees, including children, in remote, harsh holding camps.

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and an emancipatory politics, and, with the necessary good will, appropriate policies and ethical practices may follow.

In the study of visualities and visual culture, the contemporary, a temporal category of analysis, is a constitutively inter-disciplinary domain, but excursions into other areas also have validity as a heuristic strategy.[59] They can be a means of opening up possibilities, or for seeking commensurabilities, shared domains, and for recognizing differences, and incommensurabilities (Rorty, 1979), the exclusions, and gaps, and for investigating the boundaries and margins (Derrida, 1978/1967). In the seventies, a surge in critiques of received and mainstream knowledges and values intersected with discipline critiques and trans-disciplinary critiques.[60] In the eighties, feminist science philosophy (Keller, 1985; Harding, 1986; Haraway, 1988; Wajcman, 1991), examined the relations of knowledge and technology, and their role in the cultural biases inherent in what is termed knowledge, and disciplinary methodology governed by rationality and objectivity (Derrida, 1990; Rosaldo, 1989). This privileging of particular kinds of 'knowledge' over others has important implications for questions of communication and reception, and consequently, for how we interpret images across cultures. Though knowledge of non-Western cultural practice continues to be defined (and redefined) by anthropological and Eurocentric concerns (Geertz, 1983; Clifford, 1988; Rosaldo, 1989; Dirlik, 1997), this new wave of knowledge critique has led to a reconsideration of observation and translation practices, and a revaluation of introspection and subjectivity.

This inquiry into the visual representation of bodies branches out into questions of knowledge, including as it were, what an image 'knows', that is, what is instigated by both general and specific aspects of its form and presence in order to create some desired impact on viewers. Western art cultures, though offering

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[59] Disciplinary divides such as those of fine art, anthropology, and even archaeology, reflect different values and methodologies as well as institutional and professional investments; they also demonstrate the significance of Western intellectual categorization in relation to visual and material culture. It may be important to work within established agendas, and issues of expertise and specialized knowledge are obviously a pertinent concern in intellectual work (Spivak, 1993), but crossings into other disciplines are crucial for reassessing and invigorating knowledge, particularly where aesthetics, social function, and history are involved.

[60] See, for critiques of knowledge, Curtis (1970), Papeneck (1972), Tenhouten and Kaplan (1973). See discipline critiques by Kuhn (1962), Derrida (1978/1967), Rorty (1979), Mendelsohn and Elkana (1981), Geertz (1983), Clifford (1988), Heywood (1997). For key writings influential for trans-disciplinary thinking, see Derrida (1978/1967), Foucault (1980/1973), Deleuze & Guattari (1987/1980), and Haraway (1990).

rich and diverse critiques and explorations of imagemaking and media practices, have been subject to ongoing moral judgment, much of it functioning to render art invalid in some way, or to discount it as a critical practice (Heywood, 1997). Yet, this is a realm that would appear to have its own specialized knowledges about the visual, about representation, and about enactments of sight. Art includes practices that focus on and critique mainstream body representation and presentation (Lippard, 1976; Goldberg, 1979; Marsh, 1993; Warr & Jones, 2000) and much art is intentionally exploratory, experimental, and reflective (Williams, 1989; Ross, 1989; Benjamin, 1991; Heywood, 1997). It is also a field that pursues knowledges different from those of mainstream society and from science - emotional, aesthetic, political, expressive, subjective, experiential knowings (Benjamin, 1991; Heywood, 1997).

Consideration of meaning in the visual realm, in relation to what the imagemaker has manifested, and what the viewer sees, invites engagement with questions of perceptual operations and body-mind processes such as seeing/recognition/ decoding/response, and their effects on the cognitive, as well as philosophical, ethical, and political determinations of subjectivity. Within the sciences however, there appears to be an increasingly entrenched stance of positivism. While science is formidable in terms of its applications, its acting on and transforming the natural world, it would appear to be limited by its mechanistic grounding when it comes to matters of reflective and formative experience (Bruner, 1990). Mainstream science, carefully distancing itself from what it disdains as pseudo-science, attacks what it deems to be obscurantism and anti-intellectual intuitionism, including the 'anti-science' of postmodern theory, while mounting an ever-increasingly nuanced account of the objective. Yet from a humanities' perspective, science's claims of objectivity place it within a somewhat naively empirical realm.

Engagement with scientific findings about stimulation and response, or information processing, may appear to converge with these positivist approaches. There are many different areas of science though, including critical strands such as science philosophy and cultural psychology. These have developed oppositionally to behaviouralism and to the computational focus of psychological domains now largely subsumed by information and cognitive

processing, with "mind equated to program" (Bruner, 1990: 8).[61] Many of these critical theorists characteristically attempt to implement paradigm shifts that acknowledge non-Western cultural practices and forms of knowing. Neurological findings from physiology and psychology for instance would appear to have much to offer in considering the relations between sensation, perception, cognition, consciousness and subjectivity.[62] Yet, as Richard Rorty (1979) argues, epistemological revisions, or legitimations may not be appropriate endeavours in view of the incommensurabilities involved in considering contemporary experience, or different disciplines. Rather than definitive proof of a new knowledge (selected from a field of often contradictory findings), scientific studies already filtered through critical perspectives, are considered in this thesis in the propositional mode, 'as if' and 'what if'.[63]

Methods and Parameters

In this study, the method of approach is largely that of inter-discursive argument and observation, one that moves backwards and forwards over theoretical positions on visuality, imaging and ideas of knowledge to critically explore images of bodies, making connections and interweaving narratives from various

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[61] For an accessible example of this focus, and internal debates, see Penrose's (1990) supposedly anti-artificial-intelligence thesis in which he argues that consciousness is a crucial element in higher innovative thought, and that the mind is not an algorithmic entity. This argument is framed entirely in relation to physics and mathematical concepts that are postulated as the experiential interface inherently absent in machine computers, with maths and physics theorizing, and even insight, forwarded as evidence of human relatedness to a higher order of existence and thinking beyond the realm of computers. In this science terrain, embodiment is not even mentioned, not even when Penrose qualifies this computer-mind, describing it as "more like a computer that is ever-changing" (Penrose, 1990: 566). Exploration of the flexible mind is restricted to a discussion of synapse activity perhaps governed, he suggests, by processes similar to crystal growth.

[62] The mechanistic theories of the brain dominating the Cold War period eclipsed earlier psychological studies relating sensation and perception to cognition and to consciousness See Boring, 1977/42 for an account of these early psychological studies. In turn, mechanistic theories lost ground in the face of the persistent appearance of emotion, irrationality, chance, and mental conditions such as intentionality (Bruner, 1979: 171-177). An immense trajectory of earlier research in this area, that has been documented by Bruner (1947), was consequently recognized as having implications for the notion of the constructed nature of perception and cognition. A new wave of human-centered neurological studies developed over the 1960s and 1970s. See for instance, Gregory (1966), Segall, Campbell & Herskovits (1966), Luria (1968) and Ornstein (1973). These human-centered studies eventually stalled in the face of the rise of AI agendas and cybernetics. See, in relation to this, Hayles' (1999) detailed history of developments from the 1950s onwards and her critique of cybernetic narratives and 'informatic' values.

[63] See Elkins (2003), particularly 'The Case of the Ghost of C.P. Snow: Taking Science seriously' for an argument on the importance of vision and cognition science for visual studies. Elkin warns against the use of popular, elementary or rudimentary science (and, I would add, inaccurate, misleading concepts given such thoroughly fallacious statements as "the eye is a camera") for an understanding of complex processes called sight. Elkins, critical of the art discussions in studies that attempt to bridge science and art, recommends engaging directly with scientific papers, the use of vision résumés and abstracts for fast tracking into science research, and institutional encouragement of cross disciplinary studies.

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domains ranging from film theory and advertising to neuropsychology and anthropology. While this approach might look at times like some random bricolage or theoretical pastiche, it reflects a sustained, though far from comprehensive, interrogation of theoretical discourses in relation to the visual and their apparent tensions and contradictions. The arguments within the larger systematic structure of the thesis are supported by a wide variety of visual material, from newspaper and magazine photographs, television programs, films and calendar images, to art works and scientific materials. These visual materials, though not taxonomically or systematically presented, have been selected for various reasons; some have been central in some way for image practice, or have been significant sites of cultural contestation; some evidence a particular argument; and some images illustrate specific developments in social practice and visual culture. The breadth and diversity of images also constitute a register of the contemporary experience of very different kinds of images and image cultures (Elkins, 2003), and their differences in form, function, and reception.

Angela McRobbie has described this broad multifaceted approach, as one in which, "Instead of seeking direct causal links or chains, the emphasis is placed on establishing loose sets of relations, capillary actions and movement, spilling out among and between different fields: work and leisure, fact and fiction, fantasy and reality, individual and social experience" (McRobbie, 1984:142). Its approach is mindful of Heidegger's notion of a 'revealing' or unconcealment of being (Heidegger, 1993/1953), not toward any endgame of asserting an essence or truth in regard to images of the body, or embodied cultural practice, but toward re-articulating the nexus between belief and ideology, and some of the functions of images in the postmodern, postcolonial present.

In looking at different image cultures in the disjunctive spaces of postmodernity and globalization, there would appear to be a wide spectrum of practices to do with image making and image using, particularly if one looks at communities and societies that were or still are at a distance from globalized mainstream media and imaging practices. Some societies appear to have no cultural production that might be identified as imagemaking. For instance, the Semang and the Senoi, related Malay aboriginal peoples, have had no art culture, and no pottery,

metalwork, or weaving.[64] On the other hand, the cultural activity of many other societies rivals the full blown specular culture of the West. Many representational practices and graphic systems do not correspond to seen appearances (see Morphy, 1989), or are often difficult to recognize or decipher as symbolic cultural forms (Ucko, 1977). A broader cultural perspective that seeks to engage with different kinds of knowledges and values requires an acknowledgment of different social functions beyond some general contrasting of say, the conceptual sacred nature of tribal Aboriginal 'art' with the "profane" secularism of the West's visual culture.

Much variation, or multiplicity even happens within cultures, and in the broader cultural arena, 'visual representation' cannot be confined to pictures though or the production of permanent material objects. Though picturing remains the central focus of this thesis, in order to prevent the exclusion of certain cultures, or some sense that subaltern cultures are 'silent', I have expanded the idea of body portrayal to include the body's visual *presentation*. Even the Semang-Semoi, were, early in the c20th, making barkcloth clothing and putting porcupine quills through their noses, and later they were painting their faces and adorning their bodies in prescribed ways. In performance and ritual, painted, tattooed and scarified bodies, or bodies transformed or displayed in some way, are all obvious (re)presentations that intersect with body images and actuality. Conventional or everyday practice is still relevant here since though naturalized to some degree, body presentation is a staged and culturally considered event.[65]

Most attempts to write about and across cultures will encounter the presence of a Eurocentric hierarchy of representation. Some cultures particularly attract designations of 'primitive' or 'developing' as if they exist on some earlier evolutionary rung (Fabian, 1983).[66] Or they may be discounted as minor, as subcultures of some kind. Or be seen as not relevant to discussions of globalism

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[64] The Semang-Semoi are seen as sophisticated in other ways, and are renowned in anthropology for their non-violence, apparently believing it to be "distasteful and senseless" (Dentan, 1979), despite being continuously raided from the c14th to early c20th by other Malay groups seeking the Semang-Semoi as slaves.

[65] It is worth emphasizing also that 'non-visual/pictorial' cultures may have other practices that function in ways like more familiar practices, or that suggest profound cultural differences and histories. The Semang-Semoi for instance privilege their dreams, spending much time discussing them, and, as they also believe them to be another state of existence, they encourage lucid awareness within dreaming and suggest various strategies to overcome difficult or dangerous dream encounters, or to solicit help for problems in their awake lives.

[66] See Appadurai (1992) for a detailed exposition of this term and its functioning as containment.

or the play of postmodern culture. The challenge is to render the subjugatory tendency of a Eurocentric, teleological hierarchy visible as an historically evolved cultural habit of 'seeing', and to recognize ideologically enforced asymmetries to do with the value of particular cultures. All existent cultures and subaltern groups have to be placed in 'the now' within a strategic leveling of an otherwise vertically ordered historical-cultural formulation. This is a formidable, and perhaps even unrealizable demand since any enlargement of the cultural landscape can only reflect theoretical constructs of a kind that, as Gayatri Spivak reminds us, still serve to "keep Euroamerican centrism intact" (1989b: 28). Nevertheless, it is a demand that can operate as a guiding principle to affirm and consciously generate re-writings and revisions that could make a difference in terms of cultural politics.

Attempts to go beyond global events or Western constructs move out of familiar zones already encoded to some degree as Western and push at the very boundaries and margins of knowledge and what is valued. As John Welchman observes: "No longer a mere threshold or instrument of demarcation, the border is a crucial zone through which contemporary (political, social, cultural) formations negotiate with received knowledge and reconstitute the 'horizon' of discursive identity" (Welchman, 1995: 163). What counts as knowledge or truth reveals much about the importance and preservation of particular beliefs in any production of self and other. Demarcations such as normal and abnormal, worthy or worthless, pure and polluted, real and shadow, are grounded in authorized kinds of knowledge culturally maintained.

This thesis does not offer a taxonomic system or an analysis of cultural production or the creative economy in which locations of power and meaning and cultural belief systems are clearly observable. Rather, it raises questions of translation, value and authority, for, as Barthes and Derrida have shown, all interpretations and writings are new productions shaped and filtered through a broad welter of discourses, and experiences. Interpretation is advocated here as a provisional kind of positioned engagement with an elusive subject not amenable to completeness, or any certain knowing.[67]

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[67] Rorty explains this type of interpretation as falling into the "hermeneutic circle" – the fact that we cannot understand the parts of a strange culture, practice, theory, language, or whatever, until we know something about how the whole thing works, whereas we cannot get a grasp on how the whole works until we have some understanding of its parts"(Rorty, 1979: 319). He observes that this idea of interpretation "suggests that coming to understand is more like getting to know a

Outline of the Thesis

Chapter one outlines developments and interactions of culture, globalization, and representation in relation to understandings of specularity and antiocularity and the affectivity of images. The title of this first chapter is intended as a gesture toward Platonic antivisualism. Conceptualization of images as shadows, illusions or deceptions in contrast to the pure truth of thought is a denial of processes in which mentally produced 'images' are enlisted in thinking. In the theatre of the real world, *all* images are fabricated, mental images included, and even, in various ways, that imaging we call sight. Anthropologists have already called for a review of linguistic models, and in keeping with this less than "muted countercurrent to the linguistic analogy" (O'Hanlon, 1995: 1), this chapter argues that images, beyond the 'meaning' one makes of them, also produce affective experiences in their viewers.[68] And, opposing proposals of the general meaningless and the harmless pleasures and deliriums produced by postmodern imagescapes, it argues that images matter. Eurocentric ideas of body and dominant representational traditions efface the heterogeneity of cultural practice and culturally defined bodies. The broad array of body images presented here operate as sites of cultural contestation and show some of the conflicts at work in public visual cultures.

In chapter two I engage with theory's oscillations between effacement or denunciation of the visual and its obsessive fascination with the power of the visual. I examine how three theorists, Edward Said, Jean Baudrillard, and John Berger, privilege certain enactments and kinds of intellectual power. Said's thesis on Orientalism for instance, is shown to demonstrate some of the ways the authority of writing denies images a theoretical presence and blocks out consideration of empirical influence, behaviour and practice. Baudrillard's nihilist narratives are explored in relation to the proposition that the reproduction of illusion has evolved to the point where the real no longer exists (Baudrillard, 1983), a proposition that suggests certain metaphysical anxieties.

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person than like following a demonstration" and explores the idea of getting to know culture as a conversation with strangers (ibid.).

[68] See O'Hanlon (1995) for a survey of the arguments against the appropriateness of linguistic models in relation to objects, dress, design, images, and art, and also for his investigations into a broad array of meaning, including word-like properties, within one particular category of object (New Guinea Highland battle shields), before and after the arrival of literacy and modernity.

Berger's (1972) *Ways of Seeing* is revisited to show how authoritative positioning can serve as a substitute for accurate rigorous scholarship and inquiry.

Drawing on Jacques Derrida's perusals of relations between reflections and the reflected, I try to show how certain seeings that judge the morality of the image, or utilize the visual only for political or illustrative purposes, create an impasse in theorizing the visual. I argue for instance, that Berger's thesis is itself a play on deception and persuasion that profoundly problematizes truth and interpretation. Though Berger demonstrates the power of a contextualizing authority, it is ultimately, the authority of voice over image. Berger's revelations on the way the visual colludes with the interests of the powerful to mask social injustice are so persuasive, that even though he explicitly warns that he has been selective and has manipulated his material, he forecloses any possibility for understanding imagery's capacity *as* critique. His contests of authority are discussed in relation to Derrida's exposition of the struggle between different kinds of textual authority and the notion of truth (Derrida, 1990/1967, 1972, 1987/1978).

In chapter three, I examine the ascendancy of objectivity and ideality in relation to the Cartesian mind-body divide, rationalist discourse, and to notions of a universal seeing and naturalistic imagery. This is linked to the conventions of portrayal in contemporary media images of athletes, and popular aspirations for the look of actual bodies. The actualization of the ideal classical body reflects a mastery of mind and spirit over flesh and converges with the imaginative power of the Cartesian model with its fantasy of a mind in control, but a mind alienated from living bodies; its idealism expressed in terms of distancing and containment.

Subjectivity is discussed here in relation to the contests between behavioural response and introspection, between the Weberian notion of science versus enchantment, oppositions of reason to emotion and feeling, control verses chaos, and civilization confronting savagery. It is still the concept of a *fused* mind and body, implicit in Freud's recognition of psychosomatic conditions (Breuer & Freud, 1956/1895, as noted by Grosz, 1994), that appears as a pivotal site for continuing examination in critical and visual studies research.

Neurological findings from physiology and psychology would appear to have much to offer about considering the relations between sensation, perception, cognition, consciousness, and subjectivity. When mechanistic theories of the brain dominating the Cold War lost ground in the face of the persistent appearance of emotion, irrationality, chance, and mentalist conditions such as intentionality (Bruner, 1979: 171-177), a new wave of human-centered neurological studies began in the 1960s and 1970s. These had enormous implications for the enculturation and the contingency of subjectivity before being displaced by cybernetic-focused agendas.[69] The chapter puts forward one recent model from neuropsychology that challenges conventional mind-body binarization and fleshes out mind-body interdependencies in ways that connect to the broader fields of feeling and experience and that mentation called visualization.

Like Grosz (1994), Antonio Damasio (1995), describes mind-body processes as the interplay of manifold activities and reactions that cannot be subscribed to either mind or to body, let alone be brought together toward some psychological unity. Damasio offers a study of awareness, and his synthesis of experimental and medical findings on body states and sensations provides links to the production/creation of material images and new insights into intuition and expressive modes of art that have important implications for emerging studies on the culture of emotion. Even self-consciousness can be seen as an image production in its own right, one that is governed by embodied feeling as much as aware thought. Such accounts of an interactive, ongoing production of 'self' facilitate an examination of variation in sensory orders and visual productions and the notion of culturally constructed sight in later chapters where conceptualization, vision, images, response, and interpretation are located in a field of embodied intelligences, structures, and culturally differentiated systems of sense making.

Chapter four examines the constitution and interpretation of view and position with art's recognition of play of the gaze located within Édouard Manet's painting of *Olympia (1863)*. The complex interplay of looks in this painting is examined in terms of the socio-political influences on interpretations of the work. This chapter argues that art operates as a mode of knowledge and a critical

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[69] See Hayles (1999) for a history of these contestations.

practice different to, but not necessarily separate from those realms officially sanctioned as intellectual work, and needs to be re-examined for its specialized understandings of vision, representation and affectivity in relation to visuality.

In arguing for recognition of a critical tradition in art, the chapter outlines a history of artistic challenge to orthodoxy and to the photographic real, and explore the way avant-garde photographic practice breaks with the objective real. In considering arguments that the critical dimension of art is neutered by the appropriation of art as a commodity or a form of entertainment in late capitalism (Burger, 1984, Jameson, 1991), this chapter moves to where art intersects with queer culture. It looks at how art keeps re-inventing itself to stay ahead of commodification and how, as with the work of Yasumasa Morimura, it maintains a distance from mainstream practice, a difference that is marked by engagement with the mainstream. Morimura's staged photographs are seen to address the ways in which gender specific representations are informed by the politics of position in relation to the hegemony of Western culture and heterosexuality.

Rather than proposing art as a site of counter-resistance to globalism or the new Imperialist formations of economic and political forces, the chapter forwards art's multitude of practices as signifying a less than monolithic West. Moreover, it suggests that for all art's intersections with the arena of capitalist investment, that art is interdiscursive and heterogeneous, and an active and interactive domain that problematizes dominant representation practices, questions perceptual hierarchies, and offers possibilities for connection between cultures, and is an entry point into the recognition of incommensurability.

In chapter five, determinations of the visual as sight, look, or gaze, are scrutinized in relation to the adoption of the Western perspectival and illusionist tradition, and the argument that local cultures absorb imported ideas and continue to develop their own material cultures and visual practices. It specifically examines early c20th Shanghai advertising imagery used in New Year Calendars and the adaptation of the West's depiction of the modern woman. Certain conventions found here are shown to relate to both Chinese and Western fantasies regarding women that were developed in advertising and also the commercial domain of pornography. Since in many non-Western quarters

sexualized depictions of women are seen as disrespectful of women, or as an overt threat to moral order (Ahmed, 1992; Shayegan, 1992), such imagery is a highly charged site of contestation; the adoption of the industrialized pornographic image can be seen as a marker of modernization and Westernization. This chapter goes on to consider translations of this sexual body in relation to the genre of the Playboy nude as fabricated for the contemporary Asian consumer. These ritualized repertoires of 'soft porn' are compared to wider possibilities in body imaging evident in contemporary art practice, including body and performance art.

Chapter six examines the legacy of the West's modernist privileging of both sight and intellect as the determinants of knowledge, and explores the relation of visual images to some less acknowledged ways of knowing and ways of producing knowledge. In this section, I attempt to think culture beyond some of the constraints of dominant theoretical frameworks characterizing Western scholarship by employing anthropological and neuropsychological studies in questions about the constitution of normalcy, and in explorations of diversity in perception and meaning making.[70] While it might seem sensible to examine mainstream imaging or art practices as with other chapters, indigenous cultures offer a much clearer demonstration of the contingency at work in what is considered as knowledge, and as normality.

I particularly argue, following Constance Classen (1993) and Michael Taussig (1993), for the provisionality and historicity of sensory modalities of knowing, since "...the sensory basis of much of our vocabulary, and particularly of our intellectual vocabulary, indicates that we think through our senses" (Classen, 1993: 58); and further, that concepts and abstract thought operate through, or derive from, or are an extension of sensate/bodily experience. An early Canadian group of studies, (see Carpenter (1973, 1976), Ong (1969), McLuhan (1964), and Worth & Adair (1972) serve as the basis for what has been termed an 'anthropology of the senses' (Howes, 1991, Classen, 1993, Synnott, 1993) and have some correspondence with phenomenological projects.[71] Though these

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[70] Luria (1968), Marks (1978), Sacks (1985), Howes (1991), Smith (1994), Classen (1993), Cytowic (1994), and Damasio, (1995) have been particularly useful here.

[71] McLuhan (1962, 1964) drew on anthropological studies to argue for modern communications technologies' effects on sensory organization of thought. See too, Rivlin & Gravelle (1984), Howes (1991), Segall & Herskovits (1966), Deregowski (1972), Brotherwell (1976), Bellman &

cross-cultural studies lost much of their status in the face of anthropology's ethical uncertainties about the objectification of their subjects, and the Eurocentric bias and subjectivity of their methodology, these concerns appear to have facilitated a new kind of anthropological reflection suggestive for (re)thinking culture. Classen's research points to "how we process and organize sensory data" and "the sensory underpinnings of our culture" (ibid.). Her study, which assembles accounts and evidences for worlds of smell, including earlier European worlds as well as the sensory cosmologies of indigenous communities, reinstates the lived experience of embodied meanings forged within cultural life. "Sensory orders... are lived through one's own body...the Ongee breathe in theirs with every breath" (Classen, 1993: 137).

Within Western culture, the visual may be more differentiated, complex and uncharted than contemporary theory usually allows. Further, as Classen emphasizes, the sensory foundations of culture may not even be those of sight. This chapter includes an exploration of a suggestive tangent that brings sensation, visual aesthetics, and meaning together in the realm of liminal transformation, within the synaesthetic, haptic movements between surfaces, makings and energies.[72] The margins and blendings of sensory domains are particularly intriguing: the haptic visual, that imaging incorporating the experience of feeling, touch and kinetic sensation; the aural visual, with energized correspondences evoking sound and space; and linkages of sight, smell, and even taste.

My conclusion returns to the global consumer world that is speedily transforming even the most remote and isolated of surviving agrarian, nomadic, and hunting communities. The idea that 'images matter' is examined in relation to the neoliberalist promotion of free trade practices that appear to facilitate the expansion and dominance of transnational communications and cultural

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Jules-Rosette (1977), and Randahawa, & Coffman (1978). See Ross (1989: 115-134) for an extensive critique of McLuhan.

[72] The term "haptic sense" is commonly thought to derive from James J. Gibson, *The Senses Considered as a Perceptual System*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966, but it has a longer history. See earlier discussions of 'haptic' senses and imaging in Herbert Read, *Education Through Art*, London: Faber & Faber, 1956, (orig. pub. 1943) who on this, cites Victor Loewenfeld's (sic) proposal in *The Nature of Creative Activity* (London: no publisher cited, 1939, p. 90) of two different artistic extremes, with, as Lowenfeld explains in later writings, the 'haptic' operating as a feeling-subjective-participant type and the 'visual', more an observer, who "feels as a spectator" Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1964/1947: 260). In art writing, it is a common term iused in relation to expressionism. See for instance, Deleuze's (2004/1981) discussion of the haptic aspects in Francis Bacon's paintings.

industries, at the cost of local cultural practices and cultural diversity. The body image, as the locus of economies generated through desire, is discussed in view of the convergence of postfeminist embrace of sexualized images of women, and consumerist, corporate values, and in relation to proposals that local cultures are revitalized by Western media. This final section re-engages with Western representation practices and unregulated image flows in relation to how capitalist body portrayals that promote individualism affect the interweavings of cultural belief and practice, cultural identity, and difference. It returns to arguments about art practice as a counter-discourse that signifies a culture of dissent, and to the efficacy of politicizing 'the public' or mobilizing resistance to globalism through consumer culture, and how academic theory might better support cultural diversity and its different seeings, knowings, and engagements.

Chapter 1

Theatre of Shadows

Body portrayals are a particularly crucial, dynamic, and complex part of the contemporary environment in industrial cultures. They claim a fascinated audience whose interminable hunger for body images appears to confirm the validity of Lacan's configuration of desire and captivation.[1] Immersed in the vast sea of figurative imagery (fig. 1) that swamps the everyday in the service of entertainment, commerce, politics, science and art, spectators engage in unending replays of infant dramas involving possession, power and identification.

Such obsessive engagement with contemporary media appears to ratify Plato's description of those mesmerized by the shadowplay of images flickering in their cave of darkness. In Plato's denunciation of the senses, imagery is positioned as the distracting and morally vacuous mimicry of some ideal real.[2] In Western

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[1] Lacan's mirror-phase has been influential in theorizing the imaginary and subjectivity. See Grosz (1990) for a detailed study of Lacan's theorization of subjectivity set into a feminist body politics. Grosz includes an account of Lacan's development of the concept (Grosz, 1990: 15-16). See Lacan (1977) for his 1949 paper "The Mirror-Phase'. For an early positing of cinema as the quintessential apparatus of Lacanian identification, and an engagement, with its conditions of viewing "reproducing in a striking way the *mise-en-scène* of Plato's cave (prototypical set for all transcendence and the topographical model of idealism)", see Baudry, 1970 (in Jay, 1994: 475). See Shaviro (1993) for a detailed psychoanalytic exploration of the source of image fascination as evoked within cinema. Shaviro situates his discussion in relation to Benjamin and Deleuze's apprehensions of the sensorial nature of cinema and its technologies, and to physiological responses and reactions.

[2] Martin Jay (1994) argues that Plato's well-known association of sight and intelligence in *Timaeus* and *Phaedo* refers to the eye of the mind, an inner illumination. Plato's distrust of perception and of mimetic art and its power seem explicit within his cave analogy within *The Republic*. See Iris Murdoch's (1977) *The Fire and the Sun: Why Plato Banished the Artists* for a broad discussion of this. See Summers (1987) for an argument that while Plato distrusted the senses, his stand on the visual, in contrast to the other senses, was more ambivalent.

philosophical traditions, iconoclastic religious influences resist positivist predilections for seeing *as knowing*. From Plato to Lyotard, (Jay, 1994) the fascinations of visual experience are met by an intellectual discounting, usually on the basis of moral argument.[3] The experience of the visual is treated as 'other' to reason and thought.[4] In critical theory the Platonic opposition of the Idea to the visual, and to sensory experience and emotion, manifests as a profound distrust of the *persuasive* potential of images as with Horkheimer, Adorno, Debord, and Berger, or, from Lukács, Brecht, and Baudrillard, a denunciation of particular kinds of images. The condemnation of images (as decadent, degenerate, distracting, lacking in content or serious concern, indulgent, delusional, or cunning strategies of the ruling class), goes hand-in-hand with the demand for an ideological-aesthetic validation of the everyday image as much as the art image, a Lukácsian insistence on "a proper reflection of the world", an approved realism.[5] The form this realism should take though has been subject to legendary debate among Marxists themselves (Jameson, 1977).

With the word aligned to the reasoning intellect and to moral integrity, vision and the visual are consigned to the dark side of unreason and often demonized as the apparatus of oppression. Visual producers and imagemakers are designated unthinking, uncritical colluders with capitalism or dominant political ideologies (Horkheimer & Adorno 1973/1944; Berger, 1972).[6] Some images achieve

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[3] In *The Republic*, Book X, part 10, discussing the dramatic poet's tendency to maintain the recalcitrant elements in human nature, Plato says "Then we can fairly take the poet and set him beside the painter. He resembles him both because his works have a low degree of truth and because he appeals to a low element in the mind" (1968: 382).

[4] Martin Jay's comprehensive history of the centrality of vision in philosophy demonstrates the entrenched hostility to the primacy of the visual in contemporary French thought beginning with Freud's iconoclastic emphasis on linguistic analysis and verbal re-articulation, Sartre's relentless distrust of images and the gaze, Merleau-Ponty's suspicion of perception and Structuralist Marxism. Citing Althusser's insistence that most of humanity is "trapped in a hall of ideological mirrors" (Jay, 1994: 376), Jay posits Althusser as the bridge between Marx's insistence on lived bodily experience, and Lacan's emphasis on the Imaginary. Showing how philosophy implicitly "denigrates" vision, Jay exposes a dual movement of attraction and repulsion, an obsessive antiocularcentrism. Jay dismisses this turn as an attempt to re-instate language as a privileged realm, or to maintain a cultural hierarchy based on the rationality and the word (590). Yet focusing on the visual purely as illusion is nevertheless one way of controlling the more unruly disturbing effects of the experiential and its threat to the order of thought.

[5] Shaviro suggests that in film theory there is a tension between the desire to reproduce and a desire to keep distant from voyeuristic appeals. The theoretical paradigm of Metz "tends to equate passion, fascination, and enjoyment with mystification" (Shaviro, 1993: 913). Such theorization is largely a "phobic construct". He says "What is usually attacked is the emptiness and impotence of the image, its inability to support the articulations of discourse or to embody truth" (15), but what they really fear, he says, is the image's "weird fullness", its power (16).

[6] Image producers such as Leni Riefenstahl would appear to operate as an explicit confirmation of John Berger's (1972) argument that artists and imagemakers serve political oppression, or collude in capitalist seductions. In attempts to critique the society of the spectacle, images become

political validity for reasons that have little to do with 'proper' practice or politics. A frozen, distant image taken at Tiananmen Square in 1989 of a lone man facing off a column of tanks can manage to signify the bravery and resolution of a generation of young people who dared to desire freedom from authoritarian rule. Simultaneously, and prefigured in the unequal contrasts of the small isolated human figure and the hulk of the tank, the image evokes the brutal massacre of students soon after this confrontation. In this context, the apparent vanquishing of brute force is seen as an illusion, but one evoking and projecting totalitarianism through the form of a powerful inhuman killing machine, making it instantly "graspable" as a force that can at any time, mow down the singular mortal being who stands in its way.[7]

The image practice leading to the documentation of events unfolding around Tiananmen Square in 1989 is a particularly modern development facilitated by the ease of photographic technologies (a shadow technology that records light and dark, and, maybe, prismatic colour).[8] As a form of report, photographs are no more truthful or distrustful than any other kinds of witness accounts. All experience and exteriorizations of experience whether speech, writing or image are subject to different points of view, reconstruction, interpretation and appropriation; whether reflections or projections, they are vulnerable to misuse and deception. Susan Sontag, in an essay on photography and war, points out that even if such images in the end are mere tokens of reality or superficial in some form, or lacking fact or information, they form a vast repository of images that should rightly haunt us. "Photographs can't do the moral and intellectual work for us. But they can start us on our way" (Sontag, 2002: 273).

synonymous with propaganda and persuasion alongside a general condemnation of capitalist image industries. These arguments though might equally invite some consideration of Marxist concepts of alienated labour in relation to visual production such as in Benjamin's (1982/1966) address to image producers (written in the 1930s but not published until the 1960s) which re-emphasizes the need for producer-makers' ownership and control of their means of production.

[7] Some of these associations are likely to be lost in time as knowledge of the actual event fades, yet the image itself, as an iconic image with strong narrative and structural elements, may survive to take on new meanings in relation to new histories. See Chow for reflections on the Tiananmen Square massacre and the event's functioning as representative of a certain China. Although she does not discuss the massacre's documentation or photography per se, much of what she says in relation to Chen Kaige's films and writing is in relation to Heidegger's concept of technology as a process of revealing, and a mode of knowing is applicable to this image including her observation that "Central to the power – indeed the violence – of writing is its ability to repeat itself" (Chow, 1995: 122).

[8] For a study of documentary practices in image making, pre-photography, see Gombrich (1968/1960), particularly chapter II 'Truth and Stereotype'. See also Massironi (2000) chp. 7 "Seeing in Time' for an account of the development of visual documentary practices. For a comprehensive account of the production and function of images and use of the visual in the contemporary media, see Adatto (1993).

In this context she discusses a news photograph taken in Bejelina, Bosnia in 1992 by Ron Haviv (fig. 2) showing a young soldier about to kick a middle-aged motherly woman, already dead or injured, in the head to argue that war brutality must be faced in all its horrific casualness toward lives, and that the viewing of such shocking, disturbing images is a necessity. Sontag asserts that for all assertions of the 'death of reality' in the postmodern world, "…images have never been so powerful" (269).[9]

The authenticity or truth that is accorded to published or televised images may be questionable on a number of levels, including those of disinformation, silencing, and misrepresentation (Chomsky, 1988), but it is their supposed guarantee of reality that provokes productive intervention into situations of injustice or human suffering. The more recent images of tortured Iraqis at the Abu Ghraib jail for instance, produced such public outrage that it was impossible for the US government not to conduct an inquiry. Figs. 3 and 4 show some other instances of visual reportage that powerfully registered the impact of war on the most innocent of lives, images that evoked widespread anger and distress about those events, but the conflicts that produced those events and their associated casual murder, collateral damage and other atrocities still continue. The publication of such images may or may not result in political resolutions, and recently Australian newspapers appear to have stepped back from the more visceral kinds of disaster images. While this may reflect a political conservatism at work, the media's concerns tends to be framed in terms of reader/viewer aversion. It seems that most distressing images are those of human suffering that we can do nothing about, which then seems to result in a denial (deadening) of feeling response, particularly after repeated exposure.

There is also the bigger picture of being enrolled in a new world order where the expansionist tactics of capitalist media focus on 'the production of crisis', as a means of 'producing the consumer' (Mellancamp, 1997; Hardt & Negri, 2000). Fueled by media-induced anxieties and desires, the success of contemporary spectatorship as a global *activity*, if nothing else, gives credence to the idea that

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[9] Even French theorists appear to acknowledge this explicitly, at least in terms of power of the system. As Derrida recently put it, "There is nothing in the world, and certainly no political or economic power, which could avoid being dependent on the media. This is trivially obvious" (Derrida, in Patton & Smith, 2001: 45). Our political duty says Derrida, is to develop a critical culture of the media's spectrality. "We all see, so we have to know and to teach how the media fabricate artificially their objects, their information… the media (though) are also a democratic power" (45-46).

economic and political world systems facilitate a new form of decentered imperialism. Most visible as global consumer culture, this new world order, at its political extreme, is also manifest in spectacles of force. This is a deterritorialized imperialism, an empire without fixed boundaries, managing "hybrid identities, flexible hierarchies, and plural exchanges through modulating networks of command" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: xii). It is one challenged by its own limits, by incommensurable elements that resist any homogenization, and by counter-forces, old and new, that arise from "the plural multitude of productive, creative subjectivities of globalism" (60).

This chapter places a particular and contingent categorization of representation into the discursive and unstable, reterritorialized (Appadurai, quoted in Bell, 1999) context of different cultures, within what Hardt & Negri define as biopolitical production and among the contestations of theory and spectatorship.[10] Focusing on body portrayal as a site of cultural tension, it provides a critical exploration of the impact of globalization on different image cultures and visual industries.

When a Body Looks at a Body as Envisaged by another Body[11]
Image interfaces with actual events in real time, facilitated by contemporary communication technologies, might still be poised anywhere between fact and fiction. Yet, like more obviously constructed images, the faked or fantastic, with no claim to the real, they are opportunities for realizations about subjectivity, society, and interpretive processes. An image is an exchange of gazes. Looking through the camera at an event, place, thing, or person, is a situated looking. The recorded camera-image view, though it may well differ radically from what was actually seen, enables looking to extend beyond personal memory. It sets up an on-going ripple effect of reactions and responses. This already translated and mediated look, seen by others and used by others, enters into the imaginary. Each seeing, and every recall, involves a re-experiencing that further affects memory, understanding, expectation, belief and experience. Images do more

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[10] This is " the production of social life itself, in which the economic, the political, and the cultural increasingly overlap and invest one another" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: xiii).

[11] The Australian artist Peter Tyndall, since the early seventies, has focused on a similarly phrased set of relations under the title 'Someone Looks at Something'.

than convey meaning; they do not merely 'refer to', or 'index' an object world, or 'substitute for', or 'symbolize', but are perceived and felt through the body.[12]

Although the visual image exists in some form or energy separate from the viewer, the separation of thought, image and actual experience is not so clear-cut in psychic-embodied experience, or the discourses of the social world. Image, sensory experience, emotion, understanding, and body are all interlocked in the theatre of shadows that serves as the real. Actual bodies, concepts of bodies, and images of bodies are not the same thing, but they intersect in the way we think about them or look at them.

Body images are particularly potent phenomenon. A picture of a body, whatever its associations or pleasures, is normally a compelling sight among the vast array of images in the contemporary world. And, given the plethora of body images in industrialized societies, the demand for such pictures seems inexhaustible. Body images can still be riveting even when the image is only vaguely defined or barely recognizable, or glimpsed momentarily. And looking at pictures of bodies affects viewers however those effects may be experienced, and whether resulting in any reactive behaviour or awareness (Williams, 1995, Damasio, 1995, 2003). We probably respond no matter whether that looking enters our consciousness or not, or whether we are looking at the illusionist images of Western hyper-technologies, or some more generic, abstracted suggestion of human form.

Histories of visuality negate any proposition of a pure picturing of the body. All imaging is unavoidably selective and ideologically in the sense that each image is constructed in relation to existing images within a particular culture or sub-culture, whether the culture of 'high art' or some sub-culture of 'animes'. Thus, any imagemaker engages with norms of body appearance, sexuality and even 'humanness'. The body image is commonly gendered, ag-ed, sized, racialized, and aestheticized. Generalized body portrayals, whether those featured in fashion magazines or classical art, are conceptual and ideological formations that endorse hegemonic ideas of normality, power, energy, beauty, perfection, and conversely, create negative aspects associated with otherness or abjection. Even

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[12] The term illusionist imagery describes images that are persuasive or believable, a created "apparition of virtual objects" (Langer, 1957: 29) usually on the level of creating the effect of a seen experience. Expressive and aesthetic images are those which evoke feelings and sensations within the body, and all images as sensory objects have this capacity. See also Rees' (1977) discussion of cinematic illusion.

medical images of bodies, ostensibly objective and biologically focused, have metaphorical dimensions and a history of political and ideological representation (Stafford, 1993), some of which relates to the nude tradition in Western art, and to traditions of public spectacle.[13] When a particular human body is portrayed, viewers are cued to interpret it through social, historical, or individual identifications; for such cues to function, all such portrayals remain subordinate to the norm.

An image may seem to be 'about' body, whether specific individuated bodies or some generalized sense of body. The degree of referentiality though can vary enormously; an image may represent an aspect commonly associated with body, such as gender, sexuality, health or beauty, or to claim to be a trace of a real body, or to reference the real. The ideal body aesthetic or its shape encodes core cultural values (Suleiman, 1985); in the West, this ideal is homogenized and reified by the media, by advertising, and by the beauty industries (Bordo, 1993).

In that image cultures are hugely varied, and that artists produce image-objects-events as well as pictures that are made 'just for looking', the concept of imaging the body needs also to embrace objects, installations and performances of the body. There are also images that do not show bodies at all, but are still about bodies (see figs. 5-8).[14] Body can even be found as an overarching organizational concept reflected for instance in the hierarchical layout of a village that asserts the social body; and many religions refer to or even produce spiritual 'bodies' in ways that are not depictive as with Yolngu body marking for instance (Morphy, 1989, see chp. 6). The Catholic Church's use of the fish and communion wafer (as 'host') facilitates a multiplicity of meanings around consumption and spiritual embodiment, while metaphorical and energetic references to the body (or its absence) are central in art practice (see figs. 7-9).

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[13] See Clark (1960/56) for an orthodox humanist account of the nude tradition in art, and Berger, (1972) for Marxist perspectives on the nude and the European art tradition. See Leppert (1996) 'Body Examination, part 3, for a study on the intersections of the male/public gaze, the erotic, and the punished body in c17th and c18th European anatomical representation.

[14] See for instance, Buckley (1991), Stafford (1993), and Zito (1994) who explore images in which the body is absent but still manifest or evoked in some way, even as energy. See Betterton (1996) for an extensive discussion of body absence in women's contemporary art in chp. 4 'Bodies in the Work: the aesthetics and politics of women's non-representational painting'. See too Warr & Jones (2000) particularly the section 'Absent Bodies'.

The Engaging Image

In the domain of Visual Studies, from Arnheim onwards, the visual image has been designated as a form of mentation, (Arnheim, 1954; Burgin, 1983; Dubois, 1994; Elkins, 2003), a type of thinking process, but not an alternative to the word (Leppart, 1996). The visual image can be related to a broad realm of mental experience, which includes planning, fantasy, dreaming, hallucinations, and what we call seeing. A vast range of thinking and communicative functions are particularly evident in the graphic language/writings articulated in the drawings of children, or in visual languages used in various professions from architecture to electronics and computing, and they also may be observed in the aesthetic, experiential, exploratory, and critical images of art practice (Gombrich, 1968/1964, Eisner, 1972, W. J. T. Mitchell, 1994, Massorini, 2002, Elkins, 2003). The image though is an object (or event), a concretized or manifested thing engaging physical energies and matter and stimulating the senses and emotions. Image-objects-events are *felt* and experienced rather than merely deciphered. The physical and aesthetic aspects of the image have an engaging power, and a mediating role to play, one that greatly influences meaning, to the point that the style of imaging may contradict the representational content. In this realm of effect, the imaging - the way an image is formed, framed, styled, composed or realized - is never neutral.

Image production takes place within a register of feeling and sensation that is commonly and without much differentiation, termed intuition. Derrida reminds us that throughout the history of philosophy "the authority of intuitive knowledge has not, never has been, simply the authority of vision, of seeing what is visible, as sensible or intelligible. It also involves *touching*, the assumed immediacy of contact" (Derrida, in Patton, 2001: 20). That, says Derrida has always been largely denied to seeing, even though as Heidegger pointed out, the word *intuitio* includes the gaze, looking and seeing. He reminds us that despite the enormous amount of literature on the 'touching eye', that in the contemporary period it is dismissed, with Husserl calling it "mere rhetoric", and determining it a non-serious metaphor.

What is seen in an image-object-event, what touches us, is constituted through bodily reactions (Damasio, 1995). Physical, even visceral, responses accompany the perceiving senses (Luria, 1968; Classen, 1993; Cytowic, 1994; Williams,

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1995) and work in conjunction with interpretative networks of associations that operate symbolically, metaphorically, ideologically, and emotionally, whether to reify the real, or to surrender to the fantastic. An image depicting bodies may be interpreted allegorically, politically, culturally, subjectively, depending on a play of contextual factors and the spectator's implicit knowledge and expectations, all infinitely variable. But reception is also embodied in some form.

This does not exclude the play of meaning or recognition. Body images may manifest powerful even disturbing notions of body, embodiment, or the physical activities of body, and such representations/evocations can be used as referents to invoke other discourses. Whether a body image functions as the key figure of a narrative scene or as a bit player, whether it is overt or incidental, depicted or recorded, a picture of a body may easily refer metaphorically to sites of meaning that are other than body, to other subjects and ideas, real and unreal. But the fundamental and invisible act of translation is what carries these notions and ideas. As all experienced artists know, meaning and affect lies not in *what* is depicted, but *how*.

Correspondence between a picture's (or sculpture's) meaning and its overt representation is rarely straightforward, and affect is often hard to bring to conscious awareness. (fig. 9) There is much that may well operate automatically on a cellular level in terms of the body image's arresting power, and meaning can be highly ambiguous, and unstable. Many images, content and form combined, lend themselves to layered meanings and a multiplicity of interpretations, which is something that art particularly exploits and explores, perhaps working 'against the grain or against 'habituated meaning.[15] Nor is the meaning-experience something the spectator 'controls' – an image is not merely a blank space for personal projection. What is even 'seen' in the first place is determined by various factors, biological, environmental, cultural and personal. Images are agents of effect, provoking imagination, and desire, through the

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[15] See Terry Smith's discussion with Derrida that points to two aspects of projection in art making that show the tension between artmaking and mainstream image practices. Derrida's idea of the 'subjectile' is that of the artist projecting projectiles against the subjectile, the underlying 'support', canvas, family, culture, institutions, to destroy the symbolic. Smith's notion of practices of projective self-construction involves an interplay that Smith calls the double senses of being driven and, at the same time, knowing one is driven, of being shaped and (also) constructing oneself" (in Patton, 2001: 32). This of course can take place as a personal enactment of power on the artist's part, without the image (or anything else an artist might do) being seen by anyone else.

stimulation of an infinite range of emotional responses and feelings that shape meaning-experience, prior to any considered articulation or coherent reflection on that experience.

In illusionist images that are constituted to match cultural expectations of sight, the conceptual and expressive construction of imaging is purposefully hidden. To portray a body is a powerful act that may insert itself into the social imaginary and beyond, in that it invites identificatory and performative engagements. It is also possible that an image seen is never truly forgotten (Luria, 1968). Following Mulvey (1975), illusionist portrayals often reformulate those furtive or accidental seeings of childhood, sometimes traumatic and sexually charged, to promote a voyeuristic looking, a staging of omnipotent power over others. Other mirror-like spectacles may elicit the obsessive, fascinated narcissistic gaze, so that these various gazes of desire oscillate between enactments of possession or identification. Many such illusions provoke visceral reaction and offer vicarious experience (Williams, 1995, Damasio, 1995, 2003).

Images manage to galvanize viewers but there are all kinds of differences in expectation, response, and interpretation. For instance, for some viewers, Annie Leibovitz's photograph (fig. 10) might be seen as an illustration - even a purposeful demonstration - of the way love can fuse with possession and avid dependency. The image, showing a naked John Lennon enfolding and kissing his wife, Yoko Ono, might be found fascinating for its rendering of emotional intimacy, or in Lennon's enactment of infant-like need, or because of its juxtapositions, with Yoko's black hair and clothing offsetting Lennon's pale, vulnerable nakedness, or in the way her relaxed composure contrasts with Lennon's curved intensity, or for its sensual yellow warmth. For other viewers though this photograph apparently functions as a provocation about race, and/or the impropriety of body display or it is seen as portraying sexual activity. This image has been circulating in Euro-American high art and in popular music circles since it was first published just after Lennon's death in 1980. When it appeared in 1996 on the front cover of *The West Magazine*, the weekend supplement of *The West Australian*, in support of an article discussing an exhibition of Leibovitz's work, it apparently provoked outrage. *The West Australian* claimed to have received hundreds of angry letters and phone calls denouncing the image for its display of a sex act, for its nudity, and for its

depiction of an inter-racial embrace. One journalist calculated that half the complaints were "ferocious in their racism", many protesting Lennon's "submission to a dominant Asian female".[16]

There may be various factors that helped ferment this reaction, but the image itself, no matter how culturally or politically significant in subject, is visually arresting.[17] While a tame 'pornography', its tight frame and viewpoint enroll us as colluding witness of John and Yoko's interplay, tensions, and foibles, rather the detached invisible observer. But just what is happening, and why, remains unclear. It transgresses boundaries of private-public, and refuses clear or conventional representations of 'relationship'. The image suggests something like an imbalance of passion and a play of control, but finally emotional relations remain elusive. The image teases with questions about the context of this moment, its before and after, its staging; and for many viewers, it evokes other images, other knowledges about this celebrated couple.[18]

In the controversy-focused spaces of the news media, it is sometimes difficult to judge whether a story is contrived or not. Here *The West Australian* would seem to have become embroiled in a show of racism and prudery, and used it as an opportunity to air community differences as to what is suitable for public dissemination. It responded to the complaints about the publication and content of this image with a two-page explanation, and included supportive correspondence from readers. Yet, the media has an active part to play in the staging and formulation, if not the creation, of such 'debates'.

The Melbourne Age made still more of this story, commenting on it as a follow-on to their own feature interview with Annie Leibovitz who was accompanying

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[16] Toohey, Paul, 'On the Offensive', *Good Weekend, The Melbourne Age*, September 14, 1996, p.36.

[17] By this I mean that the image not only stimulates our innate fascination for body images and faces, but compositionally it heightens that experience by bringing us right into the intimate space of the couple. For some European viewers there may be some particular appeal to do with ideas of Oriental difference too in the juxtaposition of Ono and Lennon. Barthes for instance, meditating on Japanese faces in *Empire of Signs* suggests that the French/Western perception of a Japanese person is a perception without a code (Barthes, 1982/1970: 95), undifferentiated, and therefore reduced to a singular type linked to what he considers lamentable and anachronistic media/film representations. Perceived as "without moral hierarchy", this lack of differentiation of type may equally, says Barthes, give the effect of the Japanese face being "entirely alive, vivid" (102).

[18] For those aware that the image was taken only hours before Lennon's murder, there are likely to be additional readings and responses.

her travelling exhibition of celebrity photographs.[19] Their writer, in a bit of inter-city one-upmanship, suggested that, since there had been no protests elsewhere, West Australians might be less culturally sophisticated than Melbournians. However, the actual feature article mentioned that Leibovitz was concerned about possible censorship of some of her works, and that, before the Australian exhibition, a photograph of the artist Keith Haring had been omitted in the catalogue printed for Japan given its restrictions on nude representation and display of pubic hair.[20] This photograph (fig. 11) shows Haring naked, but painted up like one of his paintings, posing monkey-like on top of a couch. Though his naked body threatens to morph into one of his paintings in the background, the photograph emphasizes his nudity within a novel game of realizations that move between processes of recognition, the camouflage of the figure, and references to the artist's work.

The Affectivity of Body Images

Even if, as Goodman (1978) and Freedberg (1989) argue, our fascination for representations of bodies is an offshoot or a substitute for looking at actual bodies, does something more or less, or different, take place in relation to looking at an image of a body, perhaps something related to its functioning in particular contexts, or even its repetitions? Marxist notions of agency aligned with Althusser's account of ideological or institutional "interpellation", or developed around Bourdieu's concept of habituated practices, or Foucault's analyses of discursive practices and the ways in which people collude in narrativizing and enculturating themselves, continue to affirm the idea that subjectification is achieved through various material signifying practices including those of visual representation. Personhood is a concept that implies its own *sense* of self, a self-knowledge or self-awareness, marked off from others, an attribute that is regarded as special, sophisticated, and superior, and distinguishes humans from all other creatures.[21] The body is where that self is located, but self

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[19] Scourfield, Stephen, 'Stars in her Eyes', *Good Weekend, The Melbourne Age*, September 14, 1996, pp. 31-36

[20] See Downs' (1990) analysis of nudity in Japanese image cultures and his discussion of Japanese censorship practices. Though Downs' observations are determined by a conservative Western taxonomy that measures degrees of nudity in relation to Western male desire, this happens to also co-incide in a number of ways with Japanese censorship laws. As these appear to apply more strictly to imported Western media, it is possible that the laws have been drafted in relation to the nature of the Western material, rather than local values and practices.

[21] Although Lacan (1977) proposes that mirror fascination (beyond the reflection being understood as not real), is a formative experience relating to separation and to entry into the symbolic, and exclusive to humans, I am not convinced. I recall for instance seeing a televised

extends beyond the body. The formation of self is seen to take place unconsciously through identificatory processes and networks of meaning that work toward self-recognition, a cultural contextualization that resides in a play of inclusion and exclusion.[22] Subjectivity is therefore a dynamic process produced through demarcations, the setting of boundaries and recognition of attributes. As a cultural formation, the self is considered vulnerable to various competing forces in modern society. Thus, there is an apparent tendency toward inbuilt conflict and a sense of disunity and incompleteness. In secular Western cultures struggling with a disintegrating cohesive unitary subjectivity, it is posed as a soulless self, dependent on culture and self-serving biological needs, with little moral dimension, and dependant on the media for the illusion of an autonomous self-actualizing identity.

In all of this, we can make visible some aspects, for bodies (whether the artist-imagemaker's or viewer's) image bodies. The image is not merely what it pictures; it is intentionally created by embodied agents. It is a material or sensory construction made for looking, and the body image has particular dimensions of engagement. Contemporary media clearly enlists or even stimulates desire for the like-image, of how one might be, and how one might be seen by others (Berger, 1972, Ewen, 1979) (fig. 12), and how one might act

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nature programme about a family of baboons living in an urban fringe rubbish dump. It presented a marvellous moral tale about the dangers of visual enchantment. Rather than the baboons losing interest at some point (Lacan argues that this happens once it is understood that the image is not a real creature), they were shown obsessively searching for, collecting, and fighting over broken pieces of mirror. They were shown as so entranced by the mirror reflection that they often failed to keep a proper lookout for enemies. Whether they comprehended that it was their own face reflected in the mirror is another matter. A recent television documentary 'Animal Intelligence: Socially Smart' showed a chimp using a mirror to examine parts of its body that it could not see (the subject was shown using the mirror to pick its teeth). A chimp knows the image is itself, but a monkey seems to see another monkey. Meanwhile zoos screen tapes to teach gorillas how to be good mothers, (Cincinnati Zoo) and pandas see panda-porn tapes (Bejing Zoo) to arouse/instruct them to mate. It would seem that with animals there are matters learnt/cultured as well as biologically preordained. In keeping with Haraway (1990), it would seem the animal-human split needs a critical re-think. The issue of animal 'intelligence' and awareness is a hugely contested issue, absolutely opposed by vast investments in terms of resources, economics, and by experimental practice in science, though it is also within and through science that this is being challenged.

[22] This relates to Lacan's 1936-1949 mirror evocation though his theorization appears culturally biased, anti-body, and experientially reductive in that it privileges the abstract mode of language. It also ignores human interactions. See Wright (1991) for an account of processes of separation, subjectivity and symbolization that incorporate the mother, interactive behaviour, and bodies in infant subjectivity and which thereby deprivileges both vision and the mirror. Wright's descriptions of identificatory processes follow the Winnicot British tradition of psychoanalysis that reflects psychological and empirical understandings of infant conceptual development. Lacan exemplifies what Derrida calls "*the greatest totality* - the concept of the epistémè and logocentric metaphysics - within which are produced ... all the Western methods of analysis, explication, reading, or interpretation" (1976:46). Lacan's mirrorstage is seen by Derrida as having "cracks that disrupt its smooth operation" (Jay 1994: 505).

upon others, by using various strategies of identification and enactment. 'Unlike' images tend to facilitate the projection of desire, while confirming differences and thus defining 'self' (fig. 13). Images of bodies operate variously as mirror, as mask or model, or as portrayals of others and of the 'other'; they can be generic or specific portrayals, operating as 'me', 'us' or 'them'; 'self', 'real', or 'actor'; faked or phantasmic; they may be of the past, the present, or future, or construed as timeless, distorted, or normal.

There may be further relations between lives and images that need further acknowledgment, for in the discourse of the lived everyday, pictures of bodies are sometimes discussed as if they were real bodies, real people (Freedberg, 1989). Even in theoretical textual analysis of images, states of mind, emotion, intention, or other subjective characteristics may be attributed to an image as if it was an actual person, producing his/her own representation.[23] George L. Hersey (1996) for instance, following John Berger's observations about the sexual play of high art images (but ignoring Berger's point that such images were made by men in accordance with male pleasures), argues that body images have influenced sexual selection. He asserts "That the goddess's gestures, all along, have really been acts of sexual self-presentation is even more forcefully implied when we compare the pose with the ads in today's skin mags" (Hersey, 1996: xiv).

Hersey's biodeterminist argument that "our race has been quietly bred, over the last twenty centuries, toward the body design we see in Venus Pudica/Mrs Graham and away from the hetaira" (xv) relies on a confounding of the real with the imagemaker's persuasive presentation.[24] This blurring of illusion and actuality in the imaginary is usually attributed to naive responses, or, as Freedberg (1989) observes, to supposedly more primitive states of mind, yet it is likely to be an

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[23] The fear of the 'evil eye' that occurs in so many societies seems to be an instance of the flip side of the compellingness and persuasiveness of the illusionist image.

[24] Hersey's biodeterminist thesis is an argument for a European evolution of bodily form. The argument is deeply flawed in that such an evolution of the ideal beauty would have required that only those whose appearance accorded with certain idealized images of art to have had progeny, or, at the very least, to have had more progeny than the plain, indifferent, ugly, or even differently attractive folk. His ideas are embedded in an unreflective rationalization of encultured male tastes and they have some correspondence with the theories of racial eugenics that he himself reviews in looking at discourses on sexual selection. Contradicting his own thesis, he provides critical accounts of the diversity of body canons in traditional art. His blind spot seems to be that he takes to an extreme the notion that images influence, and accepts recent studies linking sexual selection and bodily perfection entirely at 'face value'

outcome of the invisibleness of the image *as image*. The ordinary everyday nature of the photographic or recorded body image with its supposed relation to actual, corporeal bodies contributes to invisibility of imaging, thus their potential for social influence and authority is magnified.[25] Freeberg's (1989) documentation of numerous instances where the reality effect has overwhelmed viewers is a reminder that this tradition is one where effect takes precedence over artifice. It reflects the very conditions that govern visual illusions that occur within habituated sight, including, as Derrida emphasizes, the intelligibility and invisibility of the sun and its light as the source of the visible. Pointing to Merleau-Ponty's recognition that "invisibility is included within the experience of the visual" (Derrida, in Patton, 2001: 18), Derrida notes that "invisibility is the medium of the visual" (20). Merleau-Ponty observes that "The invisible is there without being an object: it is pure transcendence, without an ontic mask." (Merleau-Ponty, 1968: 229) The visibles, he says, are "centered on a nucleus of absence" (ibid.).[26]

While it might be only the most conservative theorists who treat imagery literally as an optical reflection, confounding the image-object with the experience of image as window or mirror, how does an effect of the real relate to semiology's determinations of body picturing as 'texts' to be read, or the notion of culture as discourse? Derrida's employment of the term 'text' for all kinds of signifying constructions was used as a means of deprivileging perception, and was also an important move in emphasizing the materiality of the written word (Jay, 1994). With the widespread adoption by theorists of the word 'text' and 'reading' in relation to image culture, however, the image 'as image' disappeared in an ironic turn that negates Derrida's deconstructionist strategy and his warnings about replacing one form of presence for another.[27] For all Derrida's insistence that perception and language and other forms of signification are intertwined, the dominant use of the term 'text' re-enforces linguistic ideas of communication and poses writing as the strata of all cultural forms and activities, and as the technology of the intellect. Its usage contributes to the occlusion of an enormous range of difference in material formation and in

[25] Painted or performed illusions, understood as fabrications, often encourage a more dialectical response to the real (Bryson, 1983, Leppart, 1996).

[26] Merleau-Ponty insists "this must not be understood in the sense of a contradiction - it must not be imagined that I add to the visible ...a non-visible" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968: 247).

[27] See Corner (1983) for a detailed discussion of the problems with the term 'text' in regard to media practice.

operational and conceptual practices. Linguistic models have been commonly promoted in representational discourse (Morley, 1980; Corner, 1983) and the analysis of visual images and media communications.[28] Yet how does the body know - think itself (Jackson, 1983; Gallop, 1988; Butler, 1993, Damasio, 1995) in relation to images rather than linguistic concepts? What indeed is the relationship of linguistics or language usage to visual mentation?

What particular images are said to mean by particular analysts have all too often been granted the status of objectivity, and an equal relevance to all humanity.[29] Rather than meaning being seen as a contingent, positioned interpretation, it becomes a matter of authority, or proper analysis. Barthes' rigorous "spectral" analysis in his 1964 in 'Rhetoric of the Image' (1977) for instance, identified three interrelated "messages" in the advertising image: the linguistic, the coded iconic (cultural, symbolic) message, and the uncoded iconic (literal, perceptual) messages. His intention was to counter ideas that images were a "rudimentary system compared to language", or were subject to weakness of meaning, or to some larger "richness" invalidating signification. Even so, he gestured toward the limits of meaning within the rationalist project of structuralist semiotics: "Now even - and above all if – the image is in a certain manner the *limit* of meaning, it permits the consideration of a veritable ontology of the process of signification. How does meaning get into an image? Where does it end? And if it ends, what is there beyond?" (Barthes, 1977: 32).

Examination of the visual image in purely ideological or significatory terms has now broadened to include consideration of reception, apparatus, and spectatorship, and in studies of visuality, technologies of seeing, and sensory regimes governing representation have re-established scholastic consideration of

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[28] Foucault's linguistic-centered process of "making everything speak" (Foucault, 1983/1970: 40) in a world which is a text, is not very useful or meaningful for experiential modes of cultural production or for active perceiving/knowings that constitute different worlds. All the same these modes might yet drawn together as part of multiple possibilities in sense making - if the primacy of language or vision can be set aside. See Mark Poster (1990) for an example of linguistic models used in the analysis of media. . In his *The Second Media Age* (1995) which focuses on the relation of mass cultures with media technologies, Poster relinquishes the linguistic model *and* textual analysis; instead, he examines modes of communication and the constitution of identity and enactment of power, that is, the social impact of media, and emphasizes the decentered subject, context and reception. He also discusses and critiques Baudrillard's shift from theorization of symbolic exchange in terms of codes and models, to a totality theory based on simulacra and stimulations.

[29] See Buckingham (1978: 243) who cites Raymond Williams, Berger, and Morley, among others, in regard to the universal determinism of psychoanalytic *Screen* analysis.

the object-image.[30] Not all aspects of their making or reception, multi-dimensional and energetic in character, are amenable to conscious analysis though. Studies that might help here from the physical sciences domain, including those of perceptual and cognitive psychology, and neuropsychology, remain largely ignored in the humanities in that they are seen as governed by the positivist frameworks of science. Grosz, criticizing the consequences of this traditional disciplinary divide in the study of the body, observes that "...despite the different governance of the humanities and sciences, they share a common refusal to acknowledge the distinctive complexities of organic bodies, the fact that bodies construct and in turn are constructed by an interior, a psychical and a signifying view-point, a consciousness or perspective" (Grosz, 1994: 8). It would seem that neither humanities or the sciences can afford to claim the high ground in relation to any 'truths' of the body and embodiment, but both domains have critical and heuristic possibilities. If we are truly realized through often-unknown limits, borders, and containments, the biological notion of self and its claims of unconscious imperatives may still need to be considered alongside philosophical or psycho-sociological narratives.[31]

Embracing the pre-eminence of interiority on which Grosz insists, may open up descriptions of the production and reception of visual images. This interiority though is not an interior self or a *hidden* self, engaging in the psychoanalytic notion of masquerade. This idea, while seeming to offer a way out of fixed and reductive positions of the divided self (Doane, 1982, Pulz, 1995), still implies that a true self resides behind a mask of external presentations or enactment. The self as a contingent entity, more process than product, is constituted through an environment of circumstance and context, and in keeping with the notion of 'making-do', is seen to be involved in negotiating the various situations found in everyday lives (De Certeau, 1984).

With the self understood as being neither fixed nor complete, interiority can itself be seen as a play of surface illusion. Judith Butler (1990) argues, in keeping

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[30] See for instance, Wartofsky (1981), Foster (1988), Crary (1984), Taussig (1992, 1993), Adler & Pointon (1993), Jay (1994), Jenks (1995), Chow (1995), Welchman (1995), Williams (1990, 1995), Lavani (1996), Clunas (1997), Kaplan (1997), Mirzoeff (1998), Garb (1998), Lury (1998), Nelson, (2000), Sturken & Cartright (2001), Greer, (2003).

[31] It would seem for instance that the self negotiating its priorities and activities - as narrated for instance in the biological developmental discourses on childhood – may be a universal formational process, however it is played out culturally.

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with contemporary neurological understandings (Damasio, 1995), that the self is a causal fiction created by a repeated stylization of the body. Butler supports the idea that the self and body can be changed by changing those culturally designated and repeated affirmations of a core natural self, but, like Grosz and Susan Bordo (1993), she expresses reservations about the supposed plasticity of the body and self, and also of conscious choice. Behaviour, sexuality, body reconstruction, consciousness and desire, may all have their limits.

The concept of seduction is frequently employed in critiques of advertising or cinematic experience. Seduction of the viewer is staged as a transgression against the will, or the higher Cartesian self-spirit, as the temptation of a body biologically and psychologically motivated to seek pleasure and avoid pain. The notion though suggests some pure pre-mediatized state on the part of the viewer, some authentic, uncorrupted, unengaged position, before he/she becomes subject to the inducements of the visual media and its efficacious impact on embodiment. Self-constitution is seen as being in tension between a sense of (or desire for) a unified self, and its own experience of a fractured, divided self, (Lacan, 1977); an experience heightened by the artificial accelerations of contemporary conditions including the everyday play of cultural dissonance.

Protesting Western Body Images

Capitalism's appropriation of the dreams of freedom or status through transformations of self (Berger, 1972) can be readily seen in the ubiquitous promise of media advertising, but it can also signify more sinister matters when bodies become its object of attention. The commodified body is purchasable, obtainable, malleable, and merely a matter of choice or style. This is a body you can reconstruct, mutate, technologize, transcend, and discard. More and more women and men seem to be opting to buy the implants and reassemblages of the 'Extreme Makeover' industry along with its appalling pain, health risks, and high mortality rate. Meanwhile the rural poor in isolated areas sell off their kidneys to pay debts.[32] And although body violations and murders being carried out to supply the transplant industry seem to be the stuff of urban legends, at

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[32] See Reuters report, Sharma, Gopal, 'Nepalese sell kidneys to beat poverty', *The Melbourne Age,* August 9, 2004, p. 10 which details the trade centered on areas of rural unemployment and reports that a donor receives $A930 for the kidney and that the recipient will pay around $A2500.

least one baby is known to have been saved from just such a fate.[33] Actual bodies

merge with representations of bodies to become commodities in their own

right.[34] With the controversial *Body Worlds* exhibitions now being staged in

various world centers, skinned plasticized corpses provide the ultimate viewing

experience of 'body' (fig. 14). The exhibition seems to operate, given the

coquettish pose of its pregnant woman and other 'artful poses, somewhere

between a waxworks horror show, a public anatomical dissection, and a grim

morality play. It is not its 'educational' claims that are of concern, (the

spectators seem very respectful, hardly a goulish rabble), so much as the big

money that is being made from dead bodies whose provenance is murky. Gunther

von Hagens seems to have made more than $189·million in the first couple of

years alone ($27.00 per entry, plus assorted merchandise sales).[35]

Disassociated from any philosophy or ethics of being, judicial processes based on

a human rights or ethical charter may be all that stands in the way of the

unsanctified, (dis)owned, and infinitely flexible body from being possessed, used,

abused, neglected, sold, abandoned or destroyed at will. Older conceptions of the

body as 'a temple of the spirit' may not ever have prevented atrocities being

carried out on people, but in post-industrial capitalism, protections and concerns

regarding the body tend to be defined more and more along the lines of

ownership or property rights. This is further exacerbated with developments in

genetic material and the possibility of cloning. On the near horizon, the genome

project promises configuration of the body at cellular levels, with

reconfiguration of existing bodies for those willing to pay whatever the cost, still

the golden dream. New narratives about bodies and their possibilities, alongside

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[33] In 2003, near Bari in Italy, the auction of a baby to be born was accidentally discovered by undercover police who were posing as drug runners in a sting operation. The baby's mother was a prostitute controlled by, or part of a Ukrainian all-female gang. The baby, believed destined for organ transplants, was handed over to the police agents, the highest bidders, for $A620,000. The police then began investigating the other bidders, and the possibility that the gang had sold other children and babies for the same purpose. The investigators claimed that some 3000 babies a year are sold either for adoption, or for illegal body parts (mainly livers, kidneys or corneas) to private clinics. These babies are believed to be largely derived from women enslaved into prostitution. For newspaper coverage of these events see Johnston, Bruce, 'Auction of baby forces Italy to ban organ sales', *The Melbourne Age*, May 19, 2003, p. 11 and Fray, Peter, 'How baby M escaped Europe's trade in humans', *The Melbourne Age*, May 24, 2003, p. 16.

[34] Several fiction films have presented stories on the body parts trade, including *Coma* (1978), and *The Donor*, (1997) which offers a critique on the nexus between the desire for perfect bodies, sexuality, success, advertising and the body parts trade. See Adrian Martin 'The Cruelest Cut', *Good Weekend, The Melbourne Age*, July 6, 2002, p. 46, for a discussion of *The Donor*, deadly women and castration anxiety in relation to Takashi Miike's 2002 *Audition*.

[35] Wilson, Peter, 'Artist's dead body of work a new take on still life', *The Weekend Australian*, March 23-24, 2002, p. 14.

reworkings of older myths and ideals, move toward a objectified and cybernetic conception of what it is to be human.

The present day focus on the body may seem to be an ironic turnabout in view of the West's historical negations of the body, but it also can be seen as merely an exuberant extension of the Cartesian concept of body *as matter*. In the capitalist milieu of individualist self-constitution, images of bodies operate as exemplars, a constant lexicon of appearances, behaviours, relatings, or ways or styles of living for the making of self. Images of the body are invariably used as markers of identity for and by the observing self; they not only provide opportunities to recognize who we are and who we are not; they also convey how we might or would like to be seen. They are images that are "... closely interwoven with modern patterns of survival and desire." from which "many of us draw the visual grammar of our lives" (Ewen, 1988: 20). This aspect of the visual, the staging of possibility and 'becoming', works through the imagination in ways that go beyond what might be called symbolic, metaphorical, or mythical.[36]

Despite claims that meaning is neutralized by the flux of images in the everyday (Baudrillard, 1983), or that cultural difference is merely a matter of manufactured difference within the commodification of life style (Jameson, 1991/1984), the idea that images of the body still appear to shape subjectivity through identificatory experiences warrants consideration. The considerable interplay between real life and film for instance becomes clear when Melbourne gangsters own that they model themselves on gangster films (as initiated by Griffiths' *Musketeers of Pig Alley*, 1912, or Wellman's *The Public Enemy*, 1931), and are particularly partial to characters in *The Godfather* series and *The Sopranos*. In Hong Kong and Japan, gangsters not only model themselves on characters from the 'gangster' genre of the Hong Kong film industry but influence the film industry's representations through kidnappings, blackmail, extortion, and coercion aimed at affecting such matters from who gets certain acting roles, to funding, development and style.[37]

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[36] See Kaplan's (1999) study of the utopian dream of a world without boundaries as visualized in European image traditions and in advertising, that includes Benetton's 'united world of difference', National Geographic's transnational representations, and the focus of her study, the Body Shop's 'anti-advertising' constructions of corporate world citizenship (Kaplan, 1999: 139).

[37] Smiers (2003) notes for instance that the Toei studios have connections with the Yamaguchi criminal syndicate and have produced hundreds of films glorifying the traditional 'morality' of

Media images emphasize 'types' of bodies in a limited repertoire of easily recognized characters in order to elicit attention, engagement and identification and as a means of establishing meaning often within microseconds. The result can be stereotypes, surface meaning and cultural clichés. To think of a body or to 'know' a body, let alone 'produce' one's own body or judge another's, means engaging internally with cultural predilection and imagined possibilities. Beyond dominant media representations, there are immense differences economically, spiritually, politically, historically, and personally, between peoples and their image cultures.

The present understanding in humanities disciplines that all meaning is the outcome of cultural value and negotiation works against any totalizing view of Westernization. Influential thinkers such as Foucault (1984) and De Certeau, (1984) have argued that in mediation there is room for resistance or escape from absolute determination. How images might be interpreted may not be particularly predictable or controllable, but the impact and translation of Western representation generally remains subject to interpretations grounded in prior local knowledge and values (Appadurai, 1990). The production of media is neither totally controlled by Western interests, nor sourced entirely from the West. India for instance, with 800 or so feature films annually, is easily the world's largest producer of films (Smiers, 2003).[38] Visual/media industries engaging with the Asia-Pacific are often structurally transnational, and culturally Westernized, reworking material and ideas from various sources for specific and local appeal (ibid.). Indeed, most communications networks in the Asia-Pacific offer a mixed, and sometimes hybrid cultural experience. The Japanese and Hong Kong advertisements that dominate the Asian region often appropriate and

gangsters, as well as films that are openly nationalistic and celebrate Japanese Imperialism. This of course can be seen as an example of a specialized niche market. *The Melbourne Age* in their 'World' column recently reported that Russian mobsters, dissatisfied with the way the underworld was depicted, shot their own show called *Spets*, and played their own roles. Based on a real crime, the programme is now being broadcast on Russian television (*The Melbourne Age*, July 22, 2004, p. 11).

[38] 'The West' is an over-generalized term, and one which Asian governments invariably use to identify the source of their social destabilization. While unproductive when deployed in causal explanations of power and intention, it is nonetheless a convenient term, and reflects the considerable commercial reach of multinational corporation headquarters based in the US and in Europe. The US is by far the world's top exporter of film (63% of all world film exports in 1999) and television programmes (67%) (Balnaves, 2001). In 2001, of the world's top 10 advertising agencies, three (Interpublic, Omnicom, Grey Advertising), with the greatest combined billings, had their headquarters in the US, two others (WPP, Cordiant) were based in London, and two (Publicis, Levallois-Peret) in France. Three Japanese companies (Dentsu, Hakuhodo, Asatsi-DK), had the second highest combined billings (Frith, 2003).

reconstruct Western conventions, style genres and interests with reference to the complex networks of local desires. Local cinema industries, whether Chinese, Japanese, Indian, or those of Hong Kong, Taiwan, or Korea, have shown themselves capable of "powerful reversals" (Shohat, 2003), disseminating their own translations including reworked stylized 'Asian' bodies (fig. 14), from routinely sweet and child-like geishas, tattooed yakuza, or triad gangsters, to more complex and diverse presentations[39]. And through the internationalizing of manga and Asian cinemas, negative stereotypes of Western bodies circulate in Asian markets and are in turn, exported to the West.[40]

Yet, for all the assertions of creative mediation of imported media images on the part of viewers, the very functions of Western technologies, their associated kind of knowledges and narratives, and their representational traditions, are often discordant and incompatible with local traditions and ways of life. We look at an image made in Asia, featuring "people of colour" identifiably Asian, purporting to be representative of Asia, yet relying entirely on Western techniques of representation. Adaptation and translation at the level of technology and image practice is not that evident. What happens to local meaning when it is embedded in Western ways of doing things or Western traditions of representation? As Western-style media spread through the world, local traditions are often confronted - and sometimes affronted - by the Western praxis of imaging bodies.[41] In many Australian aboriginal communities for

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[39] See Lyne (2002) for her study of the display of exoticized Asian women on bookcovers and other cultural sites (see Fig 15). Lyne makes the point that there is no distinction made in this continuing discursive ritual between Japanese, Chinese and South East Asian women. Tony Ayres, in his film *China Dolls* (1997), also shows a brief but memorable sequence of Asian male faces to emphasize difference, but it may be a strategy that may have a different effect with woman's faces. Where the men's faces are 'normal' but different, women's faces would be judged *in relation to* the exoticized ideal. Lyne shows how images of Asian women have been determined historically as 'dolls', as dehumanized, fetishized fantasy commodities. They maintain older racist and colonial positionings that she traces back to picture postcards once sold at world fairs. Now, because the geisha construction is so pervasive culturally and commercially, it is an image that is countered by the many Asian women who now are writing their own stories. Lyne notes that the consumer is often faced with dramatic contradictions between the lascivious covers and the prosaic stories within. See also Lewis (1995), Jolly (1997) for other studies on the "sexually saturated" (Jolly, 1997: 99) exotic construction of woman. See also Manderson (1997) who shows in her study of European films set in Thailand, the way such representational traditions merge not just the erotic and exotic, but also are symptomatic of what she describes as the "crude collapse of a vague geography and moral essentialism" into an illicit space, an "Asia" where normal civilized behaviour might be abandoned.

[40] The international success of these inversions in turn have provoked new 'Asian' genres produced in the West. Tarantino's 2004 *Kill Bill* takes up the popular female warrior role, but reinstates the European as hero.

[41] In the early 1990s, some 36% of all television programmes screened in the Asia-Pacific region were imported (Reeves, 1993:14), and imported television programmes comprised 47% of children's programming, (Balnaves, 2002), but with immense differences between countries. China

instance, there is a taboo on seeing images of deceased people which is met, or at least acknowledged in public media by the practice of placing warnings for aboriginal TV viewers on documentary material showing aboriginal people. Within the intensification of quests for cultural sovereignty or survival in the face of the rapid encroachments of Western consumer-culture, all manner of portrayals may be immensely provocative for local cultural values, while other body portrayals may go uncontested in that they implicitly seem to operate as invocations of a natural authority, self-evidential in nature, about how bodies are or meant to be.[42] The most dominant Western representations are those of the ideal contained body as defined by science; the body rampant, with its demonstration of what is perceived as excesses of Western sexuality; and the body as visual spectacle, parading such aspects as power, discipline or glamour. These potentially contentious displays are staged alongside an array of cultural, ethnic and racial stereotypes. At the same time there is a pervasive absence of real lives grounded in corporeal existence (figs. 15-16).

The ceaseless global flow of Western body images, whether those of print, television, video, or cinema, or those appearing on computer screens and in various digitized forms, suggest influence on an enormous scale is currently taking place, impacting on local image-making practices, and shaping thought, belief, and behaviour. Images may well act on the very realization of selves and also actual bodies given what Grosz describes as their "organic openness to cultural completion" (Grosz, 1994: ix).

The sheer volume and vast distribution of Western imaging (Smiers, 2003), along with its implicit and explicit claims of a better or even absolute authority and truth associated with Western technologies of seeing, would seem to mark

and Indian television for instance consisted largely of local productions until recently. In other countries where media was imported, the material was not necessarily Western. India and Hong Kong for instance are large exporters of media content within the region, but such media products are often based on Western conventions in form and style. In Vietnam, there are strict controls on foreign media imports. Multinational firms must have an alliance with a local firm, and all advertising, banned before 1990, must reflect the national language and culture (Frith, 2003). In Malaysia advertising must be made in Malaysia, and foreign words, slogans, clothing, activity and behaviour are not permitted. All Malaysian commercials are reviewed, and require a censor's certificate before being broadcast (ibid.).

[42] Few countries in the Asia-Pacific are as liberal as Australia, which tends toward the regulation of certain kinds of visual display, rather than censorship. Other countries usually have stricter controls though these are changing. Singapore censors, until recently, would cut sexual or violent scenes from films, but from July 1st 2004 censors, under instructions from the Media Development Authority, allow home viewing of much previously censored material under a new classification system. In 2003 Singapore lifted a 21-year ban on *Cosmopolitan* magazine, but pornography is still illegal.

out a new form of colonization by Western culture. The glamorous appeals of its imaging also make Western representations hard to resist. This is not just a matter of economic engagement and new kinds of dependencies, but one of extreme influences.

Despite wide recognition of the visualist regimes of Western contemporary experience (McLuhan, 1964; Debord, 1983/1967; Baudrillard, 1983; Poster, 1990; Jameson, 1991/1984, 1992; Guattari,, 1992, 1993), theory often seems to be paralyzed in terms of protesting cultural disappearances in the face of what appears to be the obvious benefits of modernization. Globalism as Westernism (Martin-Barbero, 1993; Nederveen, 1994) or the convergence of global culture with economic neocolonialism (Smiers, 2003), is often glossed over by the arguments of 'glocalization' (Robertson, 1995), that is, that globalism has a long history, that cultures are always changing, and that audiences re-negotiate and recuperate meaning for themselves. In Australia, political and environmental impacts and concerns on local and indigenous cultures in the Pacific region might be addressed in the media, but any discussion of what might be at stake culturally, tends to be neutralized by narratives of progress, or narrowed down to the importance of maintaining language traditions.[43] Theorists' own investments in equating education (often Western) with 'self-determination', their own embeddedness in Western culture, and their immersion in rationalism and language/intellectual values (Dirlik, 1997) are bound to play a play a part here. Such unacknowledged complicity meshes with the difficulties of critiquing the liberalist advocacy of the autonomy of the individual, especially when individualism is confounded with political freedoms, whether freedom of information, freedom of expression, or freedom of the imaginary.[44]

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[43] See Philpott (1995) for instance, for an uncritical progressivist account of the introduction of centralized computer networking and learning to villages throughout Papua New Guinea. The project is described as focusing on the writing of stories in local languages, but European images are used as the stimulus for these activities. See Spivak (2003) who argues for the need to address the uncritical education of rural aboriginal children and develop teaching strategies and curriculum at local levels.

[44] This is a dilemma centered on descriptions of the subject position. Such descriptions need to reflect the complexity and hybrid character of non-Western subject positions (Bhabha, 1990), and maintain an emancipatory potential (Poster, 1995), and yet this the risks underestimating the influence of the media, and its role in the constitution of subjectivity. See Dirlik (1997) on this problem in postcolonial theory. See Lucy for an extensive account of the "myth of the self-determined individual "whose apparent universalism obscures its dependency upon practices of exclusion and principles of hierarchical classification" developed in relation to photographic practices (Lucy, 1998: 1).

This lack of protest is of course further complicated by the ethical dilemmas of taking up a speaking position on behalf of others, so what develops is a vacuum rather than a discourse. Some libertarian arguments locate all regulatory moves within a sphere of 'moral panic', or, in support of the absolute freedom of the imagination, place visual representation outside the sphere of behavioural influence.[45] With the new touted always as progress and celebrated, cultural disappearances cannot be mourned without attracting the charge of being nostalgic or essentialist, or wanting to treat cultural practice as something fixed, to be collected for some museum archive. While there are protests against cultural loss and change at local, popular, and government levels (Mander, 1993; Castells, 1996; Smiers, 2003), intellectual acknowledgement of the violence of cultural loss and subsequent disempowerment tends to be subsumed by the idea that human rights issues improve due to 'modernization'. Developments in countries like the old Soviet Union, and today's North Korea, and China show that these are not incumbent on each other. Modernization as consumer/commodity culture has its own problems. Rapid change and constant cultural reformations are essential to the system of consumer capitalism with its need for product turnover and replacement and ongoing consumption.

For many cultures, the appearance of industrialized visual culture, produced elsewhere, heralds not adaptation, but the obliteration of local practices, forms, representations, beliefs and values, particularly where traditional visual culture is held in low esteem by ruling elites and left out of institutional and educational spheres. After embracing Western technologies and ways of making/presenting in the course of modernization, surviving local cultures come to be defined as folk culture (Smiers, 2003).[46]

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[45] See for instance Buckingham (1993), who argues that rather than being subject to television, children have a critical, discriminating understanding of television programmes. His research is based on small group interviews and discussions, and he warns against taking what is said at face value when discussing other research. Yet he accepts his own subjects' commentary without any critical evaluation of the gap between behaviour and what is said (let alone taking into account the conditions of the interview, or the need to please the interviewer by saying the 'right' thing, or convey what subjects know is the 'correct' attitude).

[46] See 'Introduction' in Narremore and Brantlinger (1991) for a useful but still limited discussion of six contemporary art cultures designated according to different art practices, functions, values audiences and expectations. The categories of high art, modernist art, avant-garde art, mass art popular art, and folk art are traditional elite-popular class based oppositions, deriving from earlier Marxist theorization, and thus are open to criticism. Narremore and Brantlinger confound the entertainment industry with art, commerce with fine art, and dismiss folk art entirely as lacking authenticity. Also, when mass entertainment is called mass art, the word 'art' begins to lose any particularity of meaning, since the masses' role is generally that of consumption not production. There may well be a mass cultural industry, where mass exposure to advertisements, products, films, television programmes, computer games, images, even ideas, can be assumed, but what

Form and practice ground cultural signification. It is unlikely that meaning and function slip from one activity to another kind of practice radically different in form and technology, with all that involves for genre and representation, without losing that which made it culturally distinctive in the first place, and that includes its richness and complexity. New forms may well be used for older purposes, or in entirely new ways, or for new purposes evoked by modernization, or develop dimensions that still allow for community engagement, or identificatory and validatory possibilities. The risk is that with so many other factors working toward globalization that local ways of imaging are not merely supplanted by Western praxis, but lose whatever that practice enables in the way of belief, values, and other such connections.[47] De Certeau (1984) points out that 'making do' attitudes and practices formed in response to dominant cultural regimes that require resistance, may be creative or subversive, but he also points out that this is largely a practice of the powerless: "a cultural activity of the nonproducers of culture" (De Certeau, 1984: xv).

Cultures often exist in the popular imagination as fixed entities producing predictable subjects, or cast into extreme juxtapositions such as that of timeless unchanging 'tribal', or even the 'schizoid' alienated modern. The vastness of countries like China and India, geographically and culturally complex as greater Europe, appears unimaginable. Yet cultures are dynamic entities; they are reactive to both internal and external forces, even when the defined social goal is the maintenance of the past and the keeping of traditional ways.[48] A hybrid or

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meanings or interpretations follow is another matter since audiences do not consist of an undifferentiated block of people. To describe cinema or any other industry production as an art form might be an attempt to expand the idea of art but it is ultimately misleading. Sophisticated cultural descriptions differentiate between various filmmaking practices, and recognize specific films and filmmakers who reflect artistic concerns or produce experimental art film (as distinct from arthouse film), and these rarely involve "mass" product and audience. The problem is to do with the generalized use of the term 'art' to mean 'high quality'. If a product is successful, its apparent appeal may deemed something to do with 'quality' or explainable (or explained away) as art, or, it may be seen as a 'masterpiece' of its type, worthy of the term art (like the best of anything). Narremore and Brantlinger also refuse postmodern art as a distinct culture, and in keeping with their US-centered approach, they do not take into account broader cultural contexts. See Smiers (2003) for a redefinition of these different art cultures and also a critique of the term 'mass art'.

[47] Brandon comments on the value of local practices: "What is known, is that theatrical arts in Asian and Pacific-island cultures are ancient, highly developed, rich beyond imagining in their diversity, and very much alive for large segments of the population (Brandon, 1997:1, cited in Smiers, 2003). Smiers observes that, at a rough estimate, some 25,000 theatre groups, traditional and modern, perform throughout Asia and the islands of the Western Pacific Ocean.

[48] In societies that privilege tradition, much energy and effort is directed toward resisting change and maintaining social conformity.

interactive history of development can be found in the most isolated or remote cultures, (a history sometimes denied or refuted in some shoring up of purist or chauvinist genealogy). Yet the scale of present political and economic upheavals and the power exercised through new global formations, is formidable (Mander, 1993; Castells, 1996; Smiers, 2003). Previously isolated countries such as The People's Republic of China, Vietnam, Burma and Bhutan are in the process of opening up to the influence of the West, and taking their place to some degree within the new world order.[49] Other countries in this area, particularly Singapore, South Korea, China, Taiwan, and Japan and India are situated as key players in global information and communications and global economics (Ho, Kluver, & Yang, 2003). Some nation-states are struggling to maintain political sovereignty. with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Tibet particularly caught up in various ways with the Chinese government's continuing agenda of political unification.

Indigenous peoples all over the region, struggle with powerful and exploitative forces from the introduction of cash economies and ongoing environmental degradation, to undermining of traditional authority and society, and even the prohibition of language or culture. Massive dislocations of Asia-Pacific peoples can be traced to the ever widening impacts of Asian capitalist economic growth and modernization programmes from increases in populations through an improved containment of disease and infant mortality, to the development of transnational industries and finance, as much as war or political persecution. Migrations from villages to the margins of increasingly huge cities proceed in response to developments issuing from relations between postcolonial sites and neocolonial financial centers based in Europe and the United States, as well as regional global 'hubs' such as Tokyo, Hong Kong, Sydney or Shanghai. Agricultural-based economies developed under colonial administrations are being brought into a vast global network of manufacturing, trade, and multi-corporate enterprise.[50]

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[49] Struggles with Westernism can be seen as a site of conflict between the cult of individualism conjoined with human rights and state control and national or traditional sovereignty, identity, and ways of life. See Birch (1998) for a discussion of the observable tensions in Asian countries regarding the concept of a free press, and the persecution of journalists, and a rigorous critique of deregulation and the (always un)free market in relation to media control and media agendas.

[50] Ho, et. al. (2003) note that Laos, North Korea, Burma, and Vietnam are so cut off from these developments that these countries "remain almost hopelessly left behind" (6), yet this analysis confirms that information and communication technologies while enabling new democratic forums and new sites for constructing identity also maintain existing inequities relating to wealth and power. Tekwani, in his 2001 study of the use of the internet by Tamil militants and other

Amid such massive changes in the Asia-Pacific, people are trying to maintain, redefine, or even reclaim their identities in the aftermath of past repressions and colonial exploitations, while being inexorably swept toward dependence on global consumerism (as instituted by Western defined trade practices governed by such organizations as WTO, IMF, and by World Bank policies), and other 'economically productive' encounters.[51] Various interactions, from tourism to foreign advertising, create desires for Western style affluence, and even Western 'looks' (figs. 12, 16, 17); these encounters do not merely foster dissatisfaction with traditional ways, but can result in complete rejection of previously valued cultural practices, and create profound ruptures between generations.[52]

While the West is not necessarily the source of such socio-cultural destabilizations, it is still heavily implicated in the economic, political, social and cultural decisions that create the conditions for both modernization and globalized misery.[53] Its vast military machinery, for instance, might be seen as enabling enforced pacification, but the huge scale of its weapons industries, its marketing and supply, means horrendous outcomes for bodies. Whether 'small skirmishes' over borders, land, religion, politics or injustice, terrorist attacks, the continuation of nuclear tests, in the Pacific, or the cyborgian juggernaut of the new Empire in its declared stand against tyranny/terrorism (Mumford, 1963, Hardt & Negri, 2000), the atrocities of war are never far away. Whether sociopathically cruel, psychopathically murderous, deliberately genocidal, or

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insurgency movements (in Ho et. al., 2003), concludes that for all its positive outcomes the internet "has immense potential for the destabilization of nations, and for the proliferation of terrorist activities and the dissemination of misinformation and propaganda' (190).

[51] See Smiers (2003) for a sustained discussion of the role of these organizations in relation to globalization and art cultures. See Frith (2003) for a study of transnational advertising in Asian countries and regulatory policies.

[52] This can happen in various ways. Malaysian artist Kungyu Liew, for instance, interviewed in regard to his 1993 Brisbane Triennial installation *House of the Dead*, explained that it was a lamentation for the loss of Chinese-Malay traditions through such developments as a preference for English speaking schools, the result he says being "My father ... cannot communicate with his grandchildren because neither literally speaks the same language" (in Hill, 1993).

[53] Some of the more obviously sordid impacts on living bodies in the Asia-Pacific make the news in Australia: bonded labour, the enslavement of children in handicraft industries, pollution and destruction of forests and waterways through mining, timber-cutting dams, and tourist infrastructures from highways to golf courses. A massive escalation of AIDS in Asia is becoming overwhelmingly apparent, along with endemic prostitution and the sexual slavery of women and children. For early examples of media comment on the links between sexual predation by Western tourists and the rise of AIDS see Bone, P., 'Plight of the Filipina', *The Melbourne Age*, April 12, 1995, p. 20; Turner, T., 'Meat Market', *The Australian*, April 12, 1995, p.13; Murdoch, L., 'Child love, and our sad part in it', *The Melbourne Age*, June 10, 1995, pp. 1 & 4; Lamont, L., 'Virulent Asian HIV strain identified', *The Melbourne Age*, November 28, 1995, p. 4.

merely the 'collateral damage' of politically sensitive conflicts exacerbated by what Lewis Mumford in the Cold War years chillingly identified as "authoritarian technics", the emphasis is largely on body count, one way or another.[54]

Any legitimizing and rationalizing cultural upheavals as 'progress' depends, to some degree, on popular notions of culture that ignore the ambiguity and plurality of contemporary identities and recent histories. Given the "shrunken imagining" of political communities, communist Asia, for instance, tends to be presented as a politically distinct and unified bloc in keeping with an apparent disregard of their cultural mesh and the conflict and wars between different regimes of China, Vietnam, North and South Korea, and Cambodia (Anderson, 1992), let alone internal divisions and conflicts. Representations of different bodies, "territorially anchored" through imagined relations of ideas and images, or some "quintessential" features (Anderson, 1992) coalesce around the racial and gendered body, creating stereotypes of a kind that maintain and further

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[54] With its inherently systems-centered predilection for remote control, authoritarian 'technics' characteristically employ dehumanizing abstractions to mask the impact on bodies. The relations between capitalism, militarism, and cybernetics require an extensive mapping outside the scope of this thesis but Mumford's view of the tensions between community and the authoritarian apparatus of the state still have some relevance in producing perspectives that see through official language. In 1963 Mumford was arguing that given contemporary communication technologies, the time was coming where democratic technics would be completely suppressed or wiped out, or would be permitted only as "a playful device of government". His description of this technological threat invites attention: "Like the earliest form of authoritarian technics, this new technology is marvellously dynamic and productive: its power in every form tends to increase without limits, in quantities that defy assimilation and defeat control, whether we are thinking of the output of scientific knowledge or of industrial assembly lines. To maximize energy, speed, or automation, without reference to the complex conditions that sustain organic life, have become ends in themselves...the weight of effort (is) toward absolute instruments of destruction, designed for absolutely irrational purposes whose chief by-product would be the mutilation or extermination of the human race" (Mumford, 1963: 17). Mumford claimed that the reason authoritarian technics stood to gain total ascendancy was because of the omnipotent strength of scientific ideology, liberated from the controls of theology and humanism. "(O)ur great physical transformations have been affected by a system that deliberately eliminates the whole human personality, ignores the historic process, overplays the role of the abstract intelligence, and makes control over physical nature, ultimately control over man himself, the chief purpose of existence" (18). Technologies that have democratic potential, particularly the internet and other computer networked communications systems, mitigate Mumford's bleak prophesies, but his analysis of the abstract and inhuman imperatives of state authority remains an uneasy reminder of the contingency and fragility of any social contract between citizens and state (let alone international treaties). If Mumford is not convincing in this regard, see the ABC documentary *Deadly Enemies* (d. Susan Lambert, 2003) on the development of biological weapons by the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. It appears that the Soviet Union only disbanded their unbelievably vast production of deadly organisms (40,000 tons annually) as late as the 1980s, and only after defectors exposed the continued existence of the programme. For a discussion of this documentary, see Romei, Stephen, 'From the Grave', *Weekend Australian*, April 3-9, 2004, pp. 24-25. See also Hardt & Negri (2000) who rework Mumford's thesis within a Deleuzian mode of description, and bring it up to date politically.

power differentials around status and worth (Langton, 1993, Parmar, 1984) reflecting Foucauldian measures of control (Tagg 1988, Loganathan, 1994).

Pratibiha Parmar (1989) argues that even so-called documentary images are merely an excuse for exercising sexually voyeuristic fantasies that work toward the maintenance of otherness. Parmar makes the point that images cannot be separated from the political and social systems of cultural domination. In Australia, the discounting of bodies applies to women, class, minority races and ethnic groups.[55] Though diasporic communities receive media attention in Australia from time to time, actual experiences of what it is to be Indian or Chinese in Fiji, Malaysia, Singapore or Australia, are only starting to enter this discourse.[56] 'Indian' or 'Chinese', is defined in a most general but crucial way through what was an exodus at some point in one's family or one's own history, rather than the myriad differences located in religion, class, education, profession, tradition, history, and so on.[57]

On the pages of glossy magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* whose readership encompasses Asian readers, Elle MacPherson might pose in near nakedness, branding herself 'The Body' amid media proclamations of her savvy business sense and a mythologization of the woman in control in keeping with the pervasive ideological linkage of 'the look' with success.[58] In recent advertising this capitalist coalescence of financial power and model looks is now a formula invoked for lesser celebrities and, in an exotic turn for Western advertising, has taken on a Eurasian or multi-racial appearance, a hybrid 'look' echoed also in the construction of virtual characters in the games industry. Though this is often

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[55] This discounting can be observed in the disproportionate number of black deaths in custody, and imprisonment rates, in the early and high mortality rates in aboriginal communities, the prosecution of Asian women (for migration offences) enslaved by prostitution syndicates, and in the failure to protect immigrant families from exploitative cottage industry and piece work practices. It is blatant in the general acceptance of the Australian Liberal government's disregard, (or worse) for the safety of refugees at risk of sinking in open seas, and in its failure to give refugee status to those fleeing the very tyrant on whom Australia declares war. And it is brutally visible in the reprehensible internment of Middle Eastern refugees, even children, in remote and harsh concentration camps, robbing them of socialization and sanity. (This government has been recently returned to office.)

[56] For examples of studies that do address this, see Sinclair (2000), Sreberny (2002), Strelitz (2002).

[57] Such definitions or boundarization may be seen as essentialist and are easily co-opted for ethnic or race based rationalization not only in tribal feuds but in political conflicts of all kinds.

[58] In a recent interview, when asked what she though about being called 'The Body', she reportedly replied "It's just a label. Everybody knows that there is no such thing as perfection". (Clarke, Melisande, 'Waking up with ...Elle Macpherson', *Sunday Life*, Melbourne *Sunday Age* supplement, June 13, 2004, p.8)

celebrated as an embrace of contemporary melding of race, it is more likely to be an advertising strategy of identification in response to the diverse viewership of global advertising rather than any real and ongoing effort at any broader racial or human representation for these new models are still cast in the mould of the ideal body.[59]

Meanwhile the discounting of actual bodies can be seen more generally in the working conditions that follow globalization, and capitalism's enrollment of cheap labour. As the imperatives of 24/7 working hours take hold within transnational networks, labour laws, if indeed they exist, are repealed to make way for non-stop free market activity.[60] As the fifty working hour week threatens to become a normalized benchmark, the personal realm, including the body and its various needs, are subjugated to shareholder profit and to a grim working 'ethic'. In today's new world order, the disciplined body of the worker without time for social or family life, without time to *use* personal freedom or political rights, mitigates any of the empowering outcomes usually subscribed to the potentials of the information age.

The Provocative Body
In cultural studies, body theory works towards dispersing the kind of ineluctable forces that arise each time a threat is posed to the cherished and entrenched cultural essentialisms around which collective identities, cultural, ethnic, or gender-based, coalesce. Images and bodies are distinct, but they are not separate. The actual corporeal body exists - in terms of how it is thought about, experienced and even developed - in relation to available notions of body, which include all manner of visual representation. Grosz, in examining body conceptualizations, contends that the body is "not simply represented in a

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[59] For media coverage of this phenomenon see Das, Sushi, 'They've got the look', *The Melbourne Age, A3*, April 20, 2004, p. 4. See Frith, Cheng & Shaw (2002) for their comparative study of Asian and Western models used in advertising in women's magazines in Taiwan, Singapore and the united States. They found that though Asian models were often used for hair and facial beauty products, Western models predominated in two of the four local Asian magazines they studied, and tended to be employed in representations of the 'exotic/sensual' type in the Asian publications. Given that it is Asian models who have this standing in Western publications, this would seem to confirm that the notion of exotic is staged around difference. Some further differentiation of the categories might show, as it does in other studies, that the portrayal of Western women in Asian publication is often staged more overtly as sexual display, and may also over time, influence local representational practices. See Griffin, Viswanath, and Schwartz (1994) in this regard.

[60] See Ho et. al. (2003) for a comprehensive analysis of the information age as it has developed in Asia, and various case studies on the impact of information and communication technologies within various Asian countries.

variety of ways according to historical, social, and cultural exigencies while it remains basically the same; these factors actively produce the body" (Grosz, 1994: x). Knowing a body, whether one's own or that of another, involves some kind of body conceptualization, and various modelling operations derived from the intersections of seen images, seen bodies, and the imagination in memory, and through knowledge and experience. This enmeshing of the actual, the imaginary, the not-so-real - and all kinds of twilight zones in between - resonates in some ways with Derrida's concept of "the interplay of signification ad infinitum" (Derrida, 1982a: 249). Even so, though internal or mental ideas of a/the body or bodies and external material representations are realms of signification that intertwine, overlap and displace each other in a constant revising and reformulating of what constitutes body, representation does not operate as some free play of the imagination. Representations are constructed genres that interact with prevailing social norms.

Grosz argues that "...Bodies cannot be adequately understood as ahistorical, precultural or natural objects...". They are affected, she says, "by the very social constitution of nature itself" (Grosz, 1994: ix). Her argument is a call for an examination of the cultural constructions of nature and the investments within those constructions. It may be possible to expand contemporary discourses on the visual, and visualities to provide a more cross-culturally configured map of interactions between visual culture and its 'effects', and between images of bodies and actual bodies. While for instance it has become a truism that knowledge and power are inextricably related, the description of those relations tends to come after the event: even history, despite its yearnings, is not predictive.

There are many problematic aspects to theorizing imagery cross-culturally, and not the least, there is potential for misreading and mismatching intended meanings in the contemporary mesh of societies secular and religious, tribal and urban. Figurative images, though dominant and seemingly compelling from a Western viewpoint, may be less important in some societies. While some societies forbid or reject body representation, others seem to enact images of the body through ritual, or they encode culturally reinforced notions of the body in ways not readily associated with Western notions of imagemaking. Where the West for instance, has a long tradition of devotional religious imagery depicting divine entities and heavenly beings, in many societies including fundamentalist

Islamic and orthodox Jewish cultures, iconoclast traditions prevail, and in many societies human depiction is taboo, with imagemaking itself, a highly regulated and restricted practice.[61]

Critical theory still debates the merits of the textual analysis over the examination of social behaviour and belief, or determinations of form and technology. Yet it is content rather than form that provokes many libertarian, cultural or racist conflicts, and images of the sexual or naked body attract the loudest protest[62]. In most societies, the public portrayal of nudity risks becoming a site of contestation in regard to decency, moral order and religious or 'community' values. Even in the postmodern era, with its apparently free-wheeling circulation of images, it only takes a breach of moral codes, as George Mosse (1991) has suggested in regard to the public reception of Robert Maplethorpe's photographs, to galvanize all spheres of the political, social, and economic towards containment of the 'damage' or 'costs' to communal 'well being'[63]. In the everyday, all sorts of private regulatory stances govern both image production and viewing. Furors surrounding particular images, including those that deliberately thwart or violate protocols, are largely generated by their public exhibition and the entrapment of the involuntary spectator (figs. 18-22).

Controversies in Australia such as the 1997 protests over Andre Serrano's photographs shown at the National Gallery in Melbourne, and the cancelling of the *Sensation* exhibition continue to demonstrate the difficulties of maintaining such boundaries or contextual differences when art with its provocatory tradition is marketed as entertainment to public/popular audiences. The law is something

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[61] The banning of illusionist images in iconoclast societies may operate as an attempt to contain experiences which might undermine confidence in whatever other measures are used to designate the real.

[62] The public display or unexpected sighting of pornographic or sexually charged images appear to attract the most protests in the West, closely followed by images that demean women, those showing extreme violence, those that are racially demeaning, and those that are blasphemous or insult cultural belief.

[63] In March 1992 French performance artists Myriam Prigent and Raymond Blard were arrested while performing a public work called *Ilotopi* at the Adelaide Festival. They were clad in G-strings and thick body paint. Prigent was charged with indecent behaviour, and Blard with hindering police, resisting arrest, and damaging police uniforms (which were smeared with paint during the arrests). Charges were dropped in court after the actors agreed not to continue performing in a public place. The South Australian government and the Arts Minister, pressured by reports of international ridicule, apologized to the performers and put forward a motion to change the law to allow "artistic expression and theatrical events". For examples of newspaper coverage of this incident see 'Festival storm brews in a G-string' *The Herald-Sun*, March 11, 1992, p. 3; 'Apology to 'naked' actors over arrest,' *The Herald-Sun*, March 12, 1992, p. 7; and editorial: 'Arresting Art' *The Herald-Sun*, March 12, 1992, p. 12.

of a brute instrument at times, particularly as far as art practice is concerned.[64]
In one now infamous case in 1995, police, on receiving a call from a photo
printing shop, decided to prosecute Concetta Petrillo, an art student at Edith
Cowen University in Perth, who had used her children (discretely) as nude
models for a photomedia 'homage to art' project (fig. 23). Though Petrillo's
work was not sexually explicit, she faced losing custody of her children and being
imprisoned for ten years. Two years after her arrest, she was found not guilty,
despite the police insisting that any photographs of naked children were
inherently pornographic.[65]

Social friction around the role and content of images is exacerbated when divides
break down between the secular and the sacred, between the private and public
space, and between different cultural expectations. One such instance reveals just
how complex such cultural protocols can be. In 1996 media attention focused on
Australian Olympic athletes who had agreed to be photographed nude for a
calendar to be sold as a fundraiser for training and participation in the Atlanta
games. The publicity and useful press controversy relied on the nudity of the
athletes being associated with 'pin-up' and porn conventions rather than
classical nude traditions, a strategy that attracted both criticism and interest, but
for Nova Peris, then member of the Australian Hockey team, the issue proved
to be even more trying. An aboriginal woman, she was reportedly accused by
another aboriginal woman of transgressing aboriginal women's law through her
public display of nakedness (fig. 24). In one news report this judgment, cast
along the lines of: "If she was a traditional woman she would have been
speared...", was juxtaposed with the claim that Ms Peris' second cousin and the
"traditional owner" of her clan, the Bunitj, regarded the photograph as worthy

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[64] In Australia, there are legal restrictions on sexual images that vary from state to state; some prohibit the production or regulate public dissemination of pornography; some prohibit public obscenity; some are designed to protect minors, or prevent exploitation. Filming live sex acts is banned in all states except Queensland and the Capital Territory, and it is now illegal to possess child pornography. The new Western Australian Censorship Act came into effect in 1996, and it adds a further dimension to the situation in WA . Now if *the public* find their standards of decency offended, artists may be fined as much as ten thousand dollars, and galleries fifty thousand. The only defense is a double argument: 'artistic merit' *and* the work must have been created for the 'public good'. It would seem that the law is being prescribed in conservative terms that precludes much modern and postmodern art.

[65] For discussions of this case and censorship laws in Western Australia, see Bowles, Hartley & McKee (1998), Hartley (1998), Archer (1998). For media discussions of art-pornography debates over the representations of children see Strickland, Katrina "Eye of the Beholder' *The Australian Weekend Review*, August 16-17, 2003, pp.16-17. Strickland discusses Polixeni Papapetrou's photomedia *Olympia* series, featuring Papapetrou's daughter.

of great pride and a means of aboriginal promotion.[66] (Later on, after Peris became a celebrated track athlete, and named Australian Woman of the Year, this conflictual narrative disappeared from media view.)

The kinds of distinctions Kenneth Clark (1956) made between 'the naked' and 'the nude' (fig. 25) may not have much relevance in such a cultural mesh, and the battle to keep certain kinds of nudes and all kinds of naked images in their place seems well and truly lost.[67] Since the 1960s, artists have been appropriating low culture and mass media images so that even 'trash' nude images, reworked and recontextualized, appear within high art, while media protocols only go so far in keeping the private and public separate, or different image cultures apart, since the concerns and protocols around representation are so eminently useable as advertising and publicity (figs. 26-27). Though levels of violence, sexual explicitness, or bodily display and levels of public access are often determined by government regulatory bodies, judgments are also being made by media carriers and networks in regulating experiences considered unsuitable (for someone), or whether to screen/publish portrayals deemed to threaten social order or offend community values. This media self-regulation does not address broader objections, or practices that are considered a commercial or cultural grooming of the body, or those that are exclusionary in terms of linking beauty to personal worth, or validating real lives. Guerilla tactics, protests, and defacement of public advertisements suggest that these are often found offensive, but it is also likely that viewers over time become nonchalant about such material, relegating it to a fantasy genre, with the result that even more sexual or provocative images are delivered into consumer display realms. The *Adbusters* group, (fig. 28) established by Kalle Lasn and Bill Schmaltz, working from 1989 as 'culture-jammers' publishing their own magazine, found that advertising companies even appropriated their counter-image tactics (see 'By the way, my eyes are blue', fig. 21). (In response Lasn and

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[66] Ceresa, Maria, 'Nudism offends blacks', *"The Australian*, May 29, 1996, p.3.

[67] Clarke says "To be naked is to be deprived of clothes and the word implies some of the embarrassment which most of us feel in that condition. The word nude, on the other hand, carries in educated usage, no uncomfortable overtone. The vague image it projects into the mind is not of a huddled and defenseless body, but of a balanced, prosperous and confident body: the body re-formed" (Clarke, 1960/1956: 1). Placing the image in the context of high art, he emphasizes "that the nude is not the subject of art, but a form of art" (3). He argues that "The body is not one of those subjects which can be made into art by direct transcriptions" (ibid.); the body of art is, he says, the creating of an ideal and expressive form.

his cohorts have now moved into pressure group politics aimed at taking public space back from advertisers and marketers.)

Though the Australian press report many instances in which public portrayals of the body apparently fail to show due respect for particular cultural values, its investment in pursuing readership is in tension with any such ethical consideration on its own part. Indeed, the media blatantly co-opts, reproduces, or produces such images. In 1994, for instance, in World News sections of various newspapers, articles appeared which described how Miss Indonesia, Alya Rohali, after donning a bathing suit for the Miss World competitions, was castigated by the Indonesian Government for breaking a 1984 ban on participation in any beauty pageant that focused on exposure or judgements on "parts of the body".[68] Intriguingly, and with apparent disregard for the issues at stake, one newspaper article in the Melbourne Age included a photograph of Miss Indonesia in her bathing suit.[69] Parmar (1989), discussing images of Asian women shown in the British media, resists the claims that these kinds of news images are documentation, or that they provide a form of media critique.[70] In her examination of Mary Ellen Mark's infamous photographic essay/exposure of brothels in Falkland road, Bombay, and the subsequent so-called 'review' of these images in *The Sunday Times Magazine*, Parmar demonstrates how such objectifying portrayals tend to offer a salacious and racist reinforcement of

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[68] Miss World contestants are no longer required to wear bathing suits. In 2002 the Miss World contest was held in Nigeria, and apparently ignited sectarian conflict on a massive scale. In the northern city of Kaduna, a local newspaper comment reportedly led to protests that escalated to three days of murderous rioting with at least 220 people killed, and 30,000 people driven from their homes. See AFP/AAP report *The Weekend Australian*, November 23-24, 2002, p. 14, for an early coverage of the riots and which quotes the initial inflammatory comment by the *This Day* journalist Isioma Daniel as "What would Mohammed think? In all honesty, he would probably have taken a wife from among the contestants". Muslim clerics reportedly were only prepared to intervene after the newspaper apologized, and the contest organizers agreed to cancel the show. The contest was moved to London, but even as the pageant was being staged, the Miss World organizers were planning to return to Nigeria for a fashion event in the southeast city of Port Harcourt, with MW spokespeople saying the violence had nothing to do with the show. See AFP/AAP report 'Miss World will return to Nigeria' *The Weekend Australian*, December 7-8, 2002, p. 16. The MW organizer Julie Morely is reported as stating that not only did the Miss World contest have nothing to do with the riots, that it generated international attention for the cause of Amina Lawal condemned to death in Nigeria for adultery, since two contestants early on withdrew from the MW contest in protest at her sentence. See Fray, Peter, 'Beauty refugees battle it out in the UK', *The Melbourne Age*, December 12, 2002, 'Insight,' p. 5.

[69] AP, 'Beauty too revealing', *The Melbourne Age*, May 29, 1996, p. A13.

[70] Parmar is a Kenyan born, British academic of Indian descent and a radical filmmaker whose work includes *A Place of Rage*, and *Warrior Marks* (1993) which opposes the tradition of performing clitoridectomies on young girls, and the infamous *Khush* (1991) whose portrayal of lesbian sexuality was intended to confront the pathologization of homosexuality. Parmar in making *Khush* also aimed to subvert the spectorial gaze, saying "I have a different way of seeing the female body" (quoted in Kaplan, 1997: 285).

imaginings of Asian lives. The media, (and Sontag) argue that such images, though inherently objectionable in some way, still need to be shown as evidence of such events or situations. But in many cases the coverage goes well beyond reportage or appeal to justice. The recent Abu Ghraib images for instance were reproduced endlessly at every opportunity, and an appeal to a more prurient element would seem to be evident in that ongoing public display, with the media adding to the sadistic humiliations meted out to the imprisoned Iraqi men.

Western Media Praxis

The media has an inherent investment in luring and maintaining readership/viewership through the promotion of extremes, including those of position and polarized arguments. Even if what has been reported happens to be a reasonably accurate account of events and disputes, there is often little indication of context, qualification or the provisionality of represented views, and only rarely is any sustained coverage given to analysing implications.[71] Such reportage tends to provide a map of the contested territory (as envisaged by editors) but not its subject.[72] Social topics, developed, and factioned or fictioned by the media, produce material that, once in circulation, appears to take on a life of its own. Stories on conflicts surrounding images concentrate largely on the division between libertine values and fundamentalism both within the West, and globally.[73] When representation is presented as a moral issue, fundamentalists, feminists, and cultural protesters often appear to be taking similar stances in that they share a belief in the formative processes of looking at images.

In many cultures, a heavily circumscribed social role for women marks body display as not merely immodest, but threatening to social order. The blatant imaging of women's bodies characteristic of the West, often provokes conflicts and marks tensions between those who wish to maintain tradition and those who justify Western models of culture as a political right to free speech and expression. In those traditional societies where women's bodies are largely concealed, Western portrayals, seen as pornographic, easily lead to, or maintain,

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[71] There must always be some doubt as to whether people have been quoted and interpreted accurately, or whether they themselves have expressed their views satisfactorily.

[72] See Ang (1996), Hartley (1992).

[73] Although specific stories die when public interest is deemed to have faltered, a popular genre will reappear over time, perhaps with some variation or with the issues that engage worked into some other story.

the demonization and caricature of Western women as wanton creatures and justifiable objects of lust or condemnation. Such images have become a measure for the representational practice and values of all Western society, and they are utilized as to argue against women's rights. With the extreme pornographic figure functioning as the norm for the everyday lives of women in the West, women in many non-Western cultures are required to either keep to the traditional path, or they are accused of embracing Westernism *and* promiscuity. There is often no in-between.[74]

In the sixties, contestations between libertine and conservative values were framed as manifestations of wild body-centered Dionysian energies centered on the body challenging repression and intellectualism (Marcuse, 1969). In that now mythologized epoch, efforts were directed to making the sexual image permissible as a life-affirming sign, a stimulating and playful element of a counter-culture critical of the militarist values of the period. Similar hedonistic and displays of the rampant sexual body continue to be produced today although often their meanings, always contested in terms of ownership, meaning and pleasure, have been altered and redefined, most particularly in their appropriation by pornographic industries, and even more recently, the chic-porn imagery of advertising and the fashion industry (fig. 27).

The meanings evoked by this kind of imaging are now more complex, for many images evoke the convoluted positions and histories of struggle over women's bodies and feminist critiques of images of women. With images that are humorous or obvious parodies of earlier imagery, it is difficult to mount a protest, without bring told to "Lighten up!", yet under that guise such images often get to be more outrageous than the originals. Though protests against 'sexist' images are still sometimes heard today they tend to be somewhat muted since in the light of the poststructuralist problematizing of reception, their social effect appears uncertain.[75] Such images though still appear to act as models for women, even if only, following Berger's thesis, in their enabling

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[74] This is not to say this should not or cannot be challenged, along with all matters to do with the subjugation of women.

[75] Liberalist dismissals of arguments on the negative effects of media content, pornography or entertainment violence, often categorize all concerns about media content as naive responses unsupported by research. Such dismissals ignore the affective success of pornography, and they also contradict the wide-ranging employment and efficiency of the visual when used within educational and teaching spheres.

women to see how men desire them to be. How women respond to that staging is another matter.

Media image practices are hardly the Dionysian flowering Marcuse championed in the sixties. It is the cool image, played out as detachment, aggression, or narcissism that is the look now, just as it was then. Susan Sontag has argued that in today's images of women, traditional purity, piety, refinement, even dignity perhaps, have been replaced by "idiosyncrasy and forthrightness of expression…norms of beauty that are far less provincial, more diverse, and favor brazen rather than demure ways of facing the camera. The downcast gaze, a staple of the presentation of women to the camera, should have a touch of sullenness if it is not to seem insipid." (Sontag, 1999: 30-31). Sontag's celebration of the new look worn by women is apparently placed in contrast to the evocations of servitude, submission, and child-like sweetness found in conventional and non-Western representations of women. This unremitting and defensive staging of 'tough' looks is yet another regime that has little space for for the truly gentle, or for outgoing aliveness, caring, happiness, or well-being.

The transgressive traditions of Western culture may be particularly resistant to cross-cultural translation. For many places beginning to experience consumer global culture, conflict around these kinds of images would seem inevitable and perhaps irresolvable. Transgressive modes mesh with Western avant-garde art, entertainment, youth sub-cultures, queer culture, who all use protocols to do with propriety as props for confrontations and the staging of shock events.[76] Such transgressive strategies have now been broadly adopted by capitalist media for their attention getting effects, and while certain activities and images might cause flurries of amazement or concern or protest, they quickly become emptied of shock-value, particularly when their content is thin or overdetermined, or a banal, ritualistic enactment of an established form. Nevertheless, media

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[76] In the early c20th, shock tactics were largely the province of the political avant-garde, but by the 1950s and 1960s Neodada and Fluxus 'art as life' approaches utilized shock in more public events and happenings. Certain kinds of transgressive behaviours became synonymous with the development of a rebel youth culture that by the 70s had evolved into a punk 'shock culture' fuelled by social disenchantments. Though some of those cultures and practices are alive and kicking, their energies often appear dissipated in that transgression and disruptive performances of dissent and protest are now common in mainstream art and media. Punk culture is now nearly in its third generation, and is heavily proscribed and ritualized within the heavy metal scene, yet there are new variations on punk, with such designations as romantic punk, political punk, gothic punk, and artpunk. These subcultures indicate a sense of the continuing reinvigoration of cultural movements for young people wanting to position themselves 'outside' mainstream consumer culture.

depictions reveal an incremental acceptance of content once designated inappropriate for the public dissemination or as morally damaging, and many 'shock' images have entered history as lexicons of signification in a now complex chain of signified meanings.

The photographs of Annie Leibovitz have contributed to this mesh of boundary breaking and commercial engagement in Western image practice. In 1991, Leibovitz' photograph of a naked and very pregnant Demi Moore presenting her sumptuous and bountiful body appeared on the front cover of *Vanity Fair*. (fig. 29). Presented under a banner caption 'More Demi Moore', this image was a follow-up to an earlier *Vanity Fair* front cover with another Leibovitz image of Moore, in which her nakedness was disguised, her body cleverly painted *trompe l'oeil* style to look as if she was wearing a man's suit. This man-suit image acted as an introduction to a pictorial portfolio of Leibovitz' celebrity portraits in that edition, and played with traditions of representation and the idea of the liberation of body through a series of reversals: woman-man, clothed-naked, seen-notseen. The 1991 image of the pregnant Moore was the lead to a feature article on Moore, with further images focusing on the sensuous beauty of her body. These images in other circumstances - and with less celebrated figures involved - might well have been a private documentation, but published, they pushed the boundaries of acceptability in regard to bodily display, and challenge ideas that women are invariable demeaned in representation. With the accompanying text emphasizing that Leibovitz' celebrity subjects collude in and control their own representation, the images are presented as self-representations with Leibovitz a mere facilitator.[77]

It was the magazine editor's choice of this image for a front cover that provided the image with a wide public exposure.[78] At the centre of the image lies the interplay of Moore's confident and direct gaze with her hands framing the

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[77] See Annie Leibovitz' book project *Women* (1999) conceived with Susan Sontag, aimed at contributing "to the ongoing story of how women are presented, and how they are invited to think of themselves" (Sontag, 1999: 20). The hundred and seventy women pictured, says Sontag, "will be looked at (especially by other women) as models" (ibid.).

[78] Paula Span from *The Washington Post* notes that what Leibovitz calls 'collaboration' extends to the magazines also. Leibovitz worked for Rolling Stone 1970-1983, and has been with *Vanity Fair* since 1983, and contributes to *Vogue, Esquire, Newsweek* and *Ms.*. Though some of Leibovitz' work involves independent projects, of her in-house work, Span says, "A bloody brawl is probably a truer description of the jousting between editors and art directors, who want what they want, and a photographer known for obsessive attention to every detail". 'Exposing Annie', reprinted in *The Sunday Age*, (Melbourne), November 7, 1999, Agenda, p. 3.

rounded fullness of her belly and breasts. Her lower shadowed hand is counterposed to her dominant and splayed bejewelled hand. In conventional advertising, (see fig. 30, a full page advertisement from the same edition of *Vanity Fair*) the ring is traditionally a confirmation of marriage; here it glamourizes and valorizes her beyond any mere staged nakedness. Seen in conjunction with her gold and diamonds, her pregnancy, and the formal European portrait style employed in her presentation, she is designated a women valued, and *of* value.[79]

This is an image that reflects and enters debates to do with the visibility of women's bodies. When read (quite irrationally) in association with its list of feature articles - HOW SADDAM SURVIVED; TREASURE UNDER SEIGE; VA'CLAV HAVEL; HOLLYWOOD MAYHEM - the gleaming fecund figure of Moore is virtually captioned as a demonstration of liberal-conservative conflicts at work in the greater cultural arena. Employing the militaristic narrativization of these captions the image challenges all determinist conventions, and is an enactment that claims victory over the prudery and protocols that serve to restrain and oppress women. Here Moore's representation, serene, dignified, and interwoven with her reputation as a self-constructed Hollywood success, formidable and controlling, becomes a gilded sensuous performance recasting maternity and the body of woman into some new goddess configuration of self-determination, wealth and power. Moore is not everywoman; her appearance is a privileged performance of capitalism.

Susan Sontag point to the cultural implications of such images:
"We assume a world with a boundless appetite for images, in which people, women and men, are eager to surrender themselves to the camera. But it is worth recalling that there are parts of the world where to be photographed is something off-limits to women. In a few countries, where men have been mobilized in a war against women, women scarcely appear at all. The imperial rights of the camera - to gaze at, to record, to exhibit anyone, anything - are an exemplary feature of modern life, as is the emancipation of women" (Sontag, 1999: 23).

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[79] This image for instance is in extreme contrast with two other images in the centre of *Women* that are captioned 'victim of domestic violence' pp.140-143. In these, the women, one of whom has been blinded in one eye, are both women of colour.

Sontag argues for the apparent interconnectivity of camera and women's political freedoms, yet this front cover is still conventional in that it can be seen also as setting up new demands for women in terms of keeping up appearances even when pregnant, and it reconfirms the commodity potential of women's bodies.[80] Inside the magazine, the portfolio images are more open to such criticism because they are more sexualized, more invitational. Moore's gestures and gaze act out a sensual and narcissistic reverie, while her body is displayed/exposed/curtained by the operatic swathes of her satin robe (fig. 31). Here, amid the baroque coloration and the opulent surfaces of the glamorous fashion shoot, her pregnancy looks strangely out of place, disrupting her costume and performance. Suggestions of corporeality and the impending birth are subsumed in a parade of style that forwards the cult of celebrity.

Leibovitz' particular kind of shock-challenge to maternal representations appeared in an even more pronounced way in another, just as widely published photograph (fig. 32) in which supermodel Jerry Hall was shown breastfeeding her infant son Gabriel Jagger. The room's interior combined with her presentation to the camera initially suggests the lush bordello fashion fantasy, but, through her expression, the image transforms into a discourse on power. This formal style of portraiture is commonly used for financiers or other high profile businessmen, or for aristocratic-style family portraits, and here it combines with references to traditional images of the Madonna and Child. With the baby's backward glance and Hall's hand curled over his foot, there is an engaging intimacy. Yet for all the feeling that we/the photographer have interrupted the mother and son's interaction with each other, Hall's splendid fronting of the camera/viewer, prevents any determination of her as *only* 'mother'.

Though Hall's appearance suggests an investment in the consumerist stagings of glamour and power dressing, her powerful presence and flamboyant refusal of a sentimental maternity or conservative representations of motherhood, overrides attempts to reduce her to her appearance. Such radical inversions are likely to be culturally specific, and given Hall's bared breast and confrontational address, it is

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[80] Given that the image has been discussed widely and reused, even on other front covers, it obviously has some 'charge'. Sue Turnball, in her discussion of this image, claims that there were no protests. If that were the case, say, through letters to *Vanity Fair* or some of the other publications using this image (this particular image comes from the 1993 March edition of *New Idea*), it would still be difficult to ascertain this more broadly. In Western society at least, to protest this particular image might be seen to oppose motherhood/ women's rights.

a highly provocative public image even in the West, where maternity, once both natural and sanctified (fig. 33), is now presented as an entry into a chosen lifestyle.[81] In the West, such images have a dialectical function, even as they take their place within consumer culture with its naturalized representational tradition of women who only seem to count in terms of their sexual appeal. Does it make a difference when the production and editorial decisions surrounding such images are in the hands of women themselves, as is the case with the Hall and Moore images, and when the publication is, formally at least, directed at women readers? Given the furor surrounding the widely screened (and then widely reproduced) image of Janet Jackson's most unmaternal nipple-broach clad breast, bared at the live broadcast opening of the US Superbowl in 2004, it would seem that context still matters (figs. 34-42).[82]

Containing Women

Contradictions within media practices and public morality, along with the media's exacerbation of developing conflicts, can also be found elsewhere particularly where local media and entertainment industries begin to reference themselves to global media practices. In a 1994 series of seminars presenting findings on print, electronic media, film, and theatre in Sri Lanka, organized by the Women's Education and Research Centre in Columbo, (in Thiruchandran, 1994) negative and regressive images of women were found to be ubiquitous. In advertising designed for men, for instance, sexualized representations of women were commonly used as attractors. In media that targeted women, images of women were invariably limited to the role of housewife and mother. Such ideological prescriptions, a traditional strategy of containment, here operate at saturation level, and reflect little of the lived experience of women (in Sri Lanka, women workers are prominent; they almost entirely constitute the tea and rubber plantation workforce and form a large component of domestic workers in the Middle East, while professional women are a clearly visible component of society). Patriarchy was not considered the only stakeholder in the idea of the ideal woman as one who is entirely devoted to family and the

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[81] Representation does not have a direct correlation with social practice. Maternity is sanctified in many cultures, and operates as 'revered' image, but this still does not mean that women are any safer.

[82] For a discussion of this, and the media opinions and debates that followed, see the editorial 'Culture' item, 'America beats breasts, rends garments over TV boob', *The Weekend Australian,* February, 7-8, 2004, p. 25, which notes the moment Jackson's breast was revealed became the most searched image in internet history.

domestic sphere though; traditional conservative values surrounding class and status and connected to wealth and privileged lives, were just as strongly implicated (Silva, 1994a).

Within Singhalese popular film or realist/socialist films, women's roles were more varied but mainly in order to accommodate a bad woman/good woman dichotomy that was inevitably translated as Westernization (independent working women-harlot) versus the traditional and virtuous woman (de Aldwis, 1994).[83] While some films appeared to celebrate revolutionary and independent women, in these seminar papers it was generally noted that they all concluded in classic patriarchal style, with the heroine's subservience, or with her being saved by the hero, or her death as the ultimate sacrifice. Social order, conforming to male desire, is restored; those that move outside the protection and sanction of the family, either come to a bad end, or are grateful to return/surrender to the family/male embrace.

Indian Tamil films are also distributed in Sri Lanka.[84] Of the twelve that were screened in Sri Lankan cinemas in 1992, all were hero-orientated action films, and half featured sordid portrayals or the violent treatment of women, with brutal rapes that were usually extraneous to the story, and so gratuitously detailed, that they were seen by Bavani Loganathan as virtually providing explicit and lengthy 'step-by-step' instructions to the act. "Instead of emphasizing its psychological impact of the rape victim and its social implications, the focus is on sadism, so much that the average film-goer believes that rape is something that no woman can escape in her life time." (Loganathan, 1994: 93). Horrific scenes included the sadistic slaying of children, and two of the Indian Tamil films, *Sevakan* (He who serves the Society) 1992, and *Thilakam* (Son of a Woman) 1992, included lengthy scenes showing the torture and killing of pregnant women. In responding to public criticism of the level of violence in these films, both filmmakers and reviewers argued that this approach was reflective of the creation of a 'new wave' cinema (ibid.). This new style is

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[83] The local Singhalese film industry encompasses production of popular musical melodramas and comedies that stem from the forties that are stylistically similar to popular Indian film, and also a high quality socialist-realist indigenous cinema pioneered in the fifties by film critic Jayavilal Vilegoda. These serious films are certified by the Sri Lankan National Film Corporation and are screened only at specially designated cinemas (De Aldwis, 1994).

[84] There is no local Tamil film industry as such but a number of Sri Lankan Tamil film directors work in India, and films produced for South Indian Tamil states by the Indian film industry are imported for local Tamil audiences (Loganathan, 1994).

presumably in emulation of the Tarantino-style cults of violence within Western film of this period, but without Tarantino's cartoon quality and his ironic play. Tarantino's male warring and casual distanced viciousness is here largely displaced onto women and children - just as Tarantino would do himself in his 2004 *Kill Bill* series.

In these seminar papers, the relation of the Tamil films to the civil war in Sri Lanka was not discussed, nor ways that the local context might produce particular responses to film images. It seems probable though, with Spivak's (1988) demonstration of the way Bengali politics are enacted on and through the bodies of women in her recounting of Mahasweti Devi's stories of Draupadi and Jashoda, that mythical, ideological or religious dimensions related to war, local history, tradition, the value of children, and so on, were being referenced in Sri Lanka also, and were significant. In discussing Singhalese theatre, Neluka Silva points out, "It is the mother who is a conduit for the dissemination of values (essentially Buddhist values) but they have an added onus, which is the preservation of the honour of the nation. ... But at a time of war and socio-economic and political insecurity the mother image takes on a larger role, that of the motherland itself which is being violated and desecrated by war" (Silva, 1994b: 108-109).

Despite the seemingly obvious context of war, and the tendency in recent post-Third-Worldist films for women "to carry the "burden" of national allegory" (Shohat, 2003), most of these seminar papers sought to examine scenes of abuse and sexual terrorism within an analysis of gender relations and their social implications for women viewers. Alongside these orthodox feminist appraisals, the theorists acknowledged and discussed differences in viewer reception and interpretation. Their critical positions inherently oppose the postfeminist laissez-faire argument that women tend to renegotiate such portrayals in ways that are empowering. What many of these studies highlighted (and deplored) was the tendency for women to accept the regulatory ideologies embedded in these films. Wife-beating, for instance, was found extensively present on the Sri Lankan screen, and invariably glorified by both male and female viewers as a man's prerogative and evidence of a potent masculinity. In many circumstances it was presented as and accepted by viewers as proof of the man's affection or

love (Loganathan, 1994).[85] The conclusion here was that Indian Tamil and Singhalese films appealed to women by validating women's fears and confirming women's own experience of their oppression.[86] The portrayal of women in media and on the screen was seen as evidence of an entrenched social and institutional politics that requires or sanctions the terrorization of women.

Contests of Meaning and Effect

Roland Barthes suggested that

> "It would be better to see (the text) as an onion, a construction of layers (or levels, or systems) whose body contains, finally, no heart, no kernel, no secret, no irreducible principle, nothing except the affinity of its own envelopes - which envelops nothing other than the unity of its own surfaces."
> (Radio Interview, quoted in Chatman, 1971: 10)

This refusal of a core or centre of meaning in text, image or object, does not mean that the reception of cultural events, objects, texts or practices consists of an open ended production of meaning. This may be a possibility, and is well demonstrated in both rationalist and subjective modes of writing by Derrida and by Barthes. Yet some level of shared meaning is precisely what determines a culture as such, and at the same time, it is also something constantly negotiated. Derrida's close, yet analogical readings of art works in *The Truth of Painting* shows that shared meaning resides in keeping to the framing rules, the institutional histories and agendas. Denied contextual anchorage, an image may well be a Rorschach blot, open to the reader's projections and wanderings within an unacknowledged but particular cultural context.[87] Yet meaning cannot be ascribed to an autonomous liberal subject since meaning and effect are not entirely conscious controllable aspects, and a cultural work/text/event is not (usually) a blank canvas, nor entirely generated/created by the viewer. The making of meaning is an interactive production; and it is a referential activity. It involves a compulsion toward affinities - connections, reflections, resemblances,

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[85] This allowance for rough love is also in keeping with Janice Radway's 1984 findings in her research on the Smithton women's reading of romantic fiction, though whether this was reflected within the actual lives of the Smithton women was not within the province of her study.

[86] Bhawani Loganathan, referencing interviews and film reviews in South Indian Tamil magazines, says that "The director seems to believe that the introduction of such torture scenes could 'earn' the sympathy of female audiences" (Loganathan, 1994: 93).

[87] Barthes in 'Rhetoric of the Image' argues that the Rorschach test is in fact highly systematic, since "the further one 'descends' into the psychic depths of an individual, the more rarified and the more classifiable the signs become" (1977: 47).

relations, attractions, combinations - and a recognition of exclusions, thus pointing to meaning as a process of engagement within established sets or frameworks of belief. One needs to consider that 'free will' and 'choice' are words that resonate with ideological notions of autonomy and individualism, and elide all cultural context.

The heterogeneous nature of viewing audiences is only starting to be acknowledged in relation to a range of possible interpretations and reactions by audiences within and across cultures. Western media, produced with an eye to international sales and circulation, is also beginning to take this idea of diversity of viewership and plurality into account. A First World advertisement for a globally sold product might be devised so as to have a cross-cultural appeal, sometimes emphasizing non-Western values and increasingly addressing particular groups such as moneyed Asian consumers susceptible to the appeals of ethnicity. This global culture cuts across various nations or ethnic groups, where there are Western-educated classes that have more in common with each other than the non-Westernized, rural or tribal people of their own country. Nevertheless different histories and different relations to the West and Westernization, and new aspirations, keep the reception of media content generating 'from elsewhere' an open question.

If postmodern viewers determine their own meaning for their own purposes, concerns about cultural colonization or cultural misrepresentations or regulating content in some way would become irrelevant.[88] How, and to what extent the media co-opts the subject, and consequently the global masses, is a question that John Hartley (1992) and other critics of audience research suggest is ultimately unknowable, and must remain a matter of uncertainty and conjecture in terms of the traditional research model. What also seems certain, given the evidence provided by women, and those other than the heterosexually inclined, and those whose cultures, races and ethnic groups have been made 'other', is the ability of the media to objectify, for this is what these groups testify to as *their experience*.[89] Those who find that their portrayal is still largely determined by

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[88] Attempts at containment, implemented through regulations, moral codes, legal prohibitions, protocols, and prosecutions, seem to foster the growth of new industries that produce technical devices to block out particular access or web channels to be followed by some other contrivance to bypass any such restrictions.

[89] See for instance Parmar (1987), Wallace (1990), Langton (1993) hooks (1996). See also Tony Ayres' 1997 film *China Dolls*, which engages with Orientalism in the course of exploring the

unreflective or Eurocentric image-makers, and at risk, as Homi Bhabha (1983) puts it, of "an arrested, fixated form of representation" which serves to maintain a status quo around power and desire, still insist on a politics of representation.

This is at odds, not merely with liberalist positions subscribing to the unfettered play of the imagination, but also with poststructuralist deconstruction of notions of truth and essence. Yet Derrida and Barthes' idiosyncratic productions of meaning-effects do not necessarily contradict Hall's descriptions of clusters of codes and structures of meaning (Hall, 1980) or notions of discursive formations shared within particular social groups (Hall, 1997). These may be taken as different *registers of meaning* available within an individual's range or production of responses, and reflective of their ideological grounding.[90] Barthes' use of the notions of affinity and 'envelopes' point to the ways multiple meanings may be enfolded into each other. Subjective meanings can exist apart from, alongside or merge with shared, culturally assigned meanings, like those subsumed under 'society' or a given 'culture'.

Likewise, the Western postfeminist experience and the historically produced postcolonial experience can co-exist within the contradictions of culture/s and ideological contestations as different positionings, even within the same individual. The result may well be some form of cognitive dissonance (a common experience for many a field-dependent subject who is persuaded by one view only to be equally persuaded by another and different view).[91] This is not a matter of mixed messages so much as something that can be more *disturbing*. Images particularly, as Hall (1997), Barthes (1980), and Derrida (in Patton & Smith, 2001) have recognized, engage in ways that go beyond any linguistic

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prejudices that Ayres experienced as a gay Asian-looking man. His film gives an account of the Sydney gay scene and maps its growing maturity from the 1980s onwards. This film is part autobiography, part documentary, and works with expressive and experimental approaches to convey its ideas. It is also an excellent example of how art operates as a counter-narrative confronting certain kinds of representation with other kinds of representation, critiquing popular culture.

[90] Derrida and Barthes both recognized dominant or assumed meanings of codes, shared systems, and cultural practices but pursued other kinds of readings/interpretations. Though reading/interpretation may seem to offer endless re-inscription or an infinite number of texts/productions as some theorists have suggested (Fish, 1980; Morris, 1988) – indeed, as many as there are readers and their re-readings - meaning is based on expectation and learning. Recognition of particular dominant meanings are intertwined with personal responses to do with history, personality, culture, awareness, knowledge, prior experience, and intent.

[91] It can be also seen when a viewer experiences aesthetic pleasure, or humorous or entertaining aspects while at the same time disapproving of a particular production or rejecting the message. See Turnball (1994) for a discussion of this 'guilty' pleasure as it affects critical theorists.

determination of meaning or logic. Whether a particular view is right or wrong is, as Gombrich (1968) observed, beside the point. The provocations of body and body-play for youth culture and in subcultures, in the carnivalesque, the grotesque, and in horror, that emphasize the role of presence, tactility, action, and expression, escape rational meaning (figs. 42-43). Imagery too, though amenable to analysis, cannot be reduced to intellectual explanations. These are intensely expressive modalities, embodied in what Derrida has termed the "technoprosthetic virtual possibility" (in Patton & Smith, 2001: 21) where fantasy can seem to be made real (fig. 44), or crosses over into the real. In today's play of image and body, a virtual character like Lara Croft in *Tomb Raiders* is seen to take flesh (given a punishing fitness and diet programme) in the body of the actor Angelina Jolie (fig. 45). In a world that follows the theoretical abstractions and disembodied fantasies of cybercultures, body and affect would seem to have no limits.

1. Frontcovers from *The Australian Magazine*

2. Frontcover *Human Rights, Human Wrongs*
Bejelina, Bosnia, april, 1992, photographer: Ron Haviv

Owens, Nicholas, *Human Rights, Human Wrongs: The Oxford Amnesty Lectures,*
Oxford University Press, 2002

See Susan Sontag's essay 'War and Photography' (in this collection of essays) who places this image in a contemporary "iconology of suffering". She says it "tells' very little, other than handsome elegant young men are capable of kicking motherly older women in the head as they lay in their blood on the ground. She argues that there is an obligation to view such pictures, even at the risk of prurient interest or desensitization. What they can do is shock viewers and arouse conscience.

Fig. 2

3. Jamal Al-Durra and his son Rami caught in crossfire,
Gaza, September 30th, 2000, photo source:AP

These images are from videocamera footage taken by reporters who witnessed the shooting. In *The Melbourne Age*, they accompanied a frontcover story, Dunn, Ross, 'Peace in the Balance', 2/10/2000.

Fig. 3

US turns to fury

An Iraqi mother carries her son, burned after a coalition bomb caused a house fire, to Umm Qasr for medical help. PICTURE: AFP

4. 'Image accompanying story ' Iraqi welcome for US turns to fury'.
The Melbourne Age 5/5/2003, p. 12
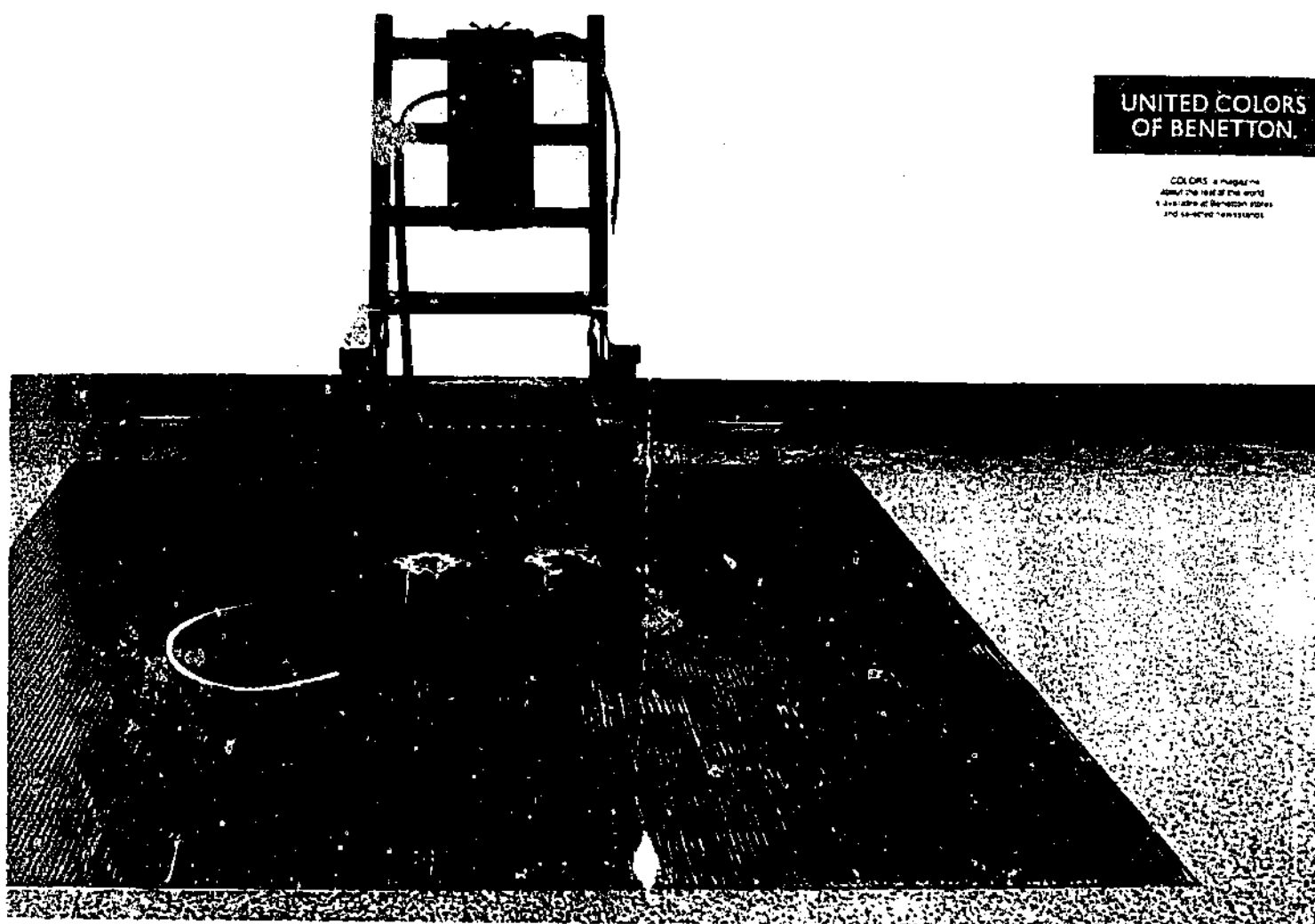
Fig. 4

UNITED COLORS
OF BENETTON.

UNITED COLORS
OF BENETTON.
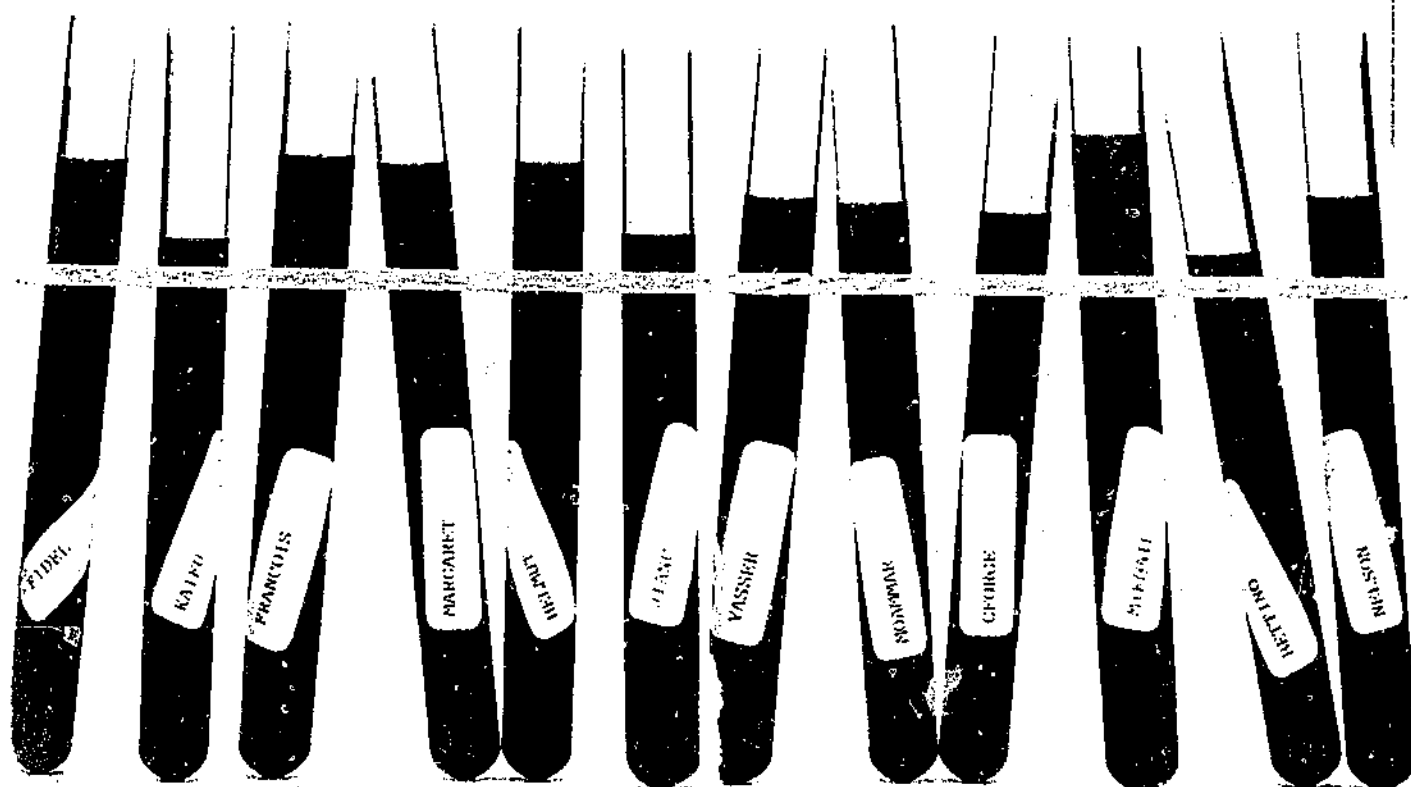
5. top: Benneton Advertisement (electric chair)
6. bottom: Benneton Advertisement: (blood samples)

Figs. 5-6

7. top: Bul Lee, Fish, 1993, beads, spangles, needlework, and whiting in freezer
8. Bul Lee, *Hwa-Um* 1992, Fish, beads, spangles and needlework

Figs. 7-8
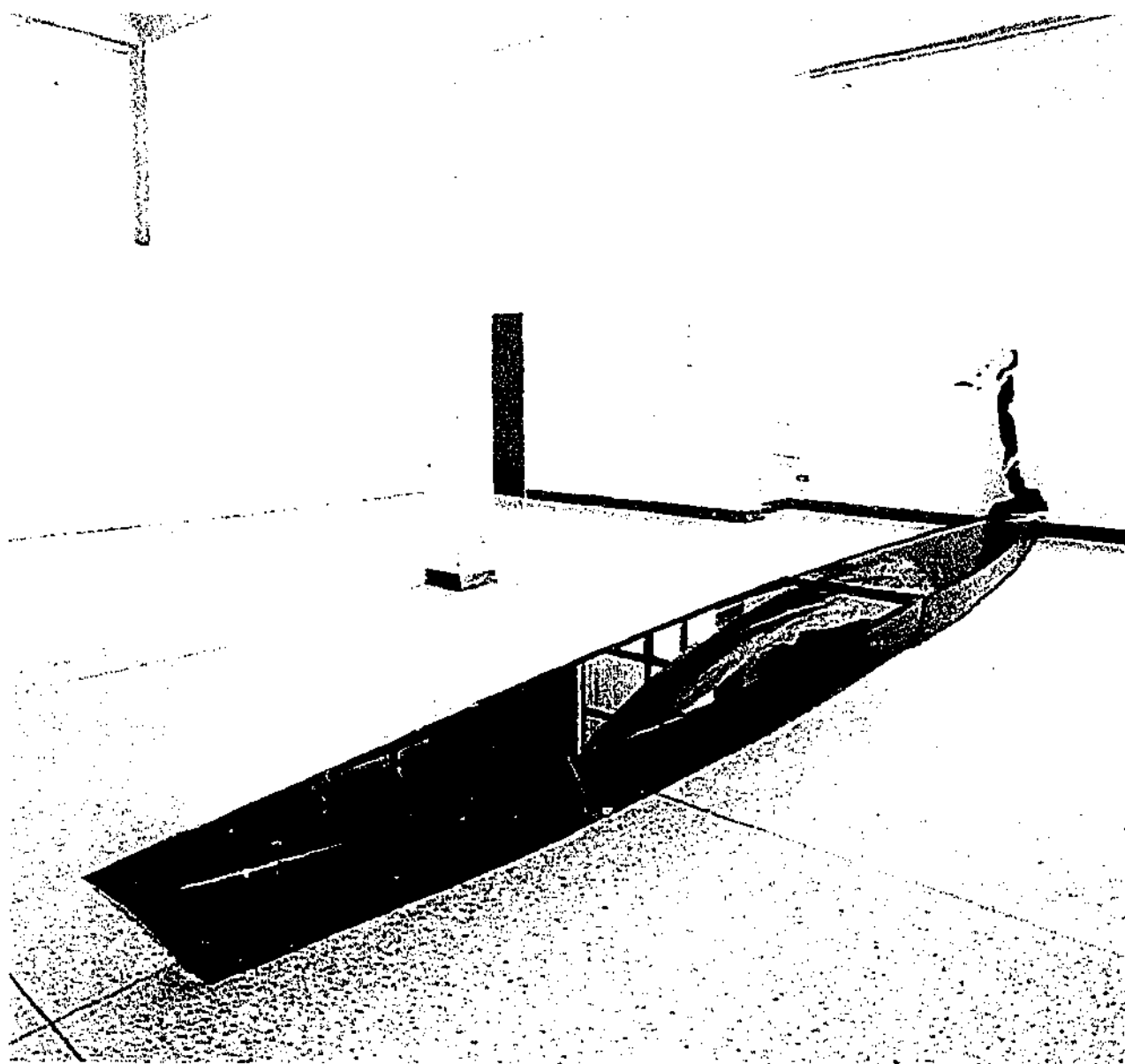
9. Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook, *Girl says, 'There is always the night time'*, 1993,
installation comprising metal boat, motor oil, cloth and 'sa' paper, hair, resin hands

Fig. 9

10. Photograph by Annie Leibovitz *John Lennon and Yoko Ono*,
New York City, December 8 1980

Fig. 10

11. Photograph by Annie Leibovitz *Keith Haring* 1984

Fig. 11

Bigger is better as China draws abreast of the West

Western influence in China is driving a rise in image-based products. These billboards in Beijing are for a breast enlargement cream. Picture: AP

Fig. 12 Newsphoto of Beijing billboard advertising
for a beast enlargement cream, with woman shopper.
Headed "Bigger is better as China draws abreast of the West".
The Melbourne Age, WORLD section,
22 august 1998, p. 20

Fig. 13 right: Popular adults-only Indonesian comic book version
of *Jakarta Undercover – Sex 'n the City*, supposedly a
documentary on the sex life of Jakarta's middle classes.
The author, Moammar Emka, says he is concerned about
Indonesia's unclear laws on what is regarded as pornographic
Since it was first published in 2003, several copy-cat
publications have followed.
Reference: Powell, Sian, 'Comic strips Jakarta bare',
The Weekend Australian, 1-2/11/2003, p. 14

Figs. 12-13
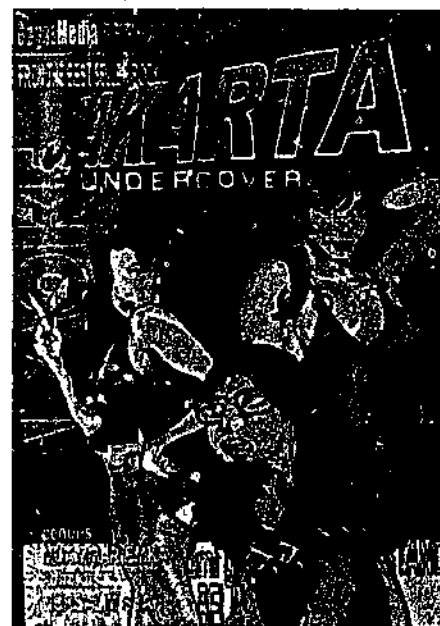
14. Deskinned and plastinated cadavers on display in *Body Worlds*, London, 2002. The 'body' in the top image, though posed as in some girlie shot, was eight months pregnant at the time of her death, and has been plastinated with the baby still intact.

Fig. 14

15. The 'Suzie Wong' image: Asian women as routinely imaged on book covers

Fig. 15

Are You Ready For Special Brew?

性趣性味

文：編輯部

Carlsberg
SPECIAL BREW

Carlsberg

Fig. 16

17. Disposable Nappy Advertisement. *Ming Pao Weekly*. Hong Kong, 1/8/1993, p.94

Fig. 17

18. Winsor Shoes billboard advertisement, 2000

19. Photograph by Patrick Demarchelier, 1994

Lisa Trendall the director of the Winsor Shoes project, reportedly said she had not seen the Demarchelier photograph, but had been inspired by a 'beautiful' photographic book, and that she considered that what she was doing was 'appropriation'. (Money, Lawrence. 'Spy' *The Sunday Age* (Melbourne), 4/6/2000, p. 26.)
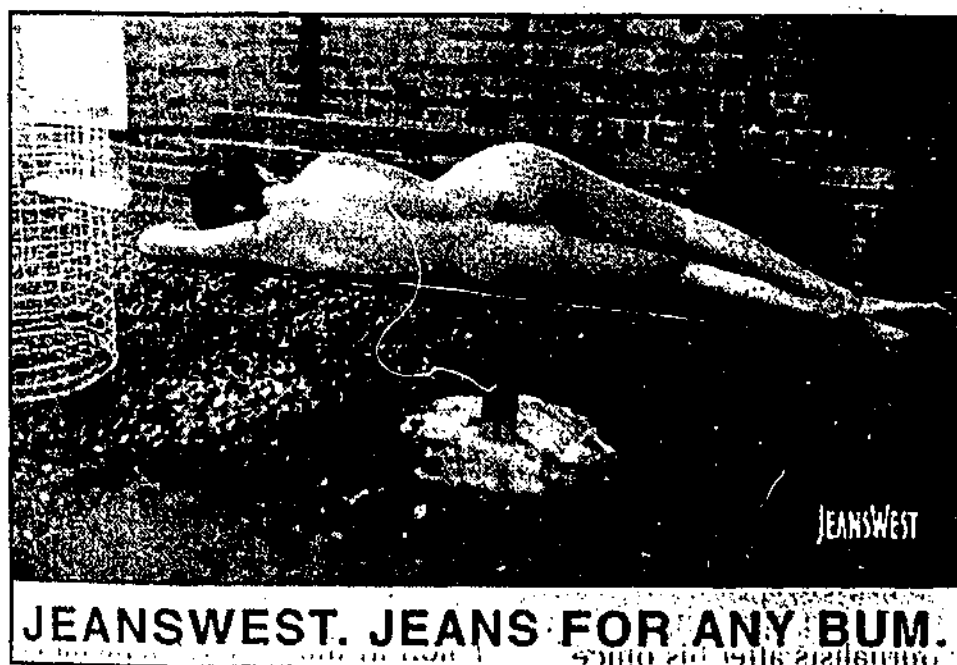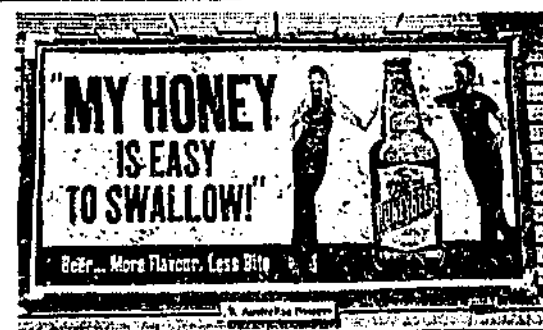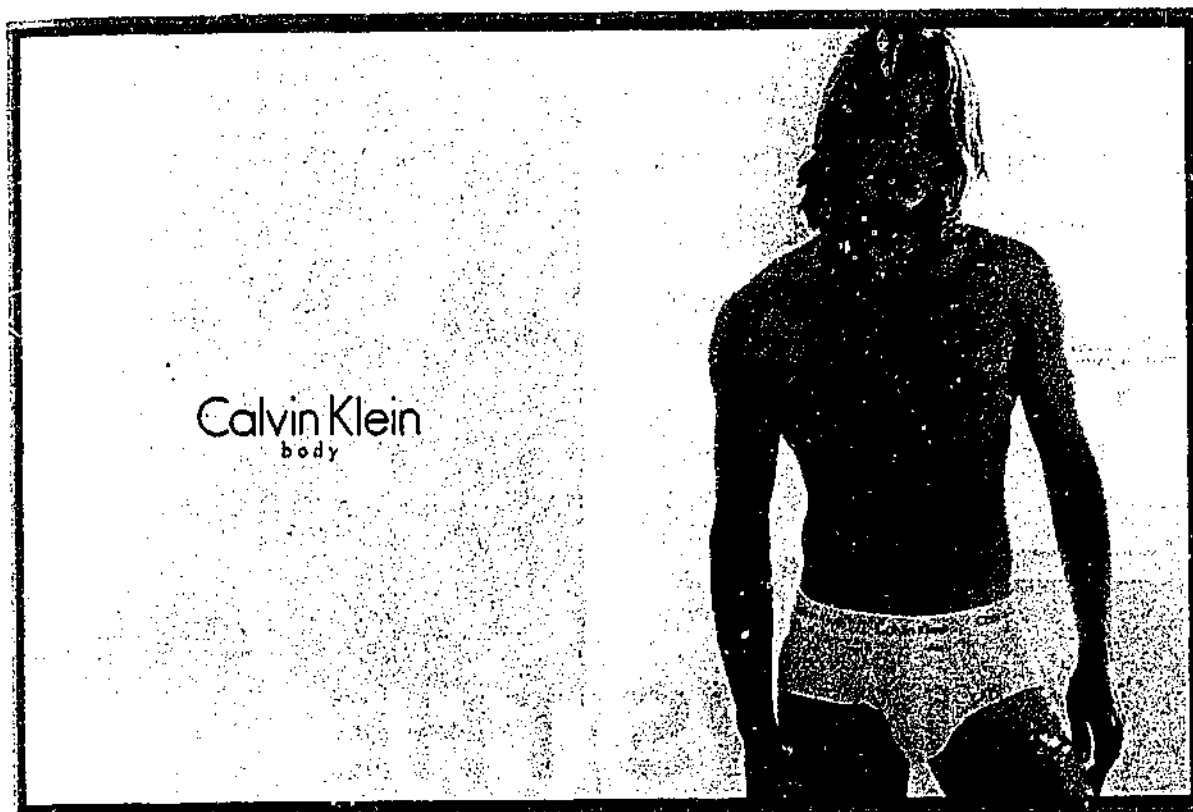
With the closer proximity of the male figure, Trendall has strengthened the suggestions of the sexual act, and she has changed the mood from that of sexual stylization of power within the depraved elegance of European high society to that of a fantasy brothel scene that is less locatable culturally.

Figs. 18-19

20. Voodoo hosiery advertisement.
  A similar image in *People*, 1992, with the sexes reversed, was withdrawn from sale
  after public protests. As gender reversal though, it seems to work very differently.
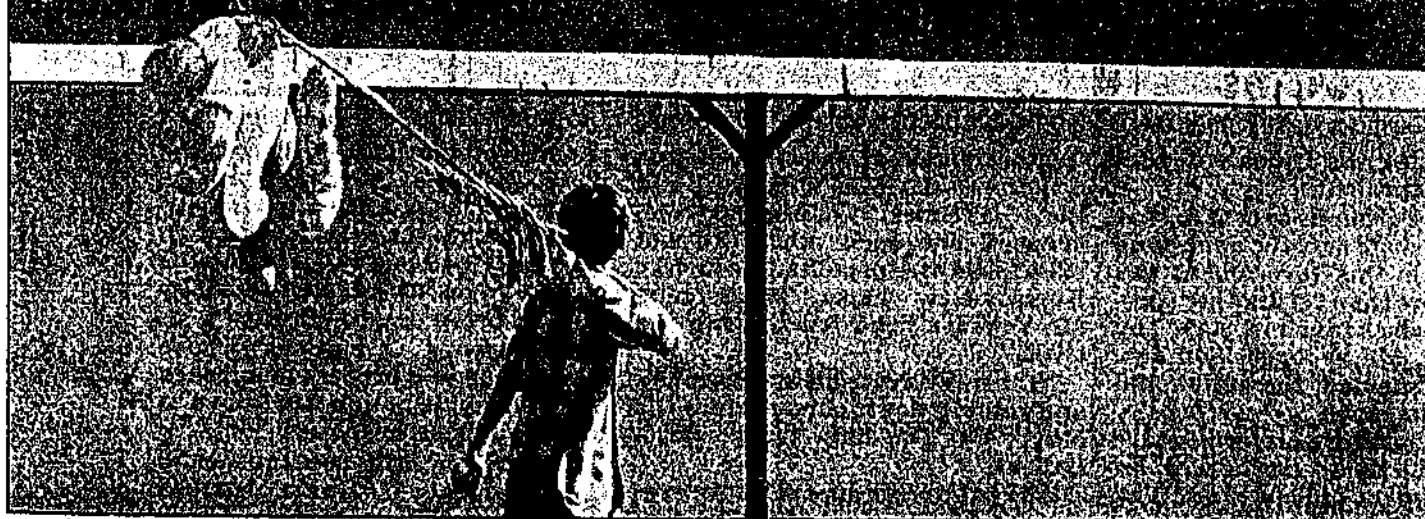
Fig. 20

Calvin Klein
body

"MY HONEY IS EASY TO SWALLOW!"
Beer... More Flavour, Less Bite

lipstik
MYER

BY THE WAY, MY EYES ARE BLUE.

JEANSWEST

JEANSWEST. JEANS FOR ANY BUM.

21. Controversial billboard advertisements

Fig. 21

If it's not on... a balloon vendor in Phnom Penh reads a billboard advocating the use of condoms. Health officials aim to ensure AIDS does not take hold in Cambodia as it has in neighbouring Thailand — AP picture

22. Function and urgent need can override traditional image protocols.
There was no story accompanying this newspaper image, just the caption:
'Cambodia launches anti-AID effort',
The Weekend Australian, 24-25th June, 1995, p.14

Fig. 22

23. Photoworks by Concetta Petrillo
Dawn 1997, photographic image on canvas, 120 x 85 cm
L'angelo, 1996, photographic image on canvas 120 x 85 cm
Puberty (After Munch), photographic image on canvas 120 x 85 cm

Fig. 23

24. 'Nova Peris: Hockey'. Two of the images in the presentation on Nova Peris in *The Atlanta Dream*, May 1996, Sydney: Studio Magazines/ Not Only Black & White, p. 70 & p. 73

Fig. 24
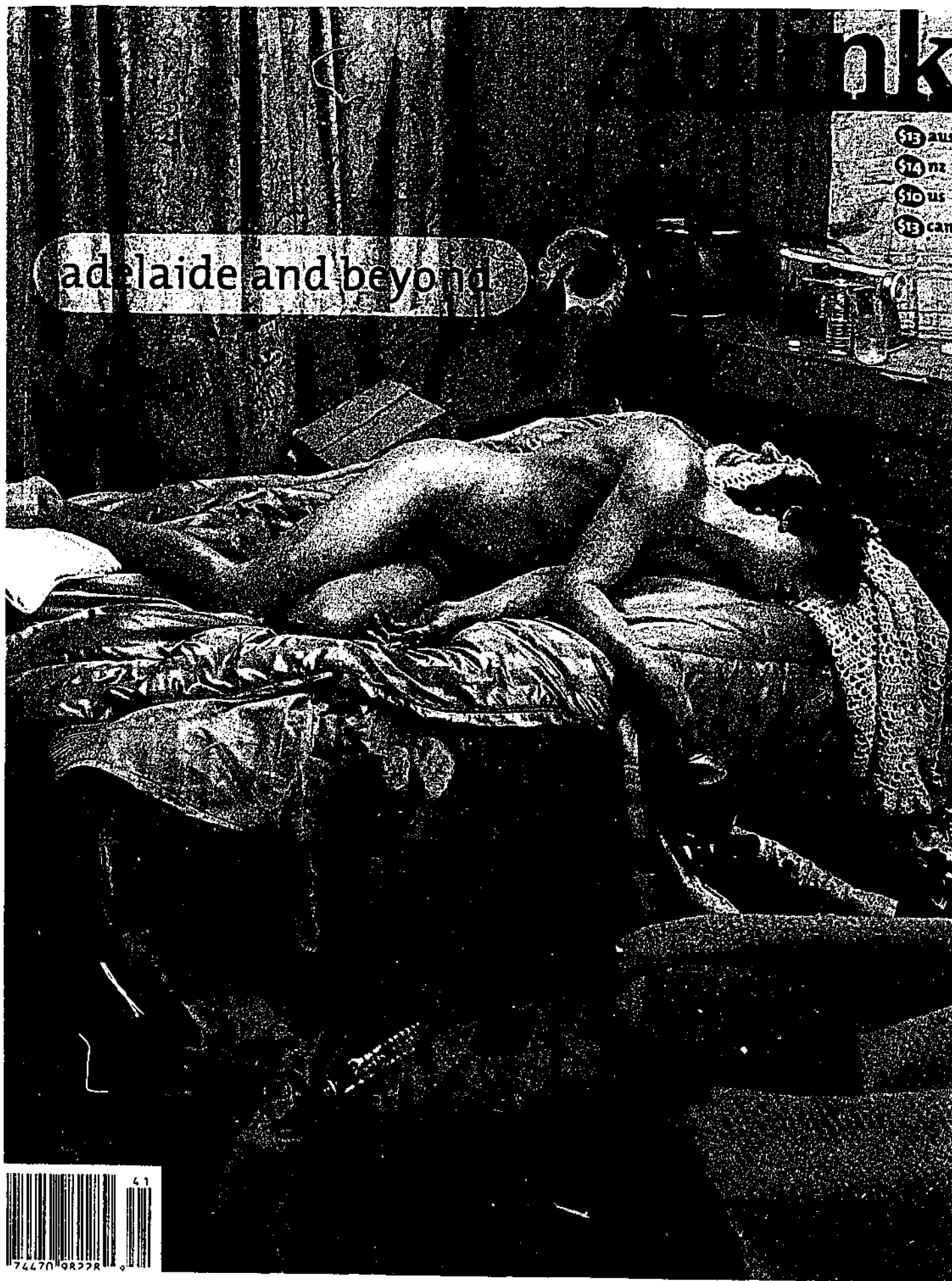
25. Frontcover for ArtLink vol. 24, no. 1, 2004.

This issue was withdrawn from bookshops in the US in 2004 and banned by the US censorship board because of the cover's display of explicit male nudity.

The image is of an installation work by Kristian Burford titled
During the later period of Chistopher's residence at boarding school he learnt that if the hand of a sleeping boy were to be submerged in tepid water, the boy would be made to wet his bed. After the passing of a considerable number of years, this knowledge has provided him with a subject for a short video. He is producing the video alone, on this Sunday evening, in a chamber that once served as his mother's sewing room. In the years between her death and Christopher's present production, it has contained only a small number of disused items that have failed to find a home elsewhere in the apartment.

Fig. 25

AMP works for ME.

Life is at its most precious when it has only just begun. That's why we work for children, helping hospitals to provide them with specialist medical care and emergency equipment.

This year, AMP will invest in around 100 community service projects. It's our small way of helping many people achieve their dreams of a better life.

The AMP Foundation. Working for you in the community.

26. Benneton-style advertisement for AMP
The Australian Magazine, 5-6/7/1997

Fig. 26
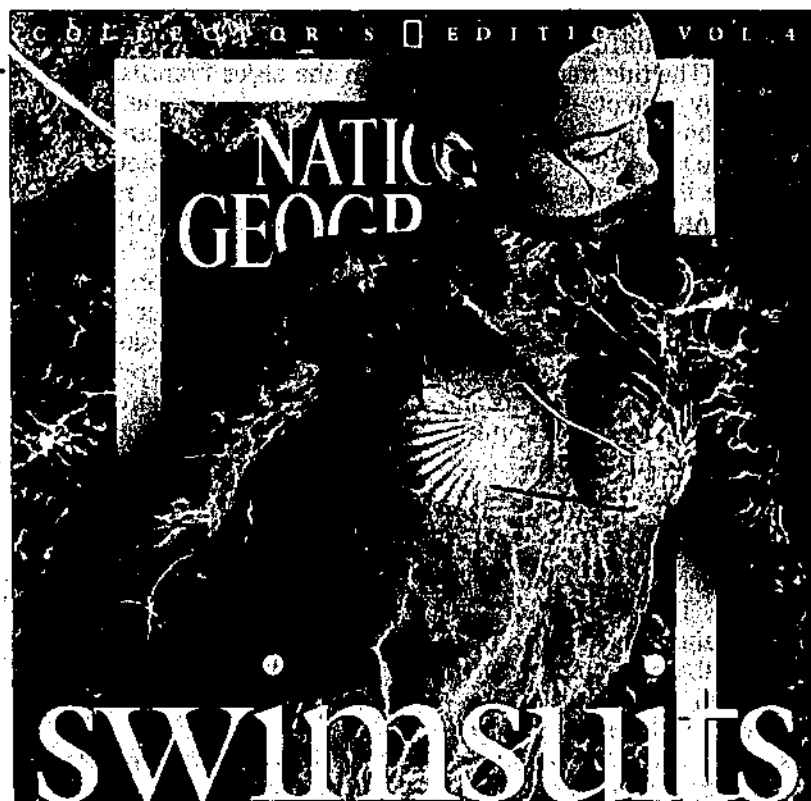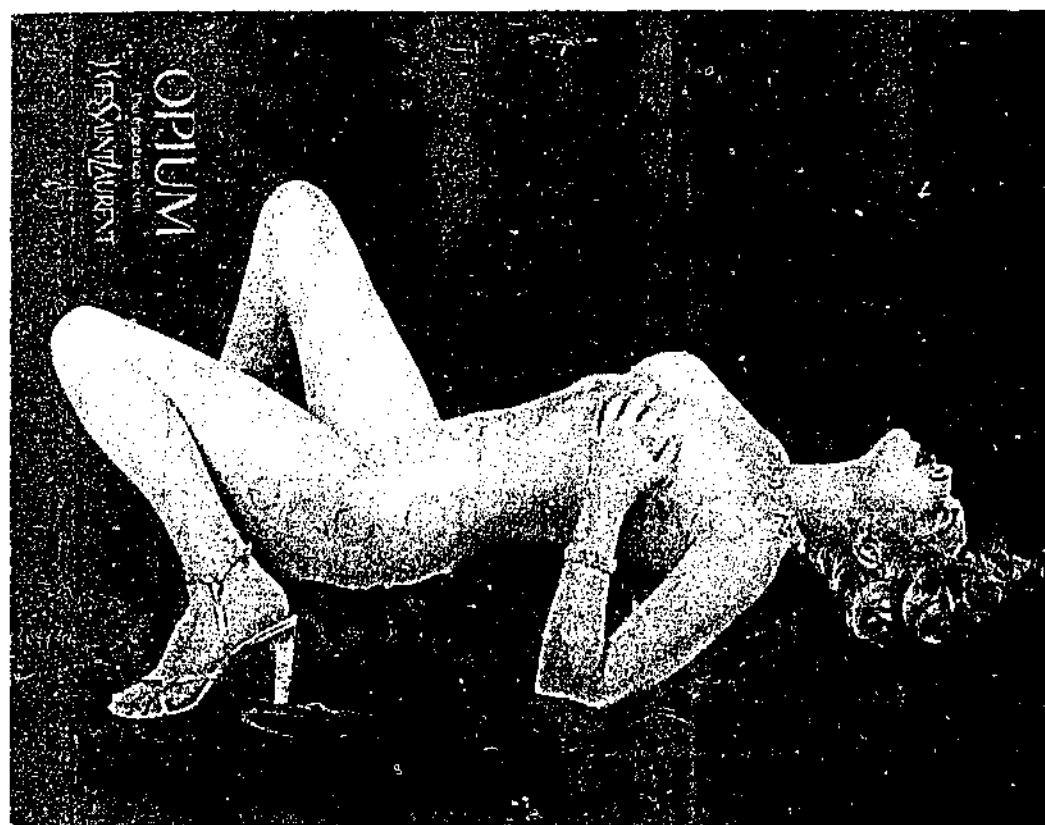
27. Magazine images and advertisements
top: The Bordello look as the necessary glamour look for women.
The four middle and lower images are all advertisements or magazine
covers that have attracted consumer complaints.

Fig. 27

28. Adbusters counter-advertising

Fig. 28

VANITY FAIR

AUGUST 1991/£2

More
Demi
Moore
by Nancy Collins

HOW SADDAM
SURVIVED
by Gail Sheehy

TREASURE
UNDER SIEGE
The Barnes
Collection
Controversy
by John Richardson
and David D'Arcy

VÁCLAV HAVEL
In the Court
of the
Philosopher King
by Stephen Schiff

HOLLYWOOD
MAYHEM
What Is
Joe Eszterhas's
Basic Instinct?
by Lynn Hirschberg

9 770733 889005   08

29. Frontcover, 'More Demi Moore',
Vanity Fair, August 1991, Photograph by Annie Leibovitz

Fig. 29

MAPPIN & WEBB

A Platinum Bond

Gentleman's platinum ring
set with a 1.02 carat diamond
in a 22ct gold surround
Matching lady's ring
set with a 0.52 carat diamond

30. Mappin & Webb advertisement *Vanity Fair*, August 1991, p. 56

Fig. 30
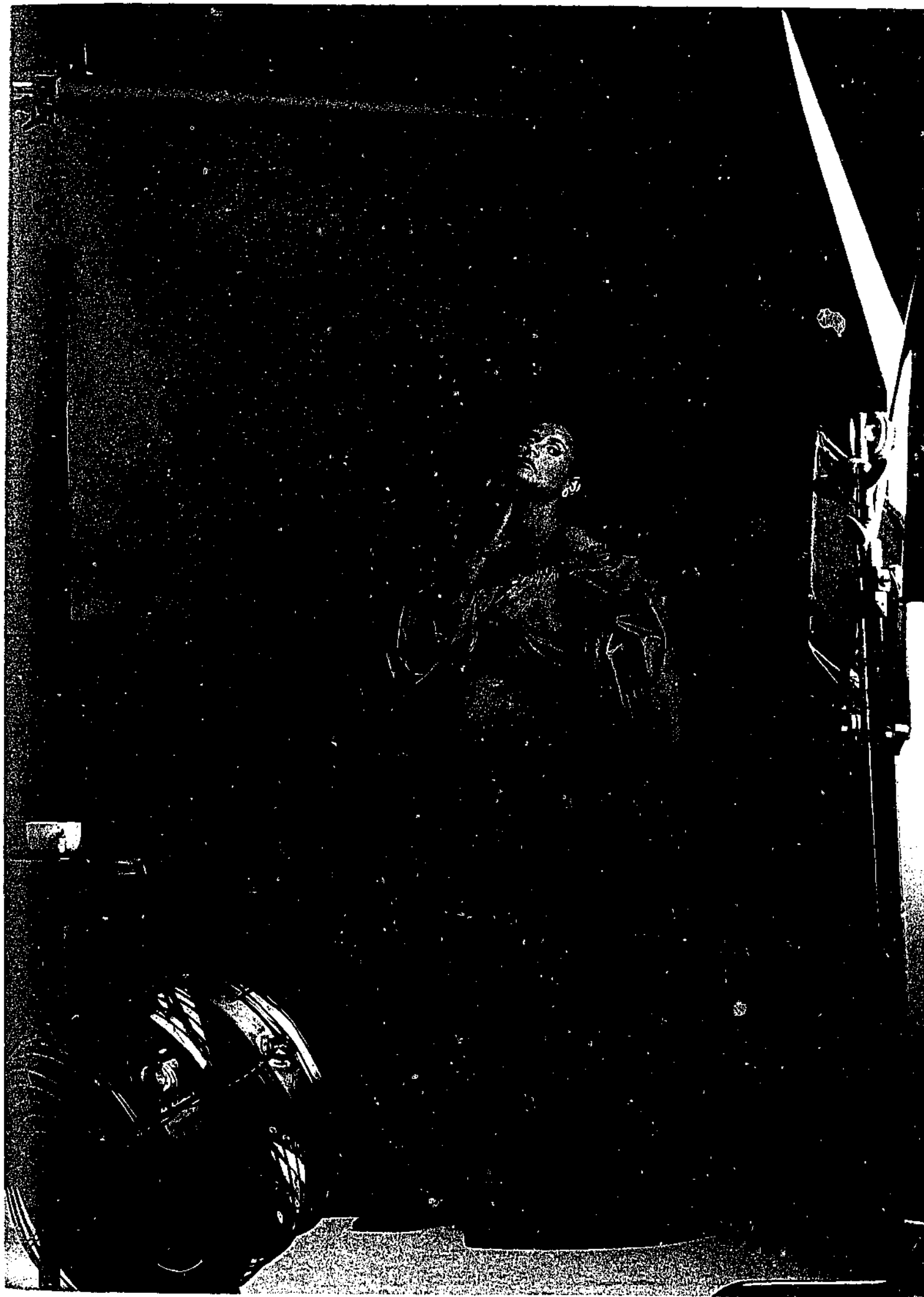
31. Image caption: *'Demi and her next project'* p. 61 in Collins, Nancy, 'Demi's Big Moment', *Vanity Fair*, August 1991, pp. 56 – 61. Photograph by Annie Lennox

Fig. 31

On the cover:

Annie Leibovitz & Susan Sontag
ON WOMEN
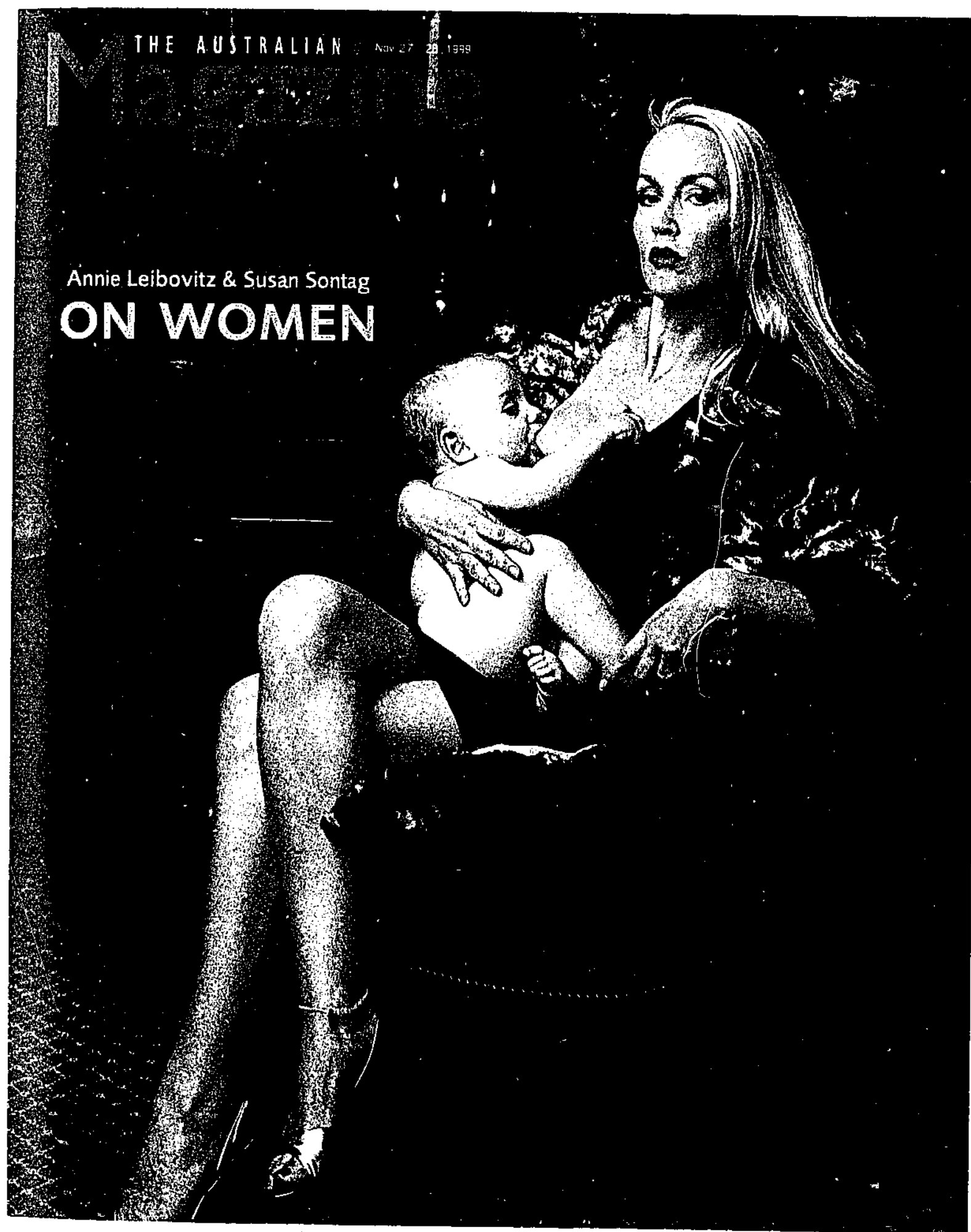
32. Frontcover, Jerry Hall and Son,
The Australian Magazine, Nov. 27-28 1999. Photograph by Annie Leibovitz

Fig. 32

33. Giorgione, *The Tempest*, c1505,
oil on canvas 32 1/4" x 28 3/4", Academia, Venice

Fig. 33

34. Louise Bourgeois,
Nature Study, 1984

This beast is an enigma.
Headless but supremely
powerful, its multiple
breasts, chewed nippleless,
testify to offspring so
savage they were doomed
from the start. What is not
evident in this particular
photograph, is that,
endowed with male
genitalia, this creature is
not entirely female.

35. Newsphoto of Janet Jackson's breast display at the 2004 live broadcast of the US Superbowl

Figs. 34-35

36. Hau-Hsian, stripper, dancer and would-be politician in Taiwan, getting married in an enactment of Adam and Eve, Oct. 1997. Her partner was been expelled from his Christian church for taking part in the ceremony.
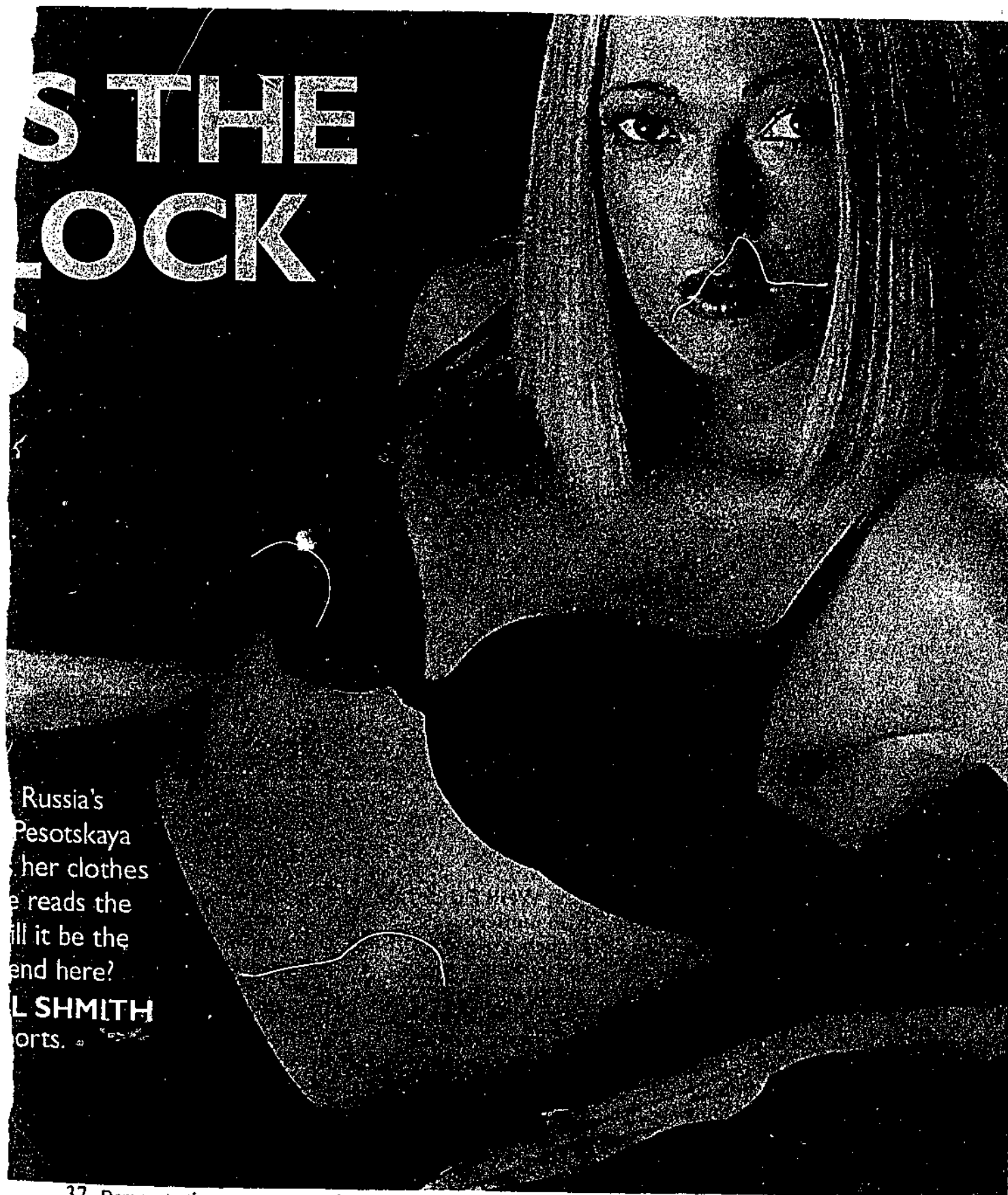
S THE
OCK

Russia's
Pesotskaya
her clothes
reads the
ll it be the
end here?
L SHMITH
orts.

37. Demonstrating some contrast between content and form, Russia newsreader, Svetlana Pesotskaya, shown here, strips down to her bra as she reads the Moscow news, 'Naked Truth'.
In Canada, on an internet service, nakednews.com, Victoria Sinclair strips down completely.

Figs. 36-37

38. Calendar Girls

top: The film version image: *Calendar Girls*, 2003, d. Nigel Cole

bottom: Image from fundraising Calendar Girl Campaign 1997-1999 for leukaemia research in which 11 members of the Rylstone and District chapter of the Women's Institute, Yorkshire, posed discretely in the nude, wear pearl necklaces and hats to maintain their respectable image.

Each black and white image included bright yellow sunflowers to commemorate the husband of one of the members who died from leukaemia. Instead of expected sales of $2000, they made over $550,000.

Fig. 38
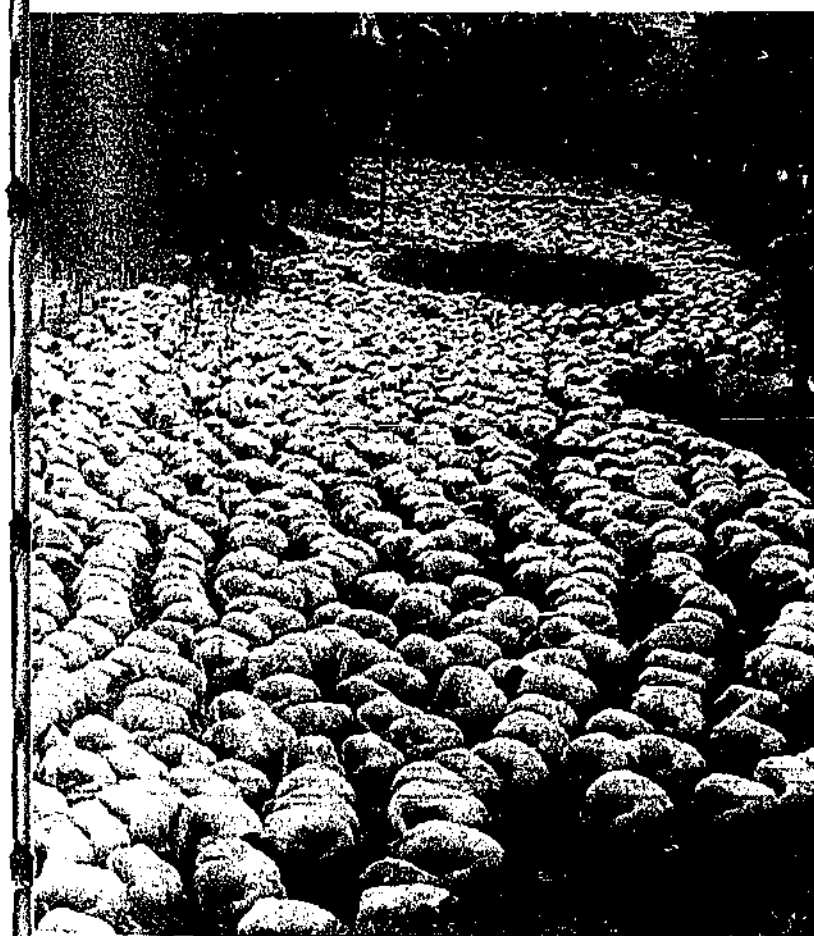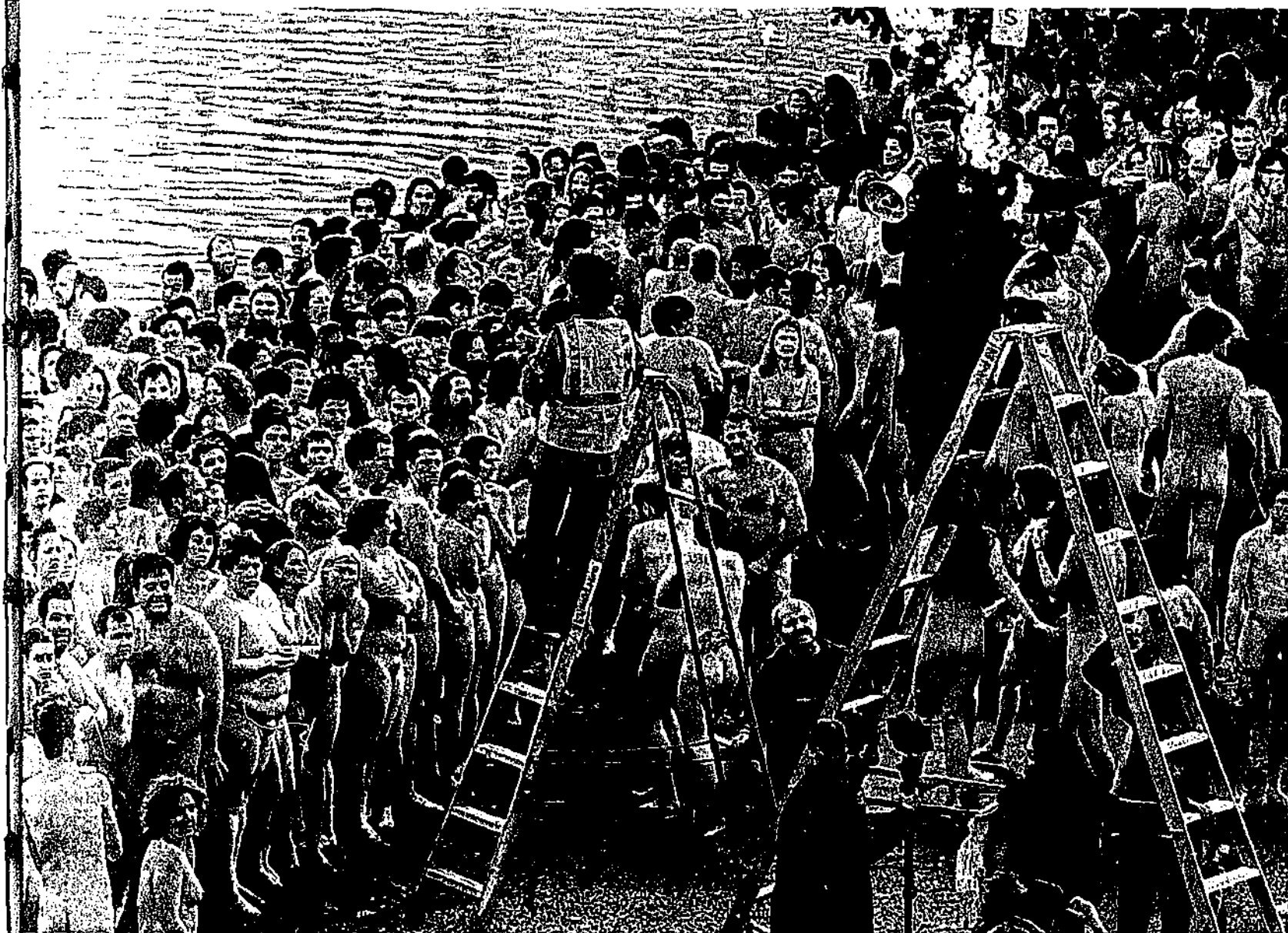
39. Spencer Tunick and crew organizing 4000 naked Victorians at 6am in Melbourne, October 2001, for a photo shoot, *The Unfamiliar Familiar*. Those that took part are said to have experienced, "a feeling of ridiculous, extravagant joie-de-vivre, of fraternal grins and sheepish acknowledgent of complicity", Thuy On, 'Naked Emotion', *The Melbourne Age*, 31/10/2001, p. Extra 5.

40. Spencer Tunick, detail from untitled photograph from *The Unfamiliar Familiar project*, Melbourne, 2001.

41. Detail of car advertisement

Figs. 39-41
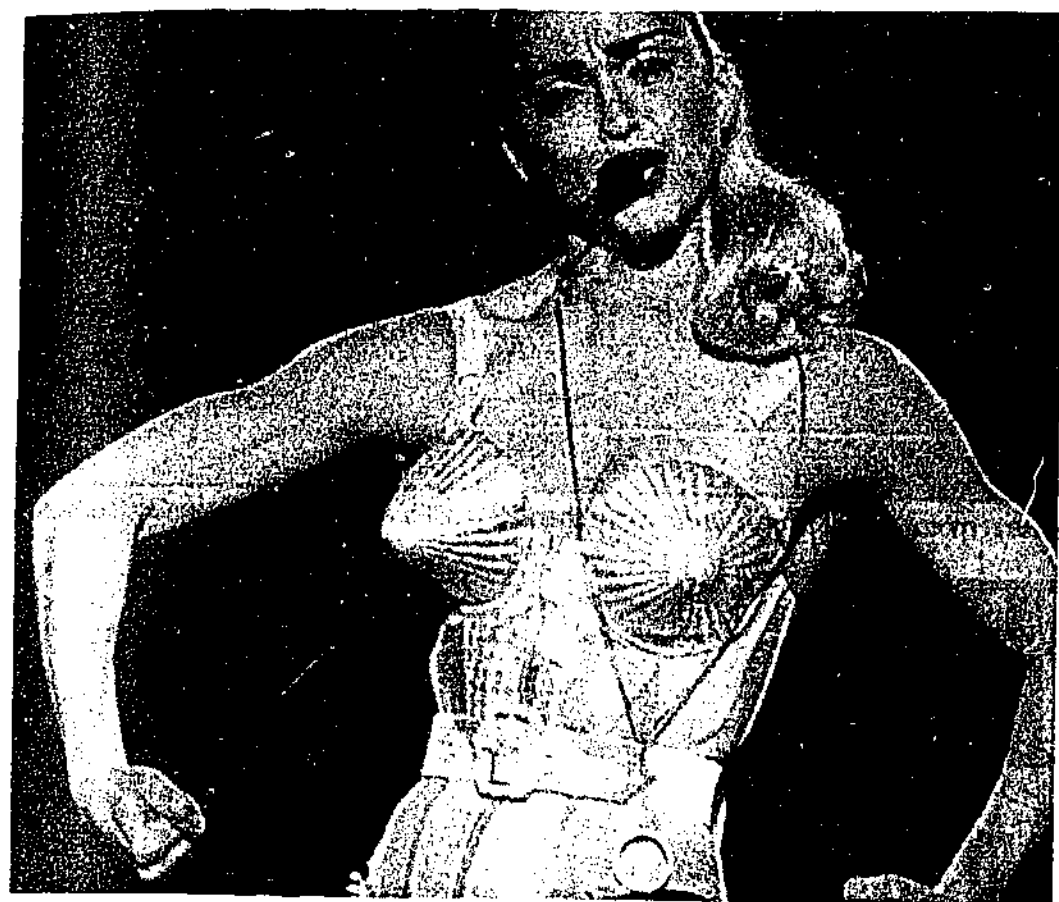
42. Staging the bodies/personas of Glam rock
top to bottom: Madonna, Marilyn Manson, Justin Hawkins of The Darkness

Fig. 42

43. The move from Transgression to 'cool'.
top: Traditional 'second skin' Japanese-style tattoo
by Tony Cohen. photo Stuart Davidson, 1988
middle right: Pop-style European traditional tattoo
bottom right: tribal punk
bottom middle: the 'most pierced woman in Britain'
bottom left: Tomb Raiders star Angelina Zolie
gets another tattoo

Fig. 43

44. Perfecting illusion

above: State of the art: detail of Aki Ross
lower left: contestant in the first Miss Digital World competition
lower right: Dr. Aki Ross in Columbia Pictures, *Final Fantasy* 2001.
Columbia is said to have spent $12.5 million dollars perfecting the look of hair.

Fig. 44
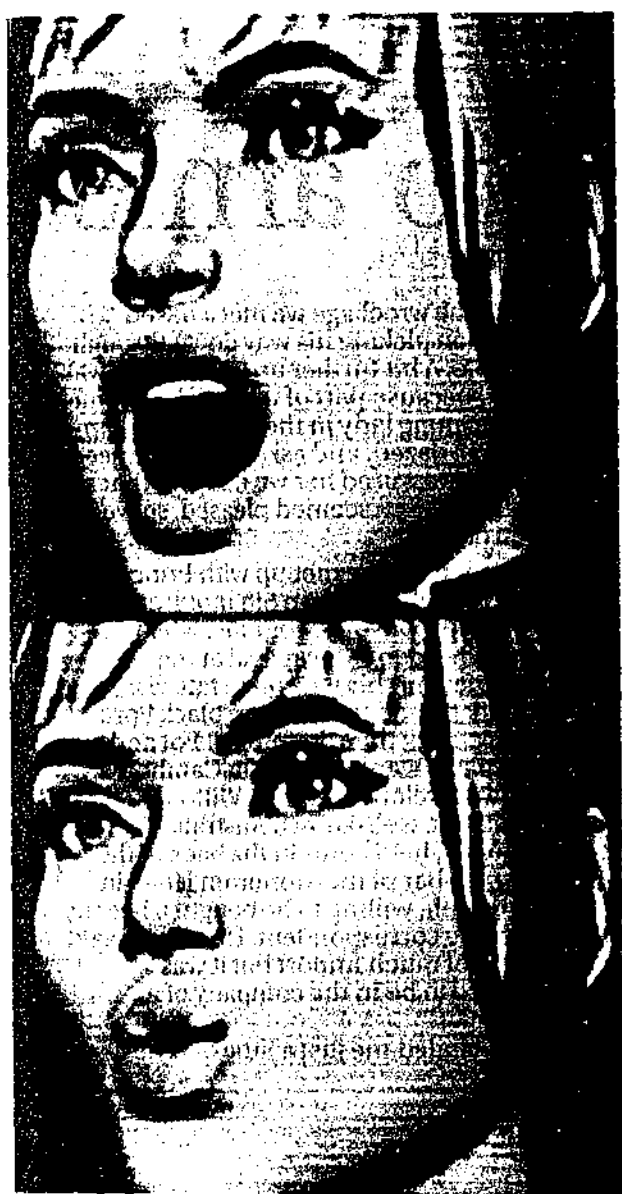
45. Virtual Babes

top left: from instructions on 'how to construct a
virtual woman' from Wiedermann (2002)
bottom left: Chyna or Qing Na, star of China's first all
digital film, a 5min. animation made at a cost of
$465,000 which acted as research and development to
match digital production to Western standards.
Merchandizing ideas came with the film.
top right: first Japanese generation: Kyoko Date, here
celebrating her 17th birthday on her FM radio show in
1997, provided the inspiration for William Gibson's
Idoru, before fading into obscurity. Webbie, a
supermodel, was then created in 1999, followed by
Nana, Nene, and Terai Yuki.
middle right: Kaya with freckles and slightly chipped teeth
lower right: Lara Croft in Tomb Raiders
bottom: Tomb Raiders star Angelina Jolie as Lara Croft

Fig. 45

Chapter 2

The Mirror Effect

Much political and popular concern regarding body representation, whether that representation is to be found in cinema, comic strips, sculpture, newspaper images, or on computer screens, centers on its claims to authenticity as a 'true' representation. Its indexical relation to a real is often persuasive; an image may be gazed upon and experienced as if it were real, even when it is known to be a fiction. In Western illusionist play, where experiencing the effect of the real has its own appeal, fantasy bodies may take on the look of corporeal reality. The interplay between illusion and actuality operates as an entertainment in its own right, with recognition of the boundaries between real and not-real providing fascination, pleasure, and status.

Jay (1994) argues that the rise of modernism with its new visual experiences, meant the subsequent loss of human sight as the privileged scopic authority, thus producing uncertainties about truth of appearances and concern about the power of illusions.[1] The new sights and spectacles of modernism are seen as having contributed to the unravelling of Cartesian perspectivalism in the late c19th, the

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[1] Jay describes these relations. "In the visual arts and in literature, these innovations contributed to that extraordinary aesthetic efflorescence we call Modernism. In philosophy, it abetted bold attempts to replace Cartesian and other discredited "spectorial" epistemologies with alternatives that explored the embodied and culturally mediated character of sight. But in many of these cases... the initially euphoric exploration of new visual practices ultimately led to a certain disillusionment, which fed into the more radically antiocular discourse that came into its own in late c20th France. Here the dethroning of the dominant scopic regime came to mean a more fundamental denigration of the visual *tout court*" (Jay, 1994: 150).

development of new sensitivities to view and viewpoint.[2] Jay shows that debates about reality and representation, exacerbated by new technologies such as photography, intensify an antiocularcentric intellectualism within French philosophy and theory.[3] Theorists that are diverse in many ways, are shown to share a fixation on the visual (mirrored by a visually obsessed modernist literature) and a distrust of appearances to reassert a Platonic privileging of abstract truth or ideals in the face of modernism's proliferation of seeings and reals.[4]

When the visual is systematically positioned in opposition to the real and to language, the discussion tends toward abstraction. Even the idea of image as *reflection* of the real is an intellectual paradox that maintains the authority of language and the intellect in contrast to an imperfect mirroring of the visual. This chapter engages with critical accounts of the relation of imagery to deception and truth as produced by Edward Said, Jean Baudrillard, and John Berger. Said's analysis of the production of Western Orientalism is discussed in relation to his claim for the authority of the text. Baudrillard's totalizing account of postmodern media, his notion of the loss of the real, and what Mark Poster (1995) calls his "reverse humanism", are examined in relation to Derrida's examination of the metaphysics of "presence" and his theorization of *differance* and trace. John Berger's influential *Ways of Seeing* (1972) is presented as a mirror of deception, and a demonstration of the power of a contextualizing authority, in this case established through Berger's voice, narration and television presence.

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[2] Jay's discussion pursues "affinities" between the distancing effects and visual orders of perspective and the rise of rationalism, science, capitalism and new visualities. See Jay, 1994: 57-62.

[3] Antiocularcentrism is not necessarily limited to French theory. Note Fredric Jameson's opening sentence in his introduction in *Signatures of the Visible*, for instance "The visual is essentially pornographic, which is to say that it has its end in rapt, mindless fascination; thinking about its attributes becomes an adjunct to that, if it is unwilling to betray its object... Pornographic films are thus only the potentiation of films in general, which ask us to stare at the world as though it were a naked body" (Jameson, 1992: 1).

[4] See Jay (1994) chp. 3 ' The Crisis of the Ancien Scopic Regime: From the Impressionists to Bergson' in which he traces the transitional period in visual arts, literature and philosophy, focusing on Proust, Duchamp and Henri Bergson. This argument has also been advanced by Hughes (1981).

Language Speaking For Itself

In the seventies, the imaging of others began to be recognized as an act of privileged seeing enacted by patriarchy and capitalism, and positioned the visual as a sociological subject.[5] Said's (1978) description of how the Western conception of the Eastern other was fashioned after Western perceptions and prejudices toward the Arab World, has become an authoritative account of the politics of representation, and its exposure of Eurocentric assumptions in mainstream scholarship.[6]

Said's study of how the scholastic field of Orientalism created and maintained the Eurocentric fantasy of the Orient has been crucial in establishing a new politics of representation and hugely significant for reflexive practice. Nevertheless I want to draw attention to how he defines the domain of the written word as if it were a closed system of representation. For all Said's detailed demolishing of the supposed distinctions and boundaries between different fields in writing, and despite his expressed intention to show that pure and political knowledge are far from separate, his thesis maintains normative constructions of knowledge and ratifies the authority of scholarship and of writing.[7] In *Orientalism* his one brief reference to visual representation stands as a crucial indication of his delineation of the Orientalist system in keeping with traditional, classical boundarization of practices and sanctioned knowledge technologies. Describing visual images of the Orient as part of a "vogue" of popular Orientalism, Said determines their role not as political influence, but one of "exotic locales" reflecting a taste for Romantic tales and splendours. Deemed

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[5] See particularly, Greer, 1970; Nochlin, 1970, 1972; Baker & Hess, 1971; Berger, 1972; Mulvey, 1972; Duncan, 1972; Goffman, 1976; Pollock, 1977 and Williamson, 1978.

[6] Said was not alone in addressing Eurocentric observation and objectification. A number of art theorists, for instance, examined this in relation to primitivism. Kenneth Coutts-Smith, looking at primitivism in contemporary art (1991/1976) argued that the assimilation of non-European art ideas and forms had taken place purely on Western terms, and that like the other foreign lands of dreams, fantasy and magic, had been absorbed into the Western body's subjective mental territory. Nelson Graburn, looking at 'ethnic arts', recognized that "The concept of primitive art is a Western one, referring to creations that we wish to call "art" made by people who in the nineteenth century were called "primitive" but in fact, were simply autonomous peoples who were overrun by the Colonial powers" (Graburn, 1976: 4, quoted in Hiller, 1991). Even Robert Goldwater, in his 1938 classic text on primitivism and modern art, recognized that the preconception of outsider art as primitive, allowed Western artists to formulate and validate their own desires for the exotic (cited and discussed in Hiller, 1991). See also Pearce's (1970) recognition of the invention of 'the American Indian' and other similarly 'Orientalist' determinations.

[7] Said acknowledged his boundaries and traditional scholasticism. In answer to an interviewer's prompt, "(I)n other words, you stick with the canonical works", he replied, "Yes, of course, because I am culturally very conservative. There are good books, and there are less good books" (quoted in Osbourne, 1996: 69).

to operate as other than documentation, these images are even placed outside of what Said identifies as the sympathetic intuitions or identifications that pre-empted Orientalism. In mentioning the artists Tiepolo and Piranesi in his survey of pre-Orientalist "structures", Said goes onto say,

> "Later in the nineteenth century, in the works of Delacroix and literally dozens of other French and British painters, the Oriental genre tableau carried representation into visual expression and a life of its own (which this book unfortunately must scant). Sensuality, promise, terror, sublimity, idyllic pleasure, intense energy: the Orient as a figure in the pre-Romantic, pretechnical Orientalist imagination of late-eighteenth century Europe was really a chameleon quality called (adjectivally) "Oriental". But this free-floating Orient would be severely curtailed with the event of academic Orienta^ℓ ⸘ ⸗" (Said, 1978: 118-119).

Said is a literary critic not a visual theorist, and it is understandable that he deals with the visual in a summary gloss since he is focused primarily on analysis of written material. His specifically defined field of study in *Orientalism* is that of academic writing, a specialized field within writing, that is nevertheless, immense and eclectic (51). My concern is for the authoritative claims he makes for this field and his exclusion of other kinds of discourses and influences. Said's acknowledgement of his 'scant' account of c18th painting, gestures not toward some interactivity or intertextual formations of fantasy across cultural practice and thought, but the existence of the visual as an expressive experiential domain, independent in the c18th, yet curtailed by academic writing in the c19th.[8] Said elsewhere asserts that "the Orient studied was a textural universe by and large; the impact of the Orient was made through books and manuscripts, not, as in the impress of Greece on the Renaissance, through mimetic artefacts like sculpture and pottery" (52). A broader history of the Orientalist imagination in visual representation would probably show that c18th images were less than "free-floating" and offer a parallel to discourses in other cultural texts of the time.[9] Early images by Rubens, Rembrandt, and other artists of the

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[8] His work probably predates the term 'intertextual' and he describes an "interlocking" between writings. Said identified 'strategic formation' as his prime methodological approach, and described it as "a way of analyzing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter the culture at large" (Said, 1978: 20).

[9] For an idea of art's 'parallel' discourse, that is, similar ideas, attitudes, contexts, see the catalogue to the 1972 Munich exhibition *World Cultures and Modern Art*, Munich: Bruckmann-Mandruck, 1972; Juillian, Phillipe, *The Orientalists*, Oxford: Phaidon, 1977, and also later writings such as

c17th and earlier melded biblical and Christian narrative with their ideas of the oriental world, and the growth of the Oriental image was a central interest in both painting and popular media of the late c18th and c19th.[10] Illustrations produced for novels, newssheets, histories or illustrated travel journals for instance, were a significant genre within the print industry.[11]

The image *The Snake Charmer* by the c19th painter-photographer Jean-Léon Gérôme, used on the front cover of the original 1978 Penguin edition, may be seen to demonstrate another form of authority that persuasively ratifies established belief and desire.[12] If one moves beyond Said's formal thesis and

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Rosenthal, Donald A., *Orientalism: The Near East in French Painting 1800 -1880*; Rochester: University of Rochester, 1982, Memorial Art Gallery exhibition catalogue; Sweetman, J., *The Oriental Obsession*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; MacKenzie, John M., *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995; Benjamin, Roger, *Orientalist Aesthetics*, Berkeley: University of California, 2003.

[10] Other major artists in this genre include Gros, Ingres, Géricault, Chasseriau, Fromentin, Corot, and Moreau. Also influential were Orientalist and art nouveau illustrators such as Dulac, Schmied, Carré, Baudin, and Behmer, In the c20th the work of Matisse, Klee, Escher, Vasareley and Baumeister have been associated with Orientalism in post-1978 writing on in art, but their work is more often a cultural and formal borrowing from Arab and Islamic sources, rather than a matter of representation.

[11] The field of illustration, like art, is a field that is highly referential, with illustrators borrowing constantly from other images, the potential for reification rather than "free-floating" ideas is huge. Certain images had a long-lasting currency. Drawings for instance, produced in India in 1784 by Daniell, Thomas & Danielle, William, were later translated into aquatints and published in *The Oriental Annual*, London, 1840, vol. 7 (held in the Munich Bayerische State Library) and became standard references for other images of the Orient.

[12] For a discussion of Gérôme's work and Said's influence on art history, see Linda Nochlin's 1982 essay "The Imaginary Orient" (in Nochlin, 1989b) which she describes as having been written in response to Said's *Orientalism* and its implications for a genre often claimed to represent an "innocent and colorful representation of an exotic reality..." (1989b: xix). For Nochlin, Said's analyses appeared to have relevance regarding the position women occupied as "the preferred object of pictorial delectation within Orientalist practice" (ibid.). See also her essay, *Women, Art and Power* in Nochlin (1989a). Delacroix is the only c19th artist named among the painters, illustrators, and photographers specializing in violent, passionate oriental themes. See for instance, his largest painting *Death Of Sardanapolis 1827* whose violent and sexually charged subject derives from a play by Byron. It depicts the Sultan Sardanapolis watching the destruction of all his possessions, including his women, as he prepares to die rather than surrender to his enemies. Delacroix also produced ferocious battle scenes set in North Africa involving exotic and savage encounters between man and beast, men and men, and between animals. In 1832 he travelled for six months in North Africa with a diplomat, and his first-hand observation of Arab cultures and journal sketches of all kinds of people and places from landscapes, urban scenes, and interiors of palaces, provided his work with an ethnographic or, at least witness-level credibility. (The subsequent interpretation of his subjects problematizes any documentary-style claims. *Women Of Algiers* 1834 for instance has been often linked to a description in Delacriox' journal where he describes the "gazelles" of the harem, but it is now considered to be a scene created from a Jewish wedding that he may have seen while in Algeria.) The conservative French Salonists in the next generation of painters either continued Romanticism's other-worldly dreamscape under the auspices of Symbolism, or rejected the world of Romantic feeling and the imagination for a more realist approach. This later c19th Orientalist painting, appearing as early as the 1860s (see the work of Gerome and Leon Belly for instance), translated Ingres' Odalisques, and Delacroix' themes into large scale illusionist portrayals of the Arab world. This realist development was supported by travel literature, ethnographic studies, travel photography and by that scholarly field of Orientalism studied by Said.

considers his publication in conjunction with this most obvious aspect of its presentation, it is possible to see how easily the visual can be intellectually sidelined - and the ways in which discourses empower themselves. After all, this reproduction sits under the book's subtitle, "Western Conceptions of the Orient". It is likely that many of those buying a copy of *Orientalism* would not even really notice the cover illustration; their interest would be in reading what Said has to say. Yet beyond some functioning as 'attractive' decoration, and without a place in Said's text, Gérôme's image, on Said's book, might still be said to serve as illustration, but of what? The choice of this image for the cover is likely to be the decision of the publisher, but still, how is it meant to relate to the text? Was it, along with the art nouveau lettering of the book's title, meant merely as an 'atmospheric' gesture by a book designer attempting to conjure up something of the Orientalist fantasy? Was it a careless or careful gesture - given the result appears such a good 'fit' for either an unquestioned acceptance of Orientalism, or conversely, an invitation to critique Orientalism. Has its meaning changed in relation to Said's text? Does it, as book cover, refer to European perspectives on the Arab world, its earlier meanings inverted due to a better understanding of the power of position and the politics of representation? Does it somehow, and to some degree, refer to both Said's text and to the illusory play of the image?

This image offers multiple opportunities for demonstrating the manufacture of Orientalism, with Gérôme's paintings having a relationship to numerous photographs he took of Islamic scenes in his travels. Predicated on prior conceptions of picturing particular subjects, selected, framed, taken/captured, and processed in particular ways, his photographs were reselected for ideas and provided details for his paintings. Despite both his photographs and paintings being *constructions* of the imagination, their detailed illusory surfaces uphold claims of scientific realism and they gesture towards late c19th ethnography. In its original form as a salon painting with claims to an exacting "scientific" naturalism (Nochlin, 1989b: 37), one supported by Gérôme's own North African photographs, this image was taken to represent a site within the Arab world.

Bryan S. Turner has described this image as "a perfect illustration of (the) theme of sensuality in the traditional vision of oriental society as one dominated by the irrationality of the senses ... with the snake itself a profound symbol of

sexuality" (Turner, 1994: 98). Linda Nochlin (1989b) considers Gérôme's painting a "profitable" demonstration of "colonialist ideology" with various signs and absences contributing to a confirmation of the cultural inferiority of the depicted subjects. She describes its "beguiling" portrayal of the boy as evoking an Orient envisaged as a "sexually charged mystery". The subject, says Nochlin, seems timeless, even though the picturesque young musician and his watching audience are located in "effects of realness" (Nochlin, 1989b: 41).

Modifying a question Nochlin asked about' realities': whose *fictions* are being represented here? Is this an example of how the Orientalism constructed by written sources was then represented visually, or is it yet another demonstration, in another field entirely, of how the Arab world was seen by Europeans? Is it another kind of Orientalist practice, or something quite different? Said himself uses the term "vogues", but also calls them 'expressions' with "a life of their own".

For all of this, the main purpose of any cover image is to attract attention and encourage book sales, and here one might argue that the provocation of the child performer's tensed and naked beauty - in conjunction with the snake substituting for that hidden from view, functioning as a phallic and pedophiliac tease - operates as the visual drawcard.[13] This graphic byplay in itself is no small thing. It reveals a Derridian power differential and something of the interplay of art and popular imagery in prints and illustrations, with commodity industries that Said's account does not address.[14] Said's thesis lends itself to extrapolation

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[13] Leppert (1996) notes that every figure within the painting holds a stick, saber, or plays a wind instrument, emphasizing this motif that is reflected yet again in the spear and shield on the wall. The light skinned boy, says Leppert is not just sexualized; he *is* sex, and gazed upon by the robed men, the image typically moves desire onto the racial Other. Leppert also touches on the problematic response to children's nudity in theory. See Greer (2003) for detailed study of the appeals and representational traditions around the young male body. For a detailed analysis of Gérôme's image as a demonstration of colonialist ideology, see Linda Nochlin's essay "The Imaginary Orient" (Nochlin, 1989b).

[14] See Mitchell (1998) whose study of the ordered certainty of "world-as-exhibition" in c19th world fairs shows another important apparatus of Orientalist construction. Mitchell suggests that these artificial models created an effect of an external contrasting reality characterized by essentialism, otherness, and absence. He provides a description of the embarrassment of an Egyptian delegation to the Paris Universal Exposition of 1889, viewing the recreation of a street in medieval Cario, so carefully rendered that it included dirt and donkeys. On approaching a mosque they found "Its external form was all there was of the mosque. As for the interior, it had been set up as a coffee house, where Egyptian girls performed dances with young males, and dervishes whirled" (Muhammad Amin Fikri, 1892, cited in Mitchell, 1998: 295). In turn the delegation found themselves "something of an exhibit," even when they arrived in Stockholm for the Congress of Orientals. Mitchell develops this idea of the objectifying spectacle to include the interactions of theatre, museum, exhibitions and Arab travel literature of their experience of Europe "with the

outside of the literary field, yet the claim of an originary power for written language as a conceptual and self-generating source of imperialist ideology can be seen as an instance of the maintenance of a conventional hierarchy of culture and intellectualism.

In the late c19th and early c20th with the development of cinema and theatre as spectacle, the popularity of the Orientalist genre is more easily visible.[15] Said, in *Orientalism* as well as later writings has acknowledged the power of the contemporary mass media: "If the world has become immediately accessible to a Western citizen living in the electronic age, the Orient too has drawn nearer to him, and is now less a myth than a place criss-crossed by Western, especially American interests" (Said, 1978: 26).[16] For Said, that nearness, indeed the very character of the media, also works toward reduction of individual lives and cultures. He argues: "One aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized moulds. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth-century academic and imaginative demonology of "the mysterious Orient" " (ibid.). Yet there is still, as Turner points out in relation to Said's later work, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), a failure "to give expression to the nature of materialism and its impact on the textual representation of the relationship between cultures... (Said is) too prone to see the problem at the level of literary production in the work of famous writers and artists rather than focusing on the everyday nature of imperial penetration of cultures via the materiality of commodity exchanges" (Turner, 1994: 18).[17]

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cultures of the world portrayed in the forms of objects arranged under glass, in the order of their evolution" (298).

[15] The hugely popular Orientalist genre easily transferred to the stage and then the cinema screen. The most dramatic images, such as those of the harem, and the rape-rescue scenario with (white) women about to ravaged by brutal wild Arab or debauched Sultan, or images of the evil seductress Salome, intersect with anti-Semitism and still feature in popular culture and media today. See Dijkstra (1986) and Lewis (1996) for detailed studies of these stereotypes. See Stam & Spence (1985), Marchetti (1993), Shohat (1997) and the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's report (1989) for studies of Orientalism in mainstream film; see also Griffin (1994) for a study of such Orientalist stereotypes in Disney's *Alladin*. See Graham-Brown (1988) and Alloula (1998) for studies of Orientalism in photographic practices.

[16] See his *Covering Islam*, New York: Pantheon, 1985 and also *Culture and Imperialism*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1993.

[17] Cultural materialism tends to focus on the malleability of object-value in different social contexts, rather than some personal, historical or intrinsic value that might be given by a particular person to an object. Walter Benjamin's writing emphasizes the object reality of images and the way

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Fascination for Evil

This ambivalence toward the visual means traditional practices as having formative influence on subjectivities may well be overlooked, while in electronic and filmic mode, its apparent and immense power of persuasion is condemned. Said's disapproval is directed solely at the tendency for contemporary media to recirculate stock narratives and formulas and reinforce ideological matters through textual narration or captions. For Jean Baudrillard it is the overwhelming and self-referential nature of contemporary media and its swamping of both the real and the imaginary that annihilates all distinctions of truth and illusion. He explains:

> "For us the medium, the image medium, has imposed itself between the real and the imaginary, upsetting the balance between the two, with a kind of fatality which has its own logic. I call this a fatal process in the sense that there is a definitive immanence of the image, without any possible transcendent meaning, without any possible dialectic of history - fatal also in the sense not merely of an unfolding of images and messages but of an exponential unfolding of the medium around itself. The fatality lies in this endless enwrapping (literally: without end, without destination) which leaves images no other destiny than as images" (Baudrillard, 1988: 29).

Grounded in Benjamin's 1936 observations (1977b) on the effects of industrialized reproduction of images and their mass dissemination, and Debord's 1967 critique of consumer capitalism and spectacle, Baudrillard argues that images, once predicated on real objects, now circulate and generate other images endlessly, without referents. "...images become more real than the real... (the

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usage, technology and social change influence meaning and value. In anthropology transaction and exchange often function as the central theoretical framework for examining communal cultures. Thomas' (1991) statement that "Exchange relations seem to be the substance of life" though manifests what might be seen as the totalizing effect of seeing the world from only a certain exclusionary point of view, one that determines relations and interactions according to economic, transactional concepts. We might equally call every encounter an act of interpretation. Where does altruism, or when someone is violent (or kind) to another, or when there is no exchange, fit into this system? Appadurai explains though that thinking "of things of things themselves, as in some kind of way having a *life*" (in Bell, 1999:27) was a strategy that facilitated a political perspective on the circulation of commodities in social life since "Economic exchange creates value... the link between exchange and value is *politics*, construed broadly" (Appadurai, 1986: 3). In his introduction to *The Social Life of Things* he emphasizes the need to differentiate between commodities, products, goods and artifacts, and gifts and in later work moved back to the relations of imagination as a social practice, consumption, with the idea of the subject-person "a constant reminder that there are other constitutions of agency, in say, the Pacific" (in Bell, 1999: 27). See Worsley (1999) for an overview of theoretical approaches to culture and the early positions developed on cultural materialism, and ownership of the means of production.

image) does no more than resemble itself and escape in its own logic, in the very perfection of its own model" (1988: 30).[18] The real he says, models itself on the image. And in such a world nothing matters since everything is reduced to meaningless equalizations. In this 1988 lecture titled *The Evil Demon of Images*, Baudrillard initially modified his familiar insistence on the disappearance of the real, to speak of "the perversity of the relation between the image and its referent, the supposed real; the sphere of images and the sphere of a reality whose nature we are less and less able to grasp" (13). He continues to urge us to doubt the reference principle of images, their apparent function of reproducing something "which is logically and chronologically anterior to themselves" (ibid.). For Baudrillard, the issue is that of a contemporary illusionism so perfect, so persuasive that it replaces the real:

"It is precisely when it appears most truthful, most faithful and most in conformity to reality that the image is most diabolical - and our technical images, whether they be from photography, cinema or television, are in the overwhelming majority much more 'figurative', 'realist', than all the images from past cultures" (ibid.).

In keeping with much writing on the contemporary, Baudrillard's work mirrors the technological fascinations and oft-proclaimed marvels of contemporary illusion. Buoyed up by futurist-like visions of virtuality, such writing blocks out broader concerns about dependencies, inequities, and oppressive, destructive areas of life.[19] Concerns about globalism and culture are lost in the delirious evocations of abstract relations (Worsley, 1999). The illusionism that

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[18] Debord, discussing how the worker's world becomes an estranged environment through the accumulation of alienated products states: The spectacle is the map of this new world, a map which exactly covers its territory" (Debord, 1983/1967: thesis 34). For Baudrillard, the "territory" now follows "the map" (Baudrillard, 1983b: 2).

[19] This phenomena, the talking up of the virtual experience in ways which correspond to the over-blown claims of the industry, is sometimes noted, but much of the discussion of new information and communications technologies is nevertheless celebratory and progressive, and tends to focus on the possibilities for new forms of social relations, and new forms of democratization. Yet research such as Waipeg Lee & Brenda Chan's (2003) on the usage of the Internet among Singaporean youth confirms that close relationships are rarely formed on-line, that even though 'virtual' friends are good for passing on secrets, they are not regarded as real friends. Contacts made were mainly local, rarely extending outside of Singapore, and between similar people. Lee and Chan identified three types of social competencies that are developed: learning to cope with psychological discomfort (when contact is terminated, or because of deception, or experiencing disappointment when finally meeting face-to-face); social appropriateness and planning skills; and learning to cope with disguise and deception, or enacting these and experiencing the consequences. These are hardly specialized to Internet activity though. While this research indicates that fears about youth disengaging from real communities are unfounded, it has little significance for utopian visions, or questions about acceptance of computer enhanced reals, or the economic, political, personal and environmental problems relating to lives increasingly determined by post-human values.

captivates Baudrillard may be considered in relation to his implicit protest regarding the impossibility of distancing oneself from the effects of contemporary media. Following Adorno and Horkheimer, (1973/1944), Baudrillard launches a damning critique of the technologically driven media system and the powerful effects of its 'hyper-real' illusion. With the separation of image from its original intended usage and context and its processes of fabrication invisible, all dialectic between image and history, and between image and reality, disappears. The only escape he offers is that of death (Baudrillard: 1976); the only strategy of resistance he sees is that of silence (Baudrillard: 1983a). Given his hyperbolic description, which often reads more like a celebration of the very state he warns against, the massive escalation of empty signs doomed to implosion, his end of the world scenario appears a very orgiastic closure, but it provides little theoretical direction.[20]

Image as Seduction

The Evil Demon of Images is significant in that it was written as an address to an audience that included a large number of image producers.[21] In this lecture, Baudrillard outlined his concerns regarding "perfect remakes", illusions which precede reality, such as the television programme *Holocaust,* and various films such as *The Last Picture Show, Apocalypse Now, The China Syndrome, Barry Lyndon,* and *Chinatown.* Yet there must have been a considerable gap between Baudrillard's perspective and those of his audience, whose filmmaking involvement would challenge his privileging of illusionist reality and his absolute neglect of 'alternative' styles which even then were to be found in mainstream film and television production.[22]

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[20] Baudrillard's writings from 1976 to the late 1980s demonstrate obsessive elements identified in Theweleit's 1989 two volume study of the fascist mentality and male fantasies of death and destruction. See Lorentzen (1995) for a critical discussion of the relation of both these writings and to fascist yearnings, visual culture, and Bataille's analysis of the totalitarian threat.

[21] This paper was first delivered as the inaugural Mari Kuttna Memorial Lecture on Film at the University of Sydney in 1984.

[22] Baudrillard indicates in later writing, that these other kinds of films do not matter. The self-referentiality or deconstructionist elements they exhibit only confirms his views, for it is realist illusion which is dominant or acts as the referential model, its simulation undermining the social logic of representation. See his commentary on self-referential or quotational films such as *Barton Fink, Basic Instinct* and *Sailor and Lula* which, in their self-parody and "useless perfection" he sees as destroyed from within (Baudrillard, 1997a: 8). He makes it clear his aesthetic preference is for the "total and intense" illusion conveyed by suggestion. "(S)ubtraction is what gives strength; power emerges from the absence"(9). Yet the very existence of alternative modes of film and the fact that many of them critique illusionist film refute his insistence on the totalizing nature of contemporary media. For Baudrillard though, looking at the addictive hold the more crass and bizarre forms of media have on audiences, the avant-garde doesn't count. Yet in his recent writing on art, he allows that he is fascinated by fascination, and in reflections on his photographic

The idea of imagery's self-generating power maintains illusionism's own masking of its material reality and hides the decision pathways within production. Contrary to appearances, all illusions are made, crafted, usually in ways that demand enormous effort, time, skills, resources and decision-making. Even a computer generated image or film has a producer, and in any appropriation, reuse, reassemblage, or transmission there are moments/points/passages of responsibility. Images do not come into being by themselves - even in a collaborative project someone is doing the selecting, often in accordance with clearly defined aims. Intention and decision are constants in production, and to pretend otherwise is to mystify technological production and maintain the power of its illusions.

What he describes, rather than a system of contemporary Western capitalism, is the effect of such illusions *as he experiences them* though he does not acknowledge a personal view. His claims assume a universal inclusive position, an 'us', though his concerns are ultimately directed to "the masses" the ordinary people, who now no longer silently resist (1983a), or perform some masquerade or "chameleon" adaptation (1988:15), but are undergoing a "metamorphosis", a strategy of conformity and compliance through which they annihilate themselves (14).[23]

This "fatal strategy" is seen to be brought about by a seduction inherent in "the play of resemblance" contaminating and distorting reality, an effect that does not merely collapse the distance between fantasy and reality, but anticipates it, produces it. Cause and effect are no longer distinguishable in media's catastrophic universalization, and content is meaningless. Baudrillard equates TV's power with nuclear deterrence and with Cold-War strategies that employed fear and neutralized energy, but he deems television itself "inoffensive to the imagination (even that of children) since it no longer carries any imaginary, for the simple reason that *it is no longer an image*" (25). TV, unlike cinema, which still "belongs to the sphere of the double, the phantasm, the mirror, the dream etc. ...(is) a screen without cinema's mythic effect; merely a terminal which

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practice, he suggests that technology is important as an instrument of magic or illusion for a positive play on illusion (37-38). His criticism is really leveled at mass culture. See Poster on Baudrillard's reactionary position, and his placing of popular culture and media as beyond "the modern distinction of the real and the imaginary" (Poster, 1995:17).

[23] See Poster's (1995) discussion of Baudrillard's construction of the audience.

"goes through you like a magnetic tape" (ibid.). He argues that images fascinate "because they are sites of the disappearance of meaning and representation" (29).

Baudrillard, confining his critique to a particular range of images, makes some odd claims on behalf of his filmmaker audience: "We all remain incredibly naive: we always look for good usage of the image, that is to say a moral, meaningful, pedagogic or informational usage, without seeing that the image in a sense revolts against this good usage, that it is the conductor neither of meaning nor good intentions, but on the contrary of an implosion, a denigration of meaning (of events, history, memory, etc.)" (23). Excusing any question of his own naivety on the grounds of the need to remain the wild, "unrestrained film buff" he further comments: "There is a kind of primal pleasure, of anthropological joy in images, a kind of brute fascination unencumbered by aesthetic, moral, social or political judgments" (28). He goes on to say

"It is because of this that I suggest that they are immoral, and that their fundamental power lies in this immorality. This brute fascination for images, above and beyond all moral and social determination, is also not that of dreaming or the imaginary, understood in the traditional sense. Other images, such as those in painting, drawing, theatre or architecture, have been better able to make us dream or imagine; other modes of expression as well (undoubtedly language makes us dream better than the image)" (28-29).

Baudrillard's 'immoral image' is dependent on the perceived enchantment of the viewer, responding in instinctual and base ways that appear to elide critical or depth of engagement. What would it mean though, following Derrida, for both writing and imaging to both be seen as ideational-material technologies?

In his 1935 critique of photography and film, Walter Benjamin argued that the value of Marxist art theses resided in their replacing of humanist concepts of creativity, genius, eternal value and mystery - all too readily appropriated for Fascist purposes and rituals - with an analysis of the developmental tendencies of art under conditions of production (Benjamin, 1977b/1936: 220). He described the industrialized reproduction of the image as producing a shift in human perception that would lead to immense social transformation. Arguing that the very prerequisite for the concept of an original work of art, its authenticity or

an 'aura' created by its presence and original context, is depreciated when the work is copied and circulated en masse, he saw in the industrialization of imagery "a tremendous shattering of tradition". What he understood was that a copy of an original work, detached from its history, viewed by spectators in their own environment, "reactivates the object reproduced" (223). Benjamin's observation on the primacy of the imaged-object is worth revisiting in relation to Baudrillard's thesis. What is seen in industrial reproduction, is *the image in itself* – that which is pictured, not the picturing.

Both Malraux (1974) and Berger (1972) saw the image's 'reactivation' of the object as the means by which an image operates as a 'substitute possession' of the pictured object. This idea has been has been enormously productive for examining the consumerist appeals of an image. What is denied or neutralized in the industrialized image, along with any traditional/original function, meaning and context, is the *experience* of form - of the original and everything evoked by the original's material presence, including a corresponding sense of authorship, authorship *as constitutive process* - and also the materiality of the current (re)production. The loss of authenticity within mass reproduction, while indeed negating humanist mystifications of art, also masks the actuality of imagemaking as a constituted, and directed, intentional process. The reality of *production* is neutralized and *the thing that is reproduction* is effaced or even rendered invisible. In entertainment and advertising the experience of the illusion is paramount.

This recognition of the invisibility of form and process is not entirely new in histories of image reception.[24] It is likely to be more marked wherever there is a gap between producers of images and audiences of images, and traditionally, it was a gap visible in the tensions between high art culture and art produced as community ritual.[25] In the postmodern period, this gap is heightened by contestations surrounding the reception of images globally disseminated by transnational media, entertainment industries, and consumer advertising. Where the persuasiveness of illusion is at stake and directed toward provoking vicarious experience, as particularly in the entertainment industries, this gap can be vast; 'production' is intentionally hidden. With the industrialized image as invisible

[24] See Freedberg (1989) who provides a history of response to images and their effect of the real.

[25] High art is characterized by a 'heroic', virtuoso performance/process, whereas in community art the making process is often visible, shared, and the crucial aspect of the project.

image, knowledge of authorship or of process may well split off to specialized domains and professional avenues, or more popular discourses such as those celebrating the 'special' effects of illusion, or the creative achievements of authors/artists.[26]

In many postmodern productions, the image as fiction, as fabrication, is revealed in a play of the workings of illusion as knowledge (Williams, 1994). Postmodern imaging often calls attention to itself as production and cuts across its own persuasiveness, rather than maintaining a seamless illusion. The frequency and popularity of such self- reflexive productions is such, that in television, 'out-takes' and 'glitches' are now genres within their own right, and even faked in feature animations.[27] For all this might mean as evidence of media-savvy audiences today, there are levels of meaning and effect that remain uncontested, embedded in naturalized ideological constructions. Sidney Mintz, in the context of an anthropologically framed study of the historical significance of sugar, maintained that people's use of cultural symbols cannot be simply understood as a matter of individual or independent choice. Most of the symbols we employ, Mintz argued, "are deeply rooted within historical codes of perception and meaning; part of a legacy, passed on over generations" (quoted in Ewen, 1988: 120). Mintz proposed that not only may the origins of meaning be lost, but that meaning is often unconscious or difficult to articulate, and further, that our active engagement in the making of meaning may be limited, that

> "Most of us, most of the time, act within plays the lines of which require recognition, not invention. To say this is not to deny individuality or the capacity to add, transform, and reject meanings, but to insist that the webs of signification that we as individuals spin are exceedingly small and fine (and mostly trivial); for the most part they reside within other webs of immense scale, surpassing single lives in time and space" (ibid.).

Intellectual Strategies of Resistance
Baudrillard works with meaning on a grand scale. In an interview published in conjunction with his *Evil Demon of Images* lecture, he admitted to being

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[26] Such purposeful invisibility of the production process is then intentionally revealed in ubiquitous follow-ups on the film's special effects "The Making of..." as another commercial opportunity that buys into and extends audience interests.

[27] Pixar is particularly fond of this joke. See *Toy Story, 1 & 11 A Bug's Life, Monsters Inc.* and *Finding Nemo* for 'out-takes' following the credits.

intentionally provocative and dramatic in the way he states his views: "It is more or less a strategic position that one adopts: one of precipitation, of acceleration, as demanded by the text itself" (Baudrillard, 1988: 40). His ambiguity is owned as deliberate, and a simultaneous tension between strategic necessity and valid analysis, a position he calls, perhaps owing something to Derrida, "objective irony" (41). Asked in this interview if his "Demon" image referred to Descartes' idea of an evil demon able to conjure up a non-existent world, including Descartes himself, Baudrillard described his motivation as more a heretical Manichean strategy. Manichean philosophy, he explains, held that the creation, the reality of the world was a total illusion, the work of an evil demon, "something that has been tainted from the very beginning…made up only of *signs* - and that it was governed solely through the power of the *mind*." (ibid.). Such creation, says Baudrillard, is "really just a product of *thought* itself, which is totally anti-rational and anti-materialist" (ibid.). He explains, in ways which contradict his version of historical rupture and the loss of the real:

> "The principle fundamentally and from the very beginning is that there is no objectivity to the world. But nevertheless one has to recognize the reality of the illusion; and one must play upon this illusion itself and the power that it exerts" (45).

It is worth noting that in Manichean philosophy, primacy of thought is equated with spiritual prowess, and, as Akbar S. Ahmed observes in his discussion of Greek influences on European culture, the Manichean principle is "that the path to God is by rejecting the body" (Ahmed, 1992: 75).[28] Baudrillard's loss of the real, a pre-discursive pure real, presumably innocent, dependable, transparent and authentic, does not engage at all with the body, for his thesis depends on the power of abstract argument, but its implication, echoing an older culture-nature debate, is that the organic/natural body is also lost in the hyper-real.[29] *Ideas* of a reality-under-threat beg for an examination of Western attachments to material and positivist explanations of being. That any such real existed may well be predicated on nostalgic and romantic ideas of the past and other kinds of

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[28] Ahmed provides a comparative and historical study of Muslim and Western relations in the context of postmodernism. This specific discussion examines St. Augustine's denial of sexual appetites and his pursuit of intellectual God-endowed truths.

[29] To argue, that because of the invasiveness of contemporary medical technology or media that the modern body, the actual body, is now more culture than nature is to privilege only certain kinds of technologies and to ignore the countless ways bodies are cultured, managed, developed, conceptualized, narrativized and constituted in all kinds of societies.

societies in which the body is seen as one with nature. Baudrillard's own language has few corporeal elements, rather it is that of a passionate abstraction in flamboyant mimicry of his vision of the cyber-real "produced from miniaturized units, from matrices, memory banks and command models... an irradiating synthesis of combinatory models in a hyperspace without atmosphere" (Baudrillard, 1983b: 3). And what is significant here is the overwhelming role Baudrillard grants to imagery as culture obliterating nature.

His designation of the postmodernist visual as a realm of meaningless simulacra is a rhetorical and allegorical arm, a hall of mirrors that amplifies visual operations and their power.[30] The two effects Baudrillard discusses, the real and the disappearance of the real, can only exist together in the imaginary space of the intellect. Foucault, discussing "the lawless and uncharted dimension of the *heteroclite* ...(where) things are "laid", "placed", "arranged" in sites so very different from one another that it is impossible to find a common place beneath them all", emphasizes the intellectual advantages of order. He explains that

"*Heterotopias* are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this *and* that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy syntax in advance, ... heterotopias...desiccate speech, stop words in their tracks, contest the very possibility of language at its source; they dissolve our myths and sterilize the lyricism of our sentences" (Foucault, 1983/1970: xvii-xviii).

The idea of different realities (or disorders) has something of this heterotopian character; certainly the validation of other orders would weaken the powerful effect of totality in Baudrillard's system.

Baudrillard's hyperreal scenario of a totalitarian, global communications matrix of illusions, is languaged, not only, as Meghan Morris observed, as "an ecstasy of description" (Morris, 1984: 92) but also as a frenzied celebration in which "the spiral of intensification, the raising of the power" (93) is what counts.[31]

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[30] Foucault proposes that rhetoric "...toys with the fullness of language. It uses the possibility of repeating the same thing in different words, and profits from the extra richness of language that allows us to say different thing with a single word, The essence of rhetoric is allegory" (Foucault, 1982: 21).

[31] Andrew Wernick points out that Baudrillard's 'ironic theory' is an attempt "to conjure up a metaphorical power" (Wernick, 1998: 347), "a challenge to the powers of the world, including the gods" (Baudrillard, 1990: 91).

Baudrillard's lament for the disappearance of the real (and philosophy), and for the loss of discursive and rational relations between reality and imagery seems to me also a nostalgic railing against loss and death. At the same time it shows itself to be an enactment of control and reassurance, consciously and intentionally constructing oneself and one's behaviour along with all the god-like hallmarks that implies - while denying this in others. Baudrillard's designation of audience as "masses", subject to the evils of media, stands in contrast to his own place as separate (and higher), as the one who, *through his intellect*, sees and understands - ironically.

Derrida's structural demonstrations (1982a) of a "governing centre" "escaping structurality" by being at the centre of totality while not part of the totality, prompts yet another view on Baudrillardian discourses. Derrida emphasizes that "the totality *has its centre elsewhere*. The center is not the center" (248). The concept of a center, he says, represents coherence itself, but is "contradictorily coherent. And, as always, coherence in contradiction expresses the force of a desire" (ibid.). Derrida describes this centered structure as professing a freedom of action ("free play"), while being "fundamentally immobile" and constituted upon "a reassuring certitude" that masters the anxiety of being "implicated... caught in the game...of being...a stake in the game" (ibid.).[32]

When read in relation to Derrida's deconstruction of the operations of coherence and totality, Baudrillard's anxiety/excitement/passion about the loss of reality appears as an exemplary version of this 'freeplay', with its fixed position on origins and the history of meaning, and with 'reality' yet another substitute for presence.[33] Even the spectacle, both the result and project of

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[32] The game itself is hard to pin down in Derrida's writing. It is a game that is "a history of meaning...whose origin may always be revealed, or whose end may be anticipated in the form of a presence ...which is out of play" (Derrida 1982a: 245). I take this to be the struggle over authority of meaning with the processes of power absent or hidden, the author absent, as a way of giving the impression that there is an objective voice and an external authority at work. What is out of play is the psychological and personal investment of the author that in turn mirrors the investments of power within social and institutional structures.

[33] Derrida proposes that the receiving of "different forms or names (is) always a designated constant of a presence: essence, existence, god, man, conscience" (1982a: 249). He also suggests that the endless chain of substitutions for center and presence is something largely inescapable yet he assigns an historical moment to such kinds of thinking. He proposes that "rupture" occurred when "the structurality of structure had to begin to be thought ...this disruption was repetition in all senses of this word... never itself, always transported...prescribing its displacements and its substitutions... From then on it was probably necessary to think that there was no center"...but rather "a function, a sort of non-locus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions came into play" ...the moment in "which language invaded the universal problematic", when "everything became discourse... when "everything became a system where the central signified" (ibid.). See

capitalist production, is, as Debord observed, "the material reconstruction of the religious illusion" (Debord, 1983/67: thesis 20), and is, for Baudrillard as Wernick notes, very Catholic, very Baroque. Debord speaks of the effect of the spectacle:

> "The spectator's consciousness, imprisoned in a flattened universe, bound by the screen of the spectacle behind which his life has been deported, knows only the *fictional* speakers who unilaterally surround him with their commodities and the politics of their commodities. The spectacle in its entirety, is his "mirror-image". Here the stage is set with the false exit of generalized autism" (Debord, 1983/1967: thesis 218).

For both Debord and Baudrillard, illusion-reality centers on separation, alienation, where the spectacle "as the concrete inversion of life, is the autonomous movement of the non-living" (thesis 2). But where Debord sees spectacle as "not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images" (thesis 4) and an inherent outcome of capitalist production, Baudrillard condemns the spectacle itself for its effect of the real. Jane Gaines points out the inherent limits in any "blaming "manipulative" media" position for intellectual work: "(T)he more extreme contention of post-modernist theory - the idea that the image has swallowed reality whole - obliterates the problems endemic to comparisons between images and society. If an image now precedes the real, engulfs it and renders it obsolete as a point of comparison, do we any more need to show how representation is ideological?" (Gaines & Herzog, 1990: 5). Mark Poster too observes that if there is any validity at all in a hyper-reality that "by-passes the distinction between life and death", then "Critical theory faces the formidable task of unveiling structures of domination when no one is dominating, nothing is being dominated and no ground exists for a principle of liberation from domination" (Poster, 1995: 111).

Illusions and Realities

Derrida has shown though that the loss of being-present, and the significatory turn, are not derived from contemporary media and cultural practice, but are produced by the consciousness of language/signification itself. Writing has its

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Wernick (1998) for an extended discussion of Baudrillard's various positions, implicit and declared, in relation the absence of God, particularly his preoccupation with the death of humanism, or a kind of Good Absolute.

own reality and effect (Willis, 1997), and language has its own rhetoric working toward the creation and manufacture of illusions. Baudrillard's authority and certainty has a tangible influence in terms of effect as evidenced by frequent citations, and his account of the relationship between reality and image has become a truism of sorts.[34] Yet his nostalgia for some analogical relation between image and referent, a golden age of pure referentiality is predicated on the notion of a singular function for imagery. In that it excludes all other kinds of images, their history, different types of seeing and meanings, Baudrillard's thesis becomes, for all its passion and force, one more illusion fueled by escalations of desire and trapped between oppositional ideas.[35] As Derrida says, "We are thus not blind to the visible, but blinded by the visible, dazzled by writing' (Derrida, 1976: 37).

Derrida, already critical of the culture/nature opposition and the use of such "old" binary grids, "external/internal, image/ reality, and representation/presence", to legitimate a "science" of linguistics (33), comments on the functioning of this dual system,

> "The paradox is that the metaphysical reduction of the sign needed the opposition it (it: the classic approach) was reducing. The opposition is part of the system along with the reduction" (Derrida, 1982a: 251).[36]

Nicholas Zurbrugg argues that Baudrillard, with his "systematic anti-system" of approach, reveals two Baudrillards, the exterminating angel, "announcing the death or disappearance of every imaginable aesthetic or ethical value", and now, playing the game from the other side, "the benevolent genie" (Zurbrugg, 1997a:

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[34] See Genosko (1970 for a discussion of Baudrillard in relation to effects and for an analysis of the interplay of Baudrillard's writing and the designs for his books that has some resonance with the my earlier exposition of the cover for Said's *Orientalism*. He says for instance, "*Seduction* is itself fatal in the sense of being irresistible. With its shocking pink cover featuring Man Ray's photograph *Femme au longs cheveux* framed with vertical green bands which contribute to the overall vibration of this restless jacket, Marilouise Kroker's design is a lesson in seduction... effectively fetishizing Baudrillard for Francophiles. Not even Baudrillard recognized himself in this book-object" (Genosko, 1997: 108), (emphasis in original).

[35] This by no means exhausts the various negative positions on the visual. As Martin Jay argues that though we might dismiss "...mandarin intellectuals distrustful of the visual pleasures provided by modern mass culture" who seem to enact "a covert asceticism in the denial of the pleasures of the gaze" that this would not do "justice to the complexities of antiocularcentric discourse" (Jay, 1994: 590).

[36] Derrida reminds us that we are unable to utter anything "which has not already slipped into the form, the logic, the implicit postulations of precisely what it seeks to contest" (Derrida, 1982a: 251). Binaries though are useful. Notions of illusion and reality generate meaning symbiotically - one is defined by what the other is not, and together they mark out something probably worth investigating.

2) who follows up the little stories and things that constitute the most profound stakes as inspiring sites of emergence of real value, 'enchanted' spaces.

Derrida's writing, with its "complicated and ambiguous ruminations on visuality in its various guises" (Jay, 1994: 498), problematizes the condemnation of mass communications and the entertainment industry, and its extreme Baudrillardian fascinations. Where Baudrillard, in a nostalgic enterprise lodged in binary oppositions, posits the imminent loss of a pure relation of referent to image, Derrida, like Foucault, argues against "naturalist opposition" between internal ideas and external realities, and for the complexity of representation and the impossibility of a pure meaning.[37] Derrida's exposure of the investments in origins and domains of subjectivity also problematizes common and implicit assumptions of a prior truth, or more authentic truth, and in ways that expose intellectual containments of imagery.[38]

Definitions of image as imitation, as mirror, or as delusion, as faked, rely on a literal notion of relation between object and image that entirely ignores metaphor and symbol, let alone form and material, or variability in perceptual response. Derrida, in discussing Malarkey in *Disseminations*, writes of the speculum as that which reflects reality effects rather than reality:

> "in this mirror of a mirror, a difference or dyad does exist, since there are mimes and phantoms. But it is a difference without a reference, or rather a reference without a referent" (Derrida, 1982b: 206).

As Jay (1994) points out, Derrida regards "perfect secularity" as unlikely even with an originary representation. Instead Derrida proposes that a mirror image, apparently identical with what it reflects, still manifests a difference in that it splits subject and object, and doubles itself thereby retaining "a surplus, an invisible otherness" (Derrida, 1976: 36).

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[37] See Foucault for a sustained rumination on image and referent in relation to the propositions and intertextual play of Magritte's 1926 painting *This is not a pipe*. Foucault identifies seven discourses within the work that he suggests inaugurate an infinite play of transferences that "demolish the fortress where similitude was held prisoner to the assertion of resemblance" (1982: 49). See also Foucault's 1983/1970 detailed examination of the location of power in art images, and a critique of mimetic ideas of imagery.

[38] Plato, says Derrida," who said basically the same thing about the relationship between writing, speech, and being (or idea), had at least a more subtle, more critical, and less complacent theory of image, painting, and imitation than the one that presides over the birth of Saussurian linguistics" (Derrida, 1976: 33).

Derrida connects the functioning of meaning to difference and argues that it resides in the trace: "Such would be the originary trace. Without a retention in the minimal unit of temporal experience, without a trace retaining the other as other in the same, no difference would do its work and no meaning would appear... This difference is therefore not more sensible than intelligible and it permits the articulation of signs among themselves within the same abstract order - a phonic or graphic text for example - or between two orders of expression" (62). In this Derrida acknowledges both the materiality of the image and its making. He even proposes that "Difference is therefore the formation of form. But it is on the other hand the being-imprinted of the imprint" (63).

Baudrillard's reversal, post-eighties, may be placed in conjunction with a 1994 retrospective survey exhibition of his photographs *The Ecstasy of Photography*.[39] In making sense of art in relation to these photographs, Baudrillard describes the world as hiding behind the profusion of images in which there is nothing to see – an ironic illusion.[40] He restates the idea that the image no longer reflects or imagines reality, in that it has become the real, and in doing so, has disappeared. "Our universe has swallowed its double, and has lost its shadow" (Baudrillard, 1997a: 13). What becomes clear is that this description of effect is directed at mass media and contemporary film. What is new is that he ordains the photograph as mirror, with its trace of the absent real, as offering "tangible evidence of the world at a certain given moment." His description is that of a trapping, the capturing of an instant or detail, and a capricious act. "It's the immanent presence of the object, rather than the representation of the object" (in Zurbrugg, 1997b: 33). Most of Baudrillard's photographs appear to be a register of absent bodies, or else, the distanced photographer, who, by his own account, cannot focus on people because the photograph "decimates' or masks them. When Zurbrugg asked Baudrillard about a photograph that does show people, Baudrillard replied. "Yes, but it's not so much a photograph of human

[39] In an interview discussing his impressions of this exhibition (two smaller exhibitions had been held earlier in Venice and Paris), Baudrillard stated that the photographs appeared more aesthetically beautiful than he wanted, but made him "conscious of building a new vision of my own strange world" (in Zurbrugg, 1997a: 3). He recognized a certain continuity in his photographic practice; and beyond that, "a something else" located within the banality of the media (ibid.).

[40] Baudrillard (1997a) calls for an art of aesthetic illusion, radical, magical, and enigmatic (as opposed to hyper-illusion), dealing with the real events of perception; an illusion that is playing with illusion. He does not recognize this in contemporary art though, or in film, where all illusion is abolished by technical perfection (Baudrillard, 1997b: 25), designating the screen "No depth – just a surface. No hidden face – just an interface" (22).

beings. It's of two Americans, I think, who were sitting there." He means, he says, that it is not a portrait depicting human beings, but an image that reminded him, in its oblique lighting, of an Edward Hopper painting. Baudrillard distinguishes his own photographic practice, as beginning casually around 1983, and as a diversion, something completely different from writing, yet the source of a far greater pleasure and passion. Reflecting a naïve ontology of the photograph and with no sense of the dialectical relations of image-object-culture (Willis, 1997), he denies searching for a vision or a subjective style, or even referencing other photographers, though he concedes such references might be found retrospectively. Where humanism privileges the subject-artist's eye, Baudrillard privileges the object, "because it exercises a mysterious power over subjects" (in Zurbrugg, 1997b: 139). His fascinations are for the absent body, and constitute a surfaceplay of sights, and a practice that is in stark contrast to the kind of image that is Angela Stewart's *Emmie*, which is a document of love (fig. 49).[41]

Baudrillard's view is not one that can incorporate materiality, or bodies, or old age, or feeling, let alone differences in expression, form, meaning or context, different histories, functions, or distribution, and conditions of production.[42] He insists on a "fundamental and radical antagonism" between illusion and reality. This irreconcilability stands in contrast to Derrida's identifications of incommensurabilities and acknowledgement of irreducibility and radical indeterminacy that open out into the diverse possibilities of experience. Dual formations such as image-reality, mind-body appear to generate a particular mythic strength and appeal. Particular attributes posed as oppositional forces lend themselves to powerful allergorization, in that they are predicated on confrontation, taking on the power of a *singular* simplicity, a monolithic representation of conflict, but presented as an either/or, around, as Trinh T. Minh-ha has observed, a kind of difference that is separation (Trinh, 1991: 150). Such designations ignore more subtle conceptualizations able to acknowledge the ambiguous and blurred configurations of experience.

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[41] Stewart made a series of photographs about Emmie, a psychiatric patient she nursed and came to love. This work was exhibited as part of a project *Art, medicine and the body*, comprising of an exhibition, performances and forum at the Perth Institute for Contemporary Art, August, 1996. (See fig. 49)

[42] Anne-Marie Willis (1997) observes that even the object mutates in Baudrillard's discourse, moving from a binary paring with subject, to pure sign, to phantom object, which then, dematerialized, moves from stimulation to illusion (Willis, 1997: 137).

Theoretical positions that are locked into oppositions of reality and sign as image, or polarize mind and matter, or which continue to cast images as delusions or suspect shadows of some real, can only engage with contemporary visual phenomena in reductive and circular ways.[43] Derrida proposes that "Representation mingles with what it represents, to the point where one speaks as one writes, one thinks as if the represented were nothing more than the shadow or reflection of the representer. A dangerous promiscuity and a nefarious complicity between the reflection and the reflected which lets itself be seduced narcissistically" (Derrida, 1976: 36).

Even though criticism of binarization and a recognition of its patriarchal aspects (Cixous, 1981/1975, Mulvey, 1989/1985) is already well established in contemporary thought and knowledge, it would seem that the continuing dominance of the Cartesian mode of cognition is such that alternative configurations of experience cannot be accorded proper attention. The pivot of Baudrillard's reversible discourse is the fear evoked by assertions of technological dominance and its power lies in an attempt to reproduce the effects of the imagery he critiques. What is usefully acknowledged is the experience of communications in the everyday, the intrusive flashy glamour and stimulating speed, overwhelming and overriding (for a time) all reality.[44] Yet to universalize this experience denies the unevenness of the cultural experience worldwide, and within the day-to-day negotiation of meaning - the constant making sense of any object, person or place or image or experience, or text. Contrast is both the pivot and the edge of meaning and experiences. While difference is crucial to focus and awareness, opposed attributes mark and divide a field or set of experiences that already have some affinities, and merely mirror each other endlessly.[45]

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[43] See Willis (1997) for a rigorous critique of Baudrillard's terms and his reductive arguments, including his nostalgic construction of nature, his denial of the reality of constant change, and his failure to move beyond a restrictive description of our relation to objects.

[44] See Poster (1995) who provides further appraisals, positive and critical, of Baudrillard's contributions to thinking about contemporary media.

[45] Barthes provides another take on this in considering his perceptions of Japan: "In the Orient, apparently, the mirror is empty...it intercepts only other mirrors, and this infinite reflection is emptiness itself" (Barthes, 1984/1970: 79).

Sensibility and Difference

In Western modes of naturalistic imagery, perceptual experience offers an infinite play of the found.[46] The very meaninglessness and irregularity of shapes as the seen field shifts and changes within movement and view; all the accidents of light in illumination and shadows, or the minutia of details and differences in surface, and the inevitable overlapping and obscuring of spaces and objects requires that even the natural be staged or contained. The perspective grid with its convergence of parallel edges and the disappearing act of the horizon, operated once as a control over representation, and it still functions as rational space. Disorder is also controlled though the mediation of gestalt perceptual tendencies toward clarity and order. Ideal form, 'rationalized' nature, or prescribed representations of body and character, staged within the view of an omnipotent, privileged and anonymous spectator, all work toward the containment of certain fears, and toward providing the pleasure inherent in mastering this universe.

Defined in relation to polarized configurations such as reality, truth, nature, culture and illusion, mind and body in ways that are conservative and reflective of a Cartesian mindset, imagery becomes "systematically drawn into a negative analogy with fraudulent apparitions, confounding dreams, and irrational delusions" (Stafford, 1993: 5). What Jay describes as "the postmodern hysteria of the visual" (Jay, 1994: 545) in contemporary philosophical discourse can also be seen as an abandonment of political will (Dirlik, 1997).[47] Words as illusion and the real, are useful as abbreviations for certain kinds of thought, but they are not adequate accounts of experience.[48] Such words are brute reductions of objects, events, conditions, and of relation. To acknowledge more sophisticated and subtler forms of reality, such as occurrences or experiences, may require a reversal - *the illusion of reality*, the naturalizing of socially constructed and negotiated determinations of what seems real and not real. This at least enables

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[46] See Gombrich (1968/1960) for the classic study on how these infinite possibilities are normally channeled selectively into what is variously called a system, or visual language, or set of conventions. See Massorini, (2000) for a revised account that accommodates recent psychological understandings and different kinds of visual practices.

[47] Jay's focus on the overwrought descriptions of image culture includes Baudrillard, Jameson, and Lyotard, yet his exposition on this strand of contemporary French philosophy shows the importance of more considered influences such as Levinas and Blanchot.

[48] See Mulvey (1989/1985) on the limits and uses of binaries in feminist thinking and politics.

some address of the obliteration of partial relations, real to some degree, real in some ways.

Why should the relation of *source* and image be one of opposition? It might also be argued, following Derrida's own explorations on the relations of writing and speech and embracing the idea of image as another form of mentation, and 'the referent' as another kind of imaging/imagining, that any relation is always that between image and image. Describing this doubling effect, Derrida proposes that "In this play of representation, the point of origin becomes ungraspable. There are things like reflecting pools, and images, an infinite reference from one to the other, but no longer a source, a spring. There is no simple origin" (Derrida, 1976: 36). With this in mind, a relation of interconnectedness is likely to be far more appropriate for both 'the territory' and the map.

Rather than polarized extremes, binaries might be better seen as paired concepts. as a marking of positions in some observed spectrum of shared relations, or better still, as intensities (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), within an everchanging field of degrees and layers as defined by locatable viewpoints. It might be also worth reflecting on the way in which Trinh T. Minh-ha formulates an act of seeing, drawing on ideas that point to a non-Western cultural sense of somatic experience.

Trinh, speaking of film in relation to reality, says,
> "The realm of a film is that of a mediating elsewhere, albeit one deeply
> rooted in reality. It seeks of the truth of reality, or the *ch'i* of life's fictions,
> but is neither dream nor reality. Its meaning is never simply true nor false.
> For it is thanks to its falsity (recreation through the mediation of the
> cinematic apparatus) that a truth is made perceptible to the spectator. In
> confusing meaning with truth, a form of literalism, of narrow-mindedness and
> of ensuing terrorism is accorded the name of "realism". Such glaring
> "misnaming" in film history ultimately serves to mask the process in
> filmmaking by which meaning is fixed and formulas are prescribed. Thereby,
> the oppressive cinematic conventions that serve ideology of power are
> naturalized, and representation, lacking *yugen,* no longer vibrates; it ceases to

be political, while meaning becomes merely a pawn in the game of power" (Trinh, 1991: 162-163).[49]

Trinh is not speaking of murderous terrorism but the ideological terrorism of political regimes that confound truth and reality. Trinh plays with the binary terms "the truth of reality" conjoining the phrase with "the *ch'i* of life's fictions" to establish a sense of difference by drawing on Chinese cosmological vocabulary, and to refuse brute oppositions or determinations of experience. *Ch'i* has a strong spiritual resonance with Daoism and Buddhism and points to different way of knowing, and seeings. She insists on the fictive nature of film *and* its capacity for a revelatory truth, and condemns the conventional politically approved 'realist' tradition that claims to be truth, while upholding or asserting the interests of the powerful whatever their position across the political spectrum.[50]

The next section of this chapter examines John Berger's ideological take on seeing the visual, which sought to accommodate Walter Benjamin's dialectical and material analysis of visual culture, and to reveal the ideological investments within European art and mass media images. Berger's work is openly political; he seeks to prescribe a way of seeing for us that will make us consciously vigilant of the "class character" of images. It is an approach that has been enormously influentiall, yet it is inherently reductive.[51]

The Ideological View
At the start of his four part television programme *Ways of Seeing,* Berger describes imagery in 'naturalistic' terms, as the reproduction of the seen. Berger states:

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[49] Trinh translates *ch'i* as spirit, and *yugen,* as "subtle profundity" or "deep reserve".

[50] Trinh warns us not to conflate meaning with truth, and argues that the truth we think we possess in viewing an image is always contingent on the meanings that we impose on the image in our act of perception, but Berger's approach is not about understanding meaning; it is a tactic, an assertion of a counter-view.

[51] Although Berger's work has been largely supplanted by more recent cultural studies paradigms (particularly that of the Birmingham School - see for example, Hall, 1997), it has an almost canonical status, and is still highly regarded in some sociological circles (for example, Chaplin, 1994). His contribution to the politics of representation had significant implications for positioning the visual within marxist and feminist critiques of consumer culture (for examples, see Williams, 1978, Ewen, 1988; Wallace, 1990; Langton, 1993). It led also to the examination of hidden premises in various kinds of visual and informational systems (see for instance, Fyfe & Law, 1988, Elkins, 2003).

"An image is a sight which has been recreated or reproduced. It is an appearance, or a set of appearances, which has been detached from the place and time in which it made its appearance and preserved - for a few moments or a few centuries" (Part 1, *Ways of Seeing*, 1972, also (Berger, 1972: 9-10).

Here an image is determined as sight re-manifested, concretized; Berger also references Walter Benjamin's (1977/31) proposition that mass reproduction results in a loss of original context and meaning.[52] The premise is that images are formative, that they influence thought and behaviour, and Berger aligns himself with the belief (see Benjamin, 1977/1932; Baudrillard, 1983a; Snyder, 1980; Wartofsky, 1981) that our conceptions of the world are formed through pictures.[53] Images have such effect because we have been schooled or taught to see them as real, as truthful. Berger argues that figurative imagery invites identificatory engagements that lead to particular behavioural responses, or behavioural modelling. His exploration of body portrayal in part two of *Ways of Seeing*, for example, centers on the way images of women are fabricated as "sights" to stimulate male pleasure and confirm male power even with images intended for female viewers, which function to show women how men would like to see them. Judith Butler in her recent analysis of the materialization (sedimentation) of sex/gender confirms this formational function and links it to the actual body:

> "That the body which one "is" is to some degree a body which gains its sexed contours in part under specular and exteriorizing conditions suggests that identificatory processes are crucial to the forming of sexed materiality" (Butler, 1993: 17).

Berger's demonstration of the sexual objectification of women within the persuasive medium of television confirmed the kind of Marxist analysis of art and culture developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1955, 1968), that would become the orthodox approach for the social critique of visual representation.[54] The title

[52] Berger formally acknowledges Benjamin's thesis on the loss of aura in the mechanical age, as influencing his arguments (Berger, 1972: 34).

[53] See also this argument in the context of postcolonialism, Goldie, Terry, "Signifier Resignified: Aborigines in Australian Literature", in Anna Rutherford, (ed.), *Aboriginal Culture Today*, Sydney: Dangeroo Press, 1988.

[54] There are a number of points made in the last section of Bourdieu's 'Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception', published in the *International Social Science Journal*, vol 20, winter 1969, pp. 598-612, that are echoed or developed in Berger's thesis. Though Bourdieu's emphasis is that of contemporary enculturation of perception/appreciation of art, and the training of art competencies, Berger seems to have taken up his ideas on the sacred and ideological functioning

Ways of Seeing implies alternative lookings (in keeping Nietzsche's understanding of the importance of viewpoint). Berger's production was largely an attempt to assert his more 'truthful' view and to illustrate modes of visual and textual persuasion. It is within the mode of television that some of the most revealing contradictions appear in Berger's theorizing of the visual, many of them overt strategies that reinforce his critique of capitalism. After showing how visual-aural elements, normally un-noticed, such as music, voice-over, camera movement, close-ups, context and juxtaposition create meaning, he demonstrates how those production elements work for traditional privilege. Only at the very end of the series, he suggests that they are employed just as much to support his own political position.[55]

In order to ultimately show how mass media's carefully orchestrated attempts at persuasion and ideological reinforce capitalist values, Berger presents certain kinds of information, distorts and manipulates the material for his argument, and then demonstrates the processes used. "I try to show why modern methods of reproduction and communication, like colour photography, like television, have theoretically changed the meaning of visual art of the past, de-mystifying it and making it secular" (Berger speaking in 'Possessions', part three of the televised *Ways of Seeing*, 1972). Mimicking contemporary media's appropriation and reproduction of images, he removes images from their art historical context -the context that he argues is an ideological mask for social inequities of the privileged class - and then re-employs these images to illustrate/reveal what he claims to be the truth of social conditions, past and present. What he ultimately demonstrates along with European painting's inherent corruption, the

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of art, the naturalization of art images and their relationship to social power and status. The approach subscribed to Berger was already visible in art theory writings by Baker & Hess, 1971, Nochlin, 1971, Hess & Nochlin, 1972, and Greer, 1972. See Nochlin's introduction to her 1989 *The Politics of Vision*, for a rich account of the formalist, Marxist and structuralist influences on her work in the sixties.

[55] He makes no such statement in the book that followed the television series. The book, published under the same title, is very different in its approach to visual material. It consists of a mix of seven essays, some of them written in relation to images and some purely visual essays. Its critical demonstration of the influence and transmission of capitalist and patriarchal ideologies relies on the juxtaposition of print media images and paintings, published as black and white reproductions many of them postage stamp size, laid out six to a page. The published book demonstrates a contradiction between theory of the visual, and the effect of the visual. The small black and white images lack the very power that Berger emphasizes as central in the illusionist seductions of both European painting and advertising, their material presence or force connected to the glamour and pleasure of colour and tactility. The extreme size reduction of the images also results in such a loss of detail and clarity that the reader has to rely on the text for information regarding content. The very qualities that make these images so persuasive and engaging for media or art viewers are repressed. By this means, Berger discursively produces the effect of rationalist analysis and knowing, and a critical distance from the visual subject.

immorality of contemporary advertising images, and even the art image's loss of aura in the mechanical age, is the malleability of meaning through contextualization, and the power of the mass media.

Ways of Seeing can be seen as an illustration of the tensions between various modes of signification systems and their claims to authority, including those of image and text. Barthes observed that ideology and power are constants in all situations (Barthes, 1973/1957); analysis itself reflects ideological positions and investments that are always reproduced in the mapping of apparent meanings and interpretative productions. Berger's participation in image politics is unusual in that he casts himself in the role of 'trickster' acting out an authority role while subverting it at every turn.

His lacunal argument provides a highly selective and reductive version of European painting, emphasizing certain aspects and practices while ignoring others. The breadth of subject matter in European art and its non-materialist concerns, the tradition of the male nude, the popularity of the print, the self-reflexivity and critical practice of the avant-garde in the modern period, and the contingencies of material and cultural practice, mitigate many of his claims. His assertions regarding meaning and art can only be countered though by alternative facts and some knowledge of art and history. For instance, he claims that art research is done to support authenticity claims for art investment, thereby reducing historical documentation to that of, as Peter Fuller puts it (Fuller, 1980:12), a Sotherby-like authentication. What Berger does not explain in his reference to the London National Gallery catalogue entry on Leonardo da Vinci's *The Virgin of the Rocks* in this regard, is that art research has a broad agenda. Art research is, of course carried out on all gallery and museum objects for scholastic and institutional reasons, though it may be co-opted by financial art markets. His claim, that the research on the National Gallery's *Virgin of the Rocks* was carried out to prove this painting was the original and not the similar work held in France, has to be seen as mischievous. From early in the c20th *both* works have been known (through research) to be by Leonardo da Vinci, with the Paris version being the earlier.[56] Indeed most of Berger's commentary relating to past art practices are immensely provocative, and invite correction.[57]

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[56] For an account of this attribution history see della Chiesa (1967: 93-95).

[57] See Fuller (1980) for a rigorous critique of Berger's discussion of art and photography.

As with all television, the evidence of argument moves fast and is rarely open to critical consideration on first viewing - although any developing disquiet may well be a good clue to contestation, whether innate disagreement with the arguments and portrayals, or some sense of not having the complete story. And Berger's TV, for all its datedness, is still an immensely disquieting experience, and a consummation of his political objectives for it appears to have been very effective in creating a skepticism toward the authority, credibility, and integrity of the capitalist media.

With the speed of television masking the dubiousness of his assertions, he is able to link the popularity of post-card reproductions of Leonardo's *The Virgin and Child with St Anne and St John the Baptist* with the market value of the original drawing, the market value alone and no other factor.[58] Despite the dubious quality of so many of his claims, his arguments still stand - false, but dramatically disseminated - with *Ways of Seeing* widely regarded as an instrumental contribution toward revisionist art history and its questioning of canons. Elizabeth Chaplin, seeking to confirm sociology's constructions of visual representation, even claims that the impact of *Ways of Seeing* was due to Berger's sensitivity "to the specific art works which he allows to inform and enrich his theoretical position ...art work and theory are dialectically linked. His own experience as a producer of visual art - one might almost say his artist's eye - helps him to analyze Gainsborough's *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews*, and to give a vivid, critical account of the ideological nature of this oil painting" (1994: 69). I would argue that, to the contrary, Berger's view on art has less to do with a producer's experience and knowledge, than the ease in which an image may be dominated by the authority of the word and the effect of media - as Berger himself reminds his audience in his final address.

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[58] Berger states that this work is shielded because it has become a "treasure" with art galleries being palaces, and guarded like banks. See Bourdieu (1993/1968: 236-7) for his similar and earlier take on museum treasures and false reverence. Theft is obviously a big consideration, but see Freedberg (1989) for a history of attacks carried out on artworks. Indeed *The Virgin and Child with St Anne and St John the Baptist* was attacked for political reasons some years after *Ways of Seeing* was first shown, and partially destroyed. One might also want to argue that there are many reasons for 'shielding' works, particularly fragile pieces. Galleries could also be likened to churches, picture theatres, cultural warehouses, gymnasiums for aesthetic exercise; therefore art works have become holy relics, 'still' video screens, signs for the journey of life, vicarious experience, stored culture, even visual dumbbells for exercising perceptual propositions.

Despite Chaplin's accreditation of Berger as 'artist', *Ways of Seeing* has nothing to say about artists' views of production. Berger's commentary on Gainsborough's *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews* for instance is limited to Berger reminding his audience that, at the time the painting was produced, the theft of a potato was punishable by death. This statement, together with a close-up on the figures, give the sense that Mrs. Andrew's smile is indicative of a callous arrogance and murderous intent toward any property trespass. What Chaplin calls Berger's *analysis* is merely a form of *captioning*, an anchoring of meaning through a linkage of ideas. The efficacy of Berger's tactic here relies on provoking outrage about wealth, power and injustice. In other instances, Berger pursues the orthodox Marxist argument of the elitism of art by stirring (and furthering) resentments about the price of art, without explaining that the market value of art is only tenuously related to the actual making of art. As with anything that can be made out to be rare, specialized or desirable, art is commodified by financial brokers and investors. Artists enter into the commodity circuit only so far as their mythologized persona adds value to the objects they provide.[59]

In 1972, with the development of ephemeral post-object art practices of conceptual art, performance art, and body art, and the non-collectable productions of environmental art, it was obvious that many artists, continuing the Dadaist critique of capitalist values, were deliberately refusing to accept the role of 'primary producer'.[60] Yet Berger does not even bracket contemporary art off as a new form of practice, itself influenced by Marxist ideas; indeed his depiction of art entirely ignores the critical avantgarde.

Strategies of Moral Opposition

One of Berger's strategies is to juxtapose texts in ways that set up new ideas about images. To demonstrate the elitism of art and the social vacuum of art

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[59] The best thing established artists can do to raise prices is to die. The work of a living artist is a limited investment, since there is no containing what is available in a market that partly works on rarity value as artists can always make more. The artist may also develop in ways that see them fall out of favour.

[60] The 1970s saw artists variously confronting and developing strategies which subverted the collectability of art. Land art, conceptual art, performance works, body art, installation and all kinds of ephemeral works typify these endeavours. That such works sometimes re-enter the field of the marketable art object through the existence of documentation of such work does not necessarily negate this stance, since this kind of object: document, reproduction/photograph/ script and so on, exists anyway - and has diverse uses. The original though is either non-collectible, inaccessible, unobtainable, or non-existent. Evidence of tensions between artists' desires and their patrons' tastes, and the motivations of modernist artists in pursuing art agendas is needs a better account in histories of modernism.

history, for instance, he asks viewers to compare two different explanations of Frans Hals' painting of the *Regents of the Old Men's Alms House* (1580-1666). Berger's 'friendly' voice, provides 'historical' information on the privileged position of the regents and their moral dissoluteness - one of them accused of being drunk - that claim to give 'social' meaning to the work. This set of new insights is contrasted with a reading from an art history text. This formal analysis gives a description of the painting's form and expression, and in contrast to Berger's previous direct and intense address, it is read out in an upper class British accent to sounding distant, jargonized, and pretentious, droning on interminably. Further contrivances are evident in 'interview' sessions, where Berger appears to facilitate open discussions of particular works with 'the people' - in one case a group of children, and in another instance, a panel of 'real' women (as opposed to dissembling and arcane experts). There he not only directs the interpretation of these images through his use of leading questions, but takes up only those responses that reflect his views, at times even inserting his ideas and interpolating them as if they are those of his panel. The ploys of selective editing also need to be taken into account in his production of such apparently 'spontaneous' discussions.

However, it is what Berger *does* with images, showing how the gaze of the camera, music and voice-over re-direct attention and fix meanings, and what he achieves with images, that requires re-examination.[61] This is because the reputation of *Ways of Seeing* is largely based on the acceptance of his arguments at face value, despite his decidedly monologic, albeit, 'friendly' mode of discourse, and his specific and final instruction to his audience to be ever skeptical. When for instance Berger claims that in European art the lives of the poor go unrecorded, the same accusation might be levelled at writing, or any other significatory system of that period.

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[61] For a further examination of the implications of authority, viewpoint, and ways of seeing, I recommend Chow's (1995) explication of the gaze within her writing on Chinese film. Chow demonstrates how critical interpretation still struggles to divest itself of claims to a truth more valid than previous interpretations, even when the interpreter is consciously working to avoid this. Chow, mindful of Barthes' (1973/1957) observations on the political futility of the distant critic simply revealing the ideology inevitably at work in conventional cultural productions, advocates the production of "an entirely new cultural object", one that provokes critical engagement. I see some of what art does as fulfilling that objective. Chow's approach is also valuable for the problematics of perception and position because it restores observational rigor to image analysis and reinvigorates issues of content and surface.

Even though Berger claims to unmask the ideology within images, he removes them from any original context or meaning and projects his own meaning and own way of seeing. With some closer look at the history of past image culture one might want to question whether the function of art from 1500 to 1900 was that of documenting lives, that is, whether those paintings which Berger would have us believe show the *lives* of the wealthy and powerful, show any such thing. His discussion of material culture and social dynamics is extraordinarily crude, even allowing for, as Jan Bruck and John Docker would have it, his delivery of patronizing simplifications for an audience assumed to be devoid of reason (1991: 90). What Berger does *not* do in his efforts to represent the 'consumable' aspects of images, is to pass from portrayals of wealth and privilege to the broader and more complex issues of social status, as taken up by Pierre Bourdieu (1965, 1984/1979). Nor does he designate European portrait painting, as a particular tradition alongside and overlapping with other traditions of portraiture and representation. Nor does he discuss painting in terms of its material and formal execution linked to cultural practice to reveal the lives of the artists and their subjects.[62] Instead he shows how his moral stance allows one to *see through* images.

For Peter Fuller, Berger's "lack of materialist theory leads him to talk about meaning slipping in and out of paintings" (Fuller, 1980: 12) even though painting and photographs are very different things with photographs essentially being "processed", and paintings "constituted".[63] However, any step-by-step refutation of the instances of Berger's manipulations of information and imagery such as Fuller has done, fails to undermine Berger's populist appeal. Fuller is at a distinct disadvantage when he opposes an intellectual academic printed site to television image; he also has to oppose his authority to Berger's, and since Fuller's authority remains that of the specialized art historian who is confined to the textual explication of art, he acquires the image of the very elite expert that Berger indicts.

Berger also claims authority, but he positions himself as a 'whistle-blower', putting himself on the side of the people, and making use of popular and non-specialized views and beliefs. Bruck and Docker propose that Berger's informal

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[62] See for example Parker & Pollock (1981).

[63] See for example, Lippard (1976), Parker & Pollock (1981), Pollock, 1988.

appearance and tie-less dress symbolize an "iconoclastic" persona, and link it to suggestions that "he was out in the street where it was all happening" (Bruck and Docker, 1991: 82), the "it" being the mass media, embraced by Berger, in contrast to "modernism's grand nostalgia" for high art and its opposition to popular and, ironically, bourgeois culture. Nevertheless Berger's authority is, as Bruck and Docker point out, still that of the "cultural intellectual, (who) high above the ruck of everyday life and mass culture, can speak with unassailable sweep and vision about and on behalf of the plight of civilization and humanity", a position which, they contend, is challenged by postmodernism (83). Berger's political stance is judged one of puritanic rationalism, based on the belief that "either you stay detached or you succumb to emotion" and that the contradictions between images and the overlaid sound signify a conflict arising from the attempt to suppress "the careless hedonism, erotic excess, fantastic juxtapositions, humour, jokes and gags of the ads" (85).[64] It is, in other words "a warning against a non-rational response" and a denial of simultaneous reason and enjoyment, even though it appears to me, that the carnivalesque excess and the attention ploys of the advertisements overwhelm all Berger's claims to a greater truth.

In considering the implications of Berger's sleight of hand it is necessary to take into account the way he uses this positioning in combination with the character of the medium itself, and how he simultaneously exposes and exploits its invisible seductions to override certain kinds of intellectual knowledge and textual analysis. Among the vast array of images used in *Ways of Seeing*, the way one particular work is 'seen' by the camera should serve to demonstrate how Berger mobilizes support even for the most inverted of his claims.

The Meaning of Objects and Surfaces
In part three of this series, an image showing an array of navigation instruments, a detail from the painting Holbein's *Ambassadors*, can be briefly glimpsed in an image sequence which illustrates a linkage of ideas: the material real; scientific instruments; navigation; European voyages of discovery; Europe's involvement in the slave trade; and its exploitation of the world's riches. This sequence is

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[64] Their charge though, that "the educator needs educating" (Bruck & Docker, 1991: 88) comes close to denying Berger his right to a social conscience, and it also ignores his deconstruction of visual media production; it also misrepresents his objectives, which are agitational, rather than educational.

followed by Berger reminding viewers that Magellan's voyages took place for profit and power, and illustrated by an image of a globe-form map charting Magellan's voyages. This globe is quickly replaced by the image of another globe, this one a further detail from within the Holbein painting, while Berger states "This globe charts Magellan's voyage around the world". Already the painting is implicated in Berger's disclosures of the crimes of European colonialization and trade. The camera then moves to the right of the painting and shows, in a wider shot, a number of objects sitting alongside this globe. Berger goes on, "Beside it is a book of arithmetic, a hymn book, and a lute. To conquer a land it was always necessary to convert it to Christianity".

Other art theorists have used these same objects to argue different symbolic relations, and indeed Berger, in passing, acknowledges these interpretations. "The picture", he says, as the camera frames a larger but cropped view of the painting to show two men standing either side of a table, "was painted in 1533 by Holbein. It shows two French diplomats in London. The picture is about science, about navigation, about diplomacy, about power." At this point Berger himself confronts us in an intense close-up to say forcefully, "But in the way it has been painted, the way it has been seen, what is it most about?" The camera then begins to pan around the painting, stopping twice at the navigation instruments - such guilty objects.

With the sweep of the camera dictating our looking, Berger assures us "There is not a surface in this picture which does not denote wealth. There is not a surface that has not been elaborately and skillfully worked. Except for the faces and hands every square inch of the canvas has been gone over numerous times - by weavers, embroiderers, carpetmakers, mosaic workers, leather workers, furriers, jewellers, and last of all, by Holbein the painter". Not only does it suit Berger to confound image and object here, he omits any reference to the large anamorphic skull which hovers across the foreground, and which, with its shadow and its distorted form, extends over a third of the painting's width. Indeed, it dominates the painting as a caption might do, and more so with its visual tease.[65]

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[65] See Harrison (1990) who suggests the painting not only sets up a dialectic about life and death, but also about representation. "While we confront the painting as a picture, the skull is *ontologically irreconcilable* with the main *illusionistic scheme*. Its *mimetic form* is perceptible only when the painting itself cannot properly be seen. Yet, once the identification is made, because the *symbol* is inscribed across or on the illusory surface of the painting, its signification overrides or cancels the significance of what is depicted in the painting. Like scare quotes around a sentence, it shifts *the truth value* of all that the surface contains" (1990: 198; emphasis in the original).

In the book, with its fixed images, the skull is inescapable. There Berger has to acknowledge it: "all agree that it was a kind of memento mori: a play on the medieval idea of using a skull as continual reminder of the presence of death" (Berger, 1972: 91), and he claims it supports his argument through having a truly "metaphysical implication" in that it has been painted in a "different optic", rather than being one more object. But how its metaphysical presence, let alone the shadow cast by this non-object, supports his arguments is simply left unaddressed. In the television programme the skull is literally passed over. It only comes into view once for two seconds, as long it takes Berger to say quickly, "...numerous times - by weavers, embroiderers, carpetmakers, mosaic workers..." and this within a six-second pan of the objects on the table above it, which is not long enough to recognize what the shape is without prior knowledge.

As Berger was well aware, it is the skull that is truly a surface that does *not* denote wealth. One too might want to quibble over other objects (such as the lute for instance) in relation to Berger's assertions of its collusions with exploitation, but the denied skull's reminder of the futility of worldly success, of that which cannot be mastered (Bryson, 1988), confirms his role as agent provocateur. Berger's proclamation, in reference to another shot of the two men, "They are two men convinced the world is there to furnish their residency in it", can only be uttered through the absence of the painting as a whole, and the absence of the painter who constituted this image. For they are not two men, but a painter's production of an appearance, and one that warns of the temporal nature of all worldly, cultural and intellectual endeavour. Berger concludes his 'analysis' of *The Ambassadors* with one last look at the navigation tools and a comment reconfirming their subjugatory collusion: "The sea-faring instruments have been placed on an Eastern carpet. Without the first, the second would not be there." The shot that follows is of a painting showing a kneeling black servant/slave holding up a painting while a man examines it. Without prior knowledge of *The Ambassadors*, it is possible that the "mysterious" skull in its anamorphic, distorted form would remain unnoticed on the television screen. Yet Berger's British audience, and particularly many of those who chose to watch this programme, would probably have been familiar

with this large and famous painting of Holbein's in the London National Gallery, and less susceptible to many of his arguments.[66]

Art is, as Berger argues, connected to the historical circumstances surrounding its production, though one might want to take issue with how he reads those circumstances into the subject matter of images. Media technologies too can be seen to have distinct histories which, if known, might modify the reception of the production (even if the cumulative *effect* of those productions is that of freely circulating and self generating imagery).[67] But whether image-making practices generally support or reflect dominant ideologies is yet another question, since societies are not necessarily homogenous, and distinctions need to be made between officially sanctioned image-making and other practices.[68]

The Authority Effect

When the BBC chose to assist Berger in producing this series in 1970, it was in response to a developing policy of liberalism, the granting of media time to critics of the establishment after the heady decade of the sixties underground media activity and protest, and opposition to conservative power and authority.[69] Given the reach of the programme, with re-runs and video viewing spanning several decades, it has been remarkably successful. If Berger's concern is to reveal the ease with which images may be manipulated through modern means of reproduction for ideological purposes, it would seem that Berger achieves these objectives no matter what level of agreement one has with his arguments and evidence. To show, as Berger does, that an image which one assumes to be merely a sight has a history, an origin, and above all, an ideology,

[66] Extrapolating broadly from psychological findings on attitudinal change, the persuasiveness of Berger's argument is likely to have the most impact on those who don't hold strong views on art, or who lack substantial art knowledge, or who, for various reasons, are happy to see art judged in totalist fashion as elitist, or who already concur with Berger in other respects, and those who have no real views either way, or no real interest in art.

[67] See Conley (1993) for critical histories of various media technologies. See Williams (1990/1974) on the developmental history of television and Winston (1996) for critical histories of the development of today's communication and entertainment technologies. See Poster (1990) for a revision of modes of technology that brings poststructuralist propositions and a materialist conception of practice and function to electronically mediated communcation.

[68] Some of Hans Haacke's installation art makes this point very clearly, in drawing attention to the Nazi past, and tying it in to the present. See Bourdieu's essay 'Too Good Too Be True' in Bourdieu & Haacke (1995). See Haacke (1999) and Grasskamp, Nesbit, & Bird, (2004) for discussions on art as politics and for exposures on the various investments, players, and influences in sanctioned, recognized and marketable art. For accounts of earlier activist art see Lippard (1984), Parker (1987), Withers (1988).

[69] It was originally conceived as a challenge to Kenneth Clark's television series *Civilization* and its humanist presentation of art history.

effectively politicizes the realm of the seen by undermining assumptions about the visual and the function of art; but it is of course, a negative critique. His unmasking of art's myth-making implements an all-pervading suspicion is (and rightly so) that all imagery (and truth) can be manipulated to the degree that Berger manipulates paintings. It dramatizes the visual as deception, and determines the delights of aesthetic and visual pleasures as guilty secrets implicated in the oppressive exercise of power.

Despite the specific emphases he places on the personal integrity and metaphysical evocations of *some* images - paintings by Rembrandt, Vermeer, (and tellingly, Protestant artists, rather than Catholic), Berger claims to reveal the truth *about* his chosen images. While arguing against images - as bereft of truth — he demonstrates indirectly, that there is truth in the notion of the *persuasiveness* of images.

To focus on art as property and relationships between image, viewer /owner /patron, and producer as socially corrupt as Berger has done, is to reinforce and further a conservative Leninist-Marxist distrust of bourgeois aesthetics, and of the visual.[70] Orthodox analysis tends to follow this condemnation or distrust of the visual in formulaic ways, and authoritative observation, as an analytic method, remains central to the ideological analysis of images. The truth of the visual is judged in relation to some predetermined understanding of the nature of truth that is extraneous to the visual. To make a certain ideological demand of an image, or to insist that the visual tells truths, or deals in exactitude, clarity, logic, causality, or factuality, is to ensure that the visual is always problematized in its reception.[71] The image can then be declared invalid as a way of knowing.[72]

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[70] See Lunn (1982) on the development of Marxist positions on art and culture, and Heywood (1997) on Marxist attempts at a purification and restitution of art.

[71] The mis/use of the image in the name of truth has some affinity with Berger's own arguments surrounding the representations of Mary Magdalen, and the apparent vanity of women: in his argument, these representations, whose overt purpose was to marshal a condemnation of vanity, displayed and often mirrored a woman self-absorbed in her own beauty. Yet such images, Berger argued, were fashioned by men for men to fuel the double pleasure of simultaneous visual enjoyment and self-righteous denunciation - as they demanded certain qualities - modesty, humility - from an image constituted to deny those qualities.

[72] This may need some clarification. Andrew Milner argues for instance: "...the very notion of art as a mode of cognition, significantly analogous to scientific knowledge, remains untenable: the most realistic novels are nonetheless fiction, not history, their realism a matter of literary conventions, not cognitive adequacy." (Milner, 1991: 46). Clifford observes that, excluded from science in the c17th, fiction, rhetoric, and subjectivity, all inherently unstable, and playing on levels of meaning, narrating one thing to tell another, have been localized in the arts (Clifford, 1984). By the c19th literary-art culture allied as sensibility functioned in response to perceived

In its indeterminancy, the realm of the visual appears easy to co-opt as a means of illustrating anything and everything. Yet some of the apparent malleability of imagery is due to ambiguity or the inexactitudes of meaning evoked by a complex interplay of significations and aesthetic and sensory effects, working in multiple ways toward effect, and as always, context.[73] Occasionally Berger uses visual means in ways that differ from his art-critical mode. Despite the mind-numbing effect of the long-drawn out factory sequence in part four of *Ways of Seeing*, few would probably want to argue against the effectiveness of that long take in evoking the excruciating boredom of assembly-line labour. This kind of image construction is termed *expressive*, the difference being that there is some integral relation realized between experience and visualization. This is not a relation of truth to fiction so much as an authenticity and clarity related to Berger's ideological position, for in this last programme, with its different style and tone, he speaks for himself rather than reconstituting the narratives of others.[74]

Adherents of *Ways of Seeing* mistake the persuasiveness of Berger's intensity and the drama and energy of his communication for theoretical insight and truth. As Laleen Jayamanne points out, when theory becomes locked into

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threats of industrial society's pragmatic utilitarianism in subscribing to the maintaining of higher values, a position which can still be found today even in art's more oppositional critical undertakings. Art works which enact scientific procedures, critique scientism, or even seek information about the physical world as much as simply stay with imaginary or experiential realms, might not be science, but they may be systematic, even logical investigations of some kind, capable of facilitating realizations or other sophisticated cognitive engagements, even new understandings. Milner is really differentiating the knowings of scientific knowledge from other kinds of knowings, and indeed argues that art should not be denounced via its failure to meet Engels' demand for realism. In opposing scientific cognition and knowledge to a generic notion of art with literature as its model though, he maintains an orthodox and narrow view of disciplines and their differences.

[73] For criticisms of feminist theory for its intellectual resistance to affectivity, see de Lauretis (1984), Stern (1989), Jayamanne (1989), Mellancamp (1995). For an example of the importance of context, see Donald (1998) who looks at the subordination of women in Chinese culture, and the way gender is articulated in some recent examples of independent Chinese film. She shows how male anxiety is displaced onto the female with a subsequent neglect of female subjectivity. The study of non-Western films generally confirms the widespread adoption of Western structures, but the way those structures operate or are interpreted or work in and for different cultures is far more problematic. Various theorists have sought to identify differences at the textual level, that may indicate something of a cultural re-employments and contextual differences, or a non-oedipal cinema (Berry, 1985; Farquhar, 1992; Hannan, 1992). Rey Chow (1995) has attempted to address signification *and* effect, yet such readings of film and the analysis of structure are by no means unequivocal.
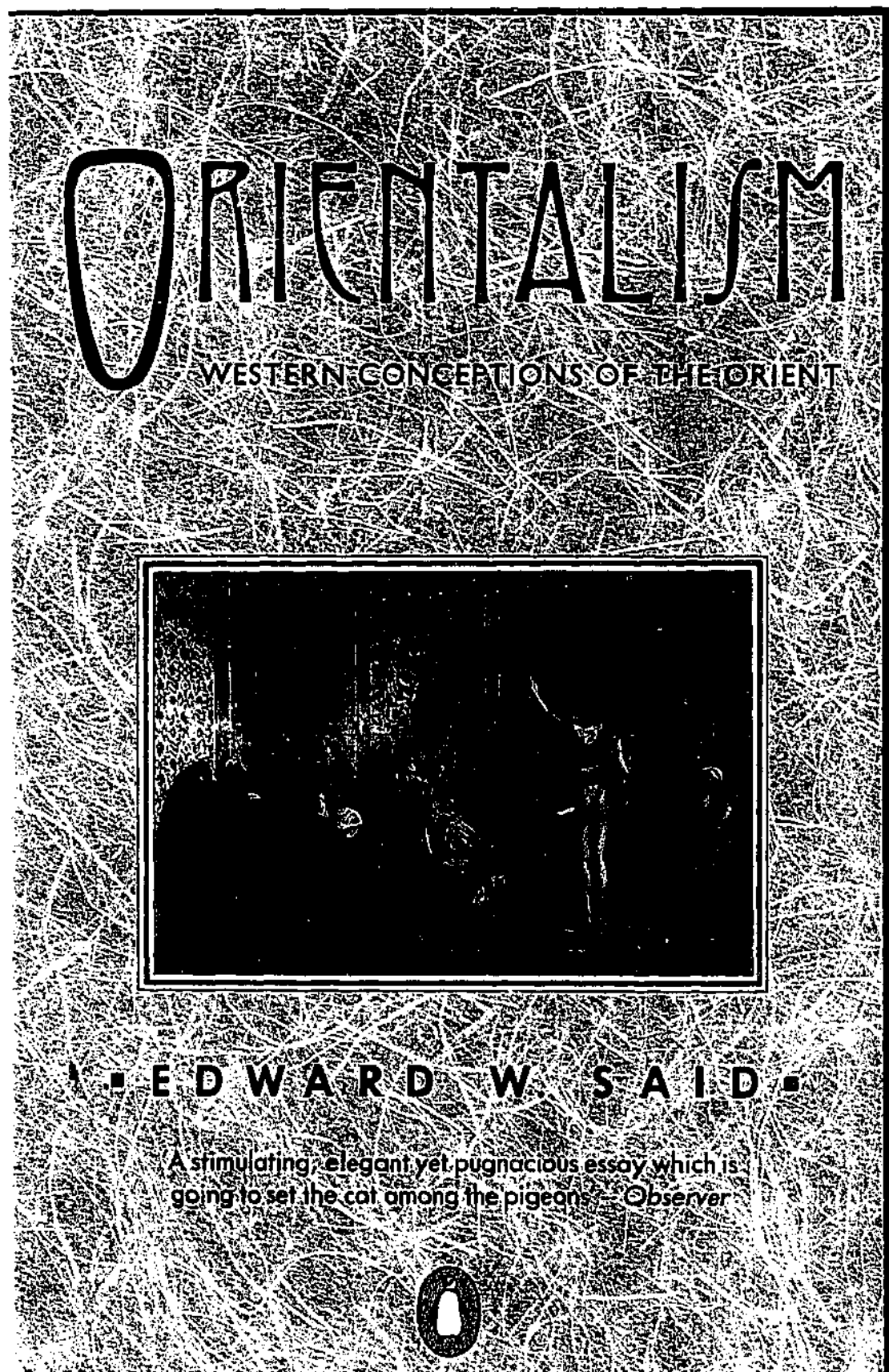
[74] See Donna Haraway (1988a) who argues for the importance of a positioned view, and a more flexible, temporary and personalized objectivity in a world that is based on demonstrable action, and pursues universal laws. Berger does identify and call attention to his position as a Marxist and his selective presentation of information, in a direct address to the audience, but this is largely undercut by the authority of his media presentation.

formulaic orthodox propositions, any political aspirations are certain to end up "bereft of energy" (Jayamanne: 1989: 33). Jayamanne includes the feminist "rhetoric of validation" within in such orthodoxies. In looking for ways out of yet another kind of binary conundrum though, that of illusion-truth, we may find the challenge is not to merely see differently, but to produce effects that enable the validation of lives lived differently - as opposed to an uncritical celebration of difference - and enable the recovery and production of different points of view. The authority role is central in all persuasions to truth in that truth itself is an authorized, produced knowledge.
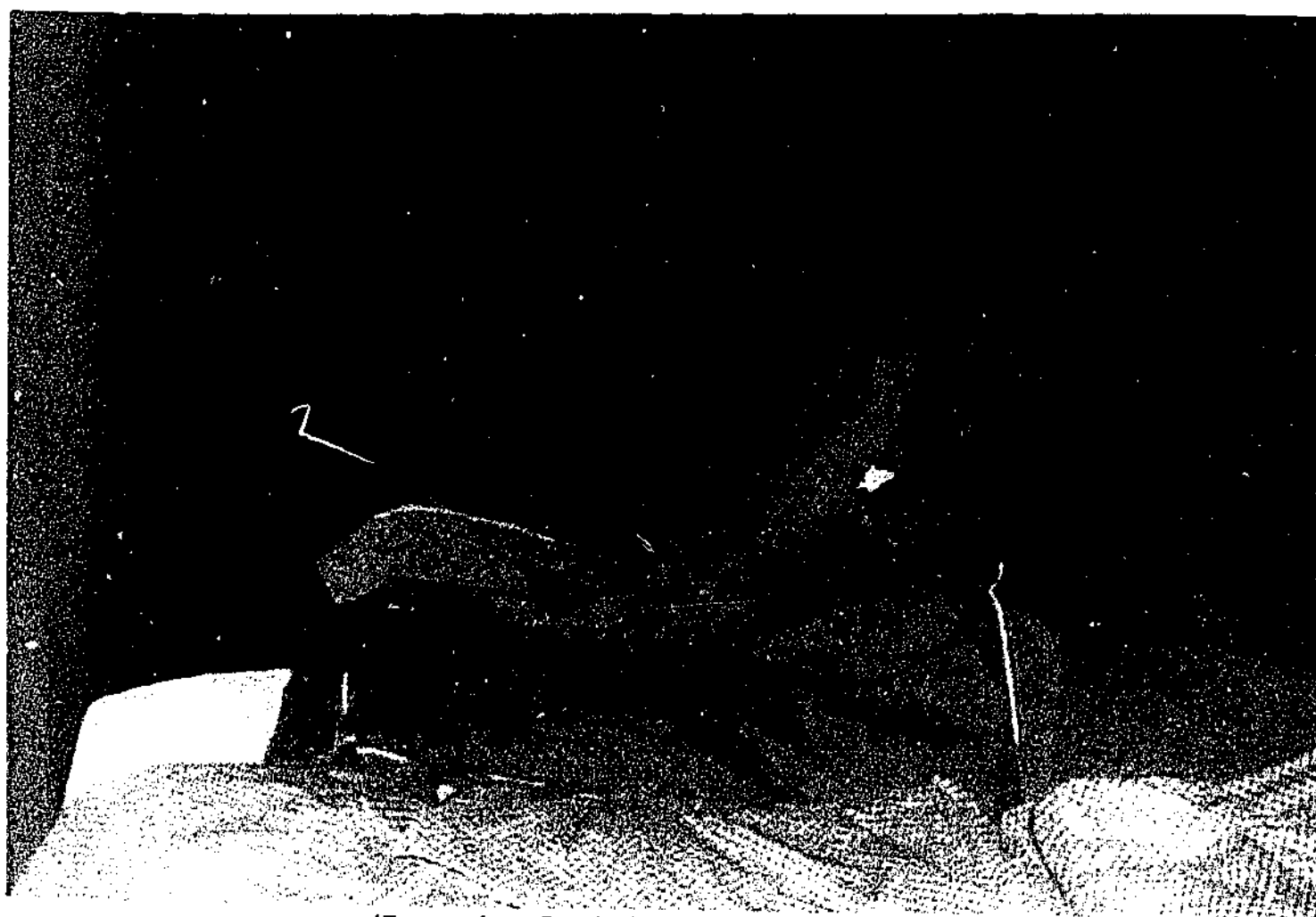
Somehow truths, knowledges and authorizations need to be broadened and differentiated, with some seen as contingent and strategic, others aspirational, and all recognized as affective. Baudrillard shows us that authority, his and that of 'the real', does not lay in rationality; his own authority derives from the force of a singular vision. The real challenge is to pass beyond such exclusionary, self-reinforcing legitimations.[75] What is gained by opposing one truthview to another, if integrity and the very values considered important, get lost in the process? Many feminists, Weedon says, share "the liberal-humanist assumption that subjectivity is the coherent source of the interpretation of the meaning of 'reality' " (Weedon (1987: 8) but where the humanist tradition would grant truth to only a gifted few, many feminists argue different realities for different individuals. Without a recasting of frameworks, visual theorization of images and perhaps even bodies, remains limited, circulating within a closed system, a kind of insular glass bead game posing as freeplay.[76] The next chapter examines the use value of different kinds of body images in relation to ideality, objectivity, and the production of self.

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[75] What is considered real and of significance in academic disciplines is bound to reflect European male-dominance. When Chris Weedon (1987) argued that theory is gendered and most of the male theorists influential in the production of poststructuralism were largely unsympathetic to feminism, she also noted that theory reflected a general exclusion of women from the production of knowledge, in the face of a hierarchical education heavily weighted to male-centered structures of authority and practice. Weedon was particularly critical of impenetrable texts, only decipherable within the interplay of seminal writings and the context of sanctioned ideas. But recently since women have generally shown themselves well able to reproduce this regime, these concerns seem not to be related to male dominance. But of course, they are, for to succeed, women have to adopt the same processes and values. Weedon's concerns focus on the relationship between experience and theory, and who gets to validate the structure and content of knowledge.

[76] This refers to Herman Hesse's novel of the same title. The glass bead game is an aesthetic game mirroring the play of power in the kingdom. It is played obsessively by the rulers of the state who disregard all other happenings, which leads to their downfall and the destruction of their world.

ORIENTALISM

WESTERN CONCEPTIONS OF THE ORIENT

■ E D W A R D W. S A I D ■

A stimulating, elegant yet pugnacious essay which is going to set the cat among the pigeons — *Observer*

46. Frontcover: *Orientalism*, 1978 edition

Fig. 46

47. top: Jean Baudrillard, *Paris*, 1985
bottom: Jean Baudrillard, *St Clément*, 1988

Fig. 47

48. top: Jean Baudrillard, *Rue Saint-Beuve*, 1993

49. bottom: Angela Stewart, *Emmie*, c1995,
black and white gelatin print 60 x 60cm

Figs. 48-49

50. Hans Holbein, *The Ambassadors*, 1533

Fig. 50

Chapter 3

Objectivity and Ideality

Let us beware of the tentacles of such contradictory notions as 'pure reason', 'absolute knowledge', absolute intelligence'. All these consequences presuppose an eye such as no living being can imagine, an eye required to have no direction, to abrogate its active and interpretative powers, precisely those powers that alone make of seeing a seeing of something. All seeing is essentially perspective, and so is all knowing.

<div align="right">

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Francis Golfing,
New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1956: 225

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Let us guard against the snares of such contradictory concepts as "pure reason", absolute spirituality", "knowledge in itself": these always demand that we should think of an eye that is completely unthinkable, an eye turned in no particular direction, in which the active and interpreting forces, through which alone seeing becomes seeing something, are supposed to be lacking; these always demand of the eye an absurdity and a nonsense. There is only a perspective seeing, only a perspective "knowing"; and the more affects we allow to speak about one thing, the more eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our "concept" of this thing, our "objectivity" be.

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Nietzsche, Friedrich, *The Genealogy of Morals*, Walter Kaufmann, (ed.),
trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale,
New York: Vintage, 1989/1966: 119

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Translation is only ever analogical at best, although it may function as an equivalent of the original. Following Nietzsche, let us be wary of the concept of the objective 'natural' image predicated on a 'universal' seeing. Translation is always an act of transformation. Even recorded images are not mere 'seeings', captured or mirrored.

In practice, they are conceptualizations materialized through various sensorial technologies that have their own effects, and they may be made or be used for all sorts of functions, including the evocation or effect of the real.[1] The truth of images is not a reversal of the deception of images, but as Trinh (1991) points out, a truth beyond appearance. Nevertheless, there is considerable investment in maintaining belief in the objective image even beyond its referential or documentary functions.[2]

This chapter addresses the ideology of objectivity and the role of photography in maintaining regimes of certainty and absolutism, and looks at certain practices in popular culture, subcultures and art as oppositional forces. It specifically explores body image, in relation to the mind-body split, the production of modern disciplined subjectivities and body norms, beginning with the classical body's transformation into an objective model for body knowledge, and an aspirational ideal for actual bodies. It reviews the objectivity-effects of photography in cults of the ideal body, and its role in maintaining measure, control, distancing, and perfection. Questions of subjectivity, desire, aspiration, and alternatives to body regimentation are considered in relation to the carnivalesque and as evident in the subversive critical modes of art. It then attempts to move beyond oppositional thinking and philosophical and ideological battles that only seek to assert the primacy of the eye or pure intellect, or action. or replace order with chaos, or one scopic regime for another. This involves the presentation of Antonio Damasio's particular account of the embodied self as a way of problematizing perception as an objective seeing. This neuropsychological, study of awareness is suggestive for the notion of flexible seeings and shows the constructed, desirous nature of objectivity.[3] My employment of a science model is

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[1] In a cultural sense, the idea of technology not only encompasses a conventional sense of tools, machines, techniques, and systems, but also Foucault's use of the term as 'apparatus' which includes processes of knowledge, and practices of implementation.

[2] Objectivity in observation, describing what is seen, is the keystone of Western knowledge, and determines all kinds of subject-object relations. It requires visual consistency. For objectivity to take place, visual appearance and location need to be predictable, which demands a universal description of perceptual operations. In this representation of the real, nature rules as a predetermining and unifying force, with the commonality of human species determined by biologically innate and fixed operations. Vision here functions largely as a reality gauge, so that when an image is coded perceptual, it takes on the claim of truth. Such objectivism has already been challenged by philosophical stances such as Foucault's critique of resemblance, and his insistence that to know is to interpret, the world being covered with signs which must be deciphered (Foucault, 1979: 32). It may also be challenged by propositions of *cultural* variations in perception and the constitution of the visual (subjective and individual differences tend to be explained away as pathological imperfection), and theoretical frameworks that incorporate body and action on the world, in the sense that perception is an embodied production of meaning.

[3] Early work on perception from physiology and psychology pointed to perception and cognition as flexible and encultured (as opposed to descriptions of a universal seeing). See Bruner (1947) for a survey of initial developments in this area, and its findings prior to World War II. These early studies were eclipsed by behaviouralist approaches emphasizing stimuli and reward, and the mechanics of

also a heuristic strategy toward constructing a more productive framework for considering subjectivity beyond conscious textual analysis, and seeks to counter a naive positivist empiricism that tends to operate in the humanities (Sekula, 1983) where the visual is often separated from embodiment.[4] Damasio's description is radical, and has potential for studies of the visual in that it reinstates feeling and sensory domains in ways that accommodate image making and the play of representation, while preserving the idea that there may be certain irreducible biological and physical aspects at work in response and affectivity.[5]

Technologies of Objectivity

It is possible that the expectation of visual truth may one day be relegated to a brief historical period related to the enlightenment and to the invention of the photograph. Recently, digitization and the contemporary virtual realities, whether those of special effects cinema, or 'impossible' pictures of art and advertising, have destabilized traditional concepts of reality. The image can no longer be assumed to be a referent based phenomenon showing a something, or somebody, or a someplace that was once in front of the camera (Willis, 1990, Mitchell, 1994). Media images that appear to be photographs, whether documentary or staged images, are often sourced from material stored in computer data banks.[6] This material can be combined in various ways and reworked to produce a convincing naturalism or a

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chemistry and physics (Ornstein, 1975/1972). See Boring (1970) for an account of this displacement. It took some time before the significance of such factors as emotion, irrationality and chance, or mentalist conditions again became acknowledged factors. See, for instance, Luria (1968) and his classic study of an exceptional individual whose mental functioning problematized understandings of brain, perception, memory, and thought. See Gregory (1966); Segall, Campbell & Herskovits (1966) for early overviews of these fields.

[4] I have discussed engaging with science to some extent in the introduction, but there are difficulties in ascribing truth value to the often competitive and contradictory claims of scientific studies, particularly with their conclusions seemingly determined by the institutional and cultural agendas tied to financial grants. However impossible it may be to evaluate the data outside science disciplines, it is still possible to critically examine interpretations and the contextualizing of scientific findings, as well as the narratives of science, as Harding (1986), Haraway (1988, 1990) and Hayles (1999) have done.

[5] This "ineradicable" play of biological, genetic factors/susceptibilities is what prevents even such critics of scientific objectivity as Haraway (1988) from subscribing completely to cultural relativity.

[6] The referential function of images has always been at risk. See for instance Gombrich's studies of symbolism and metaphor in art and early newspaper reportage that show the referential system to be other than one based on appearance and also his research (1968/1960) on the use of first hand studies from nature in relation to the more common practice of reworking second-hand sources and established image conventions. The expectation that visual documentation be an accurate first hand witness report is a relatively new development, though scientific-style observation and record can be seen in illusionist art beginning in the Quattracento, and realist art practice generally, and the gradual development of documentary photography from the mid c19th onwards.

virtual world.[7] For all of this, and even for obviously faked fantasy images, Western naturalism still functions as a universal benchmark for seeing and for knowing; it maintains a particular cultural perception as an everyday proposition and a crucial intellectual premise.[8] The Western naturalistic image is verified by the apparent neutrality of photographic technologies, and presented as an ahistorical and unauthored system of objectivity.

The idea that an image has a relation to a referent marks a social agreement for particular times and places.[9] This position, allied with belief in photography's documentary character, is one that has played a part in producing and maintaining positivist belief in the transparency of the media process.[10] This is not to say images and photographs never show things as they might be seen, but what is forgotten is that they are constructed purposefully to appear to do just that, with the 'that' - with the *kind* of seeing evoked, never neutral. Far from the image being some natural phenomenon, any visual image is the outcome of particular technologies of visualization and of construction. There is no determination by an object in regard to its own representation. The imaging of any object, any event, any body, may be approached in many different ways, using different technologies, and with different functions and effects in mind. The difficulty is in attending to that material technological dimension, in ways that include knowledge of imaging/depiction (Elkins, 1998, 2003).

Recently, imagery of the kind authorized as objective, as truth, by realms such science and medicine has come under feminist and postcolonial scrutiny. Barbara

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[7] While this is similar to the seamless montage work of early c20th trick/joke images appearing in early c20th newspapers and later developed by artists such as John Heartfield, the illusion of the real is often maintained and presented as the 'captured' reality-based image. What circulates in the media today as first hand documentation of some news event, may be an 'exemplar', or 'illustration' derived from files, archives, or image libraries, though this is not always made clear. 'Fill' material, inserted in between 'actuality' footage, is a common practice in television's news reporting or magazine-style programmes, and is meant to function as a visual caption rather than anything specific to the event reported. The result is a montage of images of various levels of authenticity.

[8] See Mitchell (1994) for a comprehensive and critical study of the shift from older practices of photography to the post-object image and which proposes that this has resulted in crucial changes in the way we judge images in relation to truth, and will probably affect the way we see images and understand seeing.

[9] This apparent loss of connection with referentiality is not so much an eclipse of the real in Baudrillard's sense though; his sense of the loss of the real is that predicated on the role of nature as an originary state of being. This concept of nature is instead one held at a distance, and taken into servitude. It is a nature forged as a confirmation of a master's universe, a "standing-surplus" (Heidegger, 1993/1927) that performs in accord with desire for control.

[10] See Tagg (1988) for a comprehensive account of how this functioned in relation to policing, social control, and the maintenance of social hierarchies.

Stafford's study of medical imaging in the eighteenth century locates the development of contemporary tensions between image as truth *and* image as deception within the development of two very different image functions arising from what she describes as the Enlightenment's need to develop "somatic metaphors" for imaging the non-visible.[11] On one hand the image was meant 'to show' and 'to demonstrate', and on the other, it became a tool for recording observations and producing knowledge. Stafford persuasively illustrates the way the image of the ideal Greek-Renaissance body (figs. 51-53, 55) was adopted in science and medicine to illustrate invisible or hypothetical attributes and processes in science and medicine, a practice that she calls "detecting theory", making visible the secrets of actual bodies, and making propositions real. The emphasis in medical illustration, "revealing, structuring and interpreting signs and symptoms", is designed to "discover and exhibit the inarticuable relationship of interior to exterior, idea to form, private pathos to public pattern" (Stafford, 1993: 2).[12] The Enlightenment "made alien matter pliant" (148). They reworked the ideal form in the course of developing certain conjectural knowledges crucial to c18th art and science, and employed it metaphorically to "make manifest that which could not be said. (2) (figs. 55-56).

In science's appropriation of the classical body, ideality was subsumed into human generality. The aesthetic embodiment of spiritual idealism was set aside for a secular purpose, thus priming the Greek body for its transformation from generic figure into today's physical norm.[13] Though the naturalistic image and the ideal image are distinct, they are often conflated. The classical ideal body has always been able to

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[11] Barbara Stafford suggests that the basis of these conflictual determinations is the result of a mismatch of an unsophisticated audience, and the expediency of seeing technologies that were invented for defining knowledge and creating illusion. "The uneducated masses - perpetually seduced by deceptive visual appearances - needed to be led by *Logos*, logic, and the unmistakable word...Optical demonstration and visualization were central to the processes of enlightening. Yet from a conceptual standpoint, images, paradoxically, were reduced to misleading illusions without the guidance of discourse" (Stafford, 1993: 2).

[12] See also Roberts & Tomlinson (1992) for a comprhensive account of European anatomical traditions of illustration.

[13] See Alliez & Feher (1989) for a sustained discussion contrasting the writings of Plotinus and Plato in relation to attitudes to the body, to Greek aesthetics, and aesthetic possibilities, to the ascendancy of realism in Hellenistic age painting and sculpture, and to the ideal body of an athlete evoking "the intelligible world", and Byzantine developments. Where Plato distrusted art for its appeal to the senses, Plotinus in the third century AD is credited with ascribing to the image the power of reflecting the soul. See Panofsky (1962/1939) also who in his definitive study of Renaissance art iconography describes the translation and revitalization of Greek and Roman traditions. See Summers (1987) for an updated and thorough account of idealism, naturalism and aesthetic concerns from Plato to the Renaissance.

transmute into the naturalistic image, and vice versa (fig. 57).[14] Some realist works appear so convincing that they perform as a marble/bronze substitute for the actual person or threaten in Pygmalion fashion, to come to life (Freeberg, 1989).[15] The mimetic tradition has been particularly strong within sculptural practice (fig. 54) with sculptors accused from time to time of casting from live figures, but in images of the two-dimensional kind, the effect of the real can still be highly persuasive.[16] As the earliest existent naturalistic images show, from Paleolithic cave paintings to ancient Egyptian or Greek paintings, (as known from Roman copies), paint can be used to evoke illusions of the seen world by creating effects of form, texture and surface, expression, life, movement, light, space, and atmosphere. Illusions though, do not function inherently as such; despite odd moments where something glimpsed looks real, the seeing of the illusion whatever it may be, whether 2D or 3D, still or moving, depends on acquired cultural learning, and the spectator's willingness to enter into the illusion.[17] The mimetic effect only works though within the narrow confines of looking. Bringing other senses into play, or expectations to do with aliveness, exposes most illusions.

For an illusion to be convincing, it normally operates on a kind of pact, the suspension of normal reality assessment in return for what the image enables in the way of pleasures, including the play of the eye itself, the challenge in undoing the fascination of an image that 'looks real', while being subject to it. The viewer may oscillate between knowing it is not real, and being engaged. Illusions can usually be

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[14] A shift from the ideal to the realist figure can be seen in the realist and expressive sculpture of the post-classical Greek Hellenistic period. In the Early Renaissance, classical and Hellenistic figures modelled on Greek and Roman sculpture were produced alongside expressive work and realistic portraiture, sometimes by the same artist as in the case of Donatello in the c15th or Rodin in the c19th, whose work ranges from detailed naturalism to the expressive portrayal. Recently, with the uploading of Jernigan's virtual body onto the web as part of the 'The Visible Human Site' and its incorporation into educational materials and encyclopedias, a very specific body is being used as the norm, in ways that go beyond traditional anatomical studies of cadavers. See Waldby (1997) for an extended discussion of this radical imaging, and its creation of some 'undead' level of being, or redemptive possibility for Jernigan, that has generated responses in art as much as medicine and science.

[15] All the illustrations I have seen of this, with the exception of a caricature by Daumier, depict the classical figure.

[16] Rodin's 1876 full scale naturalistic male figure *The Age of Bronze* is one such instance. In the context of academic classicism this early work of his was so outside the aesthetic norm and so realistic that he was accused of having cast it from a real body.

[17] Young children, and perhaps as Freedberg argues (1989), the naïve viewer, may be more prone to this - my father for instance, remembered entering a darkened picture theatre at the age of three and screaming in utter terror when the Metro lion roared from the screen, bringing the family's visit to an abrupt end. Maybe if he had seen the screen beforehand, he might have reacted differently, but given the plunge into darkness and the optimum conditions for the illusion, probably not.

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resisted even if only in relation to context.[18] Yet in the public realm today, illusion and actuality coalesce in a re-invigoration of the ideal figure.

The Normative Ideal

An illusion may or may not be considered real or truthful; a particular guarantee in excess of the image has to be evoked and there are huge investments in maintaining correlations of truth and objectivity. The maintenance of an intact referential coding, and the performance of the familiar as natural, ratifies an ideological real that supports dominant structures of power (Berger, 1972). The naturalized body has been recognized as complicit with anthropology's imaging of the West's others in the history of Western colonialism, (Pinney, 1992; Mirzoeff, 1995), in anti-Semitism, (Mirzoeff, 1995; Kaplan, 1997) in medicine's areas of neglect and male-centered research (Stafford, 1993), in the pathologization of gender differences, (Greer, 2000), and in the maintenance of essentialism and patriarchy (Greer, 1972; Berger, 1972) (fig. 58). The objective status of the 'natural' image is required for the standardization of observational accounts in scientific and medical domains (Lynch & Edgerton, 1988; Gregory, 1994; Crary, 1990), and as proof of scientific veracity for a universal science (Stafford, 1993).[19] It is also utilized in social and governmental surveillance as 'evidence' (Tagg, 1991, following Foucault 1979/75); and it functions as a means of stabilizing a real. The biology drawing, a still life painting, a passport photograph, or video recording used for surveillance of shoppers, or the ultrasound image of a baby in the womb, or holographs of objects, people or scenes, all share a capacity for measurement, confirmation, comparison, repeatability and prediction.[20]

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[18] Magic tricks and perceptual illusions are the classic challenge. Artists and imagemakers particularly learn to react to graphic or screen illusions and to resist them, almost simultaneously, in order to understand how the effect is achieved/ constructed. There is no doubt that hyper-realist technologies are moving towards total sensory persuasion, but context and knowledge will still prevail in any immersive illusion. The fact that I know I am sitting in an Imax theatre, wearing 3D glasses, and that dinosaurs no longer walk the planet, helps reassure that same self that sees that slavering Tyrannosaurus Rex coming straight for her.

[19] The more pragmatic areas in industry, technology, or in science have developed highly specialized and kinds of informational images to support a vast array of applied and theoretical knowledge from architecture and electronics to molecular modelling and nanotechnology.

[20] The overt constructedness of the digital image refuses this kind of objectivity entirely, yet paradoxically, it opens up all kinds knowledge possibilities in visualizing the unseeable. It is possible to manipulate, predict and test anything from genetic structures to physical biological and chemical properties, forces, developments and effects.

Though contemporary Western societies are radically different from the Greek culture existing over two thousand years ago, the so-called classical model is still employed as a model of human perfection and beauty, and today functions today as an aspirational norm. The cultural deployment of this image as a natural, neutral body image indicates a successful integration of belief and desire. Derived from the ancient Greco-Roman blend of oriental aesthetics and Platonic transcendentalism and absolutism, this tradition was reinstituted by the Italian Renaissance (Panofsky, 1962/1939). This ideal figure was developed in relation to a modular mathematical formulation toward an ordered harmony of parts, (Panofsky, 1955; Alliez & Feher, 1989; Hersey, 1996), and though flexible within practice, it demonstrates a predilection for what Grosz identifies as the use of "mathematics and physics as ideal models of the goals and aspirations of knowledges of all types" (Grosz, 1994: 7). With an elevated status in the contemporary world due to its associations with Western high culture and its now embedded uber-human role in the authoritative spheres of medicine and science, the classical body thus remains central in consumerist domains which stimulate desires for bodily perfection.

The nudity of the classical body reflects a distinctive cultural and aesthetic particularity of the Greeks termed *kalokagathia* (Perniola, 1989). This aesthetic and religious predilection, evident in the nudity of the Pan-Hellenic games before appearance in art (ibid.), was an aspect that symbolically suggested the laying bare or illumination of the subject, a truth or clarity of vision beyond appearance, a pure body. And, with some of that respectable aura still intact in the contemporary Western world, the ideal form as nude, unlike other kinds of naked figures, sometimes has a public showing. In 1972, NASA launched their Pioneer 10 spacecraft along with the idea that it might possibly reach the Taurus constellation some eight million years later. It carried a variety of information and visual materials portending to be a communiqué with, as NASA stated at the time, any intelligent life form.[21] Its centerpiece was the Voyager plaque, a metal surface engraved with various diagrams and an image of two human figures posed as the naked human ambassadors of humanity greeting their finder (fig. 59).[22] The figures

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[21] Although the consequences of an eight million year old message being discovered somewhere beyond our solar system would seem the territory of science fiction, it was no doubt an effective strategy for maintaining the American public's interest and support for space exploration. See Watzlawick (1983) for a history of strategies for extraterrestrial communication beginning with Gaul's 1820 idea of laying out a gigantic Pythagorean triangle in the Siberian forests.

[22] An outline of the spacecraft (behind the two human figures) is shown to scale in relation to the two figures; the 'key' diagram of radiating lines to the left is meant to provide co-ordinates to this solar system via the differing degrees of energy flashes - as indicated by binary numbers 0, as a dash

are by no means considered the important information; their cultural embeddedness in any case mitigates any expectation of serious transpecies communication with extraterrestrials who happen to share human predilections for visual decoding and significatory practice.[23] Even on earth, where it was widely published, recognition of these inscribed lines demands some prior experience of the content. Even its determination as figuration of some sort is culturally bound, while any understanding of the diagrams requires specialized learning to do with codes and equivalences.

These images, reportedly drawn by Carl Sagan's wife (Watzlawick, 1983), are a crude linear translation of the Greco-Roman three-dimensional illusionist tradition employed in the West, reconstituted along the lines of a conservative American gender coding. The ease with which acculturated viewers normally recognize the embodied implications of this line belies the provisional and very specific nature of such coding.

The Greek system of linear representation is a topographical map, a technology born of an innate sensitivity to boundaries. It derives from the mapping of contours of the body, specifically, an observing and plotting of transitional edges relating to changes of plane. Whether landscape or human figure, the strategy is the same in what is an attempt to provide information about three-dimensional form on a two-dimensional surface. The trademark of the contour system is the broken line, a plotted edge that starts from the outside boundary of the form and finishes inside the form as if following a protrusion or hollow to merge and flatten out within the form. The form becomes evident as a sight where the outside boundary line is broken to evoke the effect of the form dropping backwards sharply, or where a line breaks to give the effect of light bouncing off the surface.

Despite the overt visual character of this imagery, it involves and also elicits interactions with tactile and kinetic perceptions. In observing a model, the artist's eye slides over these contours of form, while the drawing hand echoes these

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alongside the lines axis, and 1. as a dash crossing the line - belonging to the nearest fourteen superdense pulsar bodies, their proximity indicated by the length of the radial lines. Above this is a representation of the hydrogen atom meant to signify a universal time scale with a schematic representation of that scale at the bottom along side a scaled sequence of our solar system's planets. The arrow leading from earth to an outline of the spacecraft, is meant to indicate its exit.

[23] This project and the attention it was given may have had pragmatic results. In December 1988 NASA announced that it intended to accept advertising messages in its space stations, and Pepsi plans to project its logo onto the moon's surface (Miglietti, 2000).

movements as best it can. The drawn or inscribed lines become pathway: the viewer's eye follows. This observational mapping is usually combined with more conceptual, schematic demarcations of 'features' that need more emphasis/conceptualization if they are to match emotional, selective looking, for as Gombrich (1968/1960) has shown the effect of reality is still governed by the need to match experience. Human sight is not uniform across its visual field, even though there is likely to be the sense of a whole field; instead it follows features (eyes, faces), and points of significance, and is governed by mood and intention (we notice different things). The artist, consciously or unconsciously, selects, abstracts, and codifies toward maximum effect.

The biologically bounded body separating male-female, appears to be one of the most common representations in all kinds of communities and cultures (fig. 59-65). Anthony Synnott, in his far ranging survey of cultural attitudes, narratives, and practices confirms this polarizing of gender and human attributes, but asserts that gender " is not just a biological given, but a struggle for power" (Synnott, 1993: 71). Nevertheless, although tribal portrayals of body would seem to be as markedly gendered as anything operating in the West (figs. 61-62), it is still important to consider that sensitivity to gendering may indicate more the predilections of the Western anthropologist, rather than any universal concern for sexual display.[24] Any gender emphasis is likely to be grounded in very different discursive and symbolic networks of meaning than those of the secular, sexualized, commodified West.[25]

Sexual explicitness is a cultural variable that can function very differently in societies connected to natural cycles, natural phenomena, different traditions, and different values than those of urban cultures and their emphasis on entertainments. In many areas of the world, the depiction of naked bodies is taboo, or subject to some degree of censorship. Metaphorical, associative and contextual meanings are vital and far more complex than some gridded taxonomy measuring degrees of nudity (see, for example, Downes, 1990). While fertility figures, and ancestor figures may be portrayed nude, for instance, this nudity reflects pure body-spirit, a figure stripped of cultural limits and determinations. Such figures are often explicitly marked out as sexual beings with exaggerated genitalia as befitting and

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[24] See Tacon (2000) for a discussion of the ancient rock art paintings in the Kimberleys (as shown in fig. 62) that examines their relation to local traditions and culture.

[25] Such visual signs too are all too apparent, and need to be situated in a larger social context. Clifford (1986) reminds us that interpreters constantly construct themselves through the others they study.

celebrating their role in procreation and the continuity of clan, people and life. This portrayal cannot be necessarily related to nudity as a custom in a community's everyday life, anymore than nude representations in the West can be assumed to show the everyday. The interplay between belief and image is rarely straightforward.

Within classical art, beauty and dignity co-existed with nudity, but the nakedness of Pioneer 10's ambassadors of humanity is apparently intended to signify the biological nature of humans, a nature that is staged around gender difference. The essentialist narrative depends on a variety of visual demarcations that reiterate Western conventions of the art nude. Yet given the 'natural' nakedness of the Voyager figures, there is an absurd aspect to their culturally groomed and sexually differentiated hairstyles, and the absence of pubic hair (or any form of body hair). The distinctions of height and hairstyle, the male action and uprightness contrasting with the female's passivity and her splayed *contraposto* stance, declare such images as examples of Foucault's regulatory ideal, an historical and culturally sanctioned reproduction of sex and dominance, with the female cohort, marked as adjunct to the male.[26] The Eurocentric typology evident in body build, hair type, and features negates the claim of these images as generically human - though it may be reasonable in view of the nationalist narratives connected with the 'space race' to assume that their signification was explicitly designed to work as 'American'.[27] However, the solid figure of the male comes straight from the iconography of Imperial Rome, to evoke, for those familiar with the tradition, a network of symbolic codes to do with Empire, political rule, and colonialism, all of which are highly relevant to space 'exploration' as an expansionist territorial enterprise.

Sensory stimulation is kept to a minimum in this quasi-scientific communication, yet many of the aspects to the Voyager image depend on interpretive codes that are not logically deducible. Without the guidance of the conventions of movement, pose, and perceptual points of view within Western traditions of portrayal, the form of the female mutates into odd and asymmetrical lower limbs, and both figures have feet like flippers. Why does the male figure have volcano-like markings on the trunk

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[26] Indeed this image provides a good fit to the background history of women who trained as astronauts, generally outclassing their male colleagues and the (consequent) suppression of that history.

[27] Though this selective typology privileges the Caucasian, the thick-waisted stocky heaviness of these figures, presumably meant to indicate maturity, would have been equally suitable for stereotyped evocations of the American's Russian competitors.

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of his body?[28] The male figure's raised hand, intended as a sign of greeting is said to derive from the need to display an empty hand that in other circumstances might contain a weapon, but is a convention open to all kinds of cultural meanings. It might as easily be a sign meaning stop; or one of threat and aggression, or a kind of pointing, some other coded message, or it could signify something special about that part of the body. Read conceptually, but 'alien-fashion', without prior knowledge of the human body, the gesture might become an anatomical feature of the body, perhaps an asymmetrical limb, a protrusion from the main form, perhaps an alternative head and neck, or some kind of sexual organ. Is it clear that arms are attached to the body only at the shoulders? Do we know what is the right way up for deciphering these figures?[29] What is the relationship of the figures to the surrounding markings on the plaque?

While these observations regarding the Voyager plaque representations may be due in some cases to the perfunctory quality of the drawing, the assumptions at work here in the image are reflective of the habituated thinking involved in dominant ideas - as well as the authority and acceptability of these kinds of images within realms of the Western culture.[30]

The contradictions, tensions and contestations of the Voyager figures, and their claims as generic archetypal images of humanity, are exacerbated within globalized sites, where Western representations meet Non-Western cultures. Jacques Maquet has argued that such figures are no more an absolute rendering of the human figure than are supposedly 'conceptual' representations: "If there was an archetype or an eternal Idea of the human body somewhere in the collective unconscious or the conscious mind, there would at least be some convergence in its visual figurations. " (Maquet, 1986: 172). As he points out, any scrutiny of the broad array of depictions of the human body from those of say, International Gothic art, or Japanese woodcuts of the c19th, or ancient and contemporary traditional Australian aboriginal images,

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[28] This triangular formation is a crude approximation of abdominal musculature, emphasized in Greek statuary. Garb (1998) notes that though an idealized abstraction, c19th body builders, modeling themselves on the antique male nude, were to integrate it into their body aesthetic.

[29] In the satellite the plaque is horizontal, that is, parallel to the floor.

[30] This image illustrates Althusser's description of interpellation and also the way a viewer might be persuaded ideologically, given its invitation to identify oneself as 'human'; and it demonstrates Bourdieu's notion of habitus as it comes into play in the cultural naturalization of the presentation. As staged publicity for a particular set of values, beliefs, and investments, it also evidences Foucault's descriptions of the way circulations of power and discursive practice intersect with the ways people act to (re)produce themselves.

or the human depictions in modern and contemporary works reveals enormous variation in cultural depiction. Even without knowledge of the context and traditions in which these artists worked, they evoke very different conceptions of body and embodiment.

Distancing of Being as a Politics

In his comprehensive analysis of consumer images, Ewen argues that in the twentieth century, in the public realm, the ideal acts as the model for narratives of perfectibility toward a means to power (fig. 63). This power is not necessarily that of the body depicted though. Discussing Bakhtin's argument that classical aesthetics reinforced conceptions of an eternal, hierarchical social order, in relation to European art, Stuart Ewen points out that "In its frozen perfection, the classical ideal of female beauty reinforced the supremacy of those who claimed an endless, God-given right to property and power" (Ewen, 1988: 86).

> "Not only did this classical tradition have authority, it repudiated a popular aesthetics which celebrated the kinds of beauty to be found in all people since "in the cycles of nature, the classical paradigm spoke for a concept of beauty which was, by definition, exclusive, which - in its agelessness - stood above the forces of nature." (ibid.).

The contemporary version of the ideal form of woman, a much slimmer shadow of the classic figure, circulates as a socially approved aspiration. Women, Ewen observes, are particularly subject to the

> "implosive contradictions of this ideal... permeated by countless images of ageless, porcelain beauty, totally immune to the changes of life...the reader is invited, over and over again, to measure herself - in her life- against the svelte, satisfied, photogenic sirens who call out to her " (181).

His history of the transformation of the ideal representation of the body shows that at the end of the c19th century

> "a well-fed, corpulent body was visible evidence of material prosperity."
> "...(P)lumpness ...bespoke a life of self-satisfied abundance ... the average bourgeois still sought prestige in weighty visions of monumentality... a plenitude of flesh." (176).[31] In the first decades of the c20th the tangible and fertile body

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[31] Ewen also connects this abundant body to Bakhtin's carnivalesque where "the symbol of the overflowing body, which perpetually "outgrows itself, transgressing its own limits," depicted the contours of popular aspiration, providing a utopian vision of a fecund Mother Earth, ever giving birth, ever replenishing herself" (Ewen, 1988: 177).

had changed to the abstract disembodied figure of a new order, where bodily substance became identified with cumbersome excess" (177).[32]

More than a decade after Ewen's study, real bodies, actual bodies, are now sculptured in accordance to the contemporary ideal form. Idealization of the body once incorporated the belief that a nobleness of soul manifested itself through a particular register of aesthetics; today, the ideal body is a contained, controlled entity of power that still denies the everyday lived body and its interactions.[33] The production of masterful bodies, all cast in the same mould, works towards sameness, regulates gender demarcations, and shores up the isolation of the individual.[34] With the abstraction and symmetry of the ideal charting three-dimensional, time-based living (and unequal) entities, 'male' and 'female' are realized in standardized ways whether through the disciplines of diet and exercise, the violence of surgery, the glamorous imperatives of fashion and cosmetics.[35] The future promises even more extensive clonings with the commodification of cellular biology (a rational biology, promising 'quality control'). The images that are often absent from consumer media,

[32] Ewen identifies the period of change as the end of the First World War when women's once prized signs of fertility and abundance lost currency. He points out that despite arguments that thinness reflects the liberation of women from traditional roles, or reflects a new mobility, that it "offers them little in the way of either health or emancipation", and notes that "the search for immateriality can yield pathological results" (Ewen, 1988: 179). Ewen links the fleshless female body to both the rise in the value of abstraction in the economy of the modern world and to the female body's display function for the consumer-status realm of fashion. "(A) new ideal of the female body began to emerge, taking on the volatile characteristics of abstract, market value. As the dominant system of profitability was coming to rest on a foundation of thin air, the female body - along with other icons of the new order - followed suit" (180).

[33] Grosz reminds us that this ideal body was construed within the "profound somatophobia" of the philosophy of ancient Greece, with the body construed in opposition to thought as "an interference in, and a danger to, the operations of reason" (Grosz, 1994: 5).

[34] Ewen particularly links the industrialized, manufactured body and an estranged individuality: "(The) machine-man is one of a generation of desolate, finely tuned loners who have cropped up as icons of American style" (Ewen, 1988: 191).

[35] For examples of how this desire for the ideal body is being actualized see Moore, Matthew, 'Beauty is in the eye of the culture', *The Melbourne Age*, June 7, 2003, p. 18, who reports from Indonesia on the increased use of skin bleaching chemicals, many manufactured by leading transnational cosmetic firms, with 'whitening' now allegedly 40% of beauty salon business. See McDonald, Hamish, 'Chinese buy into the beauty myth' *The Melbourne Age*, February 14, 2003, p. 18, who reports on the growing trend toward using plastic surgery mainly by young people wanting a more Western look, and a 'Cinderella' ("Grey Girl") competition run by a tabloid paper which awarded $A16,000 worth of plastic surgery to the winner. This report also gives an account of the practice of 'leg stretching' in which a technique developed by a Beijing surgeon to address growth abnormalities is being taken up by hundreds of young people annually to provide the tallness associated with Western body ideals. In this story a girl 160cm in height chooses to undergo a procedure which involves the leg bones being broken, and stretched apart to allow new bone material to grow into the gap. This is done repeatedly to add seven or eight cms to leg length. See also Armitage, Catherine, 'Stretching their Legs'. *The Weekend Australian Magazine*, September 6-7, 2003, pp. 30-32, in which another young Chinese woman who has chosen a year of this kind of surgical interventions is interviewed, and for a survey of the brand conscious, materialist aspirations of "China's first youth culture". The purchase of cosmetic surgery does not stop at women. See August, Oliver, 'Implants give muscle to rich Chinese men' *The Weekend Australian*, October 16-17, 2004, p. 15.

or commercially appropriated in some way, are those of community, of shared action, people-centered interactions, engagements, and a validation of different bodies and selves.

The body is "a site of enormous symbolic work and symbolic production" that in turn becomes "an environment we practice on and also practice with." (Turner, 1984: 190). Ewen argues that the play of style, a setting of a status laden 'look', is a crucial and "intimate component of subjectivity, intertwined with people's aspirations and anxieties"(22). Style though is difficult to pin down theoretically. "Precisely because style deals in surface impressions, it is difficult to concretize, to discern its definitions. It forms a chimerical, yet highly visible corridor between the world of things and human consciousness" (ibid.). Nor is style limited to the realm of subjectivity. Demonstrating how it is "also a significant element of power …inextricably woven into the fabric of social, political, and economic life" (23), Ewen shows how it permeates both imaging of bodies and the development of actual bodies. Following Berger and Foucault, he shows that the everyday image environment *used* as mirror leads to the internalization of body narratives where the viewers become their own keepers, performing themselves as sights, and subjecting themselves to the disciplinary modes of dominant social regimes.

In the commercial constitution of the ideal as the blueprint for the actual, even those with the kind of bodies approximating the privileged canonical image can be persuaded that they are deficient in ways that can only be addressed through commodity purchase of some kind. Meanwhile the obsessive desire to *become* the image works to the detriment of health, self-esteem.[36] The Western model threatens

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[36] See Kaplan (1997) for an investigation into the Eurocentered aesthetics of the cosmetic industries, including the pathologization of Orientalism in the aesthetic ideals of plastic surgery handbooks, and her study of how desires for youth, 'American looks', and whiteness have been played out in both mainstream and radical film. See Davis (2003) who observes that the early plastic surgeon Jacques Josef initially developed his procedures in order to enable Jewish clients to become ethnically invisible. She has found that where clients are ethnically identifiable, or are people of colour that surgery is orientated to the most identifiable and readily caricatured facial features. Davis makes the point that the emergence of ethnic cosmetic surgery is related to racial inequities that "permeated the popular imagination throughout the nineteenth century." 90). Davis notes that there is now a new handbook recently published (Matory jnr. W. Earle, *Ethnic Considerations in Facial Aesthetic Surgery*, Philadelphia: Lipincott-Raven, 1998). Though this vast textbook takes issue with the Caucasian norms within the industry, advocating instead "ideal characteristics of beauty within each ethnic category" (92), the contributors are ultimately concerned to establish a universal standard of beauty to endorse their ethnic ideals, which "is none other than the classical Greek model" (ibid.). See Davis for a discussion of the political unease that ethnic cosmetic surgery generates and an argument that many such clients -she cites Michael Jackson here- want to transcend race, or assuage suffering associated with their appearance. See Shohat also who raises this point in regard to critiques of fixed and racist ideas of beauty and appearance visible in films such as Kath Sandler's 1993 *A Question of Colour*, and Ayako Chenzira's 1985

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to eclipse other ways of living/being.[37] "Regardless of the shape one's body takes, whatever flesh remains is *too much*" (183, emphasis in original). Today, silicon breast and pectoral implants, penis extensions, lip enhancement, liposuction, dermabrasion, laser therapy, personal trainers, weight loss programs, are all increasingly seen in the global media - in line with the beauty industries' own claims - as *reasonable* ways to attain the look of a computer-enhanced image of a super-model (fig. 64).

Ewen's identification of 'immateriality' "…enacting the principle that *less is more*" (173) is worth reflecting on here.[38] Beyond Ewen's thesis, there is here an equation of refinement with the fleshless form; it derives from past aristocratic images that still beckon through their associations with power, leisure, and privilege. These slender ethereal figures once manifested an angelic fragility associated with matters of spirit, that in the c18th Rococo translated into feminine charm. The c19th actualization of this body was constituted as a self-disciplined *virtuous* body, thin, upper class, as far removed as possible from the strength and corpulence associated with peasants, servitude and childbirth.[39]

As much as the defleshed body enacts a desire to distance oneself from history, it can also be seen as a manifest desire for an energized, lithe, youthful, and androgynous body, a 'lightness of being', encapsulating resistance and refusal of the

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animated short *Hairpiece: A Film for Nappy-Headed People*, and what she describes as the "pathological syndromes of self-rejection… the psychic fallout of racial hegemony" (2003:69).

[37] See Becker (1995) for a comparative ethnographic study of the traditional Fijian production of body and Western practices, and her findings on the recent appearance of body dissatisfaction and eating disorders among young girls that correlate to the introduction of television to Fiji. Becker found for instance that traditionally, Fijians rated attractiveness over a full range of body shapes, but associated the overweight or obese form with a "very positively valued high quality of care" and correspondingly, the thin body, with family and community neglect (Becker, 1995:37). Becker also observes that whereas in some South Pacific cultures, and often in the context of vulnerability to food shortages, social status is enhanced by size, in that it is connected with power, abundance, and even social and cosmological regeneration, body shape in Fiji is not associated with personal achievement or self-scrutiny.

[38] Ewen argues against the notion that the flapper's shift and cropped hair were markers of women's emancipation and increased physical activity during the 1920s. "Where earlier fashion ideals were predicated on the stationary display of wares, the geometric angularity and simple, energetic lines of the new fashion conveyed frenetic motion (Ewen, 1988: 173). This body, says Ewen, was heading toward abstraction, not in the sense of effacing women's "problem substance" but as a mimicry of commodity market value, in "the immateriality of a floating currency" and a displacing of the earthbound idiom of horizontal expanse with that of the unfettered, vertical ascendancy" (174). These vague relations between the abstractions of the money market and the emergence of the modern female body are not particularly convincing, and ignore women's participation in staging their appearance.

[39] Sontag (1979) has observed that aristocratic looks are associated with a romantic image of tuberculosis, but see Dijkstra (1986) especially chapters 1-3, 'Raptures of Submission', 'The Cult of Invalidism', and 'The Collapsing Woman'. Dijkstra shows how in the visual domain, this image is not just a literal association with lethargy, pallor and thinness, but a fetishization of passivity, a sacrificial figure, drained of energy, and no longer a threat.

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weighty traditional responsibilities of women's maturity and maternity. It reflects a refusal of life-death imperatives and corporeal existence. Such desires have all too easily been appropriated and abetted within the merchandizing strategies of modern clothing industries whose transformative promises insert a slender hipped fashion-*able* woman into an endless system of desperate and status-driven costume renewal. The successful modern woman has no need of corsets, but as Ewen observes, her "dissolution of bodily mass" (ibid.) reveals an ideological corruption, a pathological distortion of emancipatory desires all too easily seen in the anorexic and abject extremes of the female body (fig. 64).

In the c20th, with the pared back body a sign of success, corpulence is assigned to the disenfranchised working classes, the undisciplined or unrestrained, those, who for some reason or another, don't count. Becker notes that "Obesity in our society is profoundly stigmatizing" (Becker, 1995:32), and that frustration about body image often leads to a disjuncture between body and self. It might mean for instance that people identify only with their head or face, or see their bodies as external, an imprisonment of themselves. Bourdieu observes that as material constraints have lifted over the c20th, both bodily form and cuisine reject "coarseness and fatness" (Bourdieu, 1984: 185); in order to acquire social distinction, desirability will always be relative to ease of access. Some forms or practices are deemed rare, others vulgar, in accord with the economy of cultural capital.

> "The probability of experiencing the body with unease, embarrassment, timidity grows with the disparity between the ideal body and the real body, the dream body and the 'looking glass self' reflected in the reactions of others" (207).

Christianity, in its focus on spiritual matters and celebration of the soul, followed the Greeks' apparent abhorrence of matters corporeal; the physical body was damned and repressed as harboring temptation to sin. The Church, with its sacred canon of representation, banned images of the nude - ideal or otherwise- for a millennium until Early Renaissance humanism reinstituted the ideal body of Man as its leif-motif. In theory, Descartes accomplished a further separation of soul from nature, and mind from matter, in his conceptualization of the body as a machine that operated in accordance with the laws of nature. In the Voyager plaque, the forms and poses illustrate culture claiming the status of universal truth. The bounded and divided Cartesian body, the biological body conflated with the ideal body image, is "...colonized through the discursive practices of natural science...its brute status as

given, unchangeable, inert, and passive, manipulable under scientifically regulated conditions." (ix). In the NASA image though, biological information is at odds with the contrived nakedness of the figures, the unreflective depiction of gestural conventions, and the culturally derived postures masquerading as a universal norm. It is a representation that presents a culturally biased staging of power with the paired figures enacting the role of master and mistress of the universe, with Man represented as telos for all knowing.[40] It is this idealized body image, shored up by science's need for general and abstract models and typologies, and conflated with dreams of human perfection, that has also been so easily co-opted as a totalitarian image of power, the superman beyond human dimension and beyond history.[41]

Ideality has an inherent power as a model or type, and it manifests in scientistic discourse or disciplines where definition and description are paramount. Arthur Frank's (1991) sociological descriptions of ideal body types, an inversion of Turner's (1984) structural model analyzing social tasks, for instance, details four typical bodies categorized by their action on society. Although Frank's categorizations are not formed in relation to the look of bodies, they have some correspondence with variations and visualized types of the ideal body, but also some important differences. Frank argues that three of his ideal types are all alienated from themselves in some way, selves at odds with their bodies, a state due to the apparent absence of some natural or originary connectedness. Frank's alienated types are differentiated by an attribute-action. The 'disciplined' body is that which enacts Foucault's notion of socio-physical regimentation, the 'mirroring' body is related to consumption as theorized by Baudrillard and Bourdieu, while the 'dominating' body that employs force, is that detailed in Theweleit's 1989 study of the SS and European warrior culture. Frank emphasizes that his typology is

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[40] The woman stands by his side as his consort. She is not proposed as another master.

[41] Cosmic bodies and holy bodies are ideational and sometimes abstract, but they are not usually bounded bodies. With depictions of spiritual entities that are associated with some narrative of transformation, decorporealization, or considered as being beyond any physical character, representation is more likely to have an iconic function that aids recognition. On the other hand, the ideal male god-like body of the Greeks translated into the Cartesian-behaviouralist normative model, is not only a bounded figure, it is flesh turned to armour (Theweleit, 1989). This Western model of maleness is that which is employed in superhero evocations, wherein death is but one more test of strength. The sheer relentlessness and ubiquitous presence of this visible death defying superexistence, and its determinations as masculine strength and beauty in Western media invites comparison with other warrior bodies. Those that have become so central in comic genres also open up another area of study. See Gill (1998) for instance who looks at Japanese hero-monster tales and contemporary comics and finds they emphasize transformative powers and magical rescue that are common in folk tales, but latterly, moving to armouring and mechanical incorporation in 'transformer' characters. The Japanese figures though are more likely to rely on others rather than demonstrate individual heroism. Gill suggests that for Japanese boys they offer the fantasy of mind achieving control over an unruly body, and a mechanism for dealing with fear of adults.

provisional, and indeed his differentiation is open to contention, since the first three types are closely related. Indeed Ewen has shown that these three types all enact Foucauldian self- regimentation in various ways, and all are firmly locatable within the imperatives of consumer capitalism.

Frank's 'typological grid' may be of some value as an abstract framework for purposes of clarifying different aspects of body formation and broad social context, but rather than a quadrant of body types related to a paradigm of social action, Frank really presents two realms of body conceptualization. The triple assemblage of ideal figurations sharing various manifestations of distancing and social order is one kind of body, and the other, Frank's fourth body, is a description of embodiment. As a utopian body, a communicating body, characterized through the activity of 'recognition', it does not as Frank admits, fit into his typology of 'ideals', and he describes this body as one always in the process of emerging. Instead of elaborating this embodiment in connection with a specific theorist, he offers examples of body praxis from writings on particular body arenas: dance, performance art, and the experience of illness. This is a body of self-constitution, of being exceeding or escaping taxonomic description because it is experiential, unstable, fractured, shifting, a body reflecting the mobility of life itself. Where the inhabitants of body 'types' are condemned to forever re-invent themselves in order to re-invoke and maintain their prescribed associative actions, the untyped body problematizes any such roles or boundaries.[42] Such a body challenges categorization.

Hardness and Definition

If rationality is the leif-motif of Western modernity, the idealized body image is its accomplice. In its archetypal form it facilitates mythologies and otherings in what Lyotard (1984) designated the "grand Narratives". The ideal image is at the very heart of Greco-Western quest for knowledge and power (Foucault: 1973/1966). Its extreme manifestation, the warrior image, is reflective of the masculinist fascist dream of transcendence that is forged through a delirium of power derived by the

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[42] Frank argues that it is theory which must provide the necessary reference points for observing "the process of our own being" (Frank, 1991: 96). He champions the communicative body's attempts at self-understanding as unrealizable, but as pointing to an ethics of the body capable of taking the contingency of the body into account, and recognizing and eliminating acts of body appropriation. However there in this, an assumption that ethical attributes are synonymous with communication, or that self-understanding is an inherently moral activity. As Walter Benjamin argued in the 1930s, such positions have to be cultivated. Frank's communicative body is also likely to be the body which pictures itself and others whether as open-ended exploration, or for totalitarian purposes.

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brutal disciplining of mind, feeling and body, and the domination of all that is viewed as weak (Theweleit, 1989/1978).[43] In contemporary portrayals, the body is incorporated into rationality by translating an ancient concept of a god-blessed perfection into that of a secular entity which is mechanical, technological, engineered and disciplined, its beauty defined, as Barthes (1982/1970) put it,"by an inaccessible singularity" (figs. 63, 70).[44] Co-opted into a consumer world, this image still carries disciplinary functions implicated in Benthamite measures of control, with its role one of maintaining and furthering power differentials and otherness. The contemporary renewal of the ideal body is, Ewen reminds us, "a product of late nineteenth-century science, initially an effort to develop a system of human typologies which would allow various authorities (religious, police, medical, educational) to identify inborn predilections toward 'virtue and vice' and giving inequality, as historian James B. Gilbert argues, " a rational, scientific justification". (quoted in Ewen, 1988: 196).

Where the fascist warrior might dream of a glorious death (Theweleit, 1989/1978), the ideal body of the consumer world is portrayed as devoid of mortality; it is a firm bodied silken being cleansed of history and time, its lack of fleshiness a correlation to the fantasy of a mind in control. Where the fascist dream subsumes sexuality into the death drive (ibid.), the commodified producible body, enacts sexuality as a style, a controlled display of power. Ewen notes that in such images, "The machine with its indefatigable "arms of steel" emerges as the prototype for virility, the mould from which the *new man* will be cast. If the idealized conception of the female body has provided a locus for the articulation of modern structures of value, the "masculine physique" has been the tablet on which the modern conditions of work, and of work discipline, have been inscribed" (Ewen, 1988: 188). Says Ewen, "If this is eroticism, it is one tuned to the mysteries of technology than to those of the flesh" (191).

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[43] See Mirzoeff (1995) who shows how the warrior body merges with Aryanism in the art of Arno Breker who became Official State Sculptor for the Third Reich. He was head of two studios for state art that employed around one thousand and fifty people to carry out the propaganda sculpture programme. Classical Nazi art featuring the heroic Greek-athletic body (the athlete Gustav Stuhrk modeled for some of Breker's figures) took up the broader shouldered, narrow waisted figure that still operates as the sign for power from weightlifting competitions to comicbook action figures. Mirzoeff argues that these figures are hollow "anti-bodies expressing the will of the body politic both to inflict violence on those who contradicted its corporal imperative and to demand sacrifices from even its acceptable citizens" (Mirzoeff, 1995: 91). They express fear and loathing for the material presence of the body, and indeed stand for the extermination of many of those who might have viewed them.

[44] In much of *Empire of Signs* Barthes explores his reactions to Japanese bodies. See for instance his short essays on 'The Written Face' and 'The Eyelid'. In 'Millions of Bodies' he compares Western individualizing with Japanese bodies: "Here individuality is not closure, theater, outstripping, victory; it is simply difference, refracted, without privilege, from body to body" (Barthes, 1984/1970: 98).

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The Western ideal male body is a producible consequence of choice and behaviour linked to status and privilege, and coded in relation to notions of achievement and reward. These are bodies earnt. The counter image is the abject body, coded as soft, leaking, uncontrollable, and female, (Grosz, 1994), and conventionally, as an undisciplined body, punishable or despised. Ewen notes that ""Soft flesh," once a standard phrase in the American erotic lexicon, is now - within the competitive, upscale world (the modern male) inhabits - a sign of failure and sloth. The hard shell is now a sign of achievement, visible proof of success in the "rat race".[45] The goal he seeks is more about *looking* than *touching*" (Ewen, 1988; 189).[46]

Ewen shows that even in consumer culture, male muscularity proclaims a heroic body which can transcend normal human capabilities and states of being, while the female body remains bound to corporeal destiny and flesh. And as Grosz points out, this "coding of femininity with corporeality in effect leaves men free to inhabit what they (falsely) believe is a purely conceptual order while at the same time "…making use of women's corporeality (Grosz, 1994: 14). In ancient Greek religious community rituals, the warrior and athlete were one, and the god-like body was affirmed through physical competition conjoined with mental focus and endurance. In the c20th though, the consciousness/mind - with the soul too difficult to even contemplate within today's secular context - is positioned as the driving force behind the construction of the superbody, the corporeal machine. From the earliest Greek depictions, the male body has been characterized by a display and definition of external anatomy, emphasizing muscular form. In this body, Ewen observes that

"Definition (acts as) a reference to a body surface upon which each muscle, each muscle group, appears segmented and distinct. The perfect body is one which ratifies the fragmentary process of its construction, one that mimics - in flesh- the illustrative qualities of a schematic drawing, or an anatomy chart" (Ewen, 1988: 190).

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[45] Constructed artificial beauty may be viewed with suspicion, but its acceptance, fuelled by insecurities and unhappiness, and the self- serving of the cosmetic surgery industry, continues to gain ground, to the point that if smooth-skinned muscle-toned perfection is not achieved, the fault has to be seen as that of the less than perfect consumer.

[46] Ewen (1988), in tracing body representation through a reification of human relations defined by "a web of commodity exchange" identifies the traditionally circumscribed male body as that which is highly visible within advertising and enacted obsessively and narcissistically by body builders.

In the realm of contemporary athletics, the photographic image operates as the supreme witness. In its use of fast speed photography, it lays claims to being a truthful record of force, energy, and effort, taking place at a particular time, with the privileged position of the photographer surpasses ordinary perspective through its long distance lenses working as an extreme extension of the human eye. With its freezing of the moment, and the particular tonal emphasis characteristic in black and white photography, the photograph is a perfect medium for definition and differentiation.[47] But sports photography, like other forms of photography, is still an expressive construct, and a genre still closely connected with an idealism complicit in the maintenance of essentialism.

Ewen's comments on the imaging of women body builders are worth considering in relation to all portrayals of woman breaking into the territory of the physical: "Her muscles are not the cramped, biographically induced muscles of menial labour. Hers is the brawn of the purely symbolic, the guise of the middle-class "working woman." "Real sweat is reborn as photogenic body oil" (193). It is, says Ewen, a world where women are "defined mainly by contour", and men pose so as to accentuate a segment of body (192). Though the classic hero /athlete might appear, as Ewen puts it, "a silent brooding hulk of a man", sportswomen and body builders tend to be marked out as feminine (and indeed will mark themselves out through accessories or dress), and their images will show a different vocabulary of framing and shots (fig. 65).

Female muscle, when it is portrayed, is usually presented as a form of exotica. Rarely are displays of female athleticism accompanied by any contextual discussions focusing on the dynamics of sport as with male images, or any reflection on the strength, power, endurance and professional focus of these women, or any of the conflicts they may face politically - though the personal always makes good

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[47] Many modern and postmodern bodies are influenced by photographic reproduction. See Garb's (1998) study of modernity's imaging of bodies, particularly the chapter, 'Modelling the Male Body: Physical Culture, Photography and the Classical Ideal' where she discusses the practice of photographing the male body in ways that allowed for analogical comparison with photographic reproductions of antique statuary, and the realization that "Flesh could not stand up to the comparison with stone." (1998:56). Garb shows how the cult of physical culture sought to redeem the inadequacy of the c19th male body and reproduce the classical male body. Its image practices, emphasizing nude display (though with the fig-leaf covering of museum classicism), smooth hairless skin, were also appropriated, with many of the poses in the journals and magazines in what became a new industry, taken directly from Greek sculpture. "As body building became big business, it depended as much on the modern postal service for its proliferation...the commodity exchanged and circulated was the photographic image, multiplied, manipulated, and free of any measurable relation to what it ostensibly represented" (69).

news. In 1999 for instance a newspaper photograph used a combination of a muted action shot and smiling portrait (fig. 66) to show Nova Peris as the bearer of the Olympic torch and Australian representative for the 2000 games.[48] A 'local girl makes good' style article accompanying the article emphasizes Peris as an ordinary family person who bridges aboriginal and European culture. It mentioned little of her history as a professional athlete, her training concerns and schedules, or her specialized kind of life, thus containing any threat to masculine demarcations.[49] Some years later a different type of photograph showing Peris and her two children accompanied a more social issues-style of article, and while it is a warm image, humanizing and interesting, (in colour in the newspaper), it is an approach rarely seen in stories on male athletes.

Media coverage of black female athletes sometimes seems a special, perhaps even obsessive practice.[50] On one level their imaging appears to celebrate/recognize the achievements of black people and women; yet, at the same time, in a no-win situation for women of colour, it marginalizes any idea of normal but strong women.[51] While such images seem to challenge sensuous or acceptable renditions of muscular female form, they neutralize that by 'othering' those women. Essentialist positions remain intact when images maintain a fascinated exoticism connected with racist ideas of physicality, brute power, or female muscle.

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[48] Peris-Kneebone, Nova, 'Nova's golden moment', *Melbourne Sun-Herald*, March 14, 1999, p. 10. For an alternative representation see an interview with Peris that examines the relations between her dedication to sport, her 'tough love' childhood, marital difficulties, her experiences of racism and her politicization, Hamer, Michelle, 'Some lines you don't cross', *The Melbourne Sunday Age, Agenda*, March 30, 2003, p. 3.

[49] Jane Gaines too, noting the limitations of radicalism in counter-cinema in disturbing patriarchal constructs, observes that "The lesson in transgression we have from the transvestite as well as the female body builder is that gender ambivalence is deeply unsettling to the culture. These counter-practices of the body violate deeply felt premises. The sexual difference system around which societies are organized, after all, is guaranteed on a day-to-day basis by gendered dress, adornment and body style" (Gaines& Herzog, 1990: 27).

[50] This is a tentative proposition in that there seems to be a high representation of black athletes in relation to sporting achievement or other news. Photographic aesthetics and the appeal of muscle definition might need to be taken into account since within the limitations of photographic contrast, the interplay of dark skin and muscle offers an extreme definition of detail combined with an accentuation of form, particularly in black and white photography and even more so in the coarser tonal graduations of newspaper images. Pale skin needs the enhancements of strong contrast or the drama of chiaroscuro to set up the drama of muscle definition. However, in the sports section as much as the general news section only certain representations of race are newsworthy.

[51] Some of the extensive visual material focusing on black female athletes that appeared on the front pages of newspapers during the 2000 Sydney Olympics might reflect the high profile of cultural and racial narratives in Australia. It may also point to selective official support for an increased public presence of aboriginal figures in the context of the high profile the media was then giving to debates about reconciliation.

For many other women athletes, an entirely different media response is usual: they are simply ignored unless they fit the 'goddess' stereotypes of blonde beauty, or black power (figs. 67-68).[52] Even in survey documentary articles, rather than the 'who's who' approach characteristic of coverage of male athletes, there will be a relationship angle, or a glamour/appearance image, or some issue, with drugs, breakdowns of some kind, or parental/boyfriend/manager interference, and the problem of the pregnant sportswoman being common themes (Ellison, 2002). The invisibility of women's sport within the media has been well recognized since the early eighties within numerous studies, (McGregor & Melville, 1992), but the imbalance remains. Most content analyses seem to use forms of image categorization (for example, in McGregor and Melville, 'action' and 'posed') that do not especially differentiate their subjects. Whether 'posed' or 'action', most sports page images operate as types of *portraits*, and/or dramatic spectacle. With the 'who' generally predominant, sports pages appear to function primarily to facilitate men's social exchanges and their sense of social competency. Those images that offer spectacles of extreme physical engagement and/or heightened emotion, enacting operatic levels of pathos, jubilation and ferocity (figs. 68), point to what is a sanctioned but rare domain for male expression[53].

Writing in the early nineties, McGregor & Melville noted that the earlier emphasis on sportswomen's appearance had become less evident. Today, 'the look' of women

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[52] I know of one documentary work covering the history of the world record breaking Australian women's water polo Olympic team for instance, that could not get any funding for final production, or any interest from TV networks. Women athletes have little serious representation in the national news or sports pages, though interestingly, my Melbourne community newspaper does present local women's sport, often giving it more written and visual coverage than local men's sport. Asian women are particularly invisible as athletes in the print press in Australia. It would seem that the Western stereotyping of the Asian woman - the animated adventures of Walt Disney's *Yulan* aside - does not encompass athleticism. The female warriors of Japanese Manga and the Asian cinema action genre, cosmetically and pneumatically intact for all their energized moves, have done little to shift fixed conceptions and stereotypes about Asian female bodies. In Australia, with the televised 2004 Olympic Games, where selective camera work only goes so far since it is the event that gets covered, Asian women were prominent as superb athletes whose achievements could not be rendered invisible. The print media though, in an unadulterated display of nationalism, focused narrowly on Australian star athletes (none of whom appeared to be of Asian descent).

[53] See Star for an early study of the experience of female television viewers watching male sports spectacle (Television New Zealand Rugby World Cup), and her identification of 'gender-directed' or masculinist discourses of action, violence, death, authority, the celebration of masculine mythic values, nationalism, racism, contempt for women, and masculinity. She argues, using Baudrillard's model, that these are not merely stories but stimulations, and that women are integral "as an all-but-invisible-otherness, a backdrop, the essential gestalt without which the discourse of masculinity would not function", although a discourse that operates as a "symbolic annihilation of women" (1988: 192) with women excluded through the mode of address, and the context of the hegemonic power-base that is the world of sport, but watching all the same. As with soap opera, Star notes that pleasure is enhanced through committed and sustained viewing that enables identification with main characters, where images of sport become more important than the sport itself.

is again central, and the only reason for their inclusion in the sports section. Women rarely feature there as athletes. More often they appear, mainly within very small 'snapshot' images, in connection with male sportspeople as family, girlfriend, or romantic interest, or in some entertaining nonsense to do with their novel or extreme dress (thus trivializing women generally). When women athletes do appear in larger (3 to 4 column width) photographs, they are fully fledged iconic images of power or beauty. Although these are part of a visual genre of spectacle (Mulvey, 1989/1975) offering a different kind of pleasure than the sexual sights of pornography (fig. 60), they too offset the stagings of masculinity and confirm maleness for men.[54]

Since the late nineties, a new pictorial genre centered on the celebrity athlete, has developed to the point where it now merges with portfolio tradition of the nude photography portfolio and its lower status offshoot, the nude calendar.[55] The nude representation of athletes is always promoted as having the enthusiastic consent of the athletes involved, indeed, as a kind of self-representation, a matter of pride in the athlete's physical being and achievements, and it would seem that many athletes regard their nude appearance as a lucrative fund raising opportunity, and fun. Nevertheless, with the Matildas' women's soccer team calendar project, eight members of the team declined to pose, and one went on record saying it was degrading to have to strip for publicity.[56]

There are distinct differences in style of image depending on the context. Images for general distribution tend to be reworkings of the team photo, but with a 'cheeky' difference, with an emphasis on coy cover-ups of intimate body parts, utilizing prohibitions around public nudity for their publicity (figs. 69). On the other hand, in photoart portfolios such as 'Black & White', a wide range of representational modes from transgressive imagery and classic porn shots to the fascist-style superbody, are staged as virtuoso pieces showcasing particular photographers (figs. 70-73). Both these representational modes are as highly gendered as any identified by Berger and

[54] With the ongoing concern for keeping the body 'normal' and 'women as women', and with chromosome and drug testing routinely implemented, any woman athlete who is seen as outside Western expectations of the female body will now no doubt generate media discourse on artificial engineering or biological enhancements.

[55] There is another 'celebrity athlete' genre, that of athletes endorsing products in advertising. This tends to work differently, focusing on the reputation of the celebrity, although their body may still be featured. See Ellison (2002) for a discussion of the way sportswomen in advertising usually endorse a conservative femininity.

[56] A spokeswoman for Women's Queensland Soccer observed that this calendar provided more publicity than the team's selection for the World Cup. See Ballantine, Derek, 'Naked Love of Sport', *Sunday Herald Sun*, November 26, 1999, p. 36.

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Goffman in the seventies. These realms are entirely consumer-directed; they have very little to say about sport or the lives and aspirations of athletes, but reveal the interest and the market for looking at extremely beautiful, well defined bodies that do not look back.

Reclaiming Embodied Experience

In the contained image of the ideal body there is a distancing of self from being that is manifested in the dual conceptualizations of the self as mind-body, body-soul, spirit-matter. Although the body is that inescapable reality grounded by the everyday rituals of toileting, grooming, feeding, care and protection, its physicality can often be ignored until pain reminds us of the absolute primacy of corporeality (Damasio, 1995, Leder, 1990). The Cartesian division of mind and body places all matter, all feeling, all experience that is not worthy of power, outside that construction of ideal self. The physical body became the focus of life sciences such as biology and medicine, while consciousness was taken by the humanities. Grosz observes that, "this evacuation of consciousness from the world is the prerequisite for founding a knowledge of nature, or better, a science which excludes and is indifferent to considerations of its subject." (Grosz, 1994: 6). Consequently emotions, sensations, experiences, and attitudes are left to psychology, the body's ontological and epistemological status and implications to philosophy, and its social and cultural operations to ethnography. (8). Grosz' argument is that this disciplinary division has left the interactions of mind and body unexplained, and all attempts to correlate ideas or mental processes with neurological functions failing. For Grosz the very project of correlation seems doomed. The outcome, she argues, is that consciousness is "removed from direct contact with other minds and a sociocultural community. At its extreme, all that consciousness can be sure about is its own self-certain existence" (7).

Grosz has observed that the male body is inscribed in quite selective ways, narrated as 'controlled power' and as a contained hard body, with its specific fluids elided, in contrast to the female body which is described and derogated as a 'metaphorics of flow', a body out of control (xiii). Yet, she suggests that "If bodies are inscribed in particular ways...then these kinds of inscriptions are capable of reinscription, of transformation..." (ibid.). Chris Weedon promotes the possibility of transforming "the meaning of experience by bringing a different set of assumptions to bear on it"

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(Weedon, 1987: 85).[57] Yet as Grosz points out, bodies remain "materialities that are uncontainable in physicalist terms alone. If bodies are objects or things, they are like no others, for they are the centres of perspective, insight, reflection, desire, agency" (Grosz, 1994: ix).[58] While feminist and queer activists seemed to have embraced that idea of doing the body differently may produce new bodies, the question of limits has also been raised. Both Grosz and Haraway (1990) for instance suggest that biological specificities need to be looked at, towards a better understanding of gender beyond essentialism, while Butler (1990) and Bordo (1993), suggest there are likely to be limits to the plasticity of the body, self, and also conscious choice.

Bakhtin, poststructuralists such as Derrida and Foucault, and feminists generally, have recognized the problem.[59] Grosz for instance, in an attempt to counter[60]essentialist determinations of the body relating to Cartesian dualism, utilizes Spinoza's understanding of metabolic energy as a continuous process in "the self-constitution of the organism" (11), one that arises from a sustained sequence of

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[57] She argues for the possibility of change and intervention in that "The recognition that experience is open to contradictory and conflicting interpretations puts into question the ideas that language is transparent and expresses already fixed meanings" (Weedon, 1987: 85). It is difficult to step outside culturally ratified conceptions though, and, as Grosz has observed, even feminist theorists tend to take up essentialist positions. They see the specificities of the female body as limitations to the privileges of patriarchy, but also "a unique means of access to knowledge and way of living" and will accept misogynist patriarchal designations of the female body as "somehow more natural, less detached, more engaged with" (15). Spivak (1988, 1993) too has argued for and employed a 'strategic' essentialism.

[58] In examining conceptualizations of the body, Grosz charges both mainstream Western philosophical thought and contemporary feminist theory as complicit in the misogyny characteristic of Western reason. She argues that the terms used in a "bifurcation of being" conceiving the human subject within "dichotomously opposed characteristics... function implicitly to define the body in nonhistorical, naturalistic, organicist, passive, inert terms, seeing it as an intrusion on or interference with the operation of the mind, a brute givenness which requires overcoming, a connection with animality and nature that needs transcendence" (Grosz, 1994: 3).

[59] Julia Kristeva (1980/1975, 1984), Luce Irigaray (1981/1977), and Helene Cixous (1981/1975), align rationality with the masculine, and locate the feminine in subjective cultural forms, or aspects marginalized or suppressed by rationalism: poetic language and the languages of mysticism, madness and magic. Since women already occupy subjective positions though, any effect on hegemonic structures and essentialist demarcation seems unlikely. Further, Kristeva, Irigaray, and Cixous' withdrawal from rationality operates only at the level of advocacy, since their own writing remains logical and coherent, but their argument for the *value* of these anti-rationalist discourses is important. The issue raised by these theorists, and reinforced by others such as Grosz, is that much of female experience, (and by extension, any group determined as outsiders to patriarchy) lies outside of current theoretical descriptions, and that it is in excess of language and its kinds of meanings. Weedon argues that "We cannot afford to abandon reason entirely to the interests of patriarchy. Reason, like experience, requires both deconstruction and reconstruction in the interests of feminism" (Weedon, 1987: 10). (1987). In response to what sometimes looks like an essentialist impasse, Weedon has argued for an interventionist position, and an acknowledgement of women's rational capacities and powers, indeed, a feminist rationalism, one that no longer dismisses those qualities ascribed feminine, irrelevant and inferior. Which may well be what Kristeva, Irigaray, and Cixous are doing.

[60] Elizabeth Grosz has suggested that "perhaps other ways of understanding corporeality, sexuality, and the differences between the sexes may be developed and explored which enable us to conceive of subjectivity in different terms than those provided by traditional philosophical and feminist understandings" (Grosz, 1994: vii).

states in a unified plurality..." (12).[61] For Grosz, Spinoza's concept frees the body from notions of a closed system and mechanistic metaphors: "On a Spinozist understanding, metabolism is the very becoming of the machine...not simply a system of energy inputs provided from outside the machine-body but a continuous process in the self-constitution of the organism.' (11).

For those grappling with the philosophical and psychological inferences of what seems to be a common experience, that of the *sensation* of a mind distinct from body, it is consciousness and its penchant for distanced abstraction, that causes difficulties in unseating the mind as driver of the corporeal vehicle.[62] When the conscious mind is experienced as the analyst of experience and perception, vision is determined the tool of the intellect, or view of the mind.[63] The ideal bounded body re-inforces a fantasy of control in which consciousness and language rule. Within psychology notions of a synthesized embodied self often tend to deal in biological universals and do nothing to negotiate the rifts between behavioural response and introspection, between science and enchantment, reason and feeling, control and chaos, or civilization and savagery within or across cultures. Integrationist models that purport to heal the Cartesian split between mind and body are not generally directed to an enlargement of the players partaking the formation of a self.[64] Instead, such models expand mechanistic descriptions of *both* mind and body in ways which tend to resonate with the agenda of artificial intelligence.[65] What *has* changed is that *the mind too* is designated as machine.[66] Absorbed into a cybernetic entity (Hayles,

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[61] Many feminists, including Grosz herself, call for interventionist moves to blur the boundaries of essentialist images, and for women to explore and to construct the power body for themselves. Such countermoves parallel Spivak's suggestion that feminist literary critics "fabricate strategic 'misreadings' " to counter preferred sense, (Spivak, quoted in Gaines & Herzog, 1990: 27) in order to produce a confusion of identity in performance or role, and institute a "relation of constant flux" toward the maintenance of ambivalence (ibid.).

[62] The ghost-in-the-machine is an inherent paradox of the Cartesian legacy, for mental reflexivity cannot be adequately explained by opposing the labour of some 'natural' viewing body with the reflections of its inner intellectual watcher and critic.

[63] The controlling consciousness mind, seems to reflect a liberal individualist sense of controlling interpretation and response, and to contradict the notion of universal perception and its ratification of the natural/objective image, but the dualist tradition is inherently idealist and objective.

[64] See, for instance, Dennett (1969, 1993), Humphrey (1992).

[65] See Penrose (1989), Dennett (1993), and Hayles (1999) for accounts of these debates. The privileged domains within neurology invite consideration. Much of the work done in the 1970s & 1980s was related to the demands for effective vision recognition in artificial intelligences (see studies in Ono, et al., 1993 for instance). Recently there have been some moves away from this focus with the acceptance that "In spite of this progress, it was increasingly apparent that machine perceptual systems were still enormously impoverished versions of their biological counterparts. Machines simply lacked the inductive intelligence and knowledge that allowed biological systems to operate successfully over a variety of unspecified contexts and environments" (Richards, W., preface to Knill & Richards, 1996: ix).

[66] For examples of this, see Dennett (1969, 1993), Humphrey (1992).

1999), this body-mind ends up being little more than the reductive foreclosure, with mind still cast as that which interprets sensation.

These AI aligned models have done little to destabilize what might be described as the hegemonic rule of objectivity and ideality in Western image-making. Yet there is at least one model of self-constitution that challenges the determined separateness of body-mind and the primacy of consciousness, and also places visual production beyond what is accessible to critical analysis, or the fantasy of a controlling mind. Antonio Damasio's biologically grounded model of self awareness offers a neurological foundation for examining sensory orders, rationality, and emotion, and for reconsidering the relations of seeing, imaging and the making of images.[67] His description of mind-body has affinities with Grosz's (1994) evocation of the body-mind (a mobius-like exchange of interior and exterior flows), and might well be represented by Deleuze and Guattari's (1987/1980) movements and intensities.

Damasio not only describes brain and body as "indissociably integrated" (Damasio, 1995: 87), but also construes 'self' as a production forged through internal events, and external, experiential, and cultural encounters. His hypothesis of the functioning of multiple brain systems is, by his own account, an attempt to show the connections between social phenomena and biological phenomena.[68] This synthesis incorporates many attributes and experiences on mind-body sidelined by conservative accounts of mentation.[69] It problematizes earlier models of the layered, evolutionary brain

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[67] Where traditionally philosophy claimed the study of the mind, it was psychology that governed the body and the study of perception. Jerome Bruner explains this alliance in terms of what was at stake in the division of being. "Psychology paid its price of admission to the natural sciences in the nineteenth century by a tacit agreement to ban both mind and purpose from its past armamentarium of explanatory concepts. A decent nineteenth-century natural science had no truck with either mentalism or teleology. And, indeed, given the ghost-in-the-machine use of such concepts in that period, neither of them deserved a place. To anybody conversant with the history of psychology over the past century, it is surely plain that such an initial taboo could not be sustained, save in the form of an ideological preface. Mentalist concepts were there all along - in Titchner's method of structural introspection, in concepts like "imagery", and even in the hallowed doctrine of threshold and just-noticeable-difference. And intentionality was surely an implicit premise in theories of attention, with notions like "set" being used heuristically to deal with self-directed intentions to behave in a certain way" (Bruner, 1979:183).

[68] Damasio emphasizes not one mind, but numerous brain systems "working in concert across many levels of neuronal organization" (xiii). See also Howard Gardner's (1985) outline of multiple intelligences which is discussed later in relation to the senses in chapter 6.

[69] See Massorini (2002) for an acknowledgement of the earlier work of experimental cognitive psychologists that was sidelined by cybernetics. This earlier work relates to Gombrich's position (see Gombrich, Hochberg, & Black, 1970 and Gregory, R. L., 1973/1966) and emphasizes the importance of "top-down" knowledge in perception (Richards, W., preface to Knill & Richards, 1996: ix). See Neisser (1974/1968) for an early account of a constructed vision, and his advocacy of the recognition of differences in imaging ability or visual consciousness. See his arguments regarding crucial links of vision to seemingly esoteric phenomena such as iconic and memory images, dreams and dream looking, hallucinations, eidetic images; and his radical appreciation of the implications of visual ambiguity, sensory conflict, and the non-camera character of the eye-brain.

with its reptilian, mammalian and human systems by showing that even 'reason', normally associated with the development of mind, and regarded as a superior and intrinsically human property, can be located in older subcortical areas.[70] Conversely, it shows that feelings, far from being some archaic or elusive remnant associated with a primitive limbic system, or being simply body based, are traceable to other neural substrates including the more recently evolved higher order prefrontal cortexes. Damasio formulates feelings as crucial markers of body state and as fundamental to decision-making and to the ways in which awareness comes to be experienced.[71]

More radically, Damasio proposes that feeling itself is both a sense and a thinking mode, one that is "fast moving and idea rich, when the body is in the positive and pleasant band of the somatic spectrum, slow-moving and repetitive, when the body state veers towards the painful band" (xv). Feelings, Damasio says, are "sensors for the match or lack thereof between nature and circumstance"(xv), that is, between nature as inherited, and learnt expectation or adaptive strategy developed in confronting the new. Arguing against the privileging of reason and "its instruments of logic" (xiii), Damasio proposes that rational processes merely follow in the wake of emotions and feeling. He disconnects the rational from the insights of pure ideation. It is deprivileged as a mode of knowledge and truth, and even deemed far too unwieldy and time-consuming to be useful in decision-making; instead the rational is construed as a 'rationalization' of some psychic or bodily disequilibrium.

Damasio also shifts intuition and the flash of insight from mind to the emotion-feeling domain; *insight is the mind becoming aware of what the body already knows.*[72] Far from being some biological residue, or an irrelevant indulgence, feelings serve as internal guides for decision and survival. In that they are

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[70] Damasio's account derives from his medical work with brain damaged patients and from his empirical and clinical observations on the everyday meshing of rationality and emotion, the interdependence of these two spheres made conspicuous through their absence in patients with particular kinds of brain lesions. It takes up implications of earlier research on cognition and the processes of seeing that were set aside in search for universal operations, and builds on earlier models of split brain and multiple brain structures such as those by A. R. Luria (1968, 1974/1970), and more current neurological understandings to develop an understanding of separate but interconnected brain processes.

[71] Damasio proposes that what is described as a 'feeling' is a momentary view (or register) of some part of the body landscape that is undergoing change. And further, that this sense is subject to 'qualifiers' of the body state, that is, other perceptions and recollections which derive from past experience, or the imagination.

[72] Damasio's description of mind–body is not only a neurologically framed riposte to the privileging of the intellect, it ratifies phenomenological concepts in its explanation of the self-perceiving subject that is neither unitary nor fixed.

instrumental in triggering awareness, and in externalizing and communicating to others, feelings are crucial to personal future, to social convention, morality, and to biological regulation. They act as the basis of what has been described as spirit or soul; and they are just as cognitive as other precepts.

In keeping with Merleau-Ponty's notion of body-sense, Damasio proposes that an ever-present background body state is crucial for knowing where we are and what we are doing. This body state derives from the subject's sphere of feeling; Damasio describes it as "the feeling of life itself, the sense of being." (150); it can be recognized as the kind of feeling that prevails between emotions (and I would suggest here, the kind of feeling we are having, when we say we are not feeling anything). These continuous background feelings provide an "illusory living sameness" (155), explains Damasio. Drawing on his clinical observations of certain patients, he emphasizes that without them "the very core of your representation of self would be broken" (151).

Feelings contribute to the mapping and integration of body signals that provide a continuous and direct updating of the perception or imaging of one's body within one's mind. They construct a continuously refreshed image of the body's structure and current state, inherently measured along a pain and pleasure spectrum. Damasio describes feelings as an integrated construction, a synthesis of separately located but interlocked sensate systems, or perceptual "harbours", that also incorporate associated past, and even imagined, states. Emotions, feelings, and sensations are defined as connected but different things, which explains why it is possible to sense pain but not necessarily be subject to it as a feeling.[73] Such was the experience of a brain-traumatized patient who, after receiving treatment, was able to report that though the pain was still there as usual, it no longer bothered him. This does not "solve" the problem of mind-body duality, but it explains why the experience of self tends to be constituted as a mind body split.[74]

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[73] This understanding is enormously significant for other aspects of Damasio's hypothesis, and also for Western reflection on certain practices in other cultures. It may problematize the very notion of esoteric in some cases. For instance, something like this separation of feeling and pain may be at the core of body discipline rituals and practices, meditative states and those 'detached' spiritual states disavowed by the individualist subjectivity enshrined in the West, that very Cartesian manifestation of conflict between mastery and feeling.

[74] By detailing the most recent findings on the brain's structures, including his own investigations into the results of prefrontal lobe trauma, and the mental, moral and social capacities of particular brain-damaged individuals, Damasio shows that when the connections between body and feelings are severed, life is severely impaired or compromised in ways which might be described as dissociated. Various brain regions from both hemispheres, such as the ventromedial sector, and dorsolateral sectors of the prefrontal cortices, and the somatosensory area of the right hemisphere, and the amygdala are known to

When normal subjects for instance, are exposed to scenes with a strong emotional content, such as horror, physical pain, or sexual explicitness, whether real scenes or photographic images of such scenes, that viewing generates reactive responses that can be observed through monitoring of a subtle skin excitation manifesting at its extreme as goose bumps. In contrast, subjects with frontal lobe damage are able to *describe* the horror, but they show no body reaction and do not *feel* the horror; they might even acknowledge that the images *should* disturb but do not.[75]

Damasio proposes a sensing, producing body; the brain is the body's captive audience, existing for, and in, an integrated organism. Neither mind, nor its neurons, nor body, work separately; the brain's conceptualization of body through its feeling register constitutes an "indispensable frame of reference for the neural processes we experience as the mind" (xvi). In his account of the embodied, self-aware mind, Damasio argues that there is nothing that can even be called mind, no matter how complex it might appear, if it does not possess "the ability to display images internally and to order those images in a process called thought. Such thought-images are not solely visual though, there are also "sound images", "olfactory images" and so on." (89).[76] Choice and selection are made, not by reason, which would, Damasio explains, take forever in computing all possible scenarios, but through the intuitive feeling register associated with the type of image, a fast sorting and valuation process he terms a ' somatic marker'. There is no set formula. The mind is "replete with a diverse repertoire of images, generated to the tune of the situation you are facing, entering and exiting your consciousness in a show too rich for you to encompass fully" (170).

What does not become imaged in the mind, he explains, is the innate knowledge of biological regulation, breathing, temperature, and so on. These aspects are

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be involved in the integration of reason across the social, the personal, whether dealing with logic, or emotion. Damasio identifies a further region in the brain, the anterior cingulate cortex, as facilitating interaction in systems for emotion/feeling in relation to attention and working memory - which directly influences energy levels for internal thought and animation, and external movement and energy. (Patients having temporary damage to this region report on recovery that their previous physical immobility had been on a par with their mental activity and feeling - that is, nothing much at all took place.)

[75] Damasio describes these people as only being able to live in the present, unable to consider or visualize their future.

[76] This imaging also incorporates words and speech, but Damasio argues that words and speech have an image character, but they may not be experienced as such because thresholds of awareness vary. And here he cites various abstract thinkers, mathematicians, scientists, and inventors who have been able to describe their visual thinking processes in this regard.

experienced as background, or what Leder (1990) has described as 'the absent body'. This 'body ground' is generated by stable circuits, that contrast to more pliable circuits that are constantly responding to experience, and re-imaging the continuous modification of knowledge directed toward such activities as "movement, reason, planning, creativity".[77]

So how do we get a sense of coherent vision or a sense of self within this "neural basis of knowledge with ... its parcellated nature, and its dependence on images" (Damasio, 1995: 85)? Damasio explains that "Although we have the illusion that everything comes together in a single anatomical theatre, recent evidence suggests that it does not. Probably the relative simultaneity of activity at different sites binds the separate parts of the mind together" (84). Linda Smith, surveying work on intersensory perception, notes that traditionally this mapping of separate modalities was assigned to the cortex, "Our perceptions are unitary. Sights, sounds, and the haptic feel of things are coordinated" (Smith, 1994: ix). Yet what we now know, says Smith, is that there are all kinds of interconnectivity in the brains systems, even early maturing systems in infants, and a continuous intermeshing of the senses.

This proposition, one that Smith terms 'the binding problem', reinvokes the banished inner homunculus and the specter of "infinite regress" (227) - someone looking at someone looking at someone... for *who* or *what* binds? Damasio explains this binding or integration as the work of mutually targeted biochemical and neural circuits. These connect through two principal pathways: the nervous system, which allows every part of the body to send signals to the brain, and vice versa, and the bloodstream, a more ancient conduit carrying hormones, neurotransmitters and modulators arising from the body's activity or generated by the brain. These operations are generated both externally and internally, and form a veritable broth of continuous reaction and interaction, moving inwards and outwards, forward and back; they have no real termination points, but rather, an immense complexity of ever-changing connected patterns.[78] There is no simple stream or feedback loop. It

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[77] This body reference is proposed as the basis or ground *for all conceptual representation*. It enables our experience of subjectivity and our construction of the world; it enables us to act appropriately within and on the world, for whatever our focus, be it logic in mathematical and spatial domains, reasoning in personal and social domains, or attending to purely imaginative realms.

[78] Damasio makes it clear that the sensory systems do not talk to each other directly, or to various motor controls, but rather to various interposed regions which converge and pass the messages further along to other points of convergence. The scale of complexity, and the task of describing particular processes is immense: "...the overall firing of those neurons, as they constitute complicated assemblies ranging from the local, microscopic scale circuits to macroscopic systems spanning several centimetres. There are several billion neurons in the circuits of one human brain. The number of synapses formed among those

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is these complex and interposed structures, and their continuous input and output activity that "momentarily constructs and stealthily manipulates the images in our minds" (93). There is no rigid cortical map.[79]

The Cartesian theatre, that experience of mind separate from body, may be, phenomenologically, the common experience (Leder, 1990), but it is a constituted effect.[80] The illusion of a mind's integrated image - sounds, lights, action - is, Damasio argues, "in effect, a trick of timing" (Damasio, 1995: 95), and a trick that can result in states of confusion if synthesis is not achieved. Damasio suggests that this, a coming to consciousness, allows for flexibility in prediction, planning and protection, and that selection and reaction are governed by the fast and personalized register of *feeling*, logical decision-making being far too laborious. Though 'time binding' is part of the explanation of the illusion of consciousness mechanism, it does not, as Damasio admits, address the 'how', nor does it clarify the experience of subjectivity/consciousness, that is, the experience of knowing these are *our* mental pictures.

In accounting for self awareness, Damasio proposes that feelings have a privileged role in subjectivity, and that they assist us to 'mind', to forge a representation of

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neurons is at least 10 trillion, and the length of the axon cables forming neuron circuits totals something on the order of several hundred thousand miles...The product of activity in these circuits is a pattern of firing that is transmitted to another circuit...(it) may or may not fire...The time scale for the firing is extremely small, on the order of tens of milliseconds..." (Damasio, 1995: 259).

[79] Damasio points out that there are regions in the brain where signals from different sensory domains converge, and other places where the construction/synthesization of information from separate sensory modalities takes place, but he emphasizes that there is no single area which corresponds to exact mental projection. When an image is recalled we do not get a stored facsimile but "an interpretation, a newly reconstructed version of the original"(Damasio, 1995: 100) (see also Neisser (1974/68: 7) with the approximation more vivid or accurate depending on firstly the circumstances of the original looking/learning. This 'interpretation' is registered as dispositional representations in the form of potential neuron firing patterns, and those formed from the circumstances surrounding the recall. These dispositions are the means of reconstituting or triggering our remarkably consistent pictures, but there is no one formula for any reconstruction. Although each sensory system can be localized, and has its own attention and working memory functions, damage to those areas does not preclude mind/synthesis - local trauma may also have other consequences such as learning impairment, or a lack of image formation in that sense modality. Damasio explains that the neural activity most associated with our experience of mental images occurs in the early sensory cortices, but even these derive from complex operations in other numerous regions of the brain, and are formed under the control of the body's sensory receptors, and their 'dispositional' representations.

[80] Seeing is just as vibratile and provisional in this model. While looking at an external object, image, event, signals from the eye arrive at the visual sensory cortices which engage in much cross-signaling to other sections of the brain (any damage to these cortices can result in the loss of very specific information - colour can disappear for instance, even the capacity to imagine colour). In agreement with Neisser's early work on the relations of cognition and perception: "Mental images are constructs not copies" (Neisser 1972/1968: 10), Damasio emphasizes that no facsimile image from a seeing stored at any point. In other words, we do not lose memory but the capacity for memory making.

self.[81] When you see, says Damasio, you do not just see: *you feel you are seeing something with your eyes* (232), that is, you can feel your engagement. He speculates that a transient representation of a causative entity formed by brain activity in the early sensory cortices, combined with transient representations of body state from the somatosensory cortices, leads to a representation of a third party, an imaging of feeling which, among other functions, maintains attention and activity.[82] The primordial representations of the body schema, its anatomy, boundary, its patterns of movement, the continuous updating of the body state and "slowly evolving elements of autobiographical data" (238) combined with the trigger image, the cause of the incipient changes, help generate the brain's imagetic description of self, "an image of the self perturbed" (241). This third party ensemble is capable of building a representation of the self that changes in the process of looking at and reacting to an object.[83]

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[81] Particularly as to what is intrinsic to being human. If coming to consciousness is linked to surviving and acting in the world, then it is probably not confined to humans and there is indeed evidence that great apes at least have a similar capacity. There are also implications here for the possibility that there are other modes of awareness, such as that of 'relaxed attention, a holistic synthesized perceptive state, familiar in making art and music and in looking at art and listening to music, as well as contemplative and meditative states. Awareness too might be a matter of degree in what accounts for the particular sense of self. Phenomenological descriptions are useful here, as well as neurological studies.

[82] In Damasio's model, vision and the visual are recuperated from being characterized as the 'view' of the driver-mind, but in the idea of consciousness as a reactive integration of sensory images deriving from the entire organism, the question of agency remains. How do these multiple, parallel, and converging streams of signals "visual, auditory, somatosensory, and so on" (ibid.: 88-89), with their endless repertoires of images translate into the cohesive internal image, that basis for mind? What *orders* all the types of body sensations, external and internal to fabricate the effect of coherent perception of the world (and produce the Cartesian theatre, 'the mind's eye', visualizing some feeling-seeing subject?) In keeping with his hypothesis of the value of emotion, Damasio suggests that the somatic register, conscious or unconscious, is the agent here, functioning toward the organism's best interests, a register which encompasses the environment's effect or shaping of the organism, and prepares the organism to act on the environment. He identifies regions in the right brain that cross-talk between the left and right brain hemispheres as the co-ordinating controller here, as the decision-maker governing the selection which produces the effect of the mind's screen.

In Damasio's hypothesis, mind appears an evolutionary outcome of the need to simultaneously retrieve from spatially segregated areas the ever more complex information and experience to do with social, personal and future projections and to display these in working memory for concentrated tasks. The right brain usually specializes (some left-handed people may have a reversed configuration) in holistic representations and emotional tasks, while the left hemisphere's representations are inclined to be specialized, partial and unintegrated.

[83] Damasio describes this feeling-ground-engagement-sensing as that which creates the metaself, a subjective perspective, in conjunction with "a schematic view of the main protagonists" (Damasio, 1995: 243). It shows some correspondence also with what Merlau-Ponty called 'the predicament of the viewer', the reversibility of the self and the world, the recognition "...that the seer is caught up in the midst of the visible, that in order to see, the seer must in turn be capable of being seen" (Johnson, 1993), as if from an external perspective.

Compulsion and Interpretation

I have discussed Damasio's study of awareness at some length because an embodied neural basis for subjectivity that incorporates experience and reinstates the value of feeling, invites some consideration in relation to idea of self-performance and transformation in ways which incorporate both making and looking at images. Damasio's model remains a mechanistic account, although immensely sophisticated, for it still works with a 'neutral' ungendered body-mind, and locates agency and 'self' within the individual. In many ways Grosz' (1988, 1990) theorization of the lived body and subjectivity prempts Damasio's descriptions, and places it in a social context. Grosz goes beyond the self-constituting body-mind to engage with culture, space, and time, but she still takes into account the sexually differentiated body: "The body cannot be understood as a neutral screen, a biological *tabula rasa* onto which masculine or feminine could be indifferently projected." (Grosz, 1994: 18). Nevertheless, the interactive capacities of Damasio's model sets up numerous possibilities for emphasizing the specificities of experience and difference. Image reception, the way mental images and external image-objects affect the body, imaging of all kinds, mental and cultural, are reinstated in a field of possibilities for structures and systems of sense making.[84]

Damasio's account of the mind-body re-engages with the broad spectrum of mental visual experience or imaging that Ulric Neisser (1974/1968) proposed as interrelated but different, whether that of dreams, thought, or object-imaging.[85] Agency is not subscribed to thought, or seen as an outcome of external stimulation. Damasio describes mind-body as an interplay of all kinds of events. Mental activity for instance, evokes simultaneous, myriad 'as ifs', sensory images and associated emotional representations (Damasio, 1995: 184), as well as various unconscious and automatic responses, and in doing so, unleashes "a barrage of neural and chemical

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[84] There are some correspondences here with screen theory. See Deleuze (1986/1985, 1989/1985), for instance, for an exploration and differentiation of perception-image, affect-image and action-image, and an examination of the relations between brain and body within the experience of cinema, and Linda Williams (1990, 1995) Vivienne Sobchack (1992) for their work on the embodied viewer and the roles of body response in pleasure and subjectivity.

[85] In the sixties Ernst Gombrich raised the structuralist/humanist question of universal forms in regard to visual recognition, perception, and pointed toward what appear to be innate cellular responses to shapes and patterns corresponding to certain key body features such as faces (Gombrich, 1963: 6, 1968/60: 87). Gombrich's correlation of image recognition with innate response derived from studies in animal behaviouralism, and the semiotic analysis of non-verbal communication, particularly the work of Konrad Lorenz and James J. Gibson. This area of recognition as compulsion is rarely considered in cultural theory given the problematic status for cognitive psychological science. Findings that are particularly contested, or only present on the margins, or even excluded, may be an indicator of a dynamic at work, a distinctive Deleuzian knot of tensions, energies, a phenomena that may function as a point of departure for new lines of thought.

signals on the body" (158), which bring about bodily changes. And in turn, any chemical activity, sensation, or body change may bring about thought.

Thought is body embedded. In recognizing, and perhaps visualizing 'face' or other features of the body for instance, there would seem to be some innate predispositions at work (Gombrich, 1963: 6, 1968/60: 87, Gross, et. al., 1972).[86] Further, every time that same face is thought of or seen, it constitutes a new experience in, as Damasio observes, all its cultural variation and individual unpredictability.[87] These renewed experiences may over time, affect synapses and their firing strength, and they shape and continually modify the design of the pliable circuits, the workings of the brain.[88]

Perception and recognition have also been prime sites of investigation in science, yet innate biological responses have been considered far less important for the humanities than the socially induced manoeuvres developed around looking and seeing.[89] Dialogues with science emphasize the primacy of translation rather than objectivity. Martin Jay, who resists "a completely constructionist concept of the visual", warns that it is "problematic to assume that the scientific debate over vision has itself reached a definite conclusion", and contends that "(a)lthough there is much to be learned from experiments in the mechanics and physiognomics of sight, that complex mix of natural and cultural phenomena called visuality defies reduction of any normative model based on scientific data alone" (Jay, 1994: 591). Jerome

[86] Beginning with studies such as Gross, C. G., Rocha-Miranda, C. E., & Bender, D. B., 1972, pp. 96 - 111 (also cited in Coren et al., 1978, Young, in Ono, 1993) which showed, in monkey brains, an array of neurons sensitive (firing automatically on visual exposure) to a spread hand shape. Damasio cites Michael Merzenich's research in this regard, and discusses innate fear reaction to stimuli of size, motion, sounds, and particular types of body state configurations, with some humans appearing to be neuronally predisposed to react to snakes and spiders.

[87] Damasio speculates that if two people were to see or think of the same face, there would be nothing similar in the initial patterns of activity, that is, their dispositional representations, since these are not related to specific locations in the brain. But some hundred milliseconds later, some similarity might be evident in the early visual cortical circuitry (Dmasio, 1995: 103). In keeping with Damasio's own findings though, any cortical similarity would depend on the existence of shared factors such as cultural learning, sensitization, and context, and would also bring into play the different associations that a particular face would have for those two people.

[88] Intriguingly, a recent newspaper article describes neurological research that found different brain responses and behavioural preferences depending on whether a person thought they were drinking Pepsi or Coca-Cola, with Coca-Cola evoking a shared characteristic pattern of brain activity, and also activating additional parts of the brain. Samuel McClure, a researcher at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston Texas, is quoted as saying "There are visual messages that have inserted themselves into the nervous system of humans" (Henderson, Mark, 'Coke is it…because your brain tells you so', *The Weekend Australian*, October 16-17, 2004, p. 16).

[89] If sight itself is considered a cultural construction, with its internal 'dispositional' representations open to any variety of formative experiences, then all questions of possible resisting, subverting or transforming dominant scopic regimes, go just that much deeper.

Bruner's emphasis on context and interpretation as mediators of biological predilections still holds good for emphasizing cultural learning and exposures:

"The conclusion is that a reaction to any feature of an environment is, to use Husky's (1976) phrase, most likely to be "structure dependent". (This means) that the significance of any feature is determined by its position in a structure. The position of a piece on a chess board, the function of a word in a sentence, a particular facial expression, the color or placement of a light, these cannot be interpreted without reference to the person's internalized rules of chess or language, the conventions he holds concerning human interaction, the traffic rules in force in his mind" (Bruner, 1979:183).

Even if some aspects of seeing are 'hard-wired', vision remains a process that seems amenable to environmental development, and is selective and goal orientated. Nevertheless, the notion of perception as culturally constructed is emphatically refused in some quarters.[90] If it were to be more widely accepted, it would threaten some of the great technological projects of our time. If the complexities of recognition and meaning, for instance, are found to be embedded in human lives rather than mechanistic biological systems, the field of machine intelligence might be seen as founded on immensely reductive conceptions of mind and body, as merely super-tool. It would show that where machine can or does replace human activity, that that person too was regarded and used as tool, as systemized labour, merely a functional extension of somebody else's will.

The Demand for Certainty

The photograph has been described as "innocent", as some pure unmediated "beginning" (Benjamin, 1977b/1931), or as an image without a code (Barthes, 1977/1961), or in excess of its codes (Barthes, 1984/1980), or as some underlying raw state on which cultural signs are inscribed. This may, as Elkins argues, reflect a

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[90] See for instance M.A. Hagen (1986) and Deregowski (1984) for examples of conservative stances here. The very proposition of culturally constructed sight faces much opposition given what it might mean for objectivity since perceptual veracity is a lynch pin of empirically based scientific areas. Too much has been kept in the margins of neurology and perception studies for cultural difference to be considered merely as a variation on universal seeing, or too minor or esoteric to be of consequence. Perception as a subjective and encultured process may not auger well for some rationalist enterprises, but if there are ways of seeing that are incommensurable with that of Western perception, it presents an ethical challenge to ideas of a shared global culture, but also opens possibilities for broader constitutions of cultural practice.

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theoretical tradition prone to "logical mistakes and simplifications of the nature of images" (Elkins, 1998: 270), but photography carries a truth-reality effect.[91]

As Bourdieu (1965) and Tagg (1988) have argued, the truth-reality-witness role of the photograph is historically locatable. Although it has less and less validity in the face of the infinite possibilities and common use of digitized manipulation in today's photographic practice (Mitchell, 1994), it continues to underwrite representation.[92] The photograph's sanctioned status as a "guaranteed witness of the actuality of the events it represents" (Tagg, 1988: 160) has been re-enforced by authoritative institutions such as the police or the law with their predilection for the hypothetical documentary "brute" photo characterized by its "frontal and clear" format, and its iconic "being-ness" (ibid.). Bourdieu describes all photographic choice as subordinated to the canons and categories of traditional and official envisioning of the world, which thus confirms that photography is indeed an "objective" recording, and thus "a tautological certainty" (Bourdieu, 1965: 77).

In the early 1960s Bourdieu examined the practice of photography within various social classes and groups such as villagers, factory workers and photographic clubs, and argued that for such groups the apparent realism of the photograph gives it objectivity, even though it enacts a "popular aesthetic" governed by regulated conventional canons.[93] All accidents or effects threatening to dissolve its real are eliminated even at the risk of sacrificing naturalness. European peasant farmers pose for wedding photographs by adopting a Byzantine-style frontality used as a means of ensuring honour, dignity and respectability. Functioning as a ritualized "sociogram", the family photograph celebrates and sanctions the domestic cult in which the family is both subject and object.

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[91] See Elkins (1998: 267-277) for an analysis of theorization of 'image as text' in the writings of Wittgenstein, Barthes, Bryson, and Panofsky. Elkins differentiates their rhetorical, cultural and epistemological approaches, and argues that each implies a different domain of the visual, " a version of pictures that distinguishes the domain of words, propositions, logic, or historical narratives from the domain of wordless, a-logical, inenarrable, preiconographic light and colour." (1998: 270). Elkins emphasizes that this response does not account for 'pictures as pictures', or their ultimate incoherence. "The "pure visuality" that remains when everything explicitly linguistic has been subtracted is never purely nonsemiotic" but it leads away from obvious meaning. Image theory, says Elkins, is "pinned under the crush of stereotyped seeing", and built on inadequate assumptions on how resemblance, figure and round, and realism work (272).

[92] See Willis (1990), Mitchell (1994) for a comprehensive account of the reality claims of photography and the implications of post-object photography.

[93] Bourdieu argued that photography is disposed to serve such social and iconic functions because the portrait, in providing an objectification of one's self-image, stands as an extreme form of one's relationship to others.

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Modernism, says Bourdieu, has no place within the peasant's ritualist and naturist cult of photography. He gives this summary of his subjects' reactions:

"The picture of a meaningless object is refused with such force, and the systematic distortion of the given object, and of the human face in particular, provokes such a feeling of outrage, because abstracting reinterpretation is seen as a technique of exclusion and an attempt at mystification, but also and particularly a gratuitous attack on the thing represented" (Bourdieu et al., 1965: 94).

It is not clear how much Bourdieu speaks also for himself here in regard to the European peasants perceived distaste for expressionism and abstraction, but the conventions of the formal iconic photograph are hardly unblemished ideologically. Its conventions do not derive from some form of Byzantine art, rendered timeless, but from the c18th European tradition of aristocratic portrait painting as reformulated in c19th bourgeois portraiture and photography, and maintained in academic practice. A preference for this kind of image may be seen as much a desire for the status associated these earlier traditions, and for certain kinds of documentation, as much as a sanctioned appearance for the purposes of a social and family register. And as Bourdieu himself observed, its objective authority is also that evident in the more brutal conventions of state and institutional record-keeping. Yet the family portrait tends to be a matter of ritual even for non-peasant families, one celebrating family existence and continuity. Where there is a difference in look, it lies as much within the expressive performance of its subjects who present themselves to the camera as in any more sophisticated image construction and expectation appearing in the wake of education and cultural exposures[94].

This problem with such scientific-sociological Marxist approaches to the relations of social structure and imagemaking is that they are so reductive of art practice,

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[94] Bourdieu (1965) says that the unease French farmer-peasants experience in posing for photographs is a reflection of the poor relationship they have with their own bodies in situations requiring their body as spectacle, and evidence of their internalization of the poor image other groups have of them. Discomfort in front of the camera though may be a widespread experience across classes, though dealt with differently by other groups and other classes. The notion of unease also works against his argument of Byzantine formality. For Bourdieu, class is central in any social relationship or image practice, and determines all other factors such as education, wealth, or profession. Other variables such as gender, age, or race tend to be subsumed in his writings, and he maintains a view of culture as something traditional, closed, rather than characterized by rapid and generational change, or contemporary diasporic interrelations, producing a Marxist valorization of the peasant community in European farming culture. Bourdieu and his co-researchers might share with Barthes the aim of objectifying subjective values, but in Bourdieu's traditional Marxist-Leninist formulation, art (as with other apparently value-surplus commodities) is determined as the cultural capital of the bourgeoisie. For a detailed exposition of this notion of cultural capital and his research see Bourdieu (1984/1979) Part 1, 'A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste', particularly the first chapter ' The Aristocracy of Culture'.

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locating all judgement and difference as a play of status.[95] This is unproductive in that it suggests that there are purer realms that exist without such considerations.[96] Bourdieu's (1965; 1984/1979) data rich analysis is categorized in accordance with a prescribed notion of art as a device that maintains a set of prescribed social relations, within the 'logic of the field of cultural production'.[97] He proves what now seems obvious, that sophisticated art knowledge and competencies relate to privilege, education, and opportunity, and that sociocultural practices are differentiated by some enculturated sensibility or knowledge-based practice. But that is of course true of all specialized fields, not just art culture. When art is linked to false values, all its practices are seen as either ideology (ratifying the dominant classes), or delusion (Heywood, 1997); any critical capacity is discounted.

Bourdieu's (1984/1976) critiques of 'taste', the distant coldness of formalism, and the falsity of pure beauty show his focus is on the nobler claims of high art and its modernist turn, but the avantgarde too is generally incorporated in his exposition of art as lacking true value. What is obliterated is the effect of specific art works, or the ideas and experiences they evoke (which could well be as revealing on class matters in their own way, as Bourdieu's research and writing). Bourdieu judges high art as lacking emotional involvement while engaging with particular art works as a stimulus to document responses of others as evidence of the alienating game of art. These same records however demonstrate plenty of engagement, but not in relation to the context of the work, or the intentions of the artists, or the supposed truth of the image, or with humanist notions of art. What they suggest, from a non-universalist and post-structuralist perspective, is a tendency by European working and peasant classes of the sixties to respond to images literally as document or description which is itself an enculturated interpretative context.[98] Rather than a proof of the collusions of art, in opposition to a natural moral view retained by workers and peasants, it

[95] Bourdieu is very clear about the status of his work as science. See his Preface to the English Language edition of *Distinctions* (1984). He speaks of his "project of objectifying the mental structures associated with the particularity of a social structure", one that works towards "a sort of estrangement from the familiar... the 'making strange' beloved of the Russian formalists", and "the only rational basis for a universal culture" (1984/1979: xiv).

[96] In the Preface to *Distinctions*, Bourdieu acknowledges certain limits of his work, particularly that his findings reflect the particularities of French culture. Citing the universality of structuralism, he suggests nevertheless that they are valid for all stratified societies; that his work offers "a reading that seeks to identify, behind the specific institution of a particular society, the structural invariant and, by the same token, the equivalent institution in another universe" (Bourdieu, 1984/1979: xii).

[97] His analyses in *Distinctions* are based on 1217 interview questionnaires carried out in 1963 and 1967-8.

[98] See *Distinctions* (1984/1979) pp. 44-48 where he documents responses to several photographs.

shows how certain kinds of realist representation remain the expectation and norm for conservative sectors of European society.

The Photographic Real

From its inception, the photograph was acclaimed as both technical marvel and as "mirror of nature". Daguerre, circulating a notice in 1838 to attract investors, appears to accord his invention animistic power. He states, "The daguerreotype is not merely an instrument which serves to draw nature...[it] gives her the power to reproduce herself" (quoted in Sontag, 1977: 188). This proclamation of creative power masks an emerging and continuing dichotomy between the two "chattering ghosts" (Sekula, 1983) of objective scientific recording, and aesthetic construction.

Benjamin too located the early daguerreotype between these two persistent shadows. He described this early form of photographic image as having "something that is not to be silenced, something demanding the name of the person who had lived then, who even now is still real and will never entirely perish into art", (1977b/1931: 47) a "something" initiated by "the tiny spark of accident, the here and now. "(ibid.). He saw the daguerreotype as related more to science than to Romantic art (which he regarded as fetishistic and anti-technological), and he argued that, with its long condensed exposure, the daguerreotype created a synthesis of object and process with the model growing *into* the image. Such images, he claimed, unframed and uncaptioned, were "actuality" rather than photo. He saw them as manifesting a natural quality, an *aura*, " a strange web of time and place" (49), but one that later, with the development of improved optical instrumentation, was replaced by an artificially instituted aura, an aesthetic picturesque stylization that overtook all images and masked the inequities of lives lived under the social conditions of modern capitalism.

When Charles Baudelaire (1982) protested the ascendancy of the photographic real in 1859, after viewing the first photographic exhibition to be held at the French Salon, the frozen moment in photography did not exist. The early 'stilled' subjects had a sense of permanence, not the frozen quality of later fast exposure times which move beyond what the eye takes in. What Baudelaire criticized, was not some lack of precision on the part of early photography, but its banal quality, its lack of poetry and the diminution of the beauty of imagination.

A claim of "analogical perfection" (ibid.) resides in the apparent match of the appearance of an object in looking at it in actuality and looking at it in a photograph.[99] Barthes (1984/80) took on the task of exploring the "spectator's" photograph, investigating its ontology, and sought to define what photography is "in itself", and what it is that "everyone sees in a photograph".[100] His initial assertion that a specific photograph "by nature" is never distinguished from its "stubborn referent": "a pipe, here, is always and intractably a pipe. It is as if the Photograph always carries its referent with it...glued together, limb by limb...the windowpane and its landscape...desire and its object..." (5-6) while the photograph itself is always "invisible". But it is an assertion that makes less sense as he proceeds.

Observing his own responses, he discovers that 'appealing' photographs generally relate to some cultural expectation, and further, that his own experience is sometimes broken or punctuated by some piercing or "wounding" element that takes him beyond the contrivances of the image. It is this tiny shock of recognition of some accidental, arresting "off-centre detail" that moves the spectator beyond the photograph's frozen arrested state. In a photograph showing a group of people, Barthes is drawn to hats and neckties; in an image of two deformed children, he notes a bandaged finger and an oversized collar. This kind of unintentional *punctum* overwhelms the entirety of his reading, creating a "new" photograph, an original reality and a subjective reading experienced as "photographic ecstasy". Barthes instead proclaims his own intentionality in terms of making meaning, stating, in what amounts to a subverting of the photographer's intentions: "I refuse to inherit anything from another eye than my own" (51).

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[99] Roland Barthes also emphasized the analogical character of the polished metal plate daguerreotype in his various early attempts to define what it is that the photograph 'transmits'. His initial determination was that it communicates in a positivist transparent way: "By definition, the scene itself, the literal reality. From the object to its image there is of course a reduction - in proportion, perspective, and colour - but at no time is this reduction a *transformation* (in the mathematical sense of the term). In order to move from the reality to its photograph it is in no way necessary to divide up this reality into units and to constitute these units as signs, substantially different from the object they communicate; there is no necessity to set up a relay, that is to say a code, between the object and its image" (Barthes, 1977/61: 17).

[100] See Gallop for a critique of Barthes in relation to the eroticism of his looking. She observes "I am (or he is) trying to think around a way to touch, to contact, to encounter the real of the other. When Barthes talks about the sting and the wound and the arrow that pierces me, he is pointing to a tradition of mysticism... of openness to alterity, of receptivity to being overwhelmed by otherness" (1988: 155).

The Unreals of Art

Barthes wrote about contemporary art on many occasions and considered avantgarde photo-practices in relation to the appropriations and repetitions of Pop Art.[101] He was particularly intrigued by Pop art's asymbolic propositions.[102] In *Camera Lucida* he discusses three conventional photographs that are associated with the avantgarde. He cites Duane Michaels' photograph of *Andy Warhol* which shows Warhol with both hands covering his face (Barthes describes finding his punctum through the "slightly repellant" feeling evoked by Warhol's fingernails), and two by Robert Maplethorpe, *Phil Glass and Bob Wilson*, and *Young Man with Arm Extended* (figs. 74-75). All three of these photographs might have constituted an opportunity to examine a discourse of imagemakers with imagemakers particularly given the hold they exerted on Barthes.[103] Instead, he discusses *Young Man with Arm Extended* in relation to the importance of the arresting detail, or *punctum,* as that which differentiates the erotic from pornography. The punctum

"takes the spectator outside (the photograph's) frame, and it is there that I animate this photograph and that it animates me ...as if the image launched desire beyond what it permits us to see...toward the absolute excellence of a being,

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[101] Avant-garde photo practices include the rapid adoption of photo-silkscreen, and later the smaller scale 'Xerox' or photocopying by artists variously working in response to consumer imaging and commercial practice. The 1970s also saw a return to the interrogation of the photographic real in the form of hyperrealist painting. The art realm designated 'post-object photography' includes recognition of this alternative critical image practice. Similar critiques of the reality effect in film and video can be seen too in Dada, Surrealism and post 1950's avantgarde work, though they focus more on the reality of time, space and interpretation, the imperatives of the narrative, than on the brute reality claims of the photograph. Barthes states "(P)hotography has long been fascinated by painting, of which it passes as a poor relation; pop art overturns this prejudice: the photograph often becomes the origin of the images pop art presents: neither "art painting " or "art photograph," but a nameless mixture...pop art accepts being an imagery, a collections of reflections, constituted by the banal reverberation of the American environment: reviled by high art, the copy returns" (Barthes, 1991/1980: 199). In the banality of pop art this copy loses all threat, for it is merely "a flat, insignificant, hence irreligious Double" (200).

[102] This of course directly challenges Barthes' semiotic position. See Barthes (1991/1980) for his recognition of Pop art's exposition of the signifier. "To say the object is asymbolic is to deny it possesses a profound or proximate space through which its appearance can propogate vibrations of meaning...Pop art finds the unity of its representations in the radical conjunctions of ...two forms, each carried to extremes: the stereotype and the image" (Barthes, 1991/1980: 202). He acknowledges this as radial and audacious, with pop's objects thus featuring "a philosophical quality of things...they incarnate the very concept of factitious – that by which, in spite of themselves, they begin to signify again: they signify that they signify nothing" (ibid.). Barthes argues that the subject of art is replaced by the spectator, "(t)he one who looks, in the absence of one who makes." (205). He defends Pop as an ontological art, and one that references today's Nature, "the social absolute" (206), consciously and terribly, returning to the old question of art: the question of meaning.

[103] Although he acknowledges that Maplethorpe is 'the Young Man' in the photograph, Barthes does not discuss the implications of the image as a self-picturing. The potential though is particularly intriguing given that immediately after his discussion of Maplethorpe's *Young Man with Arm Extended* he concedes the limits of subjective, hedonistic looking as a means of recognizing the universal, the "nature" of photography. Barthes observes that he cannot "accede" to the notion of an artistic style since he realizes he never liked *all* the images by any one photographer, even Maplethorpe who he had thought, after looking at a certain picture, might be *his* kind of photographer (1984/1980: 18). Of the third photograph *Phil Glass and Bob Wilson*, he says Wilson holds him, but why, he cannot say. "Robert Wilson, endowed with unlocatable punctum, is someone I want meet" (57).

body and soul together...the boy's hand at just the right degree of openness, the right density of abandonment..." (59).

In 1980, while still insisting that photography's realist analogical character as an "emanation of past reality" cannot be prevented, Barthes concedes that "certain codes do inflect our reading of it". He also concludes that " To ask whether a photograph is analogical or coded is not a good means of analysis" (ibid.: 88), that its importance, phenomenologically, is that of an evidence which is beyond representation. For Barthes, his experience of photography is ultimately either one of tameness, or its "madness", "hallucination, false on the level of perception, true on the level of time" (115). Here, as in many accounts of visual experience, what is the real of photography is tested, and contested in terms of that which is perceived. In photography, with its "intense immobility" (49), everything, says Barthes, is given, is "undevelopable", and lacking in that which makes us dream - a position finally not far removed from Baudelaire's.

Barthes' interrogations of photography do not appear to encompass Dada photomontage, or Constructivist or Surrealist photographies which operate as the historical background to the new critical photographies, post 1980s. Paying attention to the seen can also undo the hold of the ideal. The realism-effect is central to the impact of radical and critical art strategies which seek to counter fire with fire. Whatever was found convincing in the first place about the photograph's claims to objectivity and truth is used to effect a reversal of those claims, as with John Coplan and with Ann Noble's work (figs. 76-77). Julie Rapp uses the realness of installation and found objects as well as images to humorously explore the social denial of the reality of bodies, especially women's bodies (fig 78-79). The virtual image, prefigured in the political work of John Heartfield and the illusionist paradoxes and disturbances of the Surrealists, for all its obvious impossibility and known artifice, is particularly relevant as a counter-discourse to photographic objectivity. Julie Rrap's 2001 *Overstepping* (fig. 80) for instance, confronts the photographic real in its persistent effect with an impossible but utterly persuasive document.[104] Meshing the imperatives of fashion and fetishism with the rationalist promise of post-human fabrication, it poses, humourously but also bleakly, at least one 'logical' outcome for the contemporary aestheticization of the human female body.

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[104] See Alexander (2002) for a detailed discussion of this work that he describes as "a shoe-bomb", "a Magritte koan" and " a polished maxim about the body as way-station to the new electronic flesh" (Alexander, 2000: 27).

172

Jay has argued that "What might be called "the dialectics of seeing" precludes the reification of scopic regimes. Rather than calling for the exorbitation or enucleation of "the eye", it is better to encourage the multiplication of a thousand eyes, which like Nietzsche's thousand suns, suggests the openness of human possibilities" (Jay, 1994: 591. Much contemporary art opposes social and consumerist practices, but also extends into new territories, propositions and predictions. The work of Stelarc for instance, from his *Stretched Skin* performances, his robotic pieces, to his body probe works, sets up questions about control, detachment and re-constitutions of the body as machine; Orlan (fig. 81) in embracing cosmetic surgery and aspirations for bodily perfection links it to spiritual and religious teachings.[105] Patricia Piccinini, with her mutants, clones, and replicants, and her gentle intraspecies creatures (fig. 82) follows technologized desire through to certain logical possibilities that have uncanny consequences for categories of nature, human, life, and rationality.

Vestiges of the Carnivalesque

In the ribald expressive popular tradition of the carnivalesque, the fixed essentialism of classical imagery is opposed by cultural prac;ices that privilege an aesthetics based on the attractiveness and vitality of actual people. Bakhtin in his study of the hyperbolic excesses of the carnivalesque body with its mocking, searching protuberances and yawning, devouring mouths, its unending fecundity, and its exuberant embrace of physicality and all bodily functions, points out that "the artistic logic of the grotesque image ignores the closed, smooth and impenetrable surface of the (classical) body" (317).[106] He also argues that it is the grotesque body that has been the dominant representation through history and culture, that it is this body which is universal and cosmic:

> "The boundless ocean of grotesque bodily imagery within time and space extends
> to all languages, all literatures, and the entire system of gesticulation, in the midst

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[105] Davis (2003) discusses the critical dimensions of Orlan's cosmetic surgery in the chapter "'My Body is my Art'": Cosmetic Surgery as Feminist Utopia', with 'utopia' here conceived as a body that feels no pain, is in control, negates all suffering to do with appearance, and ignores processes of compliance-resistance. See Hirschhorn (1996) and Miglietti (2003) study of the extreme bodies of art for detailed discussions of Orlan's work.

[106] Mikhail Bakhtin observed that the grotesque, carnivalesque body was never a single body in that its orifices and cavities were forever ready to sprout new life, indeed, other bodies, in its enactment of the community and the "endless chain of bodily life" (Bakhtin, 1968: 318). In contrast, "(t)he body of the new canon is merely one body: no signs of duality have been left. It is self-sufficient and speaks in its name alone. All that happens within it concerns it alone, that is, only the individual, closed sphere" (321).

of it the bodily canon of art, belles lettres, and polite conversation of modern times is a tiny island" (319).

The transgressions of the carnivalesque, inverting and subverting the normal experiences of daily life, mocking hardship, morals, restraint, and responsibility, disrupt ideality and the aspirations surrounding the advancement of disciplined classical bodies as social norms. Yet it is important to note Bakhtin's further observation that this once 'cultured' elite tradition has expanded and taken over representational practice: "(T)he body that fecundates and is fecundated, that gives birth and is born, devours and is devoured, drinks, defecates, is sick and dying" (ibid.). The carnivalesque has always been a force held in check and was generally eclipsed by the new official bodily canon of classicism set in place in Europe from the c16th onwards.[107]

Sometimes the popular realm with its affiliation with the folk traditions of carnival is seen as site that resists ideal form and extremes of social order. Yet, for all rise of subversive or comic genres over the c20th, it is doubtful if today's sub-cultural traditions of mardi-gras, street theatre, cabaret, or underground performances meet Bakhtin's descriptions of "flood" or "transgressive eruption" (figs. 83-84). The last couple of decades have seen the transgressive modes of the avant-garde flow into the popular, and there seems to be an expansion of merged genres and practices that have much to say and show about the body. Yet transgressive avant-garde practices, are not always aligned with popular desire or the carnivalesque which also intersects with fears of deformed and monstrous bodies. Miglietti points out that with "Physical deformation, the anomaly of body and flesh...the common mentality still attributes to deformity the absence of moral qualities, the evidence of despicable perversion..." (Miglietti, 2003: 178). For the video-artist-filmmaker, Matthew Barney, for instance, bodies are erupting, energized, hybrid creatures charged with boundless and burdensome corporeality and erotic intensity.[108] Trans-species cross-dressing characters of ambiguous sexuality proliferate in his *Cremaster* series (figs. 85-86) to "re-map a narrative and a corporeal morphology which grafts and confuses myth, science, sex, sports, celebrity, dream, and – especially – proposes a multiplicity of polymorph male figures borrowed from an imaginary human

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[107] In certain Western and Japanese mass media spheres such as ratings-hungry free-to-air television, the carnivalesque is a predominant but contained genre; outrageous, but permitted in circumscribed ways.

[108] See Miglietti's (2003) study of the extreme bodies of art, and a description of Brady's earlier video art productions.

bestiary…an obsession with a body that has stopped being either human, animal, or vegetable" (179).

For all such vestiges of carnivale in avant-garde production, and the rise in trangressive popular productions, whether the absurdities of *Absolutely Fabulous*, or *Kath and Kim*, the extreme body conflicts of *Cat-Dog*, or the denied pain and scatological delights of *South Park*, the actual watching of television or film lacks the powerful engagement of carnivale and its performative action, whose still much feared flip side is mob violence.[109] Viewership, as a pervasive consumerist behaviour, lacks force, power, and expression even in its most resistant mode, although it may well lead to behavioural change. Transgressive viewership, now extending beyond subcultural groups or the cultivated art audience, might be seen to signal some collective cultural phenomenon opposing ideality and fixed order, but it can also accompany a paralysis of action, a frozen or inward view, or an individualism vulnerable to narcissism, selfishness, and corruption. It may also, given the extreme transgressions visible on Japanese television, to reflect social repression and political conservatism.

Hardt & Negri (2000) argue that oppositional cultural movements constitute part of a politics of "accumulated struggle", against global civil society as instituted by the judicial power of Empire, and against the production of acquiescent subjectivities. They suggest that a politics of resistance lies in the cooperative interactivity of small scale, linguistic, communicational, and affective networks and their capacity for creative energy, innovation, and flexibility who share a singular desire for what Mumford (1963) identified as the antithesis of Empire: love, community, and the value of humanity. I will return to that possibility in my final chapter, but given the appeals of the Renaissance ideal, and the classical figure of measure and order, now defined as the look of 'success', the carnivalesque risks operating as it has always done, as a cathartic culture for those whose experience is generally that of

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[109] For an example of this, Damasio, in the course of discussing Spinoza, describes the mob assassination of a central political figure of c17th Holland, Jan De Witt, and his brother. This event took place around the corner from Spinoza's home, and devastated Spinoza who had known De Witt. "Assailants clubbed and knifed both De Witts as they dragged them on the way to the gallows, and by the time they arrived there was no need to hang them any more. They proceeded to undress the corpses, suspend them upside down, butcher-shop style, and quarter them. The fragments were sold as souvenirs, eaten raw, or eaten cooked, amid the most sickening merriment" (Damasio, 2003: 21). The finale following the slayings seems to have been evoked by the carnivalesque-style desire to violate and treat the bodies with the utmost disrespect.

powerlessness (De Certeau, 1984).[110] It might also be worth remembering that the carnivalesque can be destructive in that it embraces the abject as well as the grotesque; and its aliveness engages death. It is an extreme force produced in reaction to an extreme frozenness. Neither classicism nor carnivalesque enable the validation and celebration of real lives and real bodies (figs. 87-88).
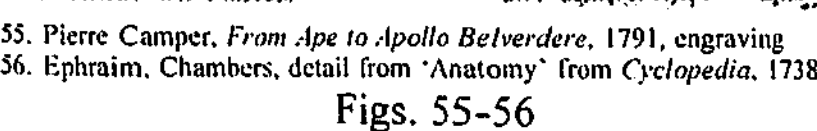
There is risk in acknowledging different seeings, different views, in refusing boundaries and opening up borders, and doing thing differently, but within the contestations of global determinations of identity and knowledge, there is much at stake. How do we begin to understand and produce knowledges that respect those cultures whose existence intersects with a spirit world, or engages with metamorphosis - not acting the bear, but becoming the bear? Loss of certainty and loss of control, are real fears in embracing aliveness and in considering different realities. In other worlds, shadows may take on substance. In many worlds, ghosts are real.[111] The next chapter takes up the idea of different lookings, and different reals that already exist within that transcultural practice called art. The intention here is to present art as a vast repository of activities, productions and knowledges that are often marginalized or discredited in official rational realms. The multiple liminal practices of contemporary art work in ways that allow for thinking visuality and cultural practice beyond habit and beyond dominant Western norms.

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[110] De Certeau's comments are more about resistance than the carnivalesque, but the two realms come together at times. "Innumerable ways of playing and foiling the other's game, that is, the space instituted by others, characterize the subtle, resistant activity of groups which, since they lack their own space, have to get along in a network of already established forces and representations. People have to make do with what they have. In these combatants' stratagems, there is a certain art of placing one's blows, a pleasure in getting around the rules of a constraining space" (De Certeau, 1984: 18)."

[111] Belief/disbelief in the supernatural is a cultural divide in which Western science's rationalist-positivist claims to a world free of ignorant superstition and sorcery acts as a crucial marker for Westernization.
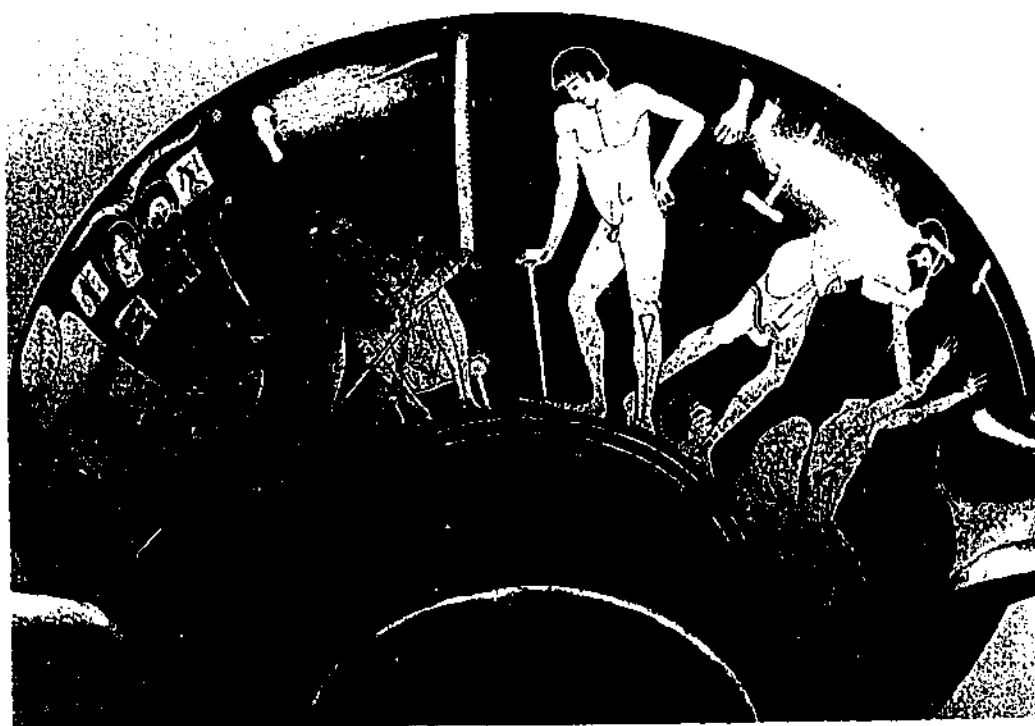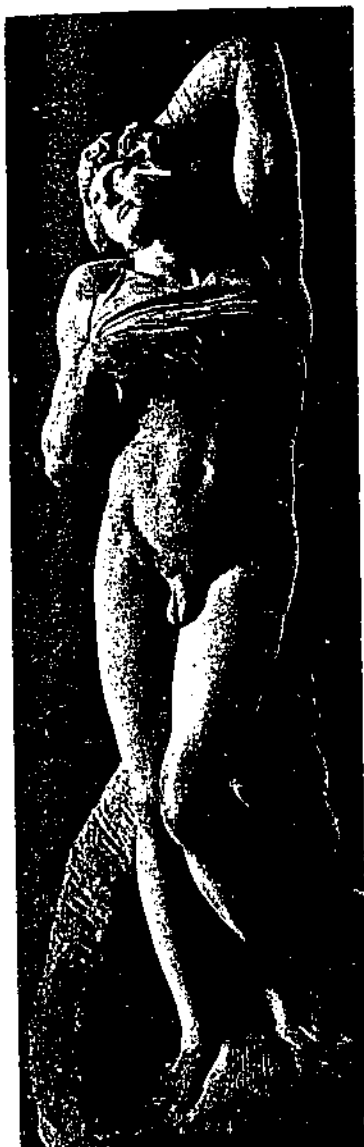
51. top left: Praxiteles, *Hermes with Young Dionysus*, c350 B.C.
52. top middle: *The Venus de Milo*, first century B.C., copy of a c4th work
53. top right: Michelangelo, *The Dying Slave*, c1516
54. bottom: Greek bowl c480 B.C. showing sculptor's workshop with a bronze foundry with sketches on the wall, and to the right, work taking place on a headless statue.

Figs. 51-54

55. Pierre Camper, *From Ape to Apollo Belverdere*, 1791, engraving
56. Ephraim, Chambers, detail from 'Anatomy' from *Cyclopedia*, 1738

Figs. 55-56
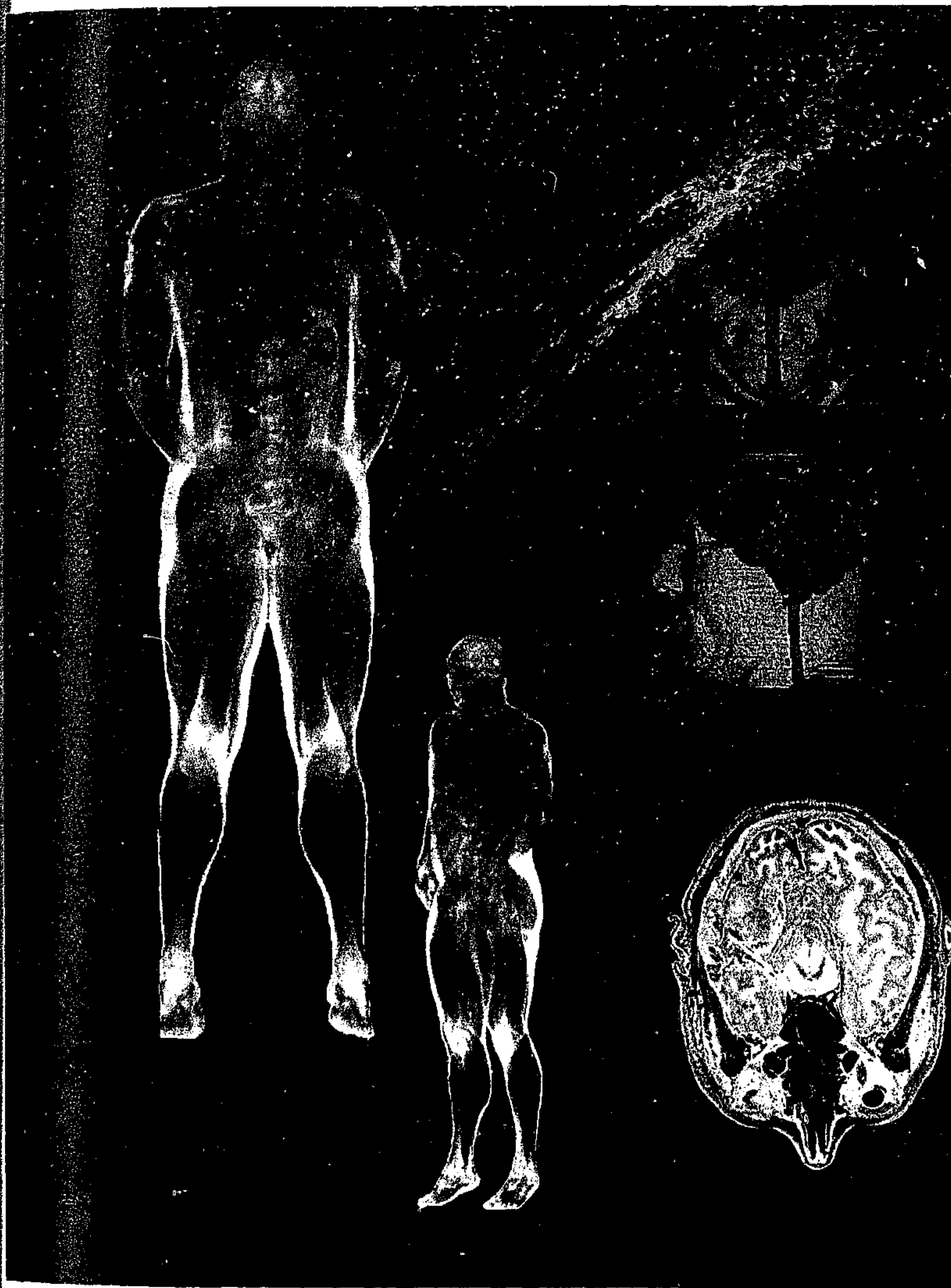
57. 'The Visible Human Site': The virtual body of Joseph Paul Jernigan, executed in the US for murder in 1993. Frozen into a block of gel, his body has been sliced into 1871 1mm cross-sections, digitally recorded, and uploaded onto the internet, which enables detailed public inspection of body structures. There are now male and female (described as an anonymous 'housewife' who died of a heart attack) cadaver databases at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/research/visible/

Fig. 57

58. Max Ernst, image from *Une Semain de Bonté*, 1934,
from the section: 'First Visible Poem:
"And I object to the love of ready-made images in place of images to be made",
(Paul Eluard, Commes deux gouttes d'eau)',

Fig. 58
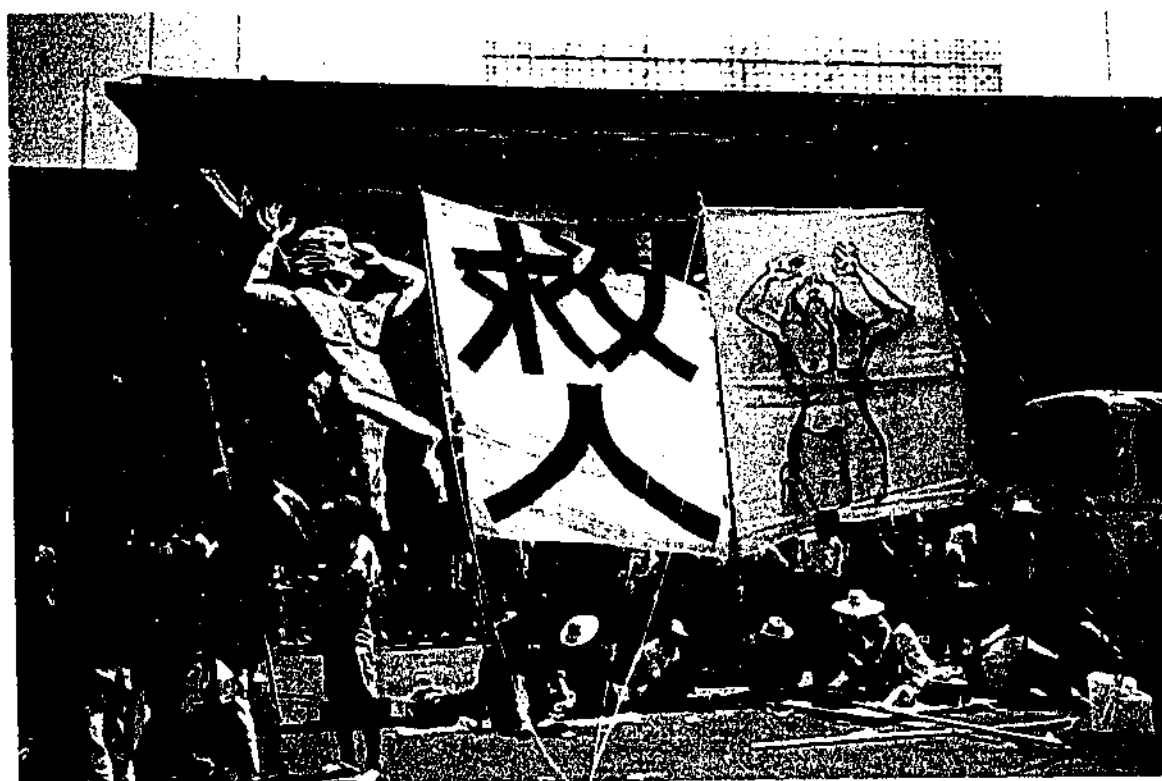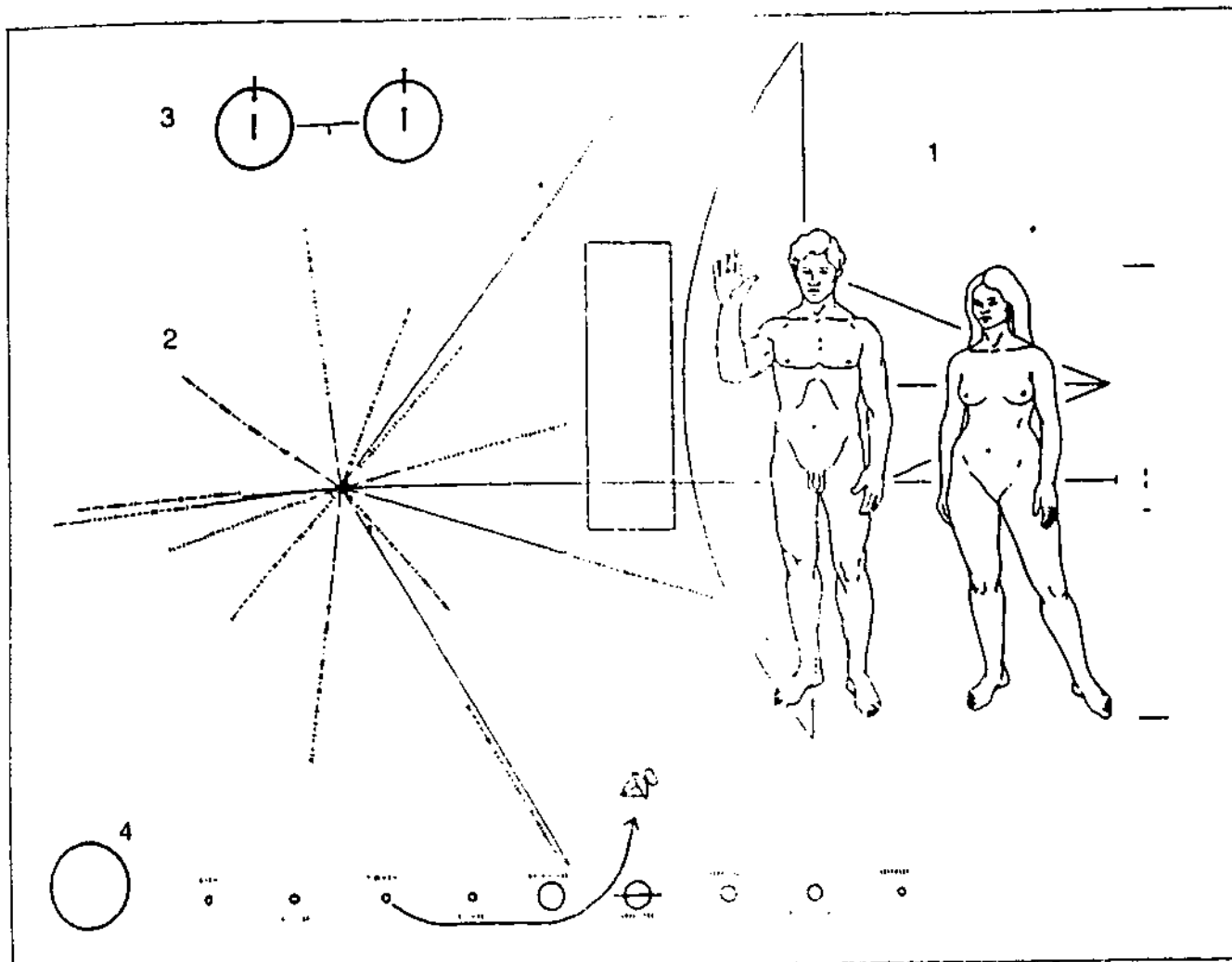
59. top: Drawing for The Pioneer 10 *Voyager plaque*, 1972
60. bottom: Tiananmen Square, student democracy protest, 1989

Figs. 59-60
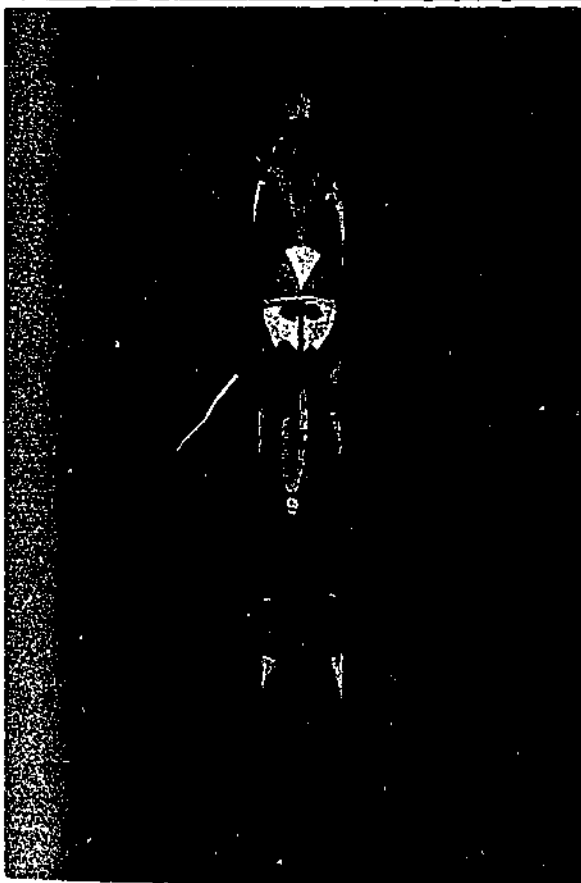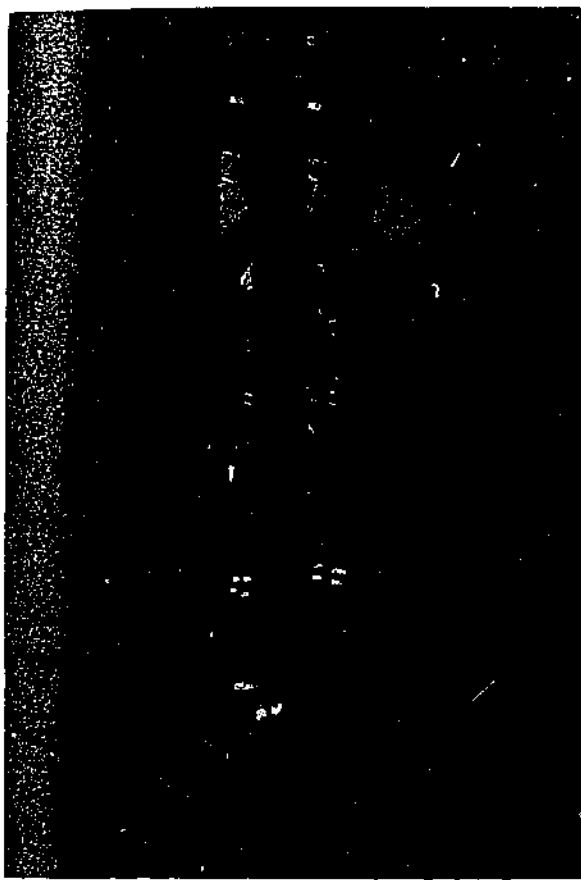
61. left: Pair of male and female figure used in yam and spirit cults. Stapigum village, Western Wosera, Abelam area, Esat Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea

62. right: Spirit-figure paintings, Nourlangie, Kakadu National Park

Figs. 61-62

63. Andrew Murphy, Triple Jump,
The Atlanta Dream, Sydney: Studio Magazines/Not Only Black & White, May 1996 p. 143

Fig. 63

64. Thin Chic

top: *The Skinny Girl Picture Page*: This internet site manifested the proud posting of bodies that are travesties of control, discipline, and profound delusion. The site's tone made it misogynist viewing territory. It has been the center of protests, but also instigated anti-censorship debates, particularly from individuals and groups who take pride in their disciplined bones.

bottom: Kate Winslet's appearance on the frontcover of two magazines were digitally altered to thin her down, and she protested publicly. "I've no desire to look like that, and I'm not six foot tall."

Fig. 64
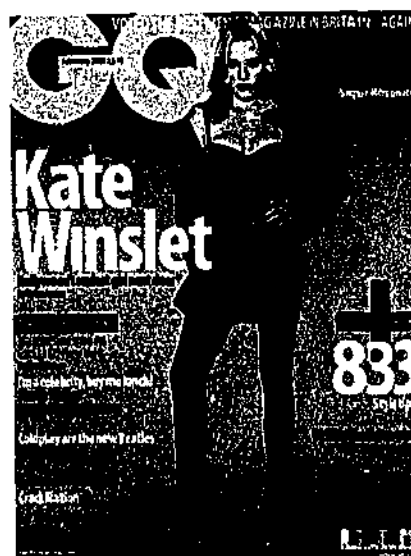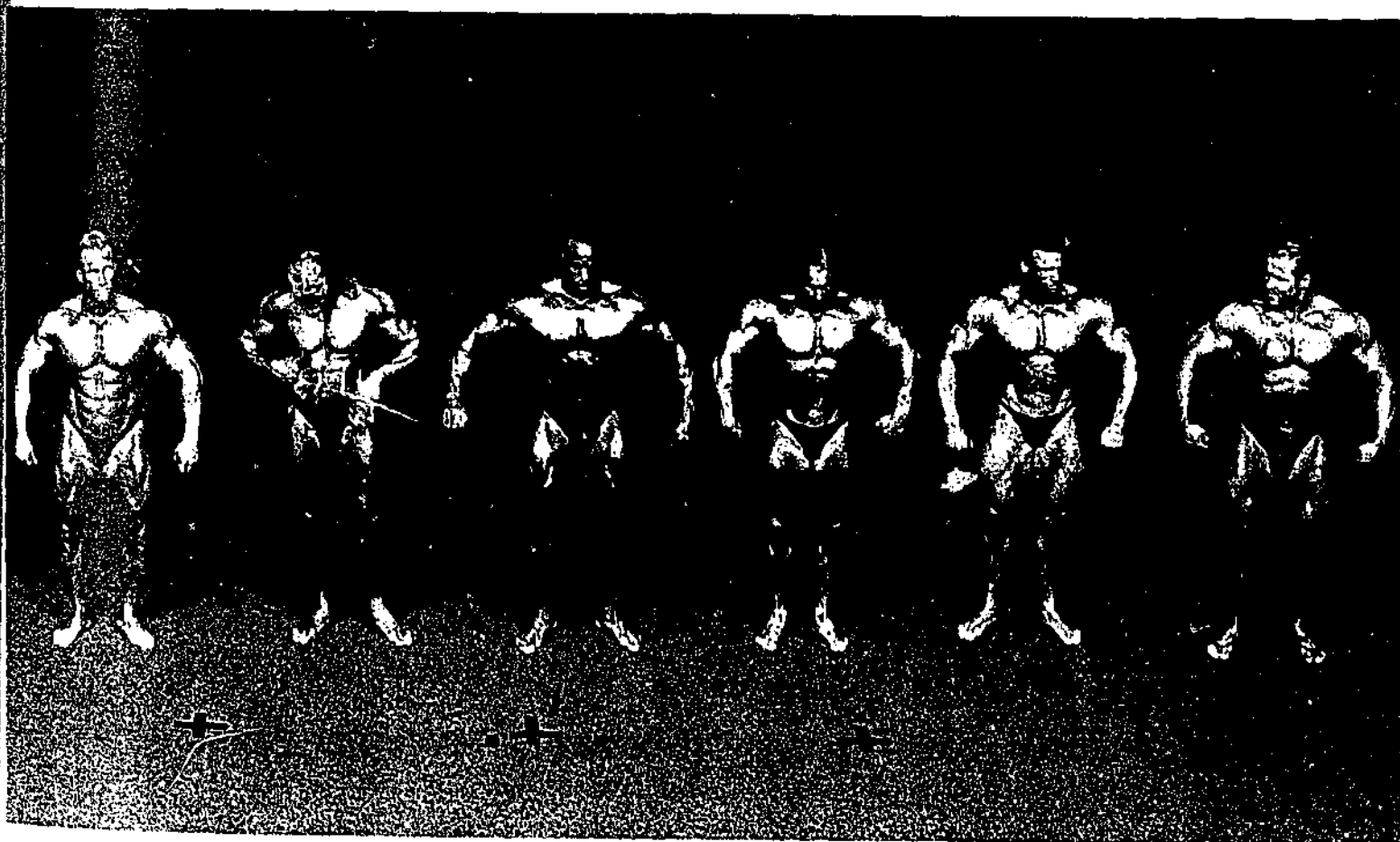
65. Defined Bodies

top: Competitors in *Musclemania* Australia, 2003. The 'natural' reference in the background is to this organization's insistence (with drug testing compulsory) that all contestants are drug-free.
bottom: Competitors in the heavyweight division of the Australian bodybuilding grand prix, Melbourne 2003, photographer, Jesse Marlow

Fig. 65

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top: Nova Peris, captioned: *Leading the way: Nova Peris-Kneebone*
Peris-Kneebone, Nova, 'Nova's golden moment'. *Sunday Herald Sun*, 14th march, 1999, p.10

bottom: Nova Peris, captioned: *'Some lines you don't cross'*
Hamer. Michelle, 'The Profile: Nova Peris", *The Sunday Age*, 30th march, 2003, Agenda 3

Fig. 66

67. Jingling Guo, Chinese diver

A rare photograph of a Chinese athlete in the Australian press coverage of the Athens Olympics. She took the gold medal in the Women's Three-metre Springboard event having been *twice* awarded a perfect 10.

Nevertheless, it is probable that the image was published because of its aesthetic and dramatic appeals, rather than in acknowledgement of Jingling Guo's achievement. The story accompanying the image was generally an acknowledgement of an Australian diver's impressive career, her lack of success in winning a medal, and her retirement from diving.

Source: Wilson, Caroline, 'Over and out for the gallant Lashko', *The Melbourne Age*, 28/8/04, p. 11, picture AP

Fig. 67
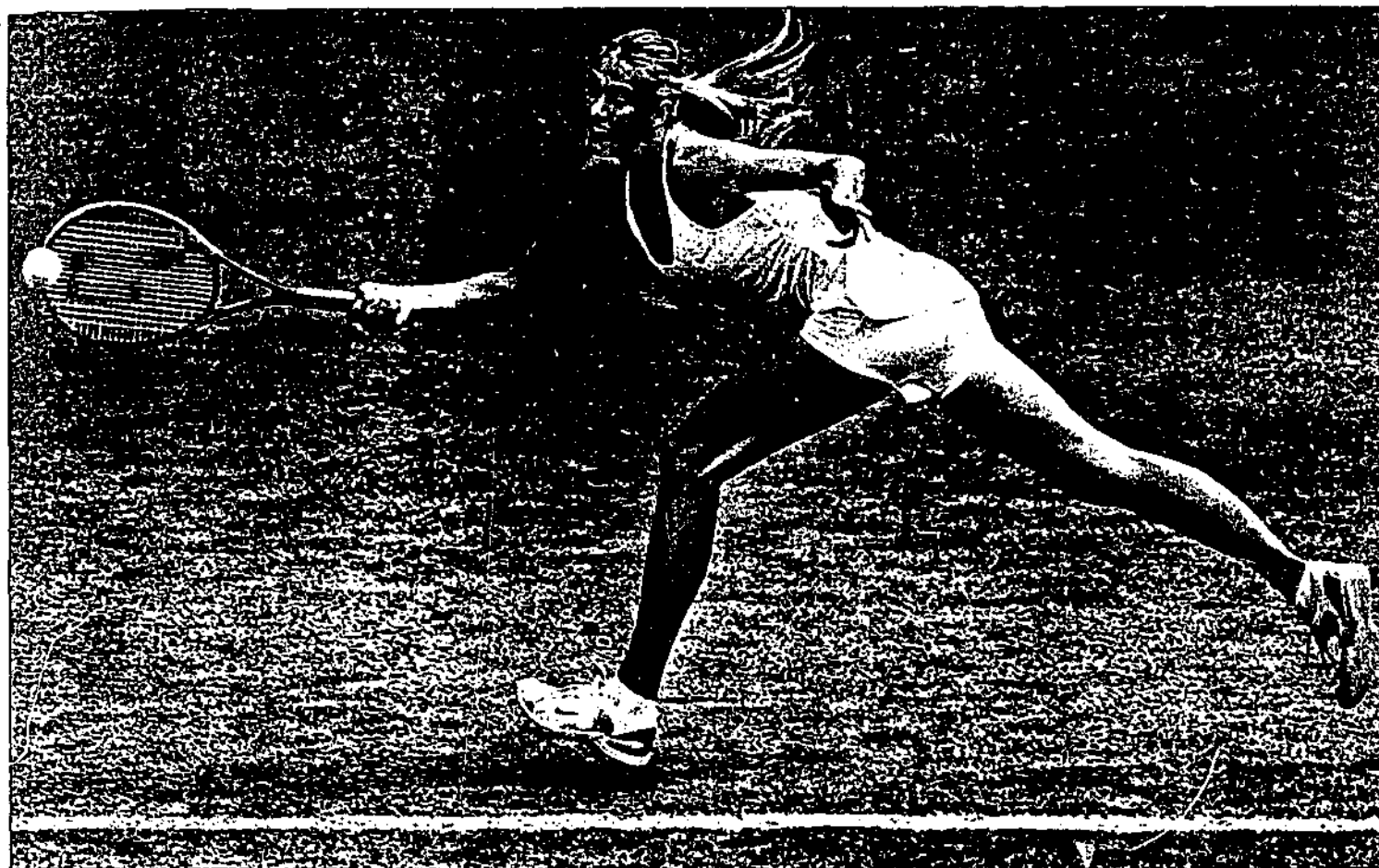
Every inch a winner: Sharapova at full stretch on her way to a memorable victory at Wimbledon

top: newsphoto of Maria Sharapova
'Editor, Close-up: Maria Sharapova', *The Weekend Australian,* 10-11 July, 2004, p. 26

bottom: Serena Williams versus Maria Sharapova at Wimbledon,
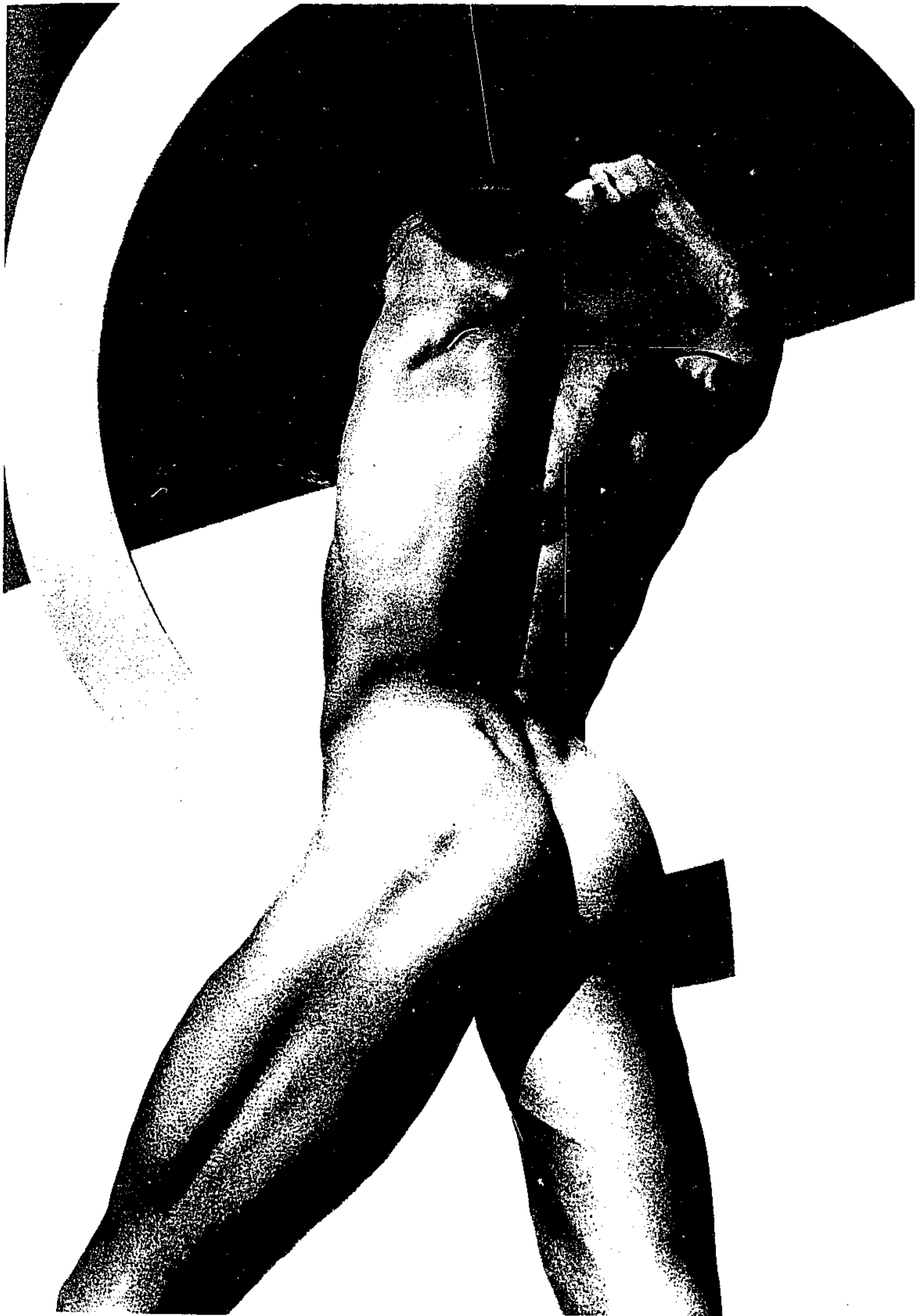captioned 'the power and the glory'
These images accompanied the story, Lusetich, Robert, 'Williams ready for new wave',
The Weekend Australian, 3-4/7/2004, p. 51

Fig. 68
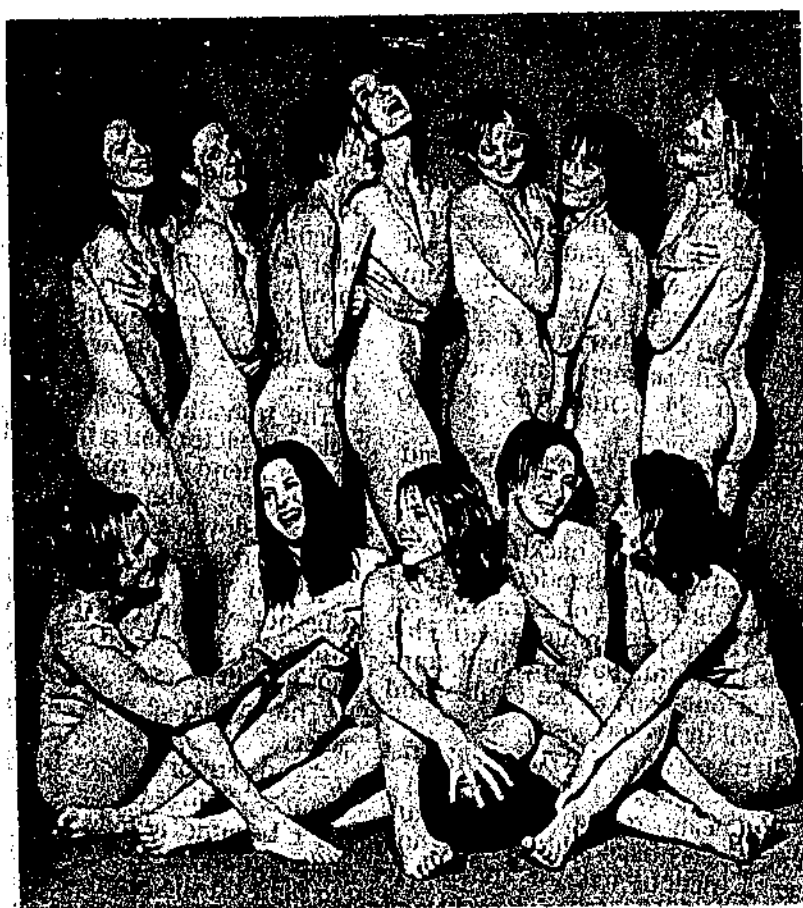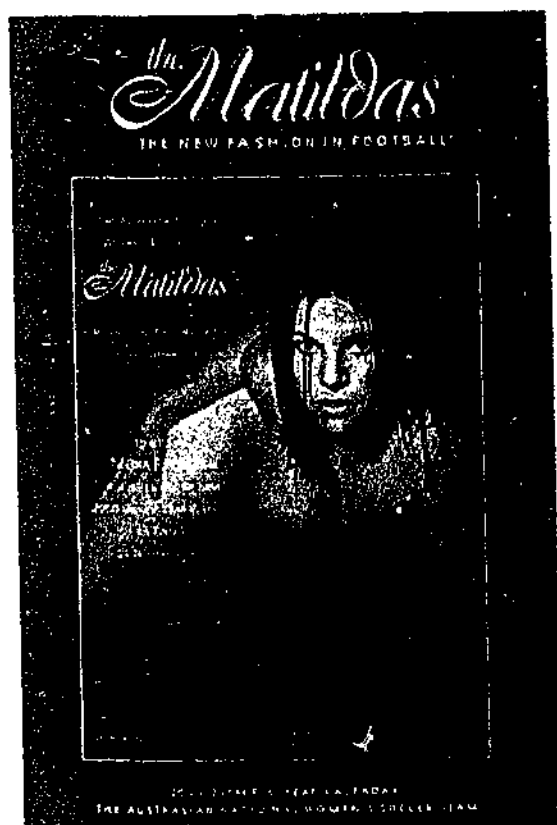
top: The National Rugby League team 'Melbourne Storm', calendar image, 2003
bottom: right: 'The Matildas', Queensland women's soccer team, 1999,
bottom left, calendar frontcover

Fig. 69

70. 'Andrew Murphy, Triple Long Jump',
The Atlanta Dream, Sydney: Studio Magazines/Not Only Black & White, May 1996. p. 145

Fig. 70

71. 'Tracey Watson, Cycling',
The Atlanta Dream, Sydney: Studio Magazines/Not Only Black & White, May 1996 p. 182

Fig. 71

72. 'Liane Fenwick, beach volley ball',
The Atlanta Dream, Sydney: Studio Magazines/Not Only Black & White, May 1996, p. 23

Fig. 72
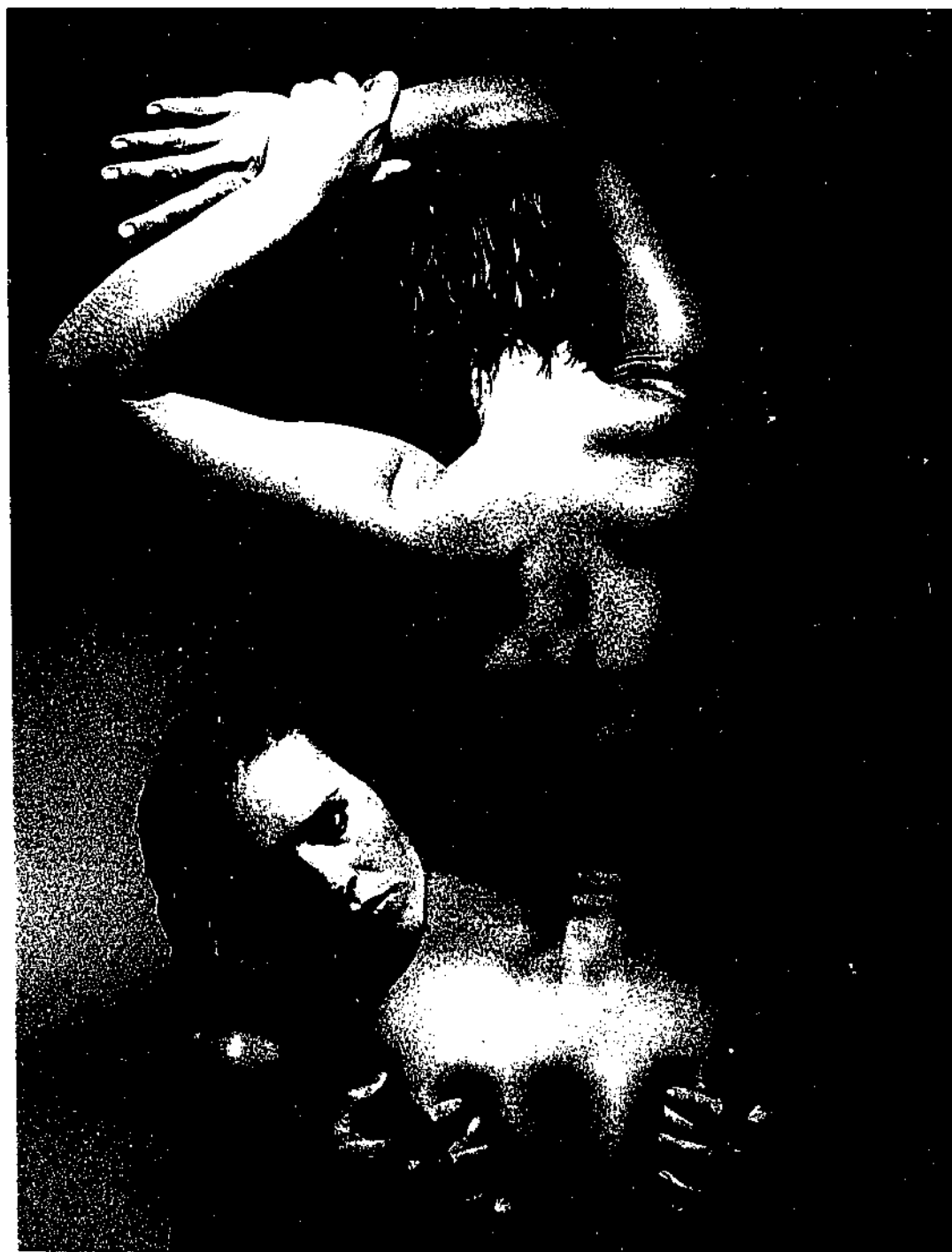
73. 'Vanessa Baker & Vyninka Arlow', Diving,
The Atlanta Dream, Sydney: Studio Magazines/Not Only Black & White, May 1996, p. 136

Fig. 73
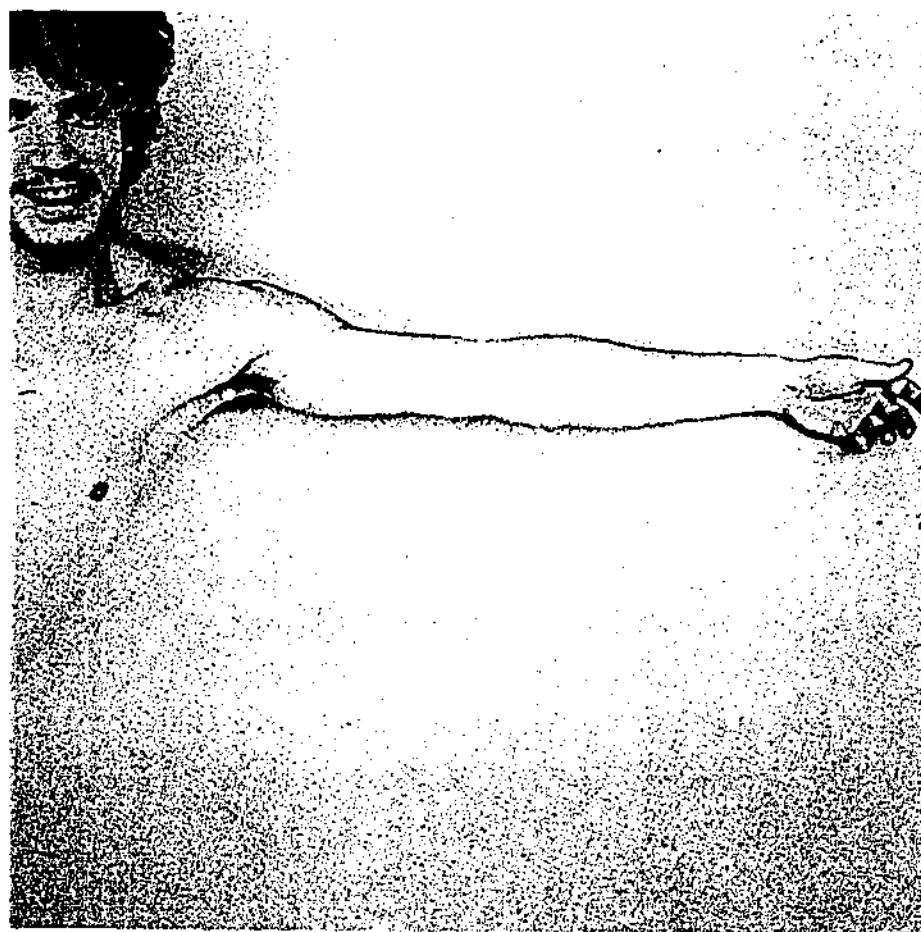
74. top: Robert Maplethorpe, *Young Man with Arm Extended*

75. bottom: Robert Maplethorpe, *Phil Glass and Bob Wilson*

Figs. 74-75
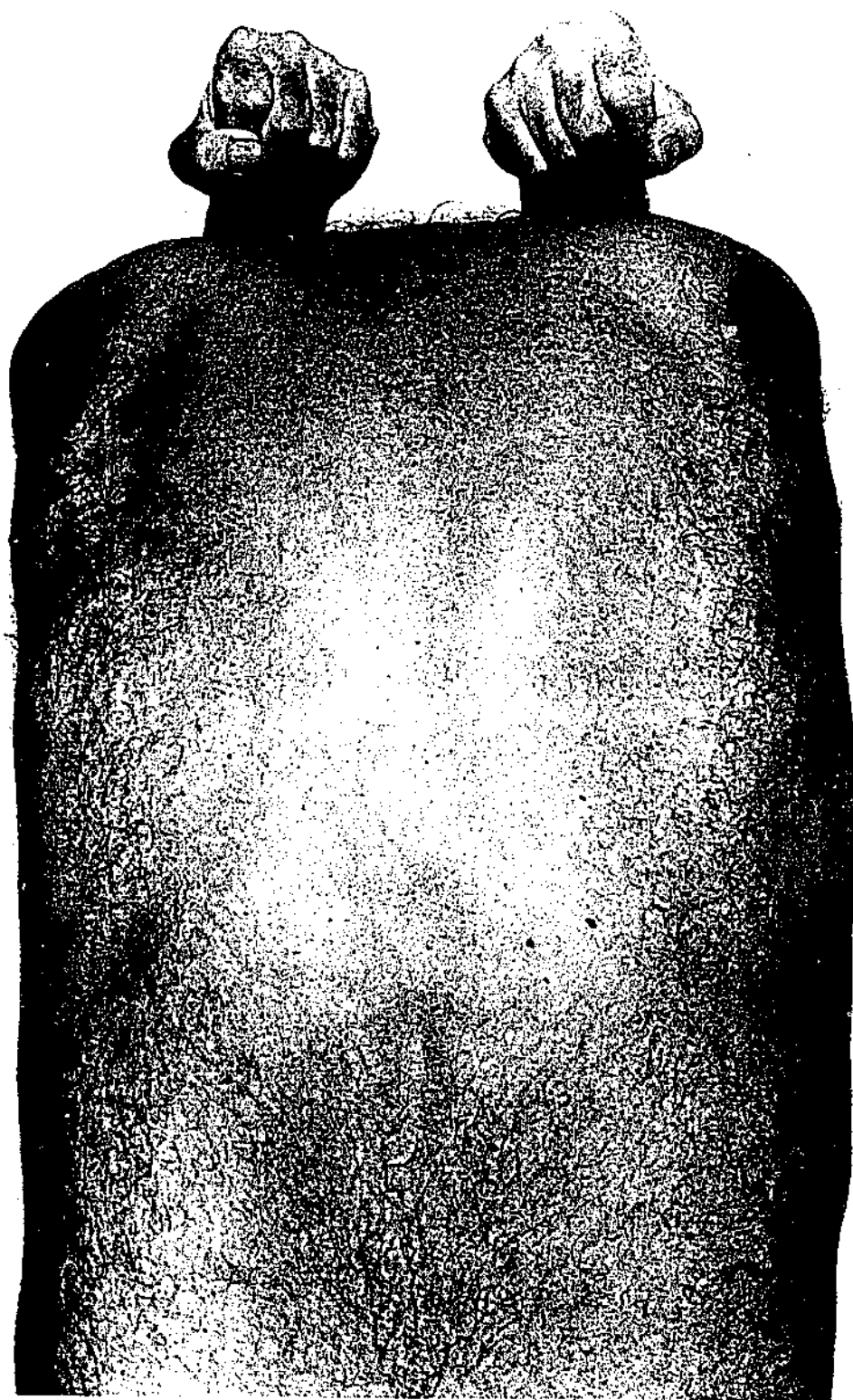
76. John Coplans, *Self Portrait.* 1984, Gelatin silver print

Fig. 76
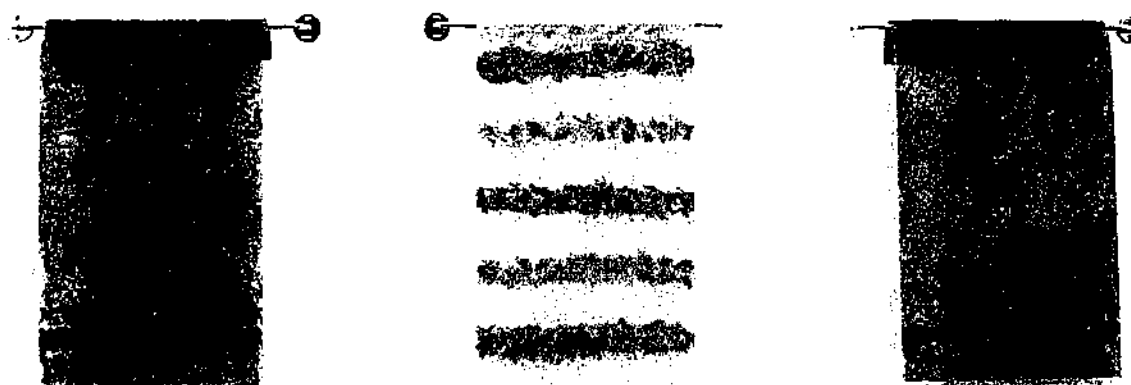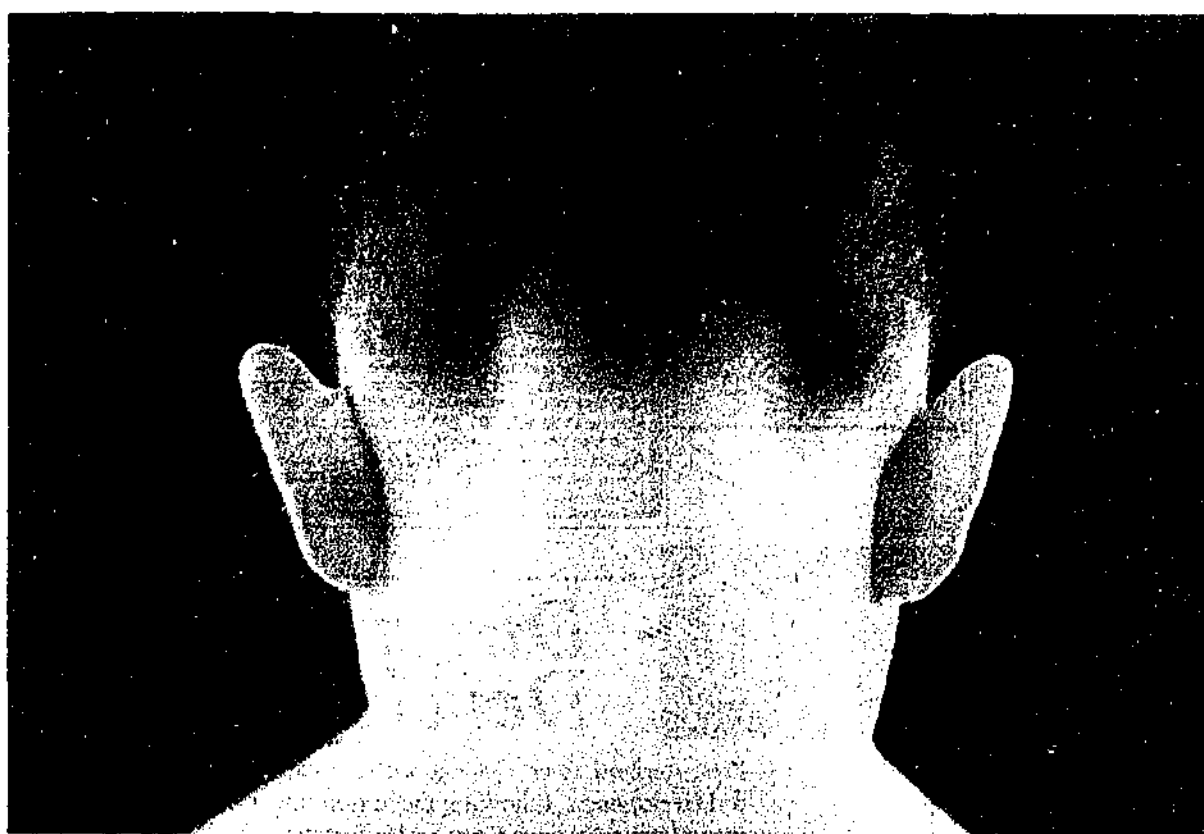
77. top: Anne Noble, *untitled photograph*, 2002.
In 2002 Noble presented a colour-shock series of images portraying her daughter playing with lollies in the exhibition 'Slow Exposure: Recent Photography from New Zealand' at the Heide Museum of Art, Bulleen.

78. bottom: Julie Rrap, *Hand Towels*, 1994
silicon rubber, human hair, and chromed towel racks, each towel 40 x 90 cms,
Body Fragments series

Figs. 77-78

79. Julie Rrap, *Camouflage (Rachel)*, 2000, digital print 180 x 120cm

Fig. 79

80. Julie Rrap, *Overstepping* 2001, digital print, 100 x 100cm

Fig. 80

81. Orlan. performances and relic

top: *Omnipresence: The Second 7th Surgical – Operation –Performance*, New York. 21st
november. 1993. transmitted by satellite to the Georges pompidou Centre. the Multimedia Centre
in Banff. the McLuhan Centre in Toronto. and Gallery Sandra Gering in New York.

left: *Operation in homage to all the mouths that have had something to say*. 8th december 1990.
Paris. Cibacrome print

right: *Small relic of flesh – the Flesh Made Word. Art Charnel no. 9*. glass. metal. solder. resin.
flesh

Fig. 81

82. Patricia Picinini. *The Young Family*, 2002, silicone, acrylic, human hair, leather

Fig. 82

83 'The Heretics Return', Performers at *Inquisition II*, closed event for Gay Leather
Tribe, Banquet Hall, Sydney Showgrounds, 1994
Director Gill Douglas works with dance parties for the Gay Community in Sydney
and Melbourne.

Fig. 83

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84. Magda Szubanski having been on an earlier front HQ magazine cover is here in an advertisement for HQ. Her appearance as a 'performance of fatness' and inanity is uncut by her intelligence and charm, and problematizes the stereotyping associated with large bodies.

Fig. 84
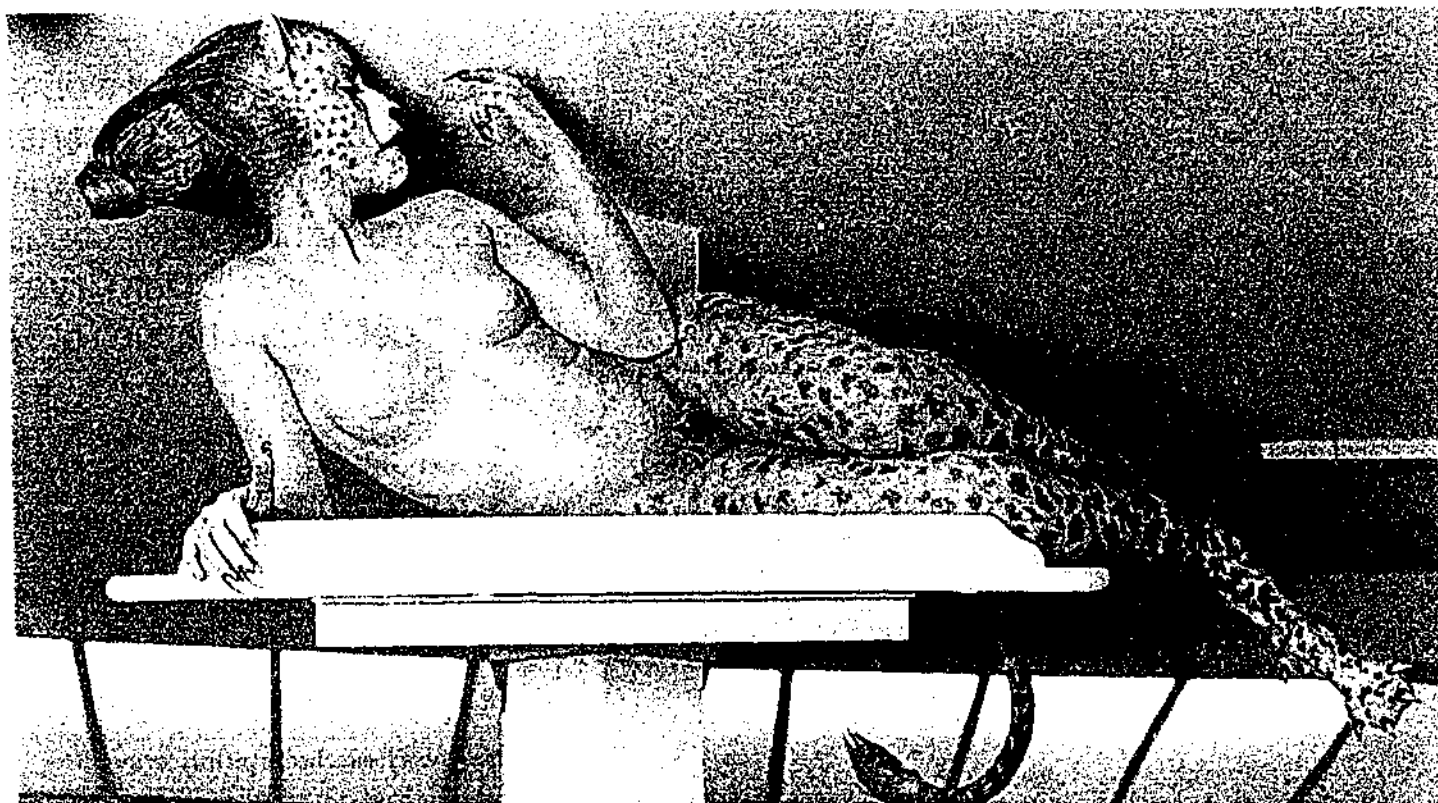
85. top: Matthew Barney, director of the *Cremaster Cycle*, five films made between 1995-2002 that are a provocative hybrid of art and cinema. The Cremaster muscle is that which controls testicular contractions, and the films metaphorically follow the development of male-female from the shared structures of early embryonic development through to gender differentiation.

86. bottom: Aimee Mullins aka The Cheetah Lady in Matthew Barney's *Cremaster 3* 2002

Figs. 85-86

87. top: Aimee Mullins (model, artfilm actress. (the Cheetah Lady in *The Cremaster Cycle 3*), athlete, former Pentagon intern, born without fibula bones), in the 100 metres at the 1996 Atlanta Paralympics.

88. bottom: Agata Wrobel, the record-breaking Polish-born Australian weightlifter training for the Sydney Olympics. Wrobel, at the time of this photograph, was 19, weighed 118kgs, and could lift around 200kgs.. She is the main rival to the Chinese weightlifters who have dominated all world championships in women's weightlifting since the events were first held in 1987.

Figs. 87-88

Chapter 4

Looking at Looking

When Berger describes an image as "a sight which has been recreated or reproduced" (Berger, 1972: 9), he reinvokes a common understanding of images.[1] Although he goes on to refute the truth of aristocratic, bourgeois and capitalist portrayals by asserting an ideology of seeing, he ratifies the very idea of a natural truth of appearance in imagery. The relation of appearance to reality, or even, to narrow this right down, the idea of 'real appearance' is a provisional and contingent construct. Claims that images, particularly those which characterize naturalist traditions in art or early photography, constitute an objective record of the real may not be philosophically tenable now in the face of contemporary imaging technologies and an established ontology of the image but they do have currency as such.[2]

While the reality of an image may be challenged, the engaging *effect* of imagery is rarely in doubt, although to *what* effect remains open to factors well beyond the image. This chapter considers what this means for cultural difference by examining some of the engaging effects of the enactments of looking as facilitated by various visual technologies, and it also considers the illuminatory potentials (Benjamin, 1977a) of radical art. In neglecting to address art's complex cultural practices and visualities, or its various groups and sub-cultures beyond its role in the maintenance of cultural capital, value-adding, and class determination, the idea of art as a multi-disciplined domain working with its own hugely varied agendas, including Marxist

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[1] This needs to be seen as part of a populist effort to reach his audience, since the confounding of image with sight is a remnant of the very position he seeks to discredit, and it contradicts his argument for a specific regime of perception reinforced by particular visualization technologies.

[2] See Aumont (1997) for detailed expositions of the "innumerable potential manifestations of images" within a context of image technologies.

critique, is not recognized. That particular art movements or art works operate as investigations into representation, or even operate as critiques of the real, tends to be overlooked in academic areas dominated by Marxist class analysis, intent on policing the political potential of art, denouncing its elitist or commercial affiliations, or monitoring its collusions with commerce and the marketplace.[3] Social theorization in particular, having demystified the processes of art and art's claims to autonomy, demythologized its practitioners, and undermined its ontological concerns (Heywood, 1997), discounts the critical objectives and possibilities of contemporary art practice.[4]

The tendency to negate art as a vital and significant arena of cultural and social activity on the basis that art has been co-opted into commercial and capitalist enterprise, usually operates on the basis of extremely reductive and conservative observations or expectations regarding the practice of art. Theoretical explanations and descriptions of art in social theory often reflect little more than popular and media representations of art and artists.[5] Outside of the relatively specialized area of contemporary art theory, art is commonly discussed as if a monolithic singular enterprise, or in terms of traditional art practices. Contemporary art is ignored as cultural activity, or placed beyond various sanctioned forms of actualization and endeavour. In Marxist theory, art tends to be judged as if it is entirely some (failed) enterprise of social engineering, or dismissed because it appears to refuse radical political agendas, or to collude with establishment values, class systems, and consumer society. Independent or avantgarde practices are deemed no longer 'authentic', or caught up in capitalist marketplace, or they are confounded with industrialized entertainment even though they have different modes of production, different relations to capitalist production and different modes of distribution and exposure, different audiences, different pleasures, expectations, practices, values, intentions, and different outcomes. Humanist and Marxist pronouncements on the

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[3] See Williams (1998) for a detailed discussion of production that focuses on avant-garde practice and its political function. See Worsley's (1999) observations on the lack of follow up of Raymond William's interest in the 'mediators of culture' (artists and producers) by postmodernists and their determination of culture as discourse.

[4] Ian Heywood (1997) identifies the embedded judgments, biases and the differing moral values of Marxist frameworks as factors in the dismissal of art as a social or radical practice, and presents a rigorous critique of Marxist arguments and methods as they have been incorporated into influential texts such as Becker (1982), Burger (1984), and Wolff, (1981, 1983). He also identifies various epistemological approaches that foreclose the critical possibilities of art, possibilities that are often interrelated with other kinds of critique.

[5] Examinations of artist mythologies circulating in the media such as those in Philip Hayward's anthology *Picture This: Media Representations of Visual Art & Artists* (1988) offers some redress in this regard.

political futility of contemporary art (for example, Hughes, 1980; Baudrillard, 1997b; Cherniavsky, 2000) or proclamations of the demise of radical practice (for example Burger, 1984, Kuspit, 1993, Willis, 1997) have been absorbed into orthodox critiques of contemporary art.

As both Ian Heywood (1997) and Mark Schneider (1993) have noted, dominant theoretical traditions have the power to arbitrate and police what is knowledge or of value, and to exclude realms that do not meet approved criteria, even though they themselves, as Heywood points out, do not meet that criteria either. Heywood argues that a lack of self-reflexivity is observable in the sociological and philosophical subjectification of the art world and their determination of art's ontological aspirations as delusional. Indeed he proposes that from similar perspectives, sociology itself is grounded in values that may be considered equally "delusional" or futile.

The trenchant demolition of art in sociology and philosophy invites some consideration of the discomfort of intellectuals with affective territory (Jay, 1994). And it exposes some of the difficulties in theorizing other cultures and beliefs. If art practices within Western society are generally dismissed, denounced, or seen as degenerate, indulgent, or otherwise judged as lacking cultural significance, then there is not much hope for coming to terms with non-Western practices - unless perhaps they happen to conform to the most conservative expectations of Western theory and social practice.[6]

Art is complex, and in Western society, the domain of art can be viewed as an accumulation of knowledges, practices and values discounted in many other realms.[7] This is not an argument for reinvesting art with humanist or mythological status; or privileging the artefact "divorced from its conditions of production and existence" (Barrett et, al. 1979), or even claiming some special revelationary privilege for

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[6] I am not arguing that contemporary Western art 'reflects' other cultural practices and beliefs, though there may well be connections and shared domains, but that art as a multiplicity of cultural practices offsets monolithic ideas of Western culture in ways that go beyond 'modern' and 'postmodern' demarcations; art can show unorthodox ways of thinking about culture.

[7] Producers in art and commerce even may be, at times, the same people, working in different fields, with different intent, towards a different brief. Nevertheless the domains and intersections of radical or avantgarde art involve myriad practitioners and viewers/audiences, which suggests that at least a sophisticated realm of alternative practice and values exists.

aesthetics.[8] Nor is it an argument for the effectiveness of art or the avantgarde, in terms of social outcomes - at least no more than could be demanded of theory in some general fashion. It is often more appropriate to mediate, present, examine or produce certain experiences in the many ways that our society terms 'art'. The various cultural practices contained by this generic term might be looked at an approach that is inherently reflective, no matter how its moral purpose is constituted.[9] Different kinds of art have different audiences, agendas, practices, and outcomes. Taken as a propositional activity that engages with experience, subjectivity and representation, art may well point to cultural aspects that are overlooked when framed theoretically in orthodox ways. The domain of modern and avant-garde art has a strong claim in regard to critique and social commentary (Greenburg, 1982/61; Mulvey, 1989/78; Williams, 1989; Mellancamp, 1995; Heywood, 1997; Kaplan, 1997), even "illumination" (See Benjamin, 1977a, 1977b), or 'realization'. This is not to say that art is divorced from society or commerce, but radical art, in its opposing of rationality, logic and official realities, can been seen as a form of oppositional culture. Artmaking or engagement with art might not constitute overt political action, but it can be a means of reflecting on ontologies, dialectics, mediation, enactment, enframing, affectivities, and the force of production.[10] These are all crucial in understanding the play of the visual in its political dimensions.[11]

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[8] Clyde Taylor (1987) argues for instance, that "rather than search for a black or Third World film aesthetic we should interrogate the Western concepts of aesthetics as such, should recognize its determination through specific Western historical experiences and cultural exigencies" (1987: p, 142, also quoted in Pines & Willemen, 1989: ix). He implicates both the Kantian theorization of aesthetics that have claimed for one particular historical projection and practice, a universal, timeless, and transcendent function, and also, the kind of pleasure aesthetic of the kind identified by Mulvey (1975). My argument is that even in the West, in art particularly, there is a multitude of aesthetic possibilities, and to understand the aesthetic as a produced experience requires consideration of cultural context.

[9] The arguments that art's radical capacity has been neutralized by consumer culture (Burger, 1984; Jameson, 1991); often seem more like a further denunciation of the moral capacity of art, than an observation about the capacity of consumer culture for appropriating every sphere of life. Contemporary avantgarde artists though still believe in radical possibilities, and that the radicality invested in a work may transcend its treatment as commodity and still make a difference.

[10] Some art works may indeed work toward social change as activist art. Other art works critique various kinds of knowledges from other domains - including those of science and sociology. Some art works are intellectually framed or focused in some way, though this is not to say they are necessarily intellectually rigorous or sophisticated for they engage with intellectual ideas on all sorts of levels and in all sorts of ways. It is their aesthetic knowledge, *how* they present those ideas though, that makes engaging, interesting art in terms of effect. recognition, and understanding.

[11] Derrida and Spivak (2003) call for a critical culture of certain aspects of the visual. "This teaching is not only our responsibility outside of the media, it is also the responsibility of people within the media" (Derrida, in Patton, 2001: 45).

This chapter looks further at some of the relations of image, naturalism, photography and politics and argues that certain domains of art, particularly the avantgarde, constitute a critical practice and offer realizations about looking, position, and portrayal. The complexities of the represented look are examined within one of Édouard Manet's paintings, and, toward the end of the chapter, followed up in Yasumasa Morimura's restaging of the interplays of those looks in an East-West extension of Manet's critique of conventional European representation. Between these expositions I outline a history of artistic challenge to visual orthodoxy and to the ascendancy of the photographic real, one in which critical photographies, such as photomontage and avant-garde postmodernist photography, can be seen as a continuation of modern art's critical, provocative and affective endeavors.

The Play of the Gaze

Though Western representation and its perspectival system is conventionally represented as sight, it is really a particular kind of *look* that is enacted, (Burgin, 1982) one that is universalized and naturalized. Mulvey's (1989/75) psychoanalytic forays into cinematic representation and the way the camera enacts the male gaze has been enormously instrumental in exposing and denaturalizing certain employments of this look in pictorial constructions.[12] Her notion of the gaze has now been considerably broadened in recognition of diversified audiences to encompass a variety of gazes and looks (Kaplan, 1997), but her psychoanalytic framework of interpretation, considerably modified, and its universal description rejected or qualified, still remains useful as a heuristic methodology. The analysis of phallocentric subjectification also holds for other perceptual modes of imagemaking than that of cinema, even though the characteristics of specific visual mediums or contextual expectations surrounding representation may be different.

Cinema's relay shot is a continuity editing strategy that sutures time, (Bellour, 1974), and is one of cinema's main devices for narrating the effects of position. In the realm of fixed or still images, other conventions perform similar effects. In the stillness of painting and photography, instead of the classic dialogue of action and reaction played out through time - she sees him act; he sees her reaction - a relay of looks can be present simultaneously in the still image, and read sequentially.

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[12] That is, her deployment of a realm which presented itself as a science of meaning - psychoanalysis operating as a metaknowledge, and its employment tending toward a ratification of phallocentrism. As such, it marks a strategic employment of an idea from another discipline.

Movement and sequence, and, even timing, are effects relying on a conjoining of expectations regarding the unfolding of events as the viewer looks, a participatory interpretative looking. Formal elements within the image also construct scan paths defined by compositional structures and juxtapositions.[13] Such elements direct the viewer's looking by employing the reactive registers of edges, shapes, textures, and colour within a play of contrast and sameness.[14] In determining what primarily gets looked at, the compelling stimulus of body and face can be employed to great effect Gombrich, (1963, 1968/60).[15]

When John Berger tapped into the growing unease in regard to ideological assumptions operating in the media's portrayals of the female body in the late sixties and early seventies, and presented art as the historical precursor for these most blatant displays of female flesh, he left a great deal out of that account. Entirely absent were those artists from Édouard Manet onwards, who had already problematized representations of the female nude, and who explored and manipulated the ambiguities and social processes inherent in constructions of the female image as determined by male desire.

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[13] The operations of these cues belong to subliminal levels of looking, but they have been studied and plotted since the 1970s, and have been crucial for the development of non-human visual-recognition systems, See Neisser (1974/1968) for an early recognition of eye movements generally in relation to the subjective construction of vision. See Noton & Stark (1974/1971) for an account of research on scan paths in looking and the suggestion that after an initial exposure, scan paths, governed by sifts in fixation on particular features and "information rich" points, tended to be habituated as embodied muscular memory. These kinds of findings pointing to practices of looking have implications for social conformity and possibilities of strategic disruption.

[14] 'Edge' determination for instance is understood to be an automatic unconscious response brought about through stimulation of specific structures of brain cells in the visual or striate cortex that are sensitized to contrast, orientation, and shape. See Coren, et. al. (1978) for an account of the research on cellular response developed in the 1970s. Recent research is more involved in the follow-up and application of these findings to artificial intelligence and robotics, and to the development of security systems involving surveillance and identification procedures.

[15] Gombrich's position on perception is ultimately determinist, though more nuanced than he is sometimes given credit for: "Ours is a structured universe whose main lines of force are still bent and fashioned by our biological and psychological needs, however much they may be overlaid by cultural influences. We know that there are certain privileged motifs in our world to which we respond almost too easily. The human face may be outstanding among them" (1963: 6). Certain cellular structures are understood to be primed for recognition of objects. See the seminal work of Gross et. al. (1972) who found a specific cell in monkey brains that responded to hand shapes, particularly a hand orientated with fingers pointing upwards – positioned therefore as they might see their own hand (this was considered curious in terms of this being redundant information, but it is probably important in terms of body-ground sensing). See Goren et. al (1976) who evidenced the compellingness of faces for newborn infants. See Held (1974), Coren et. al. (1978), Ono et. al. (1993) for other examples of this research as it was extended into human perception and recognition. For an accessible but generalist survey of such findings and more recent work on compulsive reaction to stimulus, and an account of the inherent fascination of faces, see Bates & Cleese (2001). See Downing, Yuhong, Miles, & Kanwisher, (2001) for recent work in cortical recognition of the human body, (specifically within a region of the lateral occipital cortex) which tends to confirm the automatic/ compulsive tendencies in the fascinated viewings of bodies.

Manet, in his 1863 *Olympia*, (fig. 89) challenged more than traditional conventions relating to the portrayal of the reclining nude This painting utilizes the implications of the phallocentric and imperialist gaze *as subject*. The elegantly contrived pose of its subject emphasizes Olympia's body as 'on display', ostensibly in the tradition of the European nude. Her nakedness is accentuated through its elegant and intricate accessories, shoes, choker, flower, and jewellery, while various surrounding darknesses, including the figure of the maid and the arching cat at the foot of the bed, serve to heighten and exoticize the flawless white of her body. While posed conventionally in the manner of classical works, Manet's 'goddess' was, in its day, seen as a realist depiction of a courtesan shown receiving a visitor, and considered scandalous, an insult to art.[16] The painting's classical goddess masquerade also defied the traditional and acceptable representations of 'the fallen woman', putting on display the normally discreet invisibility of male sexual proclivities.[17] With its public exhibition, the overt presentation of a woman 'to be looked at' reveals, and also recreates the play of commerce and sex normally contained by social and legal injunctions, or hidden or disguised in the name of public morality. The narrative elements of the painting, such as the bouquet of flowers, the questioning attentiveness of her maid, and the cat's alarm, convey the moment of the visitor's arrival and emphasize the staging of the courtesan's body as his/our viewing, for the constructed location of the visitor is that of the viewers of the painting.

Although this woman is a fictional construction by Manet, the portrayal appears to engage viewers as if they were looking at an actual woman, a prostitute, or at least Victorine Meurent the model.[18] Many spectators and theorists have felt that they are

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[16] See Nochlin's discussion of the prominence and significance of the theme of the prostitute in c19th French painting, and her reminder that Olympia needs to be seen as "part of Manet's project to represent the wide variety of types in contemporary Parisian life" (Nochlin, 1990/1971: 201-206). Nochlin notes that Olympia "seems like the fulfillment of Baudelaire's demand that modern artists find contemporary situations for representing the nude" (203), and observes that Manet's setting transformed the hidden symbols of sexuality to natural accessories. See Needham (1972) for an explicit reading of this painting in relation to pornographic photography of the period.

[17] Needham (1972) cites Valéry's comment, "an animal vestal vowed to complete nakedness". In this regard. Canaday observes that even though explicitly erotic nudes were commonplace in the Salon, when *Olympia* was first exhibited "Every indecency and corruption was read into it" and Manet's own character was said to be of the same order (Canaday, 1959:170). Needham, quoting the English *Saturday Review* of 1858, notes the wide availability of pornographic photography: "there is hardly a street in London which does not contain shops in which pornographic photographs and *especially* stereoscopic photographs, are exposed for sale" (Needham, 1972: 81). These photographs, the *Review* noted, displayed women "more or less naked and leering at the spectator with impudence" (ibid.).

[18] She was the model for many of the women in Manet's paintings, including *The Street Singer*, 1862; *Mlle Victorine in 'Espada' Costume*, 1862; *Portrait of Victorine Meurent*, 1862; *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*, 1863; *Woman with a Parrot*, 1866; *Woman Playing a Guitar*, 1866; *The Croquet Game*, 1873. Needham (1972) points out that Manet's work with the nude was limited and shifted to a more modern conception

being challenged by what they see as the woman's look, with the woman variously described as working class whore or pampered courtesan.[19] Pollock has described this look as "brazenness" (Pollock, 1988: 54), Callen calls it "defiance" (1992:164), Canaday sees it as a "special combination of assurance, insolence and indifference …as if her glance and ours had just met; she holds us eternally upon the point, upon the moment of recognition" (Canaday, 1959: 167). They describe her look as an "overt" or "direct" look, *which engages them*, when - as I see it - Manet depicts only the *professional* look, 'worn' by a woman who is likely to specialize in illusions of personal engagement.[20]

And it is Manet who has produced this look. The painting only appears to be a woman enacting a display of (her)self. For me, this painted look is one constituted to express a degree of containment, self-possession, or indifference - within a performance of appearance. I would argue that the readings of Pollock et al. still belie a more careful looking, for Olympia's gaze is ultimately ambiguous: one eye appears to look just ever so slightly aside, while the other eye looks slightly down, creating the effect of a purposefully detached gaze, looking but not looking. And even the suggestion of self-possession is finally mitigated by other elements. Her look of calculated indifference is contradicted by her self-display, and something more disturbing. Something to do with her servant's looking and the painting of Olympia's chin and mouth which suggests some vulnerability. Is there some lure here, something working on male desire perhaps? Some requisite play set up between that facial expression, the hand laid across her lap, and the maid's opening up of the bouquet? Or are there contradictions expressed or captured by Manet's painting that relate to this woman's *emotional* unavailability? The ambiguities mean her expression appears to oscillate between resignation and resistance. And if so, what is the appeal in this?

It does seem that the direction, investment and meanings in describing that painted look are not misconstrued so much as reconstructed to correspond to a predetermined "fact" of position, class or morality in a painting that relates goddess

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of the world and a dignified rendering of women. See his suggestion that Berthe Morisot's presence in the Impressionist group may have influenced this.

[19] Nochlin describes her as "thin, tense and chilly" (1990/1971: 203).

[20] Mieke Bal also takes this view. She says it made critics angry because it was not "sufficiently submissive, encouraging condoning…it is both offensively impolite and at the same time self-enclosed…From afar she seems to look at the viewer in challenge and refusal; but in close-up the look is directed nowhere" (Bal, 1993: 397). See Bal also for speculation on Manet's awareness of a pluralization of vision that is similar to what I argue for here.

worship to a more profane commercial transactions. Its fictive effect and constituted reality as a painted image, is largely ignored, while its political import, and sometimes its parody, is largely lost in Humanist and Marxist description, even though the portrait's look, when construed as looking directly at the viewer, might easily be considered to operate like that of a film in which the protagonist looks directly at the camera. In judging the morality of the woman, or artist's model, or commenting on her audacity in relation to her social status, the painting's challenges to orthodoxies, whether those of art conventions or social power as enacted by the gaze as an instrument of desire might not be easily recognized. The desire that is being formulated here is not that of the woman, but that of the invisible viewer, whose gaze is formulated by the woman's look, avoiding that very gaze.

The dynamics involved in interpreting emotional states, and motivation and disposition, are enormous, and it may be useful here to look at some of the issues and apparent differences that have been identified in various domains. My own observations for instance suggest that there may be gender differences at work, with some males having great difficulty with close readings of expression when looking at images of faces, and possibly actual faces.[21] Leaving prosopagnosia aside, these kinds of differences may well be markers of differences in social and emotional intelligence (Gardner, 1985; Manstead & Edwards, 1992).[22] They may also indicate different degrees of sensitization given that there is even more difficulty involved in recognizing, identifying and recognizing subtle emotions if those faces are not our own ethnic type (Anthony, Copper, & Mullen, 1992; Chiroro & Valentine, 1995).[23]

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[21] From my experience around 5% of male tertiary students tend to provide highly inaccurate readings of facial expressions within an image, and project a more fantastic scenario reflective of classic male projections of desire and sexualization of the subject or narrative. Cultural learning no doubt is implicated in all of this, as well as the ability *to articulate responses*, but there is an extreme self-projection confined to males. My guess is that it might be related to some heightened sexual priming, or extreme self-preoccupation, as much as some lack of emotional sensitivity. It would be interesting to see whether this changes over time, and under what circumstances. A greater percentage still of male students miss out on subtlety of expression and meaning. This cannot be put down to some playful rebel attitude assumed in front of the class, for these viewers are often very surprised by alternative, or close readings of others, and by the textual evidence put forward. They seem not to pick up on cues, but read *into* the image, or pin their interpretation on prior expectations in regard to the kind of images they think they are looking at. This kind of guess-reading lacks all nuance, contradiction, or complexity, but all students develop a more observational-based response if the task is specific in terms of what is being looked for, or examples of possible complexities and inversions of meaning are given beforehand.

[22] People with this neurological disorder do not see faces at all, and may not remember faces either. See Bruyer, (1986) for a detailed explication of neuropsychology involved in facial perception and facial expression, and Ercoff, Freeman & Cave (1991) for a specific description of this condition in relation to memory loss of faces.

[23] See Buckout (1974) for a overview of findings which problematize accurate recognition of faces of strangers in that they show the prejudicial role of racial bias, expectation, conformity and suggestion, with troubling implications for court evidences relying on eyewitness testimony. For a broad account of the processes involved in face recognition see McNeil (2000) and Bruce & Young (1998).

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It would seem that within cross cultural readings or interactions, interpreting subtle variations in expression can be hazardous, since there are quite extreme cultural modifications and a vast number of expressions that have developed from a few automatic and innate expressions (Ekman, Friesen & Ellsworth, 1982).[24] These core expressions, visible in infants and on the faces of the blind, are also recognizable the world over (Darwin, 1998/1872). These very specific facial expressions universally register surprise, disgust, anger, fear, happiness, sadness, and contempt. Other more varied communicative and culturally instigated expressions expand those core reactions. With the one fundamental smile for instance, some eighteen variations with somewhat different meanings have been so far identified (Ekman & Friesen, 1984) although it is thought that thousands of even more subtle expressions may be employed in the everyday. If interpreting another's state, expression or body language correctly (as in correspondence with the emotions or mood being experienced by the subject, or, in an image, in relation to the textual cues) requires, like so many other capacities and skills, a certain sensibility, and particular processes of sensitization and enculturation, then it also leaves space for certain ambiguities, levels of interpretation, and concerns around recognition as well.[25] But it might be possible to sensitize looking, and many art works such as Manet's Olympia, may operate as visual propositions regarding certain dynamics of seeing and knowing.[26]

In fig. 90 *Olympia's* head has been replaced with a photographic image, selected from an advertisement in a women's fashion magazine, so that a look far closer to the one described by Pollock et al. may be demonstrated - this is the look used in advertising, and described by Berger as that which engages, and invites envy. The gaze in this face is more direct than *Olympia's*, and the expression of both eyes and

[24] These operate as good indicators of one's internal state and appear on people's faces even when they are alone. Even blind babies make these facial expressions. See Schwartz, Izzard, & Ansul (1985) who show that babies can accurately recognize these basic expressions.

[25] See Gross & Keltner (1999) for a broad coverage of the psychology of emotions and their relation to physiological aspects such as facial expression. See foundation studies that showing the role of enculturation in facial expressions such as Meltzoff and Moore's (1977) investigations showing that babies as young as five days will mimic the mouth movements of their parents; Stern's (1977) study on the way adults slow down and exaggerate their facial expressions when interacting with babies; see Eibl-Eibelsfelde's (1989) follow up which shows that this practice is found across cultures. With recognition of faces, many studies derive from problems in identifying crime suspects. Buckhout's 1974 study (Buckhout, 1975) problematising eyewitness testimony and recall constitutes the classic pioneering research in this regard.

[26] See Garb for a comprehensive account of modernity's imagings of bodies. Garb, in discussing Cezanne's responses to this work as an explicit display of the "spectorial relations of the time", proposes that in *Olympia* Manet these relations are implicitly staged (Garb, 1998: 183).

mouth differs in ways which are subtle, difficult to articulate beyond an effect of compression and directness, and, given the dramatic lighting contrasts, the montage produces a much stronger and more intense presence. Titian's painting 1538 *Venus D'Urbino* (fig. 91) shows that Titian's portrayal of his goddess' seductive, controlling expression is much closer to that of the contemporary advertisement than to Manet's painting. In this comparative play, Manet's *Olympia* stands apart from the others; her look is far more complex and elusive, and finally far more difficult to read.

Although textual interpretation may sometimes open out onto wild or idiosyncratic production of meaning, if an interpretation claims to work *with* the text, to articulate it, translate it, speak for it, or even to place it in institutional and cultural contexts that reveal additional levels of meaning, a close analysis/observation/reading is to be expected. And yet, since the determinations of Olympia's look and bodily display as defiance are common reactions, there may be some aspect at work that is not simply a matter of superficial looking, but perhaps a reflection of some containment or tension within certain discourses around the Other, the body, sex and power, which enters that ambiguous space and invites projection. Or, standing aside from the *truth* of the matter, such interpretations may be more the result of the constructed position of 'view' in this work, an operation of its orchestrated *effect* of looking, and an ignoring of its reality, its painted substance.

Given the intricacies and contestations involved in the meaning of images, and the importance of context and expectation in maintaining any *particular* reading - including the one here of Manet's Olympia - image *as truth* is thus image as truth effect. In this regard, Barthes' exploration of the visual is instructive. His movement from ideological analysis (1973/1957) to idiosyncratic interpretation, produced not just translation, but transformation, a creation of new 'texts' (1984/1980) in ways which had little to do with the producer's intent, the image as a whole, or its agreed social meaning, yet such readings, it would seem, can add to, as well as problematize, the conventional meanings already ascribed to the text,[27] The Barthesian reading, opening onto infinite possibilities, is far in excess of the text, but

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[27] There are many instances of art theorists repeating without question earlier readings or responses to art works, or earlier interpretations. The radical portrayals of women by Degas for instance, once considered ugly and the outcome of a misogynist attitude - one evidenced, as his critics claim, by his failure to marry (ignoring his companionable relationship with his housekeeper, as documented in his own photographs) - have since been celebrated, but claims of his supposed misogyny linger in various accounts of Impressionist painting. For a substantiated and critical scrutiny of Degas and his representation of women, see Kendall & Pollock (1992).

it is still a reactive production, and is what Derrida (1987/1978) describes as an account of an encounter.

In art, images provoke new trajectories of dialogical and critical response. A number of artists in Manet's time immediately comprehended his articulations of relationships and gazes in Olympia, and painted their own versions. One of those responses, Cézanne's 1873 *A Modern Olympia*, (fig. 92) is discussed by Tamar Garb in relation a number of Cézanne's paintings that extend this realist discourse around the display of the nude. Cézanne expands *Olympia's* scenic space here to include and portray her visitor. This admiring gentleman, watching as Olympia is unveiled by her servant, turns out to look remarkably like Cézanne as he depicts himself in his self-portraits. Cezanne's painting caricatures Manet's work, and makes certain "spectorial relations" explicit (Garb, 1998: 183). Manet's erect cat is translated into an perky erect dog (ibid.), while various phallic references ensure that this painting is read in relation to voyeuristic pleasures with some clarity, but in deliberately shifting the viewer's attention to the gazing male it represses some of the original's discursive potentialities centered on intrasubjective gazes. Instead it documents Cezanne's recognition of his own fixated fascinated obsession with the process of looking.

Cézanne's reactive encounter can be situated within a history of critical moves in art, a history that opposes designations of the visual as competing with reality. When the visual is excluded, marginalized or denounced in relation to other discursive formations or significatory systems, or cast as non-truth - because it is deemed to act on the body, which then persuades or seduces the mind - it puts the visual beyond the reach of critical examination. It denies the implicit claims of authority and credibility at work in all forms of communication, and the possibility of tracing these claims and intentions. Writing for instance, also creates illusions, but it is not necessarily described *as illusion*.

Avant-garde art, which I would locate within certain self-reflexive modernist developments seen now as characterizing postmodern culture, has a conscious and political critical dimension. I want to revisit modernism and the avantgarde as sites of realization in regard some of arguments discussed in earlier chapters in relation to multiple lookings, and positions in the context of pluralist cultures, experience and

self. But first I would like to briefly reposition nineteenth century art and photography in relation to naturalism, reality, and seeing.

The Critical Tradition in Art

The play of the gaze in Manet's *Olympia* remains as potent today as when it was first produced, though its meanings may well have changed. Some of what appears to be the "undeclared subtext" (183) of such paintings may well have been unconscious, or intuitive, since Manet seems to have been disappointed that these provocative revisionary works were received as negatively as they were, but his intention to rework established naturalized traditions was clear. It might be argued that Manet's articulation of the painting's relay of looks was accidental, but I would argue that some of his other works such as *Déjeuner sur L'Herbe* (1863) and the later *The Bar at Folies Bergères* (1881) are just as complex and evocative in identifying social conventions and staging the power of the subjugatory gaze.[28]

Although Manet's 1863 works were produced in relation to an academic tradition that many artists, including Courbet, saw as restrictive, they were an attempt to modify the tradition rather than reject it wholesale.[29] However Manet was producing work that set aside many conventions of his time including the time-honoured techniques of tonal painting and colour modulation employed for surface verisimilitude and illusions of three dimensional form, and others that applied to surface finish, and the treatment of space, form, and depth. Rather than model his work on the Italian tradition, he explored the Spanish masters, and, after 1865, Japanese prints, and then the representational propositions of Impressionism. He was interested not so much in a considered manufacture of Culture for an industrialized colonialist Europe, but in images that engaged with the contemporary world. In 1863, the works that Manet put up for inclusion in the Salon's annual exhibition were among 4000 other works deemed not to meet salon standards, creating an unprecedented mass exclusion which fuelled the modernist break with a rigid institutional gatekeeping on artistic standards, practices and reputations

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[28] It may be that these paintings, including *Olympia*, have some personal, allegorical connection to Manet's personal experience of the power of the Salon, and the gaze of the art-viewing public.

[29] The authorizing role of the salon was such that works rejected for the annual exhibition were stamped 'R' on the back with indelible ink.

(Canaday, 1959).[30] The possibility of independent exhibition praxis, as well as the development of new artistic agendas, came to fruition under such challenges to the establishment system.[31] Eight impressionist exhibitions were held 1874 - 1886, the first of which was held in Nadar's photographic studio; and the first Salon des Indepéndants was held in 1884.[32]

At the time Manet painted Olympia, small monochrome images of recorded shadows had been emulating conservative art images for some twenty-four years.[33] With the development of the callotype's potential for multiple reproduction in the 1840s, photography realized its potential as another kind of print alongside the ubiquitous metal engravings, boxwood engravings, and lithographs of the period. Its popularity for portraits was such that it supplanted the miniature portrait painting industry. c19th photography had little relation to academic painting let alone more radical developments, but it was championed as an art by many of its practitioners as

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[30] And exhibited by order of Napoleon III in the 1863 *Salon des Refusés* in the Palace of Industry. See Canaday's (1959) account of the politics and the reception accorded to the exhibition, and its contribution to the death of the academy.

[31] Private or independent exhibitions were not unknown, but they were associated with popular art, not professional high art. Manet's struggle with official protocols and controls on art standards is significant in its revealing of the tensions surrounding the professional and social status of the art profession. Canaday (1959) argued for instance that Manet made a tactical error in relation to the 1863 Salon by exhibiting fourteen paintings at a dealer's gallery two months before the annual exhibition opened, an act which was regarded by Salon members as audacious. One work, *The Bullfight*, rejected by the 1865 Salon, Manet destroyed. He erected his own art show at the 1867 World Fair after being officially excluded from the art pavilion; the show, which represented eight years of work, was received badly by both public and critics. Manet still persevered with Salon submissions and eventually achieved success. In 1880 he again mounted a one-man show to co-incide with the fifth Impressionist exhibition. In 1881 one of his two portraits submitted to the Salon won the second place medal - amid official outcry - which meant, like Courbet before him, that he could bypass the selection jury from then on, to show whatever he wished. But by then he was ill, and his 1881 *The Bar at Folies Bergères* was the only new work submitted - to general acclaim - before his death early in 1883.

[32] Nadar was a friend of Manet's as well as many of the Impressionist painters who acknowledged Manet's influence in their own work. Though invited to join the 1874 exhibition, Manet refused, although his recent work, for example *Sur La Plage* 1873, and *Railway* 1873, demonstrated Impressionist concerns that were realized in his series of Argenteuil plein-air paintings produced in 1874 after that exhibition.

[33] I find arguments for a significant relationship between art and c19th photography unconvincing, particularly those of Scharf (1979/1968), who argues that artists began to base their work on photography but hid their extensive and various use of photographs. His thesis of largely one of absent evidence, but even if some of his arguments were more adequate, his speculations are not contextualized in relation to c19th art practice. His claims are based on an assumption of the primacy of naturalism in c19th art; he ignores naturalistic achievements of past art and the agendas of art and painting, pre-photography. Nor does he acknowledge past art's determinations of naturalism *as it influenced early photography*. He also subscribes painting conventions to photography, gives reductive accounts of the aspirations and interests of c19th painters, ignores printmaking, makes unfounded observations on the copying of photographs, presents invalid comparisons of practices, and in relation to ideas of artists using photographs, omits to discuss the generally eclectic and appropriational approaches in art training and practice. He also misrepresents processes, dates and influences, and relies on the reduction and cropping of black and white reproductions of paintings to superficially 'match' details in particular paintings and photographs. See Varnedoe (1980) for further arguments against photography's supposed influence on c19th art.

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well as the general public whose fascinations for effects of the natural were to be sequestered for a new image industry. Although it was hugely popular for portraits, it was largely an unoriginal art. It was though, a time-based technology in which the capture of appearances was, and is, problematic. As every photographer knows, even at amateur levels, the frozen 'moment of truth' is fraught with 'evidences' which make things look very different to what was really taking place, while the speed of the camera can result in facial expressions far removed from the subject's actual state or circumstance.[34] Photography may stake a claim as a documentary record capable of revealing what in normal circumstances might be missed, including the enactments of looks and gazes, but such photographic effects are often as staged, or as fabricated as any painting or any other visual realization.

Daguerre's first primitive photographic mirror-like plates with their capacity for recording the most minute details of still objects as shown to the French Academies of Science and the Arts required a thirty minute exposure time, and consequently, the success of this recording was largely limited to the inanimate - or the dead.[35] It was only with the development of the wet plate collodion process in 1851 with thirty-second exposure times that a reasonably clear portrait of a living face or figure, though forcibly fixed and stilled, had becr .ie possible. By 1858 however, exposure times had been reduced to 1/50 of a second, fast enough to enable Edward Anthony the following year to take instantaneous stereographs of New York traffic, but still not fast enough to prevent moving figures and cars from recording as blurs. When Eadweard Muybridge achieved exposures of 1/1000 of a second in 1877 using shutters released by electromagnetic controls set off by tripwires, freezing movement and expanding time, it should have been clear that photography offered a seeing that differed from human vision. Instead, through some philosophical

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[34] There is some current interest in an apparent phenomena called the micro-expression, the 'real' emotion masked by a constructed expression, which may be observed when a video tape of film is freeze framed (Bates & Cleese, 2001). Given all the possibilities for construing an expression from changes *between* expressions I am somewhat skeptical of this particular hypothesis of 'a flash of truth'. Both the photograph and the micro-expression technique have too much scope for psychological projection, that is, for finding what the observer/journalist wants to find or present. It seems much the same as rapidly shooting a full roll of film, then selecting the shot that conforms to the desired image.

[35] McQuire observes that " The fact that camera technologies have been an integral part of the process of industrialization has been much neglected in social theory as the camera's independence on a whole network of industrial practices and production techniques has been excluded from art history" (McQuire, 1998: 4). He points out that what we now call photography was not possible until much later. He also notes that "most photographic histories have been content to narrate a more or less unbroken history stretching from Daguerre to the present day. Such an assumption is both revealing and problematic" (3). In what he designates as an evolutionist account of an ever-improving technology, McQuire sees "the idealization of neutrality itself" (ibid.).

slippage and economy of everyday practice, the photographic image became the standard by which vision was judged.

Nearly sixty years later Walter Benjamin (1977/1935) proposed that the advent of photography had been such a crisis for the Renaissance tradition and its cult of beauty, that artists responded by creating a negative theology of art, an "art for art's sake". I would argue that the Renaissance tradition had always been contested by other traditions, and well before the advent of the earliest photographic images, it had already been found wanting. In Northern Europe for instance, up to the c16th, the Italian Renaissance tradition was largely ignored, although certain of its illusionist effects were taken up by some artists whose more subjective, expressive and visionary work constitutes a significant alternative tradition, one that foreshadows certain modernist approaches, with late c19th and c20th expressionism being a major resurgence of this mode of art - if indeed it ever went away.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, before photography, many artists were already challenging the increasingly rigid and formulaic classical norms and conventions which had been established by the academies, but the patronage and support for these independents often came more private collectors with professional enterprise conducted largely through print and book shops, not the salon. These alternative directions included the expressive works of Blake, Goya, Fuseli and Piranesi, with their mystical, or darker and sometimes monstrous visions, and the socially critical work of Hogarth and Daumier. This unorthodox imaging challenged classical and academic models, but resistance to the established norms of art practice was not always to do with style or genre. Gericault's 1822 portraits of the inmates of an asylum for instance, broke with an important function of traditional portrait painting, that of conferring social status on the sitter. The subjects are nobodies in social terms. This portrait series acts instead as a form of physiological treatise in its attempt to demonstrate visible evidences of pathological conditions, from murderous inclinations to kleptomania.[36] It pre-empted photography's later functioning as an objective neutral technology for this favoured kind of c19th project with all it meant for reinforcing and rationalizing pre-existing social orders.

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[36] For a discussion of c19th belief in and theorization of physiological expressions of atavism and degeneracy, see Hersey (1996), chp 6 "Galton and Lomroso'. For studies on how those ideologies were reinforced by photographic practices see chp 3 Lavani (1996), 'Photography and the Deviant Body'; and also Frizot (1998) and Koenig (1998).

Although arguments are commonly put forward for the effect of photography on painters such as Ingres and Delacriox, the evidence is scant or entirely speculative, and propositions of photographic influence can largely be dismissed.[37] Both Ingres and Delacroix have a continuity of style before and after photography.[38] After photography's appearance in 1839, the various engagements of naturalism of early c19th painting continued with little stylistic change. Looking at early photography of the mid c19th, it is clear that it mirrors itself on a naturalized conventional imaging developed in c17th and c18th genre and academic painting. The authority of Ingres' slick enameled surfaces (already established prior to photography and following Velasquez' naturalism) set the illusionist benchmark for mid c19th academic painting and paved the way for the photographic look which indeed came to dominate much of late c19th salon painting. By this time, modern painting, largely independent of the academy, was already well established.

Although the modernist credo "Art for art's sake" resonates with Romantic ideas of the artist as hero, willing to undergo great sacrifice in order to be master of his own destiny, the notion has a political dimension in that it also developed in the wake of artists' struggles with institutional and professional controls on art practice, and a rejection of culturalist expectations for art including its aesthetic preferences. The advocacy of artistic autonomy in the c19th arose from a growing schism over artistic authority, and the function of art. Art in the c19th is characterized by self-conscious political and philosophical reflections on style, and the function of art.[39]

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[37] The only way that it is possible to argue that photography acted as a model for painting is to ignore four hundred years of naturalism in painting prior to photography. Such accounts privilege early technical devices such as the camera lucida while downplaying the myriad visual devices, workshop training practices and handbooks, and all other forms of illusionist knowledge, including mathematical perspective; or they exaggerate the properties of the camera obscura.

[38] This is not to say painters were not interested in photographs, or didn't use them in various ways for ideas, or as possibilities for poses, just as they used other art works, or prints, and their own drawings and studies as study or reference material. To argue beyond that, that photography influenced style or art practice is something else though, and not borne out in the work of major c19th artists. The odd copying experiment of a photographic image is hardly evidence of photographic influence unless this can be shown to relate to subsequent changes in style or representational approaches or the production of a photographic 'look'. What is visible is the dialectal relation of modernism to conventional photography, the challenging its look, and its supposed objectivity, Impressionism for instance implicitly problematized the photograph's supposed equivalence to sight, and exposed its limitations. This critique seems to have largely gone unrecognized in the face of the idea of the photographic image as a natural/neutral sight, and with its industrialized ascent as normal everyday imaging, or in the orthodox discourses on art. It may be that only now, with the demise of photography's certitude, that theorization can more adequately address image practices of the c19th.

[39] Some of these tensions, for example, between subjectivity and observation, internal and external realities were also reflected in art movements that publicly and virulently opposed each other.

The ascendancy of the photograph and its shadow images may seem, as it did to Benjamin, to not only coincide with the shift to "art for art's sake", but to have a causal relation to artists turning away from representational imagemaking. Yet the impulse for new representational ideas had as much to do with colonial trade and the exposure of these artists to other cultures, particularly those of Japan, Africa, South America and Polynesia, and the new discoveries and knowledges of the Industrial Revolution. Contemporary urbanization and industrialization too, influenced the development of new subjects, new methods and new subjectivities. The re-formulation of art as an independent realm of cultural practice with a set of values other than those maintained by the educated upper classes was co-determinous with a crisis in representation.[40] This crisis was not due to photography taking over art practice (which it did not), but was a recognition of the contingency of representation, and ultimately the limitations of appearance as a conveyor of meaning and effect.

Although theorists from Walter Benjamin to Aaron Scharf (1979/1968) have described photography as usurping the naturalistic project of art, I would argue instead that photography reinvigorated the naturalistic project and that this project continues within contemporary artworks that explore relations of looking and being, or interrogate representation in some way, or pursue an ontological practice centered on appearances.[41] Naturalism reached its zenith in c17th Dutch genre painting and Baroque illusion. As it became simply a part of the artist's possible repertoire, there was a corresponding loss of status for inherently naturalistic genres such as portraiture, landscape, or still life, which by the c18th were considered by the art establishment to be minor art forms. In the first forty years of the c19th, naturalism enhanced enactments of the fantastic and the heroic. In this capacity it served the nineteenth century's most celebrated task, its extravagant production of history painting and high culture, those spectacular images produced in the context of the Industrial Revolution and the expansion of European colonial empires.

Prior to the appearance of photography in 1839, Constable was already in the process of putting naturalism back on the art agenda in England.[42] Since his

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[40] That artists have specialized interests (and may be entitled to them) is not always acknowledged.

[41] See Scott McQuire's (1998) technologically framed and detailed study of modernism's image-making and representation.

[42] For accounts of this period pre-photography see Nochlin's brief discussion in 'The Nature of Realism' (Nochlin,1998/1971), See also Schwarz (1985) whose essays published between 1949 and 1957, may at times overstate the importance of the photograph and camera obscura for illusionist and

firsthand observational works were relegated to the status of 'studies', he initially produced more finished studio versions for academy exhibition, before finding a public for his energized weather filled landcapes. In Europe, with David and Ingres' work so influential, naturalism and illusionism never went away. The various naturalisms of Gericault, Friedrich, and Corot challenged the dominance and status given to establishment art modelled on 'great' art works. In the new landscape practices of the early c19th, the enclosed, tightly framed asymmetries and the cropped forms (Coke, 1974) that are often, and inaccurately, subscribed to the advent of the photograph, were already visible in the work of Corot and Constable. This emphasis on looking and a sensibility to the dynamic energies of light and the liveness of the world continued in radical c19th painting before being developed further by the Impressionists from the late 1860s onwards.

Early photography of the 1840s and 50s exacerbated an already fermenting debate in the c19th over the role and status of naturalism in art. The photograph was found fascinating in its effortless capture of banal detail, in its register of time, and later - as exposure times were reduced - in its capture of the frozen moment. It provoked a variety of responses from artists and theorists, particularly in view of its inclusions of the incidental and the found, whether shadows, dust, or angle of view, its experiments with the problems and possibilities of light, its tendency to reproduce a certain awkwardness, and, at times, the indecipherable.[43] The immense popularity of early photography, with its non-artistry and its conservative employments, and its rapid industrialization, no doubt induced some reflection on the appeals of brute and banal naturalism. Its major impact was that naturalism as an artistic achievement, along with its technical and knowledge crafting, was generally devalued.

By the mid-c19th, the reality debate in art, sharpened by revolutions and the valorization of the worker, (Nochlin, 1990/71) came to the fore with political

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naturalistic painting, but does so in order to register the idea of art's wide employment of seeing technologies and to champion photography. See Crary (1990) for a comprehensive Foucauldian account of seeing technologies that move the argument away from photographic influence on painting to the way visualization constructed as a disembodied vision enacted ideology and power. For a most convincing rebuttal of the 'photography usurped naturalism' argument, see Varnedoe (1980).

[43] Canaday described some of Manet's paintings as 'flash-lit', and others have also suggested that Manet was familiar with Nadar's experiments with lighting and high contrast photography. The effect though also has a close affinity with the clear flat forms of Japanese silhouette portraiture that Manet painted on the wall of his *Portrait of Zola* 1868. Nadar's work may well have sensitized Manet to aspects of Japanese art corresponding to high contrast, but Nadar's images have little relation to how this aesthetic was employed by Manet.

discourses on the social real, from Ruskin to Zola.[44] The work of social realists such as Courbet, Daumier, and Millet did not take up the positivist propositions inherent in photographic recordings in their radical visualizations of the political social although Daumier's expressionist visual journalism may well lay some claim to a realist effect.[45] Instead they heroicized and mythologized the lower classes within Romantic modes. It is within the work of the Pre-Raphaelites, particularly the work of Millais, that Ruskin's advocacy of the virtue of 'detail to nature' and the look of the photograph appear to coalesce, (more so when Millais' work is reduced to photographic size and stripped of its colour, surface, and presence).[46]

The Impressionists determined the social real as their own everyday realm - a real constituted, not by the heroic style, but in accord with c17th naturalism, the truth of sight. They reinstated naturalism and updated its practice to include new scientific and technical understandings of colour and optics. In this, they took the depiction of the seen well beyond the limits of camera optics, let alone conservative ideas of a real ratified and produced by 1860-70's photography. Impressionist paintings constitute a radical phenomenological exploration of seeing in which the vagaries of light and movement dissipate all sense of material substance, including those of bodily form. What the Impressionists like Monet found was that appearance is determined by what is normalized, or defined as characteristic, while any attempt to objectively record retinal experience encountered only uncertainty and dissolution (figs. 93-96). By the 1890s Monet's studies of landscapes, haystacks, and cathedrals

[44] Nochlin dates Realism and its philosophical issues as the dominant movement from 1840 to 1870-80 in France "with echoes, parallels and variants elsewhere on the Continent, in England and in the United States" (1998/1971: 113). Naturalism and illusionism were still clearly visible in early c19th academic art. Traditional naturalism continued, and new first hand observational practices were central in the work of landscape painters. See Coke (1972). History painting and portrait painting had been revitalized by David's research into the antique, his interest in light, and his naturalistic tendencies generally, and continued in Gericault's work. Virtuoso surface realism reflecting the illusionist portraiture of Van Dyke and the textural gloss of Rubens was used in the service of exotic or grand themes, as well as portraiture in Ingres painting decades before the first daguerreotype images appeared.

[45] Though well known for his satirical cartoons and his social caricatures, his work includes politically charged images. See for instance newspaper images such as *Rue Transnonian April 15th 1834* in which Daumier portrays a family's brutal murder at the hands of the civil guard during the Republican revolution, or his lithographs which document the involvements and impacts of the republican uprisings, such as *The Grocer Who Was No Fool Was Playing With Licorice Which Did Not Taste Sweet At All* (1830).

[46] Scharf (1979/1968) pursues this practice, even cropping paintings to get a better resemblance that is often so persuasive, that the effect can only be broken by looking at the original work. Arguments that artists used photographs or camera obscuras, *and therefore were influenced by them*, is usually full historical misinformation or speculation parading as fact, and tends to ignore aspects of art practice that would discount or make such claims generally irrelevant.

render the immaterial form, the object *made visible* through the workings of
atmospheric light, the living energy that stands between viewer and object.[47]

Impressionist painting not only refused the look of the photograph (Varnedoe, 1980)
but departed radically from prior naturalistic imaging in painting. Impressionism
now may seem all too bound up with bourgeois values, and evince an apparent
superficial aesthetic of charm to be easily seen as a radical tradition, but in the 1870s
Impressionist work was widely regarded as raw, chaotic, unfinished and ugly.[48]
Though many of the Impressionists and other independent artists of the c19th lived
long enough to see their work accepted beyond the small circle of their artist peers,
their pursuit of interests other than those sanctioned by the art establishment ensured
harsh criticism and financial privation through the 1970s and 1980s. Where Monet
pursued 'the shock of the seen' in images that engaged with looking, other artists
engaged more directly with the conventions of representation. Depictions of bodies
located within the spatial convergences of the European scenic box were displaced
by intriguing approaches found within Japanese prints and even pre-Renaissance
art.[49]

With the photographic real becoming the benchmark for academic naturalism in the
late c19th, and academic painting itself seen increasingly as a conservative enclave,
naturalism in art might seem to have become a spent tradition. But if naturalism is
thought of as a dialectical engagement with experience, ideas, effect, and imaging
practices, then it becomes possible to see that the reflexive propositions of
Impressionism were taken up and developed by their Post-Impressionist peers and

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[47] As early as 1868 Monet's outdoor paintings subordinate all form to light and colour values of the scene (see *The River* 1868). By the early 1970s in some works such as *Westminster Bridge* 1871 forms are seen *through* atmosphere which in later works such as *Rue Montorgueil Decked out in Flags* 1878 can be seen as a form of a kinetic energy. Many of his works in the 1880s have a dramatic coarse quality with some affinity to Van Gogh in their charged surfaces, but where Van Gogh's colour is heightened, Monet's works with both strong and *neutral* colour; and where Van Gogh sets up a surface of systematic dynamic brush marks, Monet's brush work dissolves into softer viscous passages. See for instance, *Winter Quarters at Etretat* 1885.

[48] This kind of charm, often termed 'picture-box', reveals a history of commercial appropriation that turned Impressionism's radical aesthetic and phenomenological investigation into a form of 'eye-candy'. This effect of cheap scaled down reproduction placed in association with sweet confection may be countered by spending time in front of actual paintings, for textural surface and traces of the image as a made and dynamic enterprise seems to work against this. At some point, popular modes of imaging began to appropriate the look of Impressionist painting, thus defusing Impressionism's dehabitualization of the 'natural'.

[49] This was particularly the case with the work of Degas who studied the fifteenth century frescos of Della Francesca and Mantegna firsthand as a student. He formally experimented with instances of repetition of form and figure and cropped figures that he found within their Early Renaissance narratives depictions.

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by younger artists, such as the Nabis and c19th Expressionists. Impressionism can be seen as a liberatory movement spearheading modernism's continuing engagement with practices of looking and sensing, and all manner of representation and practices of apprehension-conception-production.

Cézanne's development of the Impressionist's pursuit of an optical real was to confirm the seen as a process governed by hypothesis and uncertainties, (Hughes, 1981). This representational impasse was followed by the Cubist refusal of the unifying effects of perspective and the conventions of coherent space and form, and images that enacted the dynamics of looking and problematized the representation of a cohesive seamless vision. In late c19th academic concerns were largely and more overtly focused on traditions of fantasy and narrative. Both academic painting and Symbolism pursued affective experiences that were largely dependent on persuasive pictorial content, an illusionist picturing of disturbing virtual otherworlds. Although heavily implicated in extending Orientalist and misogynist portrayals, Symbolism can also be seen as prefiguring Surrealism in its championing of the Romantic idea of a transformative art, an art which engages, fascinates, shocks, puzzles, moves, confronts, and thereby effects subjectivity.

Outside of this (by then) popular academic realm, artists such as Odilon Redon, Vincent Van Gogh, Kathe Kollwitz, Edvard Munch, and James Ensor were finding ways to directly express the domain of subjective feeling. Rather than *depicting* some ritualized or allegorical representation of social or historical estrangement, they worked viscerally, initially employing 'distortions' and rupturing conventional representation to gain their effect. Ideas and conventions suggested by Japanese art, naive imagery, folk art, African art, tribal art, and Oceanic art were co-opted by artists such as Paul Gauguin, Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and by German artists, including those in The Bridge and the Blue Rider groups, and turned into an experiential language producing powerful physicalized, energized images.

Less than two decades into the c20th, expressionist artists such as Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Sonia and Robert Delaunay, and Georgia O'Keefe set aside the referential relations employed in conventional representation for an abstraction of pure colour surface grounded in the lyrical sensual realm. They produced abstracted and non-representational images that established an equivalence to the workings of music and sound, and an explicit evocation of feeling, whether that of

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raw emotion, nuanced mood, or other 'energetic states'. The Futurists from 1916 onwards, in their celebrations of power, speed, and 'dynamism', employed these new formal languages to engage with the technologized experiences of the modern world. In 1913 Malevich developed a language of pure geometric form in which spatial dynamics were generated by cues provoked by the relation of abstract forms to the picture plane, prefiguring the development of purism.

While this cursory summary may come close to conventional art history in some ways, this period does not require any evolutionary humanist framework in order to be seen as the culmination of a radical shift in art, but it is not one that works necessarily towards some "purely optical experience" (Greenburg, 1982/1961), since all kinds of intersensory zones are evoked. Within this period of radical change, a critical history of European naturalism can also be traced, one worth considering in respect to teasing apart the conundrums of the real. Where "Realistic, illusionist art had dissembled the medium, using art to conceal art, modernism used art to call attention to art" (ibid.). But even beyond this counter-illusionist focus, art manifests a capacity for dialectical production (Benjamin, 1977a/31) that evokes new bodies, new seeings.

The critical practice of art does not begin with the convergence of art and socialism, but socialism is certainly implicated in the critical positions to be found in c19th art.[50] When Gustave Courbet demanded of c19th painters that they address the real, he meant the tangible world fused with Proudhon's social real or Baudelaire's heroic real.[51] In Courbet's work the commonplace and the detailing of nature were instrumental to his realist view. He demonstrated what his socialist friends called 'democracy in art' (Nochlin, 1990/1971) in three monumental paintings he presented to the 1851 Salon, *The Stonebreakers*, 1849 *The Funeral at Ornans* 1849 and *Peasants of Flagery*; a momentous move which as Nochlin notes, would eventually take workers, peasants rag-pickers, miners, laundresses, beggars, and

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[50] See Haacke (1999) for instance, who, curating the 1999 exhibition *AnsichtsSachen/Viewing Matters*, in an attempt to demonstrate contemporary relations between art, politics, power, and wealth, finds in the Rotterdam collection two early c17th paintings showing workers. These, portrayals of fishermen by an obscure artist Arent Arentz 1585/6-1635, Haacke sees as non-sentimental; in other words, not constructed as 'the labouring classes' for the view of the ruling classes.

[51] See Nochlin who quotes Proudon's demand as that contemporary art "depict men in the sincerity of their nature and their habits, in their work, in the accomplishment of their civic and domestic duties, with their present day appearance" (Nochlin, 1990/1971: 137). Baudelaire called on painters to celebrate the epic elements and the heroicism of modern life – and to recognize the possibilities of poetic beauty in the funeral -like garb of modern dress. See Baudelaire, Charles 'The Salon of 1846: On the Heroicism of Modern Life', originally published as a booklet May 13th 1846, and published in Mayne, J., (ed.), *Art in Paris*, London: Phaidon, 1965, and Franscina & Harrison (1982). Cited in Clarke (1982).

prostitutes to central stage in c19th art. These paintings declared Courbet's emphatic rejection of the overt fantasies and the idealized fictions dominating the practice of French salon art in his day. He dismissed both the Neoclassic antique real as well as Romantic quests for the real of the imagination and spirit and its claims for an experiential authenticity and celebrated the life of heightened sensation.

Courbet's socialism, with its anarchistic associations, his outspoken challenges to high art's protocols of confining imaging to elite subjects, as well as his painting of the politically excluded, marked him subversive.[52] Nevertheless, and though T. J. Clark (1982) warns that the political edge of mid c19th art has now been blunted by time, Courbet's manifestation of *art concret* with its unfashionable evocations of material surface and weight is less than radical. His nudes may indeed be substantially corporeal, they still are portrayed in provocative sexualized ways representative of the traditional male fantasy, in which women exist to serve male sexual desires and populate their ideas of paradise. However revolutionary his depicting of 'the people', his images are still staged tableaus that reflect a classical male order, a conservative view that operates as " history painting of contemporary life" (Nochlin, 1990/1971: 25).

Positivist demands for a truth of verification were met by photography during the c19th, but as Benjamin (1977b/1931) points out, c19th photography had little to say about the truth of social conditions; for real hardship and exploitation was suppressed, denied or obliterated in public discourse of the time. Only a few photographers took photographs of factories, workers' slums, the sick children, destitute families and beggars, soup kitchens or alms houses, and most colluded to some degree with institutional and governmental projects and portrayals devoted to social control and surveillance.[53] It wasn't until 1888 when the journalist Jacob A.

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[52] It was Proudhon who coined the phrase "all property is theft", but Nochlin (1990/1971) reminds us that Marx was virulently critical of Proudhon's socialism, and that its family conservatism designated a restrictive and traditional role for women.

[53] Among the vast range of subjects covered in the earliest years of photography there were scenes of peasants, street sellers and musicians, urchins and tinkers, many of them made by unknown photographers, with attributed works including Giacomo Caneva's 1850s *Fisherman, Southern Italy*; David O. Hill & Robert Adamson's 1845 *Newhaven Fishermen*; those by the painter-photographer Charles Negre such as his c.1850 *Ragman, Market Scenes* and his 1851-52 *Chimney-sweeps Walking*, Paris. Rather than any political agenda such images reflect more the excitements of the photograph, the desire as Timm Starl puts it "to compile a catalogue of all possible phenomena" (Starl, 1998: 46). Such images took on a socialist significance post 1848 through the work of Social Realist artists (see Courbet's 1868 *Beggar's Alms*, for instance) though academic painters also painted the oppressed and poor. See Nochlin (1990/1971) who mentions works by Phillipe Auguste Jeanron such as his1836 *La Charité du peuple ou les forgerons de la Corrèze*; and his *Scene of Paris*; Deverell's 1850 *The Irish Beggar*; Bonvin's 1852 *La Charité*; Pils' 1852 *Soldier Distributing Alms to the Needy*; and also A.

Riis photographed the New York slums with the intention of bringing attention to their appalling conditions, and his publication of *How the Other Half Lives* in 1890 that photographic social criticism began, (and proved to be effective since his continuing efforts led Rooseveldt to eventually implement a whole series of social reforms). But it remained a rare practice.

Only with Lewis Hine's 1908-1918 photographic documentation of miners and child workers for the National Child Labour Committee and miners, with Hines a professional sociologist did this become established as a critical form of social research and imaging practice. Any such absence of the social real problematizes the positivist dream of a representation that purports to be without ideology, mediation or filter. But even when the absent subject appears, the ideological possibilities and determinations of photography are endless. John Tagg (1988) for instance, looking at the photographs of the poor or socially marginalized, has shown how dense connotations, concealed as natural and universal, contribute toward a simulation of a seamless transparent structure. He argues that even when ideologically determined choices around event, aspect, angle, composition and depth are acknowledged, an ideal pre-manipulative, a-rhetorical level is still posited.

The linking of representation to the seen is so pervasive that the wealth of non-perceptual forms of image-making appear of no account. Whatever the origins of art's attempt to separate itself from establishment values and desires, or the exact nature of the art crisis which became associated with the advent of photography, for Benjamin, the development of an "art for art's sake" meant not only the championing of a purism that denied traditional subject matter, but the possibility of a political art.[54] What this denial really offered, he claimed, was a freedom from parasitical

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Antigna's work such as his 1855 *The Forced Halt*; Henry Wallis' 1857 *The Stonebreaker*; Thomas Faed's 1867 *The Poor, the Poor Man's Friend*; Luke Fildes' 1874 *Applications for Admission to a Casual Ward*, Zandomeneghi's 1872 *Poor People on the Steps of the Ara Coeli in Rome*; Hubert von Herkomer's *Hardtimes* and his 1891 *On Strike* , and also the work of Tassaert, Frank Holl, Watts, and Gustave Doré's 1870's print illustrations of London's slums. During the 1850s the portrayal of the social real was swamped by other social and private uses for photography, and the role of imaging the poor was claimed by institutional bodies. The tradition of sociological reportage for instance began to include or be manifested as photographic documentation, beginning with projects such as Thomas Annan's 1868-1877 documentation of Glasgow's slums for the Glasgow City Improvement Trust and John Thompson's 1877-78 London slums project (published as *Street Life in London)*. From 1874 Dr Barnardo's Homes maintained a photographic studio for producing 'for and after' publicity images of Dr Barnardo's redeemed street urchins. See Koenig (1998) for an overview of these developments.

[54] This is a project that may always have limits, and requires constant revitalization and redirection, given the co-option of art as a commodity whose value may increase and thereby confer wealth to the buyer. It has little to do with art and everything to do with social structures and the desire for status. It is a process that does not depend on the buyer's recognition/valuing of the artist's work, but on institutional assurances of the artist's status within the art world and among other investors.

dependence on any original ritual function, and liberation from aesthetic artificialities and he included in these critical possibilities certain photographic practices. In Eugène Atget's photographs of Parisian streets 1897-1924, for instance, Benjamin saw a revealing or "illumination" of urban alienation (1977a: 228). In August Sander's vast series of portraits of men, beginning with his 1929 series *Face of the Times*, Benjamin (1977b) recognized a project which exposed the ways photography enacted and colluded with the socially controlling objectives of physiognomy and scientific typology.[55] Benjamin maintained that such photographs promoted a politically educated sight, and acted as a potential source of knowledge for an 'optical unconscious'.[56] For Benjamin, the real reality, the revelation of human relations, resided not in some mere reproduction of the seen, but in photographic *construction* of the kind pioneered by Surrealists and Russian Constructivist filmmakers, and in political possibilities inherent in a breadth and diversity of photographic function, that might be realized through its "fascination".

The Fractured Image

Photography is an instrumental technology, and artists particularly have tested its possibilities. A little more than a decade into the c20th, after Cubism and Futurism had shattered the unified iconic body and reconstructed it as a multiplicity of views, some artists began to reassemble actual objects or physical fragments into what would come to be known, in relation to Duchamp's work, from 1912 onwards, paradoxical 'combines'. Dada artists, like Hannah Hoech, Max Ernst, and Kurt Schwitters began to assemble jumbled bodies from fragments of various photographic source images to form ironic, nihilistic visions and provocations. Each visible fragment had the potential to evoke associations connected with its original context and thus generate another set of meanings, a process that challenges Benjamin's propositions on loss of the aura. The aura here derives *from* mass reproduction, including the banalities of leaflets and advertising.

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[55] *Face of the Times* presented seven different groupings of social types meant to correspond to existing social orders, beginning with farmers and finishing with those of the highest rank. In Sander's typography the physiological manifestation of social difference fails to be confirmed, and is thus challenged.

[56] See Rosalind Krauss' (1993) extension of the concept into a revisionary account of modernism, which counterposes inside-outside, conscious-unconscious, figure-ground to show that modernism's conscious concern is to chart, capture, master the formal order of the gestalt, "the formal conditions of possibility for vision itself, the level at which pure form operates as a principle of co-ordination, unity, structure: visible but unseen.", but beyond that visibility is the 'matrix', operating "entirely underground, out of sight" (Krauss, 1993: 217). Krauss revisits function, purpose, effect, motivation, relation through a wide variety of discourses to restructure understandings of modernism, surrealism and abstraction.

Benjamin Buchloh, (1988) reviewing some of the "political possibilities" in Russian Constructivist art happening at the time Walter Benjamin was writing about the effects and implications of mass reproduction, argues that photomontage with its visible constitution and obvious production processing was a self- reflexive practice. Buchloh subscribes its usefulness as an agitational tool for addressing the Soviet Union's urban masses, to its ready photographic appeal and the reliability and to the limitlessness of its source material. The photomontage image, twice removed from any originary real in Baudrillard's sense, also works against objectivity. As Buchloh observes, the fractured image unravelled the apparent cohesiveness of the image and created a wealth of unstable meanings, thus challenging the idea of unified order. Accordingly this kind of practice was denounced and discouraged by rising totalitarian forces in both Russia and Europe.

By the 1930s, both the iconic image and the homogeneous single frame photograph, with the "monumentality of the camera-angle's awesome visions and the technological media optimism it conveys" (Buchloh, 1988: 97) were reinstated in the service of totalitarianism. This grandiose socialist vision, with its unified spatial view of vast expanses naturalized "the perspective of governance and control, of the surveillance of the rulers' omnipresent eye in the metaphor of nature as an image of a pacified social collective without history or conflict" (108). This rational image, together with formal pattern and the iconic image, often in the heroic style of c19th Romanticism and social realism, has become the official visual language of totalitarian rule and absolutism (figs. 97-100). It operates as the conceptual ground of control, the organizational grid, in implementations or evocations of power and regimentation (fig. 101).

Photomontage was abandoned by both Russian Constructivists and Italian Futurists in 1925 amid pressures to forsake experiment and individualism for community proselytizing. The year before though, the technique had been adopted by Andre Breton's Surrealist group as a means of evoking the strange unconscious, and the marvellous. Schwitters had already been using the technique in this way by 1909, and later, its object-counterpart, assemblage, for the possibilities it offered for free association, disturbance, symbolic relations and the subversion of normality, and as a means of dislocating experience from the habituated everyday. Like formalism, by the thirties it had entered the graphic arts as another expressive language or style

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(figs. 102-103) within public image culture. Yet Dada artist John Heartfield continued to use the technique effectively for political shock. In his hands photmontage became a Brechtian dialectic through the juxtaposition of conflicting realities seamlessly blended together in confronting illusions. From the 1950s onwards NeoDadaists were still employing montage and assemblage for ironic possibilities, using these de-construction strategies expressively as a means of evoking the montagist experience of the everyday mediascape and its avalanche of fragmentary engagements. By the 1960s, commercial imagemaking began to tame photomontage and use it as an entertaining play on dislocation, or as stylistic referencing of subversion and rebellion in their promotion of youth culture.

The 'shock' of photomontage is not inherently radical; it could just as well operate as a mere device for attracting attention. Nor are such structures as the grid, or centralized composition, or purist or formalist aesthetics, given their spiritual and revolutionary origins, fundamentally tied to totalitarian politics. Technologies, even if they have a certain determination or logic of usage, can always be used differently. Dadaists, and in some instances, of Surrealists, often used straight photography to confront both the sexualized body and the mechanical body. It is always possible to subvert the tendencies of a particular genre, style, or visual language. Zhuang Hui, for instances has even managed to use the most reductive format of the class photograph and turn it into a document that individualizes every face within the massed body of the group (Borysevicz, 1998) (figs. 104-105). The transgressive use of photography can be subtle, working on uncertainty or ambiguity. This tradition begins with Marcel Duchamp's play with the unstable boundaries of gender and convention in his masquerade as Rrose Sélavy beginning around 1921, photographed by Man Ray (Jones, 1993).[57] Man Ray had an extensive interest in the body and its representations as well, and produced some extraordinary images, many which are now seen as decisive markers of sexually subversive counter-production to conventional practice and social norms. These include his famous 1933 *Minotaur*, a transformation of male torso and raised arms into the image of a man-beast, and his 1933 series of photographs of women modelling hats

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[57] Amelia G. Jones' (1993) has suggested that Duchamp was acting out certain transferences and trappings characterizing seduction, while also toying with the absence of the real "making subject" (and thereby denying the usual reassurances of traditional art practice).

(fig. 106) which expose - and reproduce - the play of genital concealment and substitution at work within traditions of clothing (Fer, 1993).[58]

The passing of subversive images, with their critiques of coherence and convention, into mainstream everyday imaging, now contributes to the uncertainty of the postmodern experience, but any political effect seems neutralized in the consumer context (Solomon-Godeau, 1984). As Patricia Mellancamp (1997) points out, uncertainty itself is now a strategy of advertising and media toward the creation of an addictive cyclic consumption of media and consumer goods that occurs in an effort to resolve media induced anxiety, (though indecision, and confusion may work against the goal of profit). Though photomontage as a strategy countered the truth of photography in the twenties and thirties, the now familiar photomontage, and other visibly constructed kinds of photo-images still remain potentially open to radical usage, for the very separation of art constitutes another speaking position, and one which is not nearly as othered, incomprehensible, or elitist as is claimed by anti-art critics.[59] What do artists do given the commercial market's "capacity to assimilate, absorb, neutralize and commodify virtually any practice at all" (Solomon-Godeau, 1984: 81), or with the art market's ability to marginalize any work opposing too strongly the policies and ideologies of institutional spaces? As always, these compulsively 'productive creative subjectivities' reinvest, reinvent, and re-present.

Critical Photographies

Abigail Solomon-Godeau, describing the shift from modernist photography to postmodern practice, illustrates how postmodern artists use photography instrumentally to engage "virtually every critical and theoretical issue".[60] She shows how postmodern photographic work contests notions of subjectivity, originality and

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[58] See Fer (1993) who examines these as Ray's response to Tristan Tsaza's essay 'D'un certain automatisme du goût', (published in *Minotaure* 3-4, 1933), which explored the way fashion fetishistically signs the body and its sexual identity.

[59] Although Solomon-Godeau restates the familiar argument that postmodern art and its hybrid practices contribute to breaches or obscurification of popular and high culture boundaries, these boundaries are not artificial or necessarily elite serving. The boundaries mark different practices, traditions and operations and outcomes, including expectations values, and desires, audiences, institutional and organizational structures, work models and financial supports, and embrace different relations to commerce and art applications. As such it is not a matter of breaking these down, so much as entering into dialogues across these borders.

[60] Solomon-Godeau differentiates postmodern practice from the formularized canon protected and circumscribed by generations of art photographers working toward a modernist fine art photography.

authorship; how it addresses the conditions of commodification and fetishization; pinpointing the primary devices employed by these artists - seriality, repetition, intertextuality, simulation, pastiche, a refusal or subversion of the modernist autonomy of the art work, and various modes of deconstruction. Much of this work tends to address pre-existing and highly conventionalized mass media imagery and reproduction, and includes conceptually-based work that investigates semiotic possibilities and the limits of image as text, and text as image. Such artists also mix genres, styles, conventions, objects, materials and media, a process of hybridization (Crimp, 1980) that violates purist and positivist photographic practice and its associated humanist orthodoxies.[61] This can precipitate new understandings of the cultural boundaries differentiating 'high' and 'low', and popular and elite.

Solomon-Godeau differentiates postmodern practice from the formularized canon developed and circumscribed by generations of art photographers who worked to establish a fine art photography, and on the other hand, the radical stances described as postmodern, where artists adopt instrumental non-craft approaches or embrace non-art formats in order to remain outside the sphere of capitalist commercialization. However, as she points out, these artists are never more than one step ahead of capitalist-culture. Indeed Haacke (1999, in Grasskamp, et. al., 2004) and Jameson (1991) among others, have argued that the network of power, politics and wealth reflected within art institutions and the art market are all-pervasive. Haacke however, pursues strategic projects that explicitly exploit such relations:

> "Given the dialectic nature of contemporary petite-bourgeoisie consciousness industry, its vast resources probably can be put to use against the dominant ideology. This, however, seems to be possible only with a matching dialectical approach and may very well require a cunning involvement in all the contradictions of the medium and its practitioners." (Haacke, in Grasskamp, et. al., 2004: 112)

Photomontage, Surrealist photography, and Moholy-Nagy's formalist photograms and 'found' compositions of light and shade were regarded by Benjamin (1977a) as having critical agency in so far as they exposed both bourgeois corruption and totalitarian certainties. But given the appropriative tendencies of capitalist

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[61] Such as the sanctity of authorship, questioned through unmediated photographic appropriations such as those by Sherrie Levine. Following Barthes (1977/1968, and Solomon-Godeau (1984), the result is the rejection of fixed meaning, absolute authority, and ultimately, the hypostases of law, reason and science.

imagemaking, the political possibilities of any form of radical art practice are always at risk.[62] The relentless commodification of capitalist consumerism of anything with attraction and restimulation value, drives today's constant refashioning and remaking of art as much as any desire for 'originality'. And it shows that no battle is ever won; that as the ground changes, new counter strategies are needed. The difference between modern and postmodern art practice is very much a difference in context, but art radicalism, as a combination of critical stance and an actioning that confronts orthodoxy with political effect, is another matter.

Though critically engaged contemporary art continues to enact Benjamin's agenda, it struggles in the face of a contemporary culture-media landscape of enormous energy, power and presence, and, as Heywood (1997) argues, it is also weakened in being the object of theoretical attack. Radical art often addresses the everyday, critiquing or opposing habituated practices and visualities, and it is overwhelming produced in reaction to other art, but it is also a practice which, given the academic education of contemporary artists, also locates itself in relation to theory. However, it is not an arm of theory, given its generally iconoclastic approach from Manet and Duchamp onwards, its emphasis on engagement, and its multiple agendas, many of which might be deemed apolitical.[63] The kind of theoretical practice that demands of art a political purity, community engagement, and political effect that it does not demand of itself (Heywood, 1997), subjects art to impossible kinds of trials, and undermines its effect.

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[62] Jake Chapman, one of the controversial artists of the YBA (Young British Artists) given prominence by the London Saatchi gallery during the 1990s, is reported as saying that though the art market seems to recuperate even the most inert and deliberately stupid anti-art statements. What persuades him to keep going though, he says, is that the art itself takes on an independent life. "I do have an idea that there is something possible about making a work of art, that it can do stuff in a very random, chaotic and volatile way ...that's why it's worth doing. Because it's so anti-human, because it undermines the very thing on which humans base their superiority. Of having some intelligible control." Quoted in Bunbury, Stephanie, 'He's Been a Very Naughty Boy', *The Melbourne Age*, March 13, 2004, A2, p. 3.

[63] The discursive formations of art institutions, their canons, histories, and criticisms, for instance are the formations that were crucial for the successful positioning of photography within modernist art. Solomon-Godeau (1984) argues that these theoretical practices developed an institutionalized art that shores up humanist concepts of artist, style and oeuvre, and have formulated a photographic ontology that theorizes only in terms of inherent properties of the image such as time, frame, detail, the thing itself, or the vantage point from which things are seen. A critically engaged postmodern practice though does not so much produce a photographic art, as inquire or demonstrate how photography actually functions in its role as mediator or representation of the empirical world of industrialized society, often, as Solomon-Godeau notes, in the sense of resisting positivist determination.

The Gaze Returned

Manet's *Olympia* has been reworked countless times over the last century, and is still provocative for art and representational discourse. One reworking, Yasumasa Morimura's *composition Portrait (Futago)*, 1988, (fig. 107) uses photography to appropriate not only the old dynamics of gender, race and class observable in Manet's work, developing the tensions of gaze and position through a switching of roles and an insistence on the image as an assembled construction. Morimura inserts himself into what has become the authoritative European art tradition. As an Asian male, culturally subjectified in European discourses, his impersonations disturb the conventional European structures of power relations and gender roles. The ethnic difference that prevents him claiming descent from this canonical tradition provokes an intensified reading of the original in relation to Orientalism and the Imperial gaze, and provokes further considerations of the play of representation.

As with all his other 'imitation' photoworks, which range from reworkings of the great paintings of the European canon to famous Hollywood iconic images, Morimura's own image is used for every character and reconstitutes the looks in a humorous parody of the originals. In his elaborately painted and photographic recreation of Olympia, he is *both* the courtesan and the maid. Here he reworks the body, not as reversal, as male in drag, as might be expected from some other of his works in his celebrity-photo series such as *Red Marilyn*, or *Emmanuelle*, but more as a series of relayed/reflected contradictions. Although his body is male, the image keeps referring back to the original. The likeness in the photographed contours of his legs to Manet's painting of his model's legs becomes fascinating, alluring, refusing closure. In a Goffman-like reversal, the normal signs of gendered sexuality and its enactments of beauty and appeal reveal the rigid norms of fetishism at work in the portrayal of women's bodies. His courtesan's artificial blonde curls calls attention to the original sleek darkness of Manet's image, and to conventional signs of Asianness, and through contrast, to blondness as today's marker of the sexualized body for looking. Such border crossings expose cultural conventions and take postmodern pluralism beyond any adoption of style or mode of work; his extension of the self portrait tradition into art history, while in some ways similar to the work of Cindy Sherman, reveals another and entirely overt way of subjecting oneself to existing representational norms.

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These witty transformations with their reconstituted surfaces emphasize that the painted originals were also mock-ups, constructed tableaus with their own influences and representational norms. Morimura's expression carefully develops Manet's play of looks: here the eyes are hooded, the gaze slightly turned, and he looks past the viewer, allowing the viewer to freely observe the body as it is displayed. His look steps away from that of Manet's Olympia, and suggests another kind of interaction than the relay of looks in the c19th work. His expression, heavy-lidded and cast downwards, is seductive, It is orientally demure, a ritualized offering of passivity. Although the face's expression may be a performance and a mask, Morimura has recognized and exaggerated that important yet subtle cue to the power enacted by the viewer on the subjectified body. The tension of the chin which might have reassured or even enticed Olympia's viewer/visitor, is here openly staged.

Although he appears to challenge the feminine positioning of 'Asia' in European culture, Morimura denies any critical objective and instead defines all these recreations as self-portraits, and as homages to the original images and artists.[64] Certainly some of his exchanges, such as substituting Japanese textiles for European embroidered silk, are in excess of cultural critique, and appear to be playful and pleasurable surface moves that have a logic in this game of reversals. The large scale impact of his work and his richly coloured glossy surfaces with their mix of photographic and paint surface also have an aesthetic presence and power absent in reproductions of his work.

Morimura's work cannot be thought of in terms of false/real identity; rather it is a critical reconstruction of both painting and its historical legacies (or, as in other of his works, the "Japanese pop mode, with a lot of stereotypical Japanese visual gags" (Morimura, quoted in Brown, 1996: 54). In relation to later works (his 1994 *Psychoborg* photo series, the book, *Kisekae Ningen* (Dress-up Person/Doll), and his CD project *Kao*) Morimura says

"Of course, at the root of all of this is the notion that individuals cannot be truly represented by their bodies, particularly when the body itself changes constantly... The body's boundaries, its limits, are becoming less obvious daily,

[64] Frieberg (1996) suggests that though Morimura's "powerfully liberating dramatizations" draw on female impersonation traditions of Kabuki theatre, his "cannibalizing of Western icons" reflects a more transnational Japanese culture. Brown (1994) suggests that Morimura's work "is primarily pointed towards the conservative core of the Japanese academic art establishment". The argument here rests on the viewer somehow being able to 'match' the artist's true intention or identity. Brown herself notes that Morimura is interested in the different readings of identical imagery in Japan and the West. In vain we search for a true interpretation of Morimura within his self-presentation - all is fabrication.

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and as love is apprehended through physical attraction, one result is a crisis of love itself. As the body becomes more protean, full knowledge, and therefore love, decreases in likelihood. What is left is solitude and desire" (55).

Ultimately, his referential otherness, in its overstated and sumptuous accumulations, becomes a demonstration of power and self, a statement exemplifying contemporary positioning in relation to the past, and reflective of the possibilities of visual dialogue in the postmodern global cultural moment. Morimura's enactment inhibits, indeed even actively resists any interpretive closure. There can be no privileged understanding of some being, or even a communication of some normally private and authentic entity. Who is Morimura? Is there any 'personal' present, any 'knowing' of Morimura? 'Self' portrayal is shown here as something strategic, and *a means* of investigating constitutions or presentations of appearance. This re-enactment of Olympia encapsulates a history of position and portrayal in an ever-expanding interplay of lookings. Victorine's look as mediated through prior conceptualizations of 'Olympia', through the look of her maid, and through the surmized look of Olympia's invisible admirer, and as constituted by all those looking at the painting and its reproductions over the last century, Add to this Morimura's own examination of the painting, his created gaze and our gaze. All these gazes, these various subject-object positions have different dimensions, and are interwoven to produce a complex and highly unstable narrative and organization of meaning that goes beyond the image.

Arguing that European art has been largely a male production for male-centered pleasures, Berger demonstrated how images can be visually coded through pose, expression, gesture, and setting, aesthetic structures and their associative and symbolic networks, to encompass the male viewer. "Everything must appear to be the result of his being there. It is for him that the figures have assumed their nudity" (Berger, 1972: 54)

This prioritization of male needs goes beyond depictions of women's bodies, but women's bodies appear to be particularly subject to the patriarchal imagination to the point where genuinely alternative representational strategies appear extremely difficult. In the 1970s, feminism extended the critical tradition of art to confront and

change conventional practices of representation.[65] Representing an emancipated sexual female body presented difficulties. Lucy Lippard warned "It is a subtle abyss that separates the men's use of women for sexual titillation from women's use of women to expose that insult" (Lippard, 1976, quoted in Haug, ibid.). Griselda Pollock, challenging the effect of explicit genital imagery that appeared in art during the seventies in the course of women's determination to re-own and celebrate the female body, says

> "I would have to argue the absolute insufficiency of the notion current in the Women's Movement, which suggests that women artists can create alternative imagery outside existing ideological forms; for not only is vaginal imagery recuperable but in that process the more sinister implications of sexual difference in ideological representations are exposed" (Pollock, 1977, quoted in Haug, 1998).

It has been argued that images of women are not of woman signified, but operate as a sign, *the* prime sign of difference and otherness (Williamson, 1986), a sign being, as Barthes puts it "what repeats itself" (Barthes, 1991/1984: 237). Laura Mulvey (1989/1985) argued, that trying to open up the pre-Oedipal in relation to the possibility of resisting phallocentric positioning as an inevitable developmental consequence of Oedipal relations and language acquisition, (Lacan, 1977/1949) allowed only an either/or. Inversion, she stressed, is the only movement available in relation to masculine/feminine: there is no space within or without. Though Mulvey acknowledged that the binary mode of thought was a necessary analytical tool for exposing the power relations behind the "phoney" claims of balance between masculine and feminine, she saw that it hindered the possibility of change by trapping analysis in its own dualistic terms, thereby maintaining the polarity. For Mulvey the way out of this binarization lay in avant-garde practice and its construction of counter representations, different viewing conventions, new narrative and non-narrative structures, which she herself experimented with in *Penthesilea* 1974 and *Riddles of the Sphinx*, 1974.

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[65] Carolee Schneeman's work is notable in this regard, with performance works, and experimental film work such as her 1964-1967 *Autobiographical Trilogy* beginning with *Fuses* (in which she filmed herself and her lover in bed), in which she controlled her own image and erotic representations. Feminist critics have been divided over such work because it can be so easily looked at pornographically. See also in this regard, Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Table* 1970. See Gillespie (1988) for a discussion of this work in relation to its feminist claims. See Lippard (1976) for a survey of attempts to reclaim the body in the early seventies' feminist art.

These once fierce binarisms that concerned North American, European, and Australian avant-garde filmmakers in the 1960s and 1970s, "have now become choices and tactics" (Mellancamp, 1995: 173). Mellancamp argues that the formal experiments of the early avant-garde were "strictly rational", separated from life, affect, and emotion. "Effect (not affect) existed in the form, and it was cool, intellectual, distanced, single minded" (174). She describes a new avantgarde of the 1980s and 1990s, "interested neither in ontology nor in first principles", focused on works of memory, real and imagined, subjective histories, focused on relations (174-5).

The reinvigorated avantgarde developed new approaches and visual languages, new kinds of perceptual enactments, and new possibilities for film meaning. The viewing of experimental film was largely restricted to film festivals, and arthouse or university circuits.[66] Alternative, innovative approaches of art-based practice (see Michelson, Carroll & Krauss, 1973, Mulvey, 1978, Penley, 1984, de Lauretis, 1987) though have become increasingly visible in mainstream film and television production, whether along the lines of methods such as montage, pastiche and appropriation, or style and concept.[67] Such 'influences' may function as sign (for identity, culture, cult, style, mood, age) or as novelty and attention getting strategies. While, as de Lauretis observed mainstream representations of women, and filmic and pictorial structures are far more varied today, radical representation and stylist play now sit alongside the most blatant objectifications and endorsements of women's sexual servitude.[68] Within radical art practice, forms and structures are always being invented, transferred and recycled in ways that destabilize meaning and produce transformations of some kind, but what survives of this within the

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[66] This is changing. In Melbourne for instance, ACMI, the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, located centrally near the city's main railway station, and with well publicized innovative programming, is bringing experimental work to a much wider public.

[67] Avant-garde non-narrative forms have greatly influenced television advertising and youth music formats such as MTV's montage-style programmes (Kaplan, 1987). Popular film structure often departs from classical Hollywood formats. Endings which refuse closure, alternative stories and outcomes, subjective and anti-realist techniques, refusal of the seamless illusion, radical representations of space and time, and the puncturing of the experiential illusion through some deconstructive move, once only visible through those independent productions which moved into the industry circuit, are all now within the repertoire of popular. Even the autobiography, with its possibilities for displacement of Oedipal structures, exploring subjectivity and thus problematizing position/authorship, view, memory, rationality, coherence and the very notion of the personal, and with its capacity for incorporating its own making process, has begun to move from the avantgarde to popular realms.

[68] Teresa de Lauretis, embracing the notion of difference among and within women, argued that films addressing a broad variety of women as spectators were indeed being produced in 1985. She called for feminist theory to shift its focus from codes of power and 'presence', to engage not just in analysis or even in experimentation in the transformation of vision, but in "the redefinition of aesthetic and formal knowledges" (de Lauretis, 1984: 131).

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popular context? Dada's anarchistic use of text and image may still translate as countermove, protest, or anarchy, but what happens when the aim of the viewing is other than political confrontation? Dada shock tactics once implemented as social protest, now function as signs of a fashionable rebel neopunk; desires are utilized, as Jameson (1991) argues in relation to notions of difference, to advertise a commodified life-style.

Fifteen years after Mulvey's exposition of the gaze much theory of the visual remained tied to sexuality. Patricia Mellancamp summarizes:

"In the late 1980s "sexual difference" divided and multiplied. Feminism's oversights were pointed out. Differences multiplied - into race, class, ethnicity, age - and split off from sexuality. Sexual difference became sexuality, which multiplied into bisexuality, transsexuality, lesbian and gay sexuality. Differences and sexuality verged on identity. The focus was still on the body and sexual desire" (Mellancamp, 1995: 184).

Mulvey's model of spectatorship, revised toward the possibility of more flexible positioning, still has validity in analysis of this mainstream media images. Info-entertainment for instance, or computer games, centered on the pursuit of vicarious experience, often exploits most formulaic renderings of the operations of the gaze. Not only are there powerful vested interests in keeping these structures going, but these same codes are also implicated in objective notions of reality. That this sexual emphasis might be a Eurocentric concern, or framed as such, is still less evident. Analysis or acknowledgement of the way the sexual dominates the subject in theory tends to be rare despite Foucault's (1978) recognition of sexual talk as a modern compulsion.[69] Judith Mayne observes that "A certain version of the scenario of sexual difference emerges again and again in film theory as obsessive structure and point of return, and it is not always clear when the obsession and return are an effect of the cinema or of the theorist" (Mayne, 1995: 170).

Mulvey's original exposition of the gaze has been developed to examine what takes place for viewers who are neither heterosexual, and other than white or European/American. Rhona Berenstein notes that this third category of spectatorship normally evokes a "conception of cinema as a phantasy terrain or discursive site

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[69] See Williams (1990, 1995) who discusses this compulsion in relation to gendered pleasures, cultured responsiveness, and pornographic films.

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upon which spectators access shifting subject positions" (Berenstein, 1995: 232).
Such a conception though argues away the need for any politics of representation in
that it suggests a creative role-playing space beyond structures of interpellation,
interpretative manoeuvres, psychological investments, fetishization, or Orientalist
practices, that is, beyond effects on subjectivity or embodiment.

Challenging the Dominant View

Meaning might be immensely unstable, but particular readings or associative
networks can dominate in the moment of what is being celebrated as the global
cultural economy. Describing how films create meaning, Trinh T. Minh-ha calls
attention to some of the tensions operating between dominant forces and individual
identity:

> *"Hegemony is most difficult to deal with because it does not spare any of us.*
> *Hegemony is established to the extent that the world view of the rulers is also the*
> *world view of the ruled. It calls attention to the routine structures of everyday*
> *thought, down to common sense itself. In dealing with hegemony, we are not only*
> *challenging the dominance of Western cultures, but also their identities as*
> *unified cultures. In other words, we call attention to the fact that there is a Third*
> *World in every First World and vice-versa. The master is made to recognize that*
> *his culture is neither homogeneous nor monolithic, that he is just an other among*
> *others"* (Trinh, 1991: 148, italics in the original)

In challenging the notion of a unified Western culture, Trinh's own position is a
differentiated one in that she takes a perspective which is both Asian and Western.
Further she is both an academic and, an activist/filmmaker focusing on documentary
film, a practitioner within the visual who sees a responsible production as that which
"shows, on one hand, a political commitment and an ideological lucidity, and is on
the other hand interrogative by nature, instead of being merely prescriptive" (149).
Trinh's own filmmaking practice, which melds ethnographic film with a politically
focused avant-garde refusal of the gaze, is not that of mainstream film, but is located
in more rarified circuits attuned to difference. Her strategic denial of a distinct West
is one which is crucial to her arguments, nevertheless any "master", even if able to
acknowledge his otherness in his own culture, is unlikely to share Trinh's views or
even want to if it meant relinquishing a position related to privilege and power. All
the same, the very idea of a unified "master" consciousness is highly problematic if

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the complex processes and objectives of First world image makers are taken into account, and where, as typified by Benneton & Coke style advertising, multicultural difference is played out as an effective market strategy.

Individual decision making may be obscured in transnational industries, but decisions all along the line are made by individuals whether acting independently, in accord, or, meeting by meeting. The exercise of dominance depends on 'masters' maintaining particular views *on* others, circulating those views in ways that are engaging and convincing, or blocking other views. If the illusion of the impenetrability effected by the anonymous corporate collective is to be undone, and if more ethical commercial practices are ever to be realized, it is important that we understand as much as possible who selects, who sets policy and develops strategies - *who* gets to exercise power. It is crucial that individual responsibility and decision-making does not get lost in some abstracting of global forces.

Homi Bhabha, advocating Bakhtin's space of hybridity to enable new negotiated sites contradicting "polarities between knowledge and its subjects" (Bhabha, 1989: 118), argues that the very process or "force" of ambivalence toward portrayal is productive of otherness; it "gives the colonial stereotype its currency: ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjectures; informs its strategies of individuation and marginalization; produces that effect of probabilistic truth and predictability which, for the stereotype, must always be in excess of what can be empirically proved or logically construed" (Bhabha, 1983: 18).

Further, he warns that this is not resolved by the mere portrayal of difference: "The difference of other cultures is other than the excess of signification or the trajectory of desire. These are theoretical strategies that are necessary to combat 'ethnocentricism' but they cannot, of themselves, unreconstructed, represent that otherness" (22).

Mayne (1993) calls for a re-valuation of textual analysis, and raises the possibility that gaze models which are tied to an account of re-enactments of the crises of male Oedipal identity and spectorial desire, (and even the feminization and queerings of those models) may not be particularly relevant to psychic experiences of class, race, and culture. She suggests that there can no assumption of direct identification with one's own social status or relations or cultural, racial group, nor is cinema

necessarily fixed in its ideological address.[70] Despite Mayne's concerns, the identification of phallocentric subjectifications in terms of textual construction remains a prime method in visual analysis, since male centered codes of representation are still so common that it is the view that all others have to renegotiate, including those males who do not comfortably or willingly enact dominance.[71] Whether 'shifting positions' or 'reading against the grain', the status quo, for the moment at any rate, remains intact, and as such continues to have a significant role ideologically and historically.[72] As Mayne herself observes, one's identity is not easily given away; and heterogeneity is not necessarily contestatory. Bhabha himself argues that it is only possible to displace the cruel fixity of the stereotype and its wide range of psychic functions "by engaging with its *effectivity*, with the repertoire of positions of power and resistance, domination and dependence that constructs the colonial power" (Bhabha, 1983: 22).

Meanwhile Ella Dreyfus' photographic projects point to a way that embraces the gaze, while humanizing her subjects.[73] Rather than obstruct or defuse the gaze, she employs it directly and unflinchingly to show that objectivity is normally maintained through a play of signs, and, that in the look there may also be connection, empathy, feeling, and sensibility (fig. 108). Lingis observes

"Skin is not hide nor covering, camouflage, uniform, adornment. It is a surface of exposure, zone of susceptibility, of vulnerability, of pain and abuse. In the skin

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[70] Mayne observes that 'apparatus' and 'institution' theory's displacing of character identification as the central dynamic in spectatorship came just before enormous expansions in independent film and video took place. Since cinema is an industry specifically catering for a diversity of audiences, and since diversity itself has become a marketing ploy, she advocates renewed consideration of ideological influence and of the necessity of holding homogenizing and heterogeneous representations in tension. She argues that productive theoretical directions lie in the gaps that occur between the viewer's actual response and a film's address - particularly in those assumptions of an ideal viewer and the film's textual effectiveness.

[71] The analysis of the male gaze is as relevant to still images as other forms of moving images. In still images various structures and conventions used to give the effect of view and relation and feeling.

[72] Berenstein makes a suggestive comment in relation to the implications of a more conscious renegotiation of role and identification: "...from a personal perspective, one of the draws of evaluating classic horror film is to address the imputed spectatorship in a genre that may do little to unhinge the workings of patriarchy outside the theatre but plays havoc with conventional identifications and roles behind closed doors" (Berenstein, 1995: 233). Transformative possibilities may still lie in the expression of such tensions.

[73] Some of her projects have carried out within the healthcare system in Sydney. See Oppermann (1997) for a description of this. Other projects include *Pregnancy Series* 1992, and *Transman* 2001, a dignified documentation of the stages of trans-sex surgery, from woman to man. She is quoted as saying that she has been particularly influenced by Mapplethorpe's photographs, and that her work is a collaborative venture with her models. Rather than stylize the figure, and skin surface as Mapplethorpe would do though, Dreyfus focuses on details and textures that convey the succession of time, and the fraility of being. She says that while many of her subjects in the *Age and Consent* project initially viewed their bodies with disgust, that taking part in the project "seems to have had considerable success in overriding this reaction" Goodall, (2002: 60).

inscribed with its own wrinkles, one does not read the signs of nothingness but the vulnerability of what is other" (Lingis, 1989: 136).

Acting on the Image

In Rey Chow's writing on New Wave cinema (1995) it is possible to see the conventional paradigms regarding the business of 'who looks at who' developing a vast range of variables that problematize particular aspects of interpretation and objectivity.[74] In seeking to theorize the position of the ethnic spectator observing filmic constructions of ancient or rural China as 'other', Chow explores visual representation of the gendered body beyond Western demarcations and cinematic practices, but her highly reflexive work also points to the limits of image analysis.

In the films of Zhang Yimou, for instance, presented both in China and internationally as a cinema of historical documentation, Chow finds a nostalgic construction, a new modernist ethnography presenting a mythologized 'China', where portrayals of women are implicated in a *"self-exoticization* through the tactics of visuality" (Chow, 1995: 146).[75] Looking at *Red Sorghum*, 1988; *Judou*, 1990; *Raise the Red Lantern*, 1990, which ostensibly deal with the sexual oppression of women, she argues that they show a "fetishization of women" (148), and specifically, a constitution of women as "a kind of wronged, maligned, exploited *noble savage* whose innocence must be redeemed" (146). In these films, described by Chow as "tough" and "masculinist", women are both nature (as such, indicative of a form of exile) and culture (as an embodiment of oppression, exchange and commodification), and located "always in places where primitive passions are cathected" (44).

Though arguing against the presumption that the power play involved in the gaze structure is always that of the male, and the outcome always one of pleasure, Chow argues that Zhang's films rely on enacting sexuality and violence through the

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[74] As with many of those who now work and live across cultures, Chow's position encompasses perspectives generally differentiated as Asian, Western, and feminist.

[75] Chow says that while many of the cultural practices portrayed in Zhang's "gigantic" and, "spectacular" films are "excessive and absurd" fictions of his own invention, they nevertheless are important as "collective, hallucinatory" signifiers, markers of a past, an ethnic, feudal China, and are "in effect a culture's belated fascination with its own datedness, its own alterity" (Chow, 1995: 145). Chow links Zhang's kind of nostalgia with Paul Virillo's concept of "a new aboriginality", in this case, a vision of shared roots constructed in order to gratify the desire for some eternal homeland, a hegemonic ordering of the visual directed toward shaping and controlling a society experiencing "demographic anarchy".

female.[76] This he does by reworking the traditionally feminine genre of melodrama within the seduction of richly coloured glossy, visual surfaces. Chow explains that Zhang's films are seen by some critics, and by the Chinese government, as empty shallow displays for melodramatic exhibitions of feeling - a critical attitude which, she argues, is also aligned in their preference for depth and virtue, with the desire for concreteness, "a *somethingness* in representation" (154). She observes that in Chinese literature and culture oppositions of 'fullness' or 'concreteness' (shi) are opposed to 'emptiness' (xu) and commonly used "as criteria for judging virtues of aesthetic representation", thus constituting a significant formation of cultural values. *Shi* is associated with authenticity, worth, content, history, maleness, and Chinese, while the largely pejorative *xu* invokes the fake, worthlessness, form, fiction, femaleness, and Western. Yet Chow argues that to celebrate Zhang's films as Dionysian, passionate, energetic, a return to the forces of nature, intense, carnivalesque, and even ecstatic, as, she notes, many, and mostly male, critics do, still upholds the premise that the value of cultural production resides in its "somethingness", which is, says Chow, mainly 'primitivism'.

Although such films appear conventionally structured by the object-subject relations of the male gaze, Chow argues that that this intellectual type of analysis cannot be sustained in relation to its structures of looking and feeling, and finally needs to be recognized as another form of ideology.[77] Zhang's films, she contends, are ultimately about exhibition as the power of confrontation, rather than the voyeuristic aspect of the gaze. When a sobbing girl turns and defiantly exposes her body to a peeping tom, her bruised body reveals a cruel patriarchal violence rather than any "visual pleasure". Instead of the controlling male gaze, Chow discovers a *defiance* of power and of surveillance, indeed, a double machine of surveillance, that of the Chinese state and the West's Orientalist gaze.[78] Instead of Zhang's camera/eye

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[76] Chow stresses that to always presume the gaze is male gaze is to demonstrate ideological habit rather than visual analysis. She also warns that while Zhang's films appear to demonstrate Laura Mulvey's "incisive observation of what in many ways is still the predominant heterosexual problematic" in that they reflect "the politics of the polarization of male gaze versus female body." (Chow, 1995: 152), the casting of such observations as *moral criticism* only risks fuelling antifeminist conservatism. See Chakravarty (2003) who queries Chow's emphasis on the sexual gaze, pointing out that Zhang's handling of erotic scenes is circumspect and prudish and provides an alternative discussion of the erotics of Zhang's films in relation to a thematic of the dimunition of sexual passion, the interplay of male prohibition and female transgression.

[77] For further accounts of variance in film structure and an absence of the controlling male gaze in Asian cinema see Berry (1985), Farquhar (1992), Ghosh, 1992), and Hanan (1992).

[78] In another instance a woman dies of 'exposure' (to the public gaze as well as the cold) rather than apologize/submit to her mistress. And in *Raise the Red Lantern* the view is a mirrored one with the gaze

functioning as an assertion of authoritarian power, it becomes, says Chow, an occasion for self-display, and a subversive way of engaging with political oppressions.

Chow's examination of Zhang's films takes place within the context of Roland Barthes' endeavours to systemize ideological analysis through semiotics, and she addresses the problem of "the age-old tendency, among intellectuals in particular, to distrust surface phenomena".[79] She says that "As a result, whatever is glossy, beautiful, or glamorous always takes on the status of the suspect" (164). It is, she says, this equating of ideology with illusion, or "surface phenomena" that which it seems " prevents us from seeing or knowing the truth; and criticism's task it is believed, lies in unveiling that illusion" (ibid.).

Chow also shows that in a world already shaped by Western visual technologies, the possibility of 'innocent', 'authentic' or 'ethnic' representations is unlikely. Indeed her writing reinstates the problematics of perception, position and meaning, and reinvigorates argument at the level of content, image, and effect. Indeed, she suggests that often critical perceptions are determined by habituated expectations engendered by ideological expectations, in other words, that theoretical assumptions are read *into* the image. Inevitably Chow too reads into the image, and this, although untenable where the process is one of revealing secreted truths or giving a 'correct' reading, is an important aspect in the process of dialogue with something or someone - and which differs from reflection on something or someone. The difference resides within connectivity, engagement, and an ability perhaps to be *with* the text.[80]

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of the abstract shadowy patriarch clearly opposed to that of the concubine enacting a female subjectivity though literally imprisoned by male desire and power.

[79] Chow reminds us that Barthes himself realized that his stand on unmasking ideology was untenable, that all elements of his analysis were subject to change, since ideology itself is subject to the processes of change. What he also understood was that as a consumer he faced either incorporation into those ideologies, or alienation from his own society in remaining the distant critic.

[80] While problematizing penetrating analysis, Chow does not attempt to inscribe her observing self. In many ways Chow's own exposition of Zhang's films appears to be a conventional 'unveiling of truth' despite her various gestures towards an understanding of all truths as contingent on position, since her claim is that of an interpretation more valid than previous claims. Nevertheless her work is theoretically reflexive and, as she herself points out, it breaks with traditional Chinese aesthetic criticism.

arthes' understanding of the limitations of languaged analysis and the ever-evasive properties of reality are evident from his concluding words to *Mythologies* and are worth requoting here:

> "The fact that we cannot manage to achieve more than an unstable grasp of reality doubtless gives the measure of our present alienation: we constantly drift between object and its demystification, powerless to render its wholeness. For if we penetrate the object, we liberate it but we destroy it; and if we acknowledge its full weight, we respect it, but we restore it to a state which is still mystified" (Barthes, 1973/1957: 159).

Rather than penetrating the object or mastering it, Chow's writing, a reflective consideration of Zhang's visual-aural narration, produces new contexts and expectations that influence the way films are experienced,[81] It may be that Zhang's films are complicitous with the Orientalist gaze and the desires of his First World audiences in that he is inescapably directed by the need to ensure the popularity of his films. When looking at Zhang's work as commercial production, his films become a hall of mirrors, their interplay of surface reflections intertwining subjectivities and projections in tension with expectation, pleasure, history and interpretation, Chow's included.

In the following chapter, the patriarchal gaze is located in certain kinds of body representation dominant in Western perceptual practice that have been taken up by Chinese imagemakers, and viewers. This chapter particularly looks at the way the body of woman operates as a particular focus in staged enactments of desire within processes of modernization taking place in developing countries, and some of the investments at stake in the massive commercialization of that body.

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[81] Chow's writing no doubt has a small academic readership when compared to the reach of Berger's *Ways of Seeing* for instance, but it still has a ripple-effect, influencing other academics, students, critics, reviewers, and ultimately viewers.
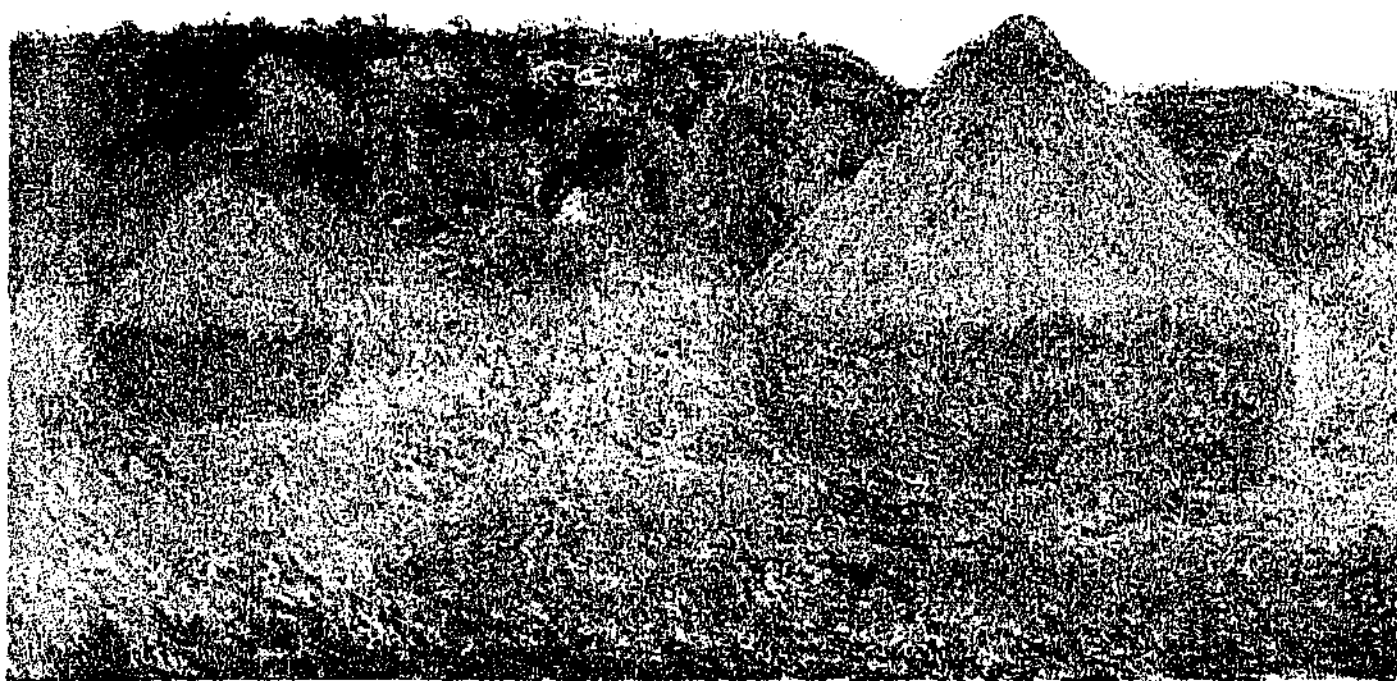
89. Édouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863

Fig. 89

90. top:
Reworking of Édouard Manet's *Olympia*, 1863

91. middle:
Titian, *Venus of Urbino*, 1538

92. bottom:
Paul Cezanne, *A Modern Olympia*, 1873

Figs. 90-92

93. top: Claude Monet. *Two Haystacks*, 1981

94. left: Vincent Van Gogh. *Cornfield*

95. middle right: Henri Edmond Cross.
    Les Lies d'Or
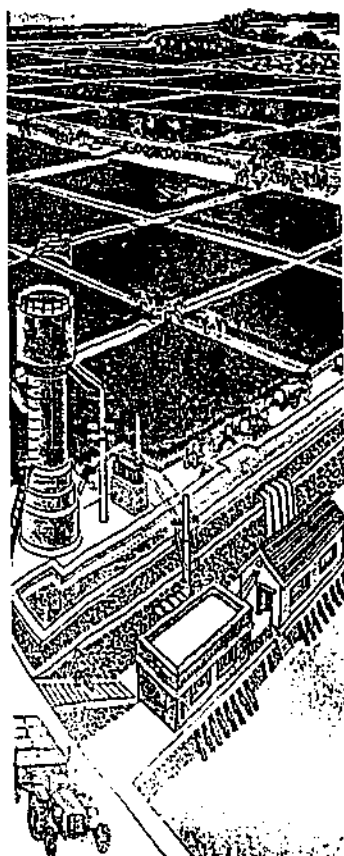
96. bottom: Georges Seurat. *Cornfield*, c1885

Figs. 93-96

97. Zhan, Jianjun, *Five Heroes of Mount Langya*, 1959

98. Tang Xiaohe and Cheng Li, *Follow Closely Our Great Leader Chairman Mao, Ride the Wind, Cleave the Waves, Fearlessly Forge Ahead*, 1972

Figs. 97-98

当代愚公绘新图 当代愚公绘新图 只有社会主义才能救中国
只有社会主义才能发展中国

99. top left: Prints made during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976): *Contemporary Yu Gongs draw a new picture*, 1974

100. top right: Poster: *Only socialism can save China, only socialism can develop China*, 1989

101. bottom: Uncaptioned image accompanying news article, Lague, David, 'The long, sad march', *The Melbourne Age*, 31/1/2000, p. 15.

Figs. 99-101

102. right: double page spread from Chinese publication, *Pictorial Weekly*, September, 1933
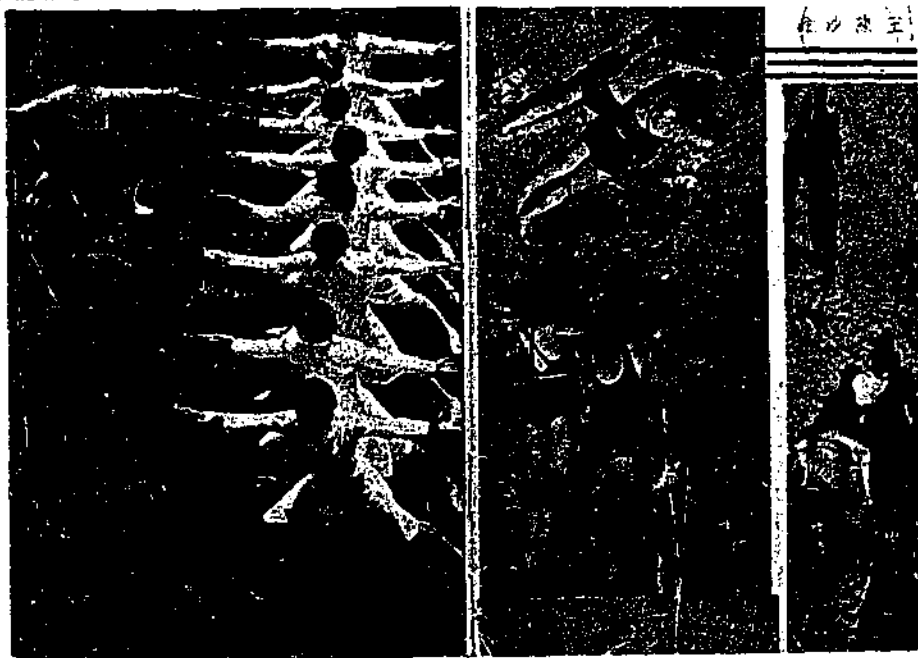
103. bottom: Chinese photomontage, artist unknown, 1936
Source: Minick & Ping (1990)

Figs. 102-103

念紀影合生師體全園兒幼號七司公拖一市陽 日十二月三年七九九

104. Zhuang Hui, detail from *The Staff and Children of the No. 7 Kindergarten of Yituo Company, Luoyang, 20 March, 1997*. 18.5 x 67.5 cm

105. Zhuang Hui, detail from *The Student Body and the Faculty of Bei Ye Middle School, Xingan county, Henan Province, 20th October, 1999*. 18.5 x 105.9 cm

Figs. 104-105

106. Man Ray, untitled works, 1933

Fig. 106

107. Yasumasa Morimura's *composition Portrait (Futago)*, 1988

Fig. 107

108. Ella Dreyfus, *Age and Consent*, black & white photograph, 1999

Fig. 108

Chapter 5

Adopting Illusion

In his history of the body image in Western consumer culture, Ewen observes that "We are constantly addressed by alluring images; they speak the universal language of the eye. Each is the product of deliberate creation. Each has been selected for its particular appeal, its particular purpose. Each offers a point of view. Yet as we look, we rarely reflect upon what Kenneth Burke called a "rhetoric of motives." We are educated, from infancy, to *look*, we are not encouraged to see and interpret simultaneously. Our eyes imbibe images, with little critical resistance, as if they offer an ordained glimpse of some distant, yet accessible *reality*" (Ewen, 1988: 156). Illusions are only one sphere of the visual and its engagements, but they are particularly powerful. Even under less than optimum conditions for viewing, they are experienced to some degree as if their constructed events, spaces, or objects exist, even when we know that what we are looking at is not real (Damasio, 1995; Morse, 1998). The degree of truth-value subscribed to analogue images, and the supposedly undoctored, factual 'documentary' image or illusionist film, can be absolute.[1] This experience fuels a commonplace perpetuation of the Cartesian divide, with eyes, designated as organs of the body, persuaded, deceived, and affected.

Jonathan Crary (1984) has argued that the representational system that was symbolized by the camera obscura and Cartesian representation dissolved once the idea of subjective perception, the idea of the body's "visionary" capacity for producing its own kind of knowledge, was accepted. I would argue that this is still a specialized kind of knowledge and does not necessarily mitigate effect, and, in

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[1] This effect depends on their effacement of the artifice and effort involved in depicting a 'transparent' unmediated view of a world, real or imagined. With digital processing of images now the professional and industrialized norm, the constructed nature of all images is more 'known', but no more *apparent* as contrivance than in the past.

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accord with Linda Williams (1995), that decorporealized Cartesian representation, with its staging of the omnipotent controlling gaze, remains a rival system. And further, that even if the idea of subjective perception were to be broadly accepted, the objective image remains a referential marker for positivist concerns, performing that function in tension with other kinds of imaging.

To what extent this sense of the invisibility of the image *as image*, and its relation to reality, affects viewers, even resistant viewers, and what this might mean, remains an open question.[2] Ethnographic audience studies based on interviews, reveal critical attitudes, resistance, transgressive pleasures, and readings against the text, but such studies rarely compare these critical statements with specific behaviours or engagements.[3] Critical awareness is not of itself evidence of resistance, only of a certain consciousness, with the reflective context of the interviews themselves inviting certain types of responses, and 'distanced' viewing, which by definition, is that which circumvents or splits off from affectivity. Apart from the difficulties viewers might have even explaining or articulating all aspects or particular elements of their media engagement, processes of mediation may only become conscious at the point of contradiction or conflict, that is, when the need to resolve some cognitive tension becomes imperative. What happens though when the form or the content of the message complements the spectator's beliefs and aspirations? And what might operate below the threshold of awareness? Certain distancing or disassembling behaviours toward the media marks the culturally savvy, but effects may still affect in various ways.[4]

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[2] Sociological empirical audience research with its emphasis on media use and gratifications might illuminate some issues here, but, as Ang (1996) points out, the field tends toward positivist relations. It often seems to collude with the need of power bases to administer the public, and with the desire of the consumer/media industry to fine tune their appeals and to create/target an audience. In contrast, cultural studies positions, starting with Morley's (1980) refutation of the 'subject determined by the text', emphasize the difficulty of determining precise causal relations between text and possible effects on viewers as well as different modes of textual approach, (Brunsdon, 1986) and the difficulty of delineating 'the text' in the postmodern environment (Ang, 1996). Ang argues that the way out of this disciplinary divide between the knowable and the unknowable is a close examination of both textual and social interactions - but she also insists that a convergence of positivist Communications with the politically focused cultural studies positions is untenable.

[3] Examples of interview-based studies of media viewing include Radway, 1984, Ang, 1989, Buckingham, 1993. Radway's study of the Smithton women though was correlated against readership and sales statistics. Contemporary anthropological research is more likely to study relations between verbal response, material culture and behaviour before drawing conclusions. For examples of a more triangulate-kind of methodology in anthropology see Forge (1965), O'Hanlon (1995).

[4] The skilled and obsessive game of 'spot the flaw' is one such example of resistance to the effect of illusion. See Septrup (1986) also for a description of this resistant behaviour in television viewers which takes the form of a reactive unending stream of cynical commentary. However, despite audience awareness of the ploys of advertising and the media's marketing agendas, the viewers still watch; the media still fascinates; products are still consumed; viewers continue to aspire to lifestyles that are media determined. Familiarity may help develop an awareness of media rhetoric, bu. in advertising it also

Issues of persuasion and influence are likely to remain both complex and contentious, but what is certain, is that what meets the eye goes beyond conscious critical determination. It is even possible to identify a history of discursive engagement with imagery's tease, a testing of its affectivity and its play with perception, intertwined with the fascination for illusion. Ancient discourses on the fascination and pleasures of effect can be found within Pliny's retelling of ancient Greek anecdotes about painted illusions that fooled not only animals but also humans, and can be seen in perceptual play of Roman art, as with the mosaic geometric illusions, three-dimensional illusionist mural painting, and realist funerary portraiture.[5]

This also has counterparts in China, with Sherman Lee (1975) recounting the legend of the most famous eighth century figure painter, Wu Tao-tzu who, on finishing his last wall painting, opened what was a painted illusionary door, walked in, and disappeared, leaving behind him a blank wall.[6] In later European art, the appetite for such "magical impact" (Lee, 1975: 265) is reflected in Giotto's revival Greco-Roman illusionist techniques within his c14th religious narrative frescoes, (fig. 109) and Masaccio's play with the contradictions of perspective in his painting *La Trinata* c1427 (fig. 110).[7] This growing compendium of optical tricks and devices

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works towards sales success by registering the product no matter what the context, and, as structuralists have shown, familiarity offers its own kind of pleasure with some things endlessly fascinating.

[5] The Roman historian Pliny, writing in the first century A.D. about what Greek art produced from 1400 BC up to the first century BC, points to some of the differences between the interests and intentions of artists, discussions or representations of art by sophisticated commentators, and popular interest. Artists' interests, assembled by Pliny from their various writings and treatises, focus on technical and stylistic concerns, ranging from tonal rendering and anatomical observation, to ways in which they might represent character and emotion. Critics and commentators on art in ancient Greece produced descriptive writing, identifying the different qualities found in artworks. They looked at art for inspiration, for its renditions of noble virtues, or its development of new standards of beauty, or new levels of spiritual awareness. Popular criticism, usually directed toward mimetic or naturalistic effects, that is, how persuasive the visual illusion, can be seen in various anecdotes about statuary coming to life, or animals fooled into trying to mate with images. In these populist discourses on art, the most convincing illusion is that which fools another artist, as in the story of two rival artists, Parrhasios and Zeuxis. These artists challenge each other to produce the better illusion. When Zeuxis reveals his painting, birds flew down and pecked at painted grapes in the scene, but when invited to pull the curtain aside on Parrhasios' painting, Zeuxis found that he himself had been duped for the curtain itself was the painting. Another anecdote tells of Zeuxis' irritated response to the birds pecking his painted grapes, grapes that were being carried by a boy. "I have painted the grapes better than the boy, for if I had rendered him perfectly, the birds would have been afraid" (*Pliny's Natural History*, vol 35 p. 61, cited in Pollitt, 1965).

[6] Wu Tao-tzu (d. 792 A.D.), whose work is only known from copies, is considered within Chinese scholarship and popular mythology as the greatest figurative painter, and perhaps the greatest Chinese painter generally, and is said to have introduced what Lee (1975) describes as Chinese painting's most unrealistic but central aspect, calligraphic brushwork.

[7] This work, *The Holy Trinity, the Virgin, St. John and Donors*, painted on the wall of Sta Maria Novella in Florence ca.1427, was one of the first to make use of Brunelleschi's mathematical laws of perspective. Indeed, it exploits the combination of three dimensional effect on a two-dimensional surface by making God the Father appear to be standing in the foreground behind his crucified son while

culminated in the *trompe l'oeil* and anamorphic paintings from the c16th onwards, and in visual devices such as c17th perspective cabinets, puzzles, optical toys, and magic lantern devices, that prefigure the cinema. Visual conundrums and the ambiguity of perspective effects are the subject of Hogarth's 1754 engraving *False Perspective* and Escher's c20th explorations of perspective structures, and his reversals of figure and ground [8] All kinds of kinetic toys, kaleidoscopes, stereoscopes, and other visual animations, entertainments, and illusions, predating cinematic technology, point to an obsessive exercising and trialing of the conditions for perceptual persuasion.[9]

Digital production and its capacity for immersive virtuality, furthers this hallucinatory game (Morse, 1998). The development of multidimensional sensory screens and environments will no doubt create impossible but seductive worlds, their spaces and experiences far removed from the early crude pixilated cartoon-based game images that relied on fast movement and change for spectator engagement. Yet for all of this pursuit of illusion, the truly persuasive visual image may well, as Gombrich argued, require the play of absences or other factors beyond any illusion of the seen real.[10] Particular psychic or status-laden appeals, and particular conditions of reception, so effective in advertising, are also likely to be implicated in spectator involvement.[11]

A convincing illusion may still involve some surrender to the image and the repression of any observable or known artifice, but *any* level of engagement may facilitate shifts or changes from one body-feeling-mind state to another (Damasio,

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at the same time standing some twelve metres away at the back of the painted vaulted space. The figure's hands rest on the cross, while the feet are firmly placed on a ledge on the back wall. .

[8] See Werner Nekes' 1985 film *Film Before Film* for a vast compendium of pre-cinematic and illusionist images and objects. See Crary (1990) for a critical discussion of such objects in relation to observer technologies and implications for notions of vision, visualities, and modernity. See Gombrich (1968/60) particularly the chapter 'Ambiguities of the Third Dimension' for an overview of such images. See Teuber (1974) for a comprehensive discussion of the perceptual operations and visual illusions involved in Escher's work.

[9] Today this interest shows up in Imax images, 3D cinema experiences, 3D card gimmicks of all kinds, magic 3D images (where the hidden image only appears when the eyes are concentrated on a short bifocal viewing length), holographs, kinetic-perceptual arcade games, and sensory computer-helmet-glove engagements.

[10] Gombrich argued that what he earlier terms "Pygmalion's power" (Gombrich, 1968/1960: 87), that is the illusion of life, needs to be considered beyond aesthetics, or 'evocative' illusions or Renaissance-style picturing (1963: 10).

[11] The atmospheric painterly tradition (Leonardo do Vinci, Rembrandt, Claude Lorraine) that worked on suggestion engaged the spectator's capacity to complete the picture or add the details (Gombrich 1968/1960). This approach was translated in the c19th into the photographic practice of the picturesque, suited to the softer image of the callotype and which stands in contrast to the exactitudes of the daguerreotype image.

1995). Levels or degrees of affectivity, and kinds of engagement, warrant ongoing investigation. Excitatory presentations of violence often combined with sexual imaging and tension-rousing-resolving narratives continue to be a matter of public concern and debate, world-wide. Powerful stimulation, whether low tech or the high-tech hyper-illusions, inserts a privileged illusion of the body itself, that is, the sensation of the observer-body as if a real presence within the action. Reinforcing what are sometimes seen as literalist or conservative concerns over representation, it is probable that any enactment of the imaginary, let alone visceral stimulation (Williams, 1995) and extreme levels of involvement, facilitate the incorporation of the image into the viewer's own visionary processes.[12] If physical and emotional enactments can have a real impact on the body (Damasio, 1995), the idea that the imaginary and the real are separate in terms of psychic-bodily effect requires a rethink. In other words, even if the conscious mind with its capacity for ignoring or underestimating the effects of feeling, experience, and bodily states, chooses to believe that imagery has no real effect, or the imaginary is purely a psychoanalytic realm, the experience is still embodied. Repetition reinforces this incorporealization.

Instead of seeing the body as that which may be seduced, and as much as the conscious mind, may like to think of itself as autonomous, critical, and in control of body and behaviour, resistance may take place unconsciously. Initially it may register bodily as emotional dissonance or that change known as feeling (Damasio, 1995), even problematizing habituation to some degree. 'Disturbed feelings' are of course the motivation for engaging in other experiences that restore 'balance' or equilibrium, (or joy, peace of mind, reengagement with reality/ normality/ people/ nature/ the everyday).

This chapter explores relations of looking and imagery and effect. The insistence on a 'natural' imaging of a 'natural' seeing, originating from a 'neutral' positioning, is considered in relation to performative engagements and what Linda Williams calls "haptic immediacies" (Williams, 1995: 11). It specifically looks at some of the ways Western imagings of women in advertising and pornography have been incorporated into the textual experience of the Asian viewer. Mapping some of the shifts occurring in response to modernism, this chapter shows how traditional Chinese body imaging practices evolved into the new practices observable in c20th popular Chinese images, specifically those of *yuefenpai*, Chinese New Year Calendars.

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[12] See Crary, (1990) for a comprehensive account of the interactivity of optical technologies with seeing processes conceived as enculturated and technologized.

Because of the tendency for artists to adhere to style, using a given but contingent set of protocols for visual representation, it allows us to see some of the convergences, mediations, and transformations at work. Such images act as visible records of values retained, and of new motivations and visions being forged. This exploration of the gradual adoption of Western illusionism is followed by a consideration of representational sites that feature the nude female body, particularly the popular, acceptable face of the pornographic industry, intrinsically associated with the modern West and the construction of the male gaze. This imaging tradition is then compared to the broad practices of body imaging and enactments in contemporary art, as a means of establishing some of the differences between imaging as a circumscribed ritual of reassurance, and imaging as a diverse, propositional and open-ended practice.

Different Ideals

The way the body is depicted can be located in cultural learning and experience (Gombrich, 1968/1960). But what happens when body images are foreign imports? An image always has a context; it never exists in isolation. Although a body image may be discussed as if it is a 'free-floating signifier' (Baudrillard, 1983b), stripped of its original meaning or aura (Benjamin 1977b/1936), or an entity subject to the viewer (Barthes, 1984), it will evoke a network of associations, whether intentionally designated by the producer, or otherwise. Though little original or auratic presence, authenticity or function may remain in this syncretic formation of meaning – particularly when an image is stripped of its background, literally - even if nothing else is visible but 'body' - the picture will still be made meaningful in relation to *some* discursive and institutional context, existent or presumed.

When old meanings are re-invested in *new kinds* of images, some transformation of meaning is inevitable in that the technology and usage define the meaning and the experience. Images produced in relation to the growing influence of the West in the early c20th offer a fertile field for observing the changes associated with modernism and the interests at stake in taking up Western ways of imaging. It cannot be assumed that the dominant tradition of Western perspective illusion has been seen by non-Western cultures as offering a better image. The Western perceptual image was developed as a means of evoking the experience of being a spectator looking at some thing or place; its staging derives from the analysis and objectification of visual experience; and evidences a psychology of viewer-centeredness. This kind of geometricized occultation, with mathematical grids underlying its converging fields

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is an ideal system of conceiving the world in terms of material form and spatial relations, and, along with its technologies, this way of visualizing the world has been adopted widely.[13] Its contemporary importation into non-Western cultures would appear to be facilitated by its claim to objectivity, or its perceived affiliation with Western progress and modernization, as much as its way of picturing.[14] In initial exposures to Western images, as in China from the c16th onwards, Western images were found wanting not so much in terms of portrayals of the world, as in modes of portrayal, and aesthetic aspects.

The *strangeness* of Western images is often found in anecdotes regarding first sightings as much as admiration. Such reports of initial encounters are usually found in Western records though and therefore might be expected to reflect an emphasis on realism-value and other Western agendas. As research, first contact reports and many cross-cultural studies are considered flawed (Hagen, 1986) while new work is now problematic in terms of new ethical considerations at work in contacting and studying remote cultures, and it would be a rare community that now has never seen Western images.[15] More recently, the emphasis has been on the mediation of Western film and television, a semiotic approach rather than formalist analysis, on the tensions operating between local and the global, and indigenous production. While phenomenological inquiry has re-validated image conventions, in the fractured discursive experience of postmodern media consumption, studies of local responses risk overlooking particular modes of visualization and the attendant

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[13] See Dubery & Willats (1971) and Willats (1997) for comprehensive surveys of various projection and spatial systems in which they observe "The need to involve the spectator in the painting is peculiar to the West and then only in two limited periods: The Roman Empire and the Renaissance" (Dubery & Willats, 1971: 39). They argue that both periods appear to have been preceded by artists using orthogonal projection and experimenting with convergence as a means of emphasizing some narrative feature. Such experiments, they point out, might be a condition or symptom of this illusionist development though, rather than causal since they are to be found in other cultures which did not develop a consistent system, let alone use single or multiple point perspective, or foreshortening to any significant degree, or scale change. Willats observes that very few artists have attempted to replicate the appearance of the optic array directly" (1997: 135).

[14] Earlier, colonialist importation was the usual way Western artefacts were introduced but the colonial rulers' importation of goods for their own use, and even toward efforts to educate their colonial subjects in the superior ways of European culture, and for internal trade, has a history/s in relation to nationalist resistance to cultural imposition. See Leppert (1993), particularly chp. 5 'Music, Domesticity and Cultural Imperialism' for a study of the conflicts involved in such attempts at enculturation.

[15] For some examples of accounts from missionaries working with remote tribes see Deregowski (1972), Gombrich (1981). For a detailed coverage of cross-cultural studies in perception and image cultures, see Segall, Campbell & Herskovits (1966), Pickford (1976). For accounts of reactions to Western image conventions see McElroy (1952), Hudson (1960), Jahoda (1966), Carpenter (1973, 1976), Jones & Hagen (1980); for film and television see Wilson (1961), Worth & Adair (1972), Bellman & Jules-Rosette (1977), Thompson (1983), Michaels (1986), MacDougall (1987).

incongruities and disjunctures in relation to the postcolonial and giving tacit support to the universality/superiority of the Western visual modes.[16]

European influence on Eastern art has been studied and debated in some detail, but generally art historians accept (Cahill, 1960, 1982; Lee, 1975; Sullivan, 1972, 1973, Hay, 1994) that the Greek figure - likely to have developed under the influence of ancient Oriental and Indus traditions (fig. 111) – appeared in India during the campaigns of Alexander the Great, where between 50-320 A.D. it merged with local practices in what has become known as the Romano-Buddhist Gandhara style (fig. 112) (Rowland, 1963; Lee, 1975).[17] Over the fourth to eighth centuries A.D., this Indo-Greek art spread to China, and on to Nara Japan, then a satellite state of China, through the spread of Ashoka Buddhism.[18] This much travelled and adapted tradition dominated the first millennium of Chinese art in narrative and portrait painting (Hay, 1994), and in sculpture (figs. 113 – 115). In the Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D.), pictorial works such as *The Portraits of the Emperors* by the seventh century Yen Li-Pen (d. 673 A.D.) (fig. 116) show a powerful realistic tradition which, as in earlier Ashoka Buddhist images, combines an expressive tradition of costume with an ideal representation of form and face seen in Greek art. Faces, drawn in three/quarter profile, are elegant, spare plottings of three-dimensional contours, while objects or furniture are laid out in parallel perspective. Clothing and objects though, are rendered in a stylized tonal system of modeling that would eventually become schematized as pattern and shape for decorative or expressive effect.

Copies of paintings, made after the realistic style of the c8th artist Wu Tao-tzu (who is also credited with introducing the expressive calligraphic brushstroke), demonstrate this mix of realism and expressionism as an established tradition. A

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[16] See Appadurai (1990) and Ginsberg (1992) for overviews of this situation.

[17] See Cohen (1992) for a detailed account of the development of the nexus between the development of American collections and dealers in East Asian Art during the 30s, American politics, the expansion of Asian studies, and the cultural wars around authority between sinologists and art historians such as Rowland (1963), Lee (1975) and Cahill (1960, 1982). See for instance Cohen's outline of Rowland's challenge to the placing of Chinese artworks in chronological progression of style (pp. 164-166), and his detailing (pp. 186-194) of the debates stemming from Cahill's (1982) controversial insistence on social context, rather than artistic freedom, as the determination of style.

[18] Greek art and practice is thought to have followed Alexander the Great's conquests of India, and also Roman incursions to the north-west frontier of the Kushan Empire. Lee (1975) observes that while 68 A.D. is often given as the date for Buddhism's introduction to China, Buddhism did not become a great force until c450 with the reign of the Buddhist Central Asiatic Tartars in northern China. The growth of Buddhism though promoted art in China during the Six Dynasties period (220-589 A.D.). This history of influence and adaptation taps into some nationalistic and sensitive arguments regarding origins, yet whatever the *degree* of alien influence, it is a history that (re)formulates the ideal body in terms of Eastern figurative art, with its complex well documented discursive traditions.

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surviving third-hand copy of Wu Tao-tzu's work, (a c14th copy of a copy by one of his followers, Wu Tsung-yuan), titled the *Eighty-Seven Immortals,* (fig. 117) for instance, shows great richness in individual characters. Faces and hands, conveyed through contour delineations of form, contrast with expressive swirls of garments folds and decorative costume detailing. Where faces and hands may be perceived as form in space, clothing operates as an informative set of productions 'about body', with such devices as floating ribbons, swirling robes serving as a lexicon for the supernatural (Hay, 1994).

Elvin notes that corporeality is considered subject to *xin*, heart-mind, a psychological force that attempts to control the body, and which reveals itself in physical structure, posture, or superficial forms of beauty like prettiness, or stirs up garments in a "parasomatic expression of affect. Thus the twisted ferocity of a general's armour might be used to convey his martial rage and inner tensions" (Elvin, 1989: 267).

Whereas masculine types tend to be strongly characterized to the point of caricature and satire, the representation of women remained idealized. In the hand scroll, *Palace Ladies Listening to Music* by Chou Fang (active c780-810) (fig. 118), the three-dimensional contour line is used to define edges. This contour line also details the solid planes of costume, a departure from the decorative stylization of the Ashoka tradition and even seventh century realist work. These solid forms act as a foil to the exacting delineation of gesture, clothing, hairstyle and ornamentation. Though the facial expression of each woman is clearly differentiated, the features remain generic representations of female beauty.[19] Such paintings established the norm for depiction of noble women in the later Sung, Yuan and Ming dynasties (Lee, 1975). The endurance and continuity of this style can be seen in such works as the c12th Northern Sung court hand scroll painting of women pressing newly woven fabric, *Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk* (fig. 119).[20]

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[19] Lee notes that proportionally these figures reflect popularity of a more substantial form "moon faces and bodies like plump pears" (Lee, 1975: 266-268) and are indicative of a time of luxury and abundance. This style is also seen in late Tang dynasty, rather than the usual predilections for "morsels of jade, "petal faces", "swaying willows" with "waists like bundles of silk" (266).

[20] This painting is attributed to Emperor Huizong (1082-1135) and thought to be a copy of an earlier Tang painting by Zhang Xuan (Lee, 1975: 339). Cohen (1992) reports that at an important 1970 Taipei conference on Chinese art, Cahi'l argued that European paintings renewed interest in the practice of Northern Sung Landscape around the turn of the c16th and early c17th in China. Cahill also argued that Western art had influenced the Ming painter Wu Pin, in that the appearance of certain motifs could be traced to European engravings, but, Cowen points out, he emphasized that the Chinese art tradition was too strong to be overwhelmed by foreign influence, but that contact appeared to stimulate new directions.

Although this line of influence seems reasonably clear and thoroughly documented by Eastern and Western scholars, there is some danger in extrapolating the hegemonic courtly art of the Emperors which serves as the loci of 'Chineseness', into a general description of 'Chinese art'.[21] While it seems, for instance, unlike the Greek tradition, that Chinese figurative painting tends to elide the specifics of bodily form (Hay, 1994), this needs to be considered in relation the probability that many histories are likely to be found in the diverse cultures which are assembled under the term 'Chinese'.[22] There are naked figures in ancient Chinese traditions, such as figurines from the late Chou period c600-222 B.C. like "Boy on a Toad" or "Wrestlers" which are highly specific naturalistic works in their detailing of form and features, and there are some suggestive, sophisticated figurative portrayals that have survived from the Han period (206 B.C. to 220 A.D.).[23] The stress on body representation in studies of the visual also needs to be seen as a bias in Western scholarship due the central place of the nude in European art (and the naked body in science and popular culture), particularly since Craig Clunas (1997) argues that Chinese painting, centuries before Cezanne and Western modernism, "reached a point 'beyond representation'.[24] Chinese scholar-artists discarded an early attachment to mimesis in favour of a self-referential attention to painting in and of itself" (Clunas, 1997: 10).

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[21] An influential tradition characterized by a formal emphasis of shape and composition with its echoes of classical Greek pottery painting, Chou's style spread beyond China to Japan. It would seem to be part of the inheritance at work in particularly in Ukiyo prints (the term Ukiyo originally being a Buddhist word for the floating or passing world of sorrow from which humanity seeks release).

[22] Siberian cultural sequences, for instance, from 2000BC onwards, have been the recent focus of Russian archaeological scholarship. See Clunas (1997) also, who examines 'Chinese art' in relation to broader practices of visuality in early modern China to show that painting was a specialized and elite art form among the many art practices, rituals, expectations and industries focused on image-making, but one that is all too often appropriated for some idea of a coherent Chinese art. He observes that when construed as a totality by European scholars, Chinese painting operates as a form of closure on theorizing East-West in ways that conform to Bhabha's description of "the good body of knowledge, the docile body of difference, that reproduces a relation of domination" (Bhabha, 1994: 31, cited in Clunas, p. 14), in that Chinese art can be designated an extreme instance, a curiosity, and contained rather than an "active agent of articulation".

[23] The periodic dating follows Lee (1975).

[24] Hay (1994) argues that the absent nude cannot be seen as a sign of cultural prudery and cites both literary works such as the early c17th erotic novel *Golden Lotus* (also the term for bound feet) and the tradition of erotic images from the same period. See Beurdeley (1969) also for a useful survey of erotic images in Chinese art contextualized in relation to erotic literature. Hay describes the Chinese body as one that appears dispersed rather than depicted. See Hollander (1975) and Hay (1994) for a discussion of the Western emphasis on the nude and the relation of the nude to the clothed body, that is, "the naked body's complex and inextricable dialectic with clothing (1994: 44). Both Hay and Hollander also observe in relation to the sensualities of garments that there are other forms of the erotic than that of the revealed body.

Clunas confirms Norman Bryson's (1993) contention that Chinese painting is characterized by "the cultivation of deitic markers", that it is a practice that, in its visible brushwork, embodies process, not portrayal. Chinese painter-scholars of the late Ming or early modern period considered that the emphasis on the "manner of representing" rather than "the thing represented", had been an established principle in Chinese art since the fourteenth century at least. *Xing si*, 'likeness in form' was considered vulgar and even childish (fig. 120). Thus body portrayal is absent in this high art painting field (except as an occasional narrative reference most probably related to gift-giving and the event being celebrated). Yet in religious imagery, temple wall painting and mural painting, in book illustration and woodblock prints, and stone rubbings, in the narrative scrolls used by story-tellers, and in sculptures, and the myriad pictures on things, from laquered boxes, ceramics, and garments, to fans and lanterns, representational image-making was crucial. Cunas point out that the narrative tradition with its iconic references to sages, emperors, and scholars, though just visible within painting, was immensely popular, as were illustrations of novels, legends, and ancient stories, and various other genres that were often outside the boundaries of approved images.

Chinese pictures of the human body may often be, as Mark Elvin (1989) puts it, meager or schematic, a "peg-doll", and merely a marking of human attributes or identity, or used to carry expressive or symbolic meaning. More detailed portrayals of everyday people, such as in Zen Chou's 1516 *Beggars and Street Characters* with its procession of expressive depictions of street characters, are rare, but both James Cahill (1982) and Clunas argue that such images were probably common. They surmise that a distaste for images of the lower classes among the collectors (whose repositories form the basis of what now exists from the past) led to few of them surviving. In other words, like other forms of naturalism, they were not regarded as significant. Ancestor portraits of the Ming period might seem to offer another potential site for naturalism, given the assertions of the importance of similitude in differentiating the souls of the dead for the purposes of ritual and offerings, but Clunas shows that such portraits were determined by status rather than realism. As visible to visitors, they were prone to an idealized, generic appearance determined by a widespread obsession for physiognomy and for particular facial structures considered evidence of virtue.[25]

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[25] See Elvin also for an extensive analysis of the way Chinese figurative images demonstrate the outward manifestation of " the inner propriety of the heart-mind" (Elvin: 1989: 271). Moral worth is seen to have effects on the body and even sartorial aspects such as clothing and accoutrements, atmosphere and auras.

Documented debates about the impropriety of allowing painters of ancestor portraits to observe women normally kept in seclusion, reveal tensions too around the portrayal of women generally in Chinese society before modernization. Clunas suggests that even the most respectable images of women would have carried some sexual frisson, and need to be considered in relation to voyeuristic fantasies on the private lives of women (Furth, 1994), or at the very least as an enactment of one of the visual pleasures available to men of the courtly classes.

Pre-modern China appears to have no athletic cults comparable to the Greek glorification of the body (Elvin, 1989).[26] The Chinese saw value in physical exercise properly carried out, but violent or extreme physical activity was considered debilitating. The portrayal of extreme physicality appears largely reserved to images of demonic beings (ibid.), while the portrayal of the naked body seems to be reserved for carnivalesque or grotesque figures. The exposed or naked body may have well been an unrecuperable sign of lowliness. Clunas describes *Beggars and Street Characters* as displaying "the ugly bodies of the poor, distinguished by their relative nudity and above all by their lack of verticality. The poor bend forward whether burdened by disease and want or stooped in toil over their tools, in contrast with figures that are both decently clothed and dominatingly erect in posture" (Clunas, 1997: 88). He argues that in such images the otherness of the working classes is being specifically designated. In another image depicting labourers, *Brine-lake Salterns*, c1249, Elvin suggests that "the degree of nudity varies inversely with social status".

The other sphere in which the nude might be encountered, Chinese erotic painting (*chun hua* or 'spring painting'), was considered lewd and depraved by respectable Chinese, and by the Qing period was subject to censorship. In this genre, generalized bodies, depicted naked or in various states of undress, are eroticized through sexual narratives evoked by actions, locations, and looks, and their settings are luxurious and sensual (fig. 121). Charlotte Furth notes that visual evidence in such images usually designates the male as 'prince', the "one whose well populated inner quarters would be a badge of royal rank" (Furth, 1994: 135). Clunas, who cites

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[26] Elvin uses passages from Chinese literature and image analysis as well as secondary references to evidence his arguments. He describes Chinese as preoccupied with "looking after themselves physically, with feeding, exercising , meditating and resting their bodies (Elvin, 989: 279), and notes their love of acrobatic entertainments displaying physical dexterity. His study includes an examination of the Communist revolutionary body as portrayed in literature and images.

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Furth on this, says it may indicate a cultural tension between "the imperialized court and the educated classes of the empire, with the latter fantasizing the former as a site of transgressive looking, improper acts of vision, along with many other kinds of excess" (Clunas, 1997: 131)

These images were often illustrations of poems or stories and presumably reference knowledge of those sources for some of their effect. Other images probably functioned as 'bedside manuals' given their explicit depiction of different sexual postures. Clunas points out that in Ming literature the standard context for looking at such imagery, is not solitary viewing, but that of a man showing the material to a woman in order to initiate her sexually, or whet her sexual appetite, though he warns that this is so tied in with male fantasy, it cannot be taken at face value. While to Western observers these images may appear voyeuristic in that scenes are usually framed as scenic tableaus distanced from the viewer, this kind of judgment is likely to be governed by habituations to Western enactments of intimacy such as the extreme close-up. or detailed textural surfaces. For Chinese viewers of the time, these images may have functioned as an engaged seeing. Also dating from the late Ming period, around the late c16th or early c17th, 'diagnostic ivories' (figs. 122-123) were used to pinpoint medical problems and aid communication about the body and sexual matters. These display the generic body in physically explicit ways using an interplay of pose and gesture of the kind familiar in Chinese erotic painting, and have a sexual, sensuous character that goes well beyond any functional schema required for pointing to the location of pain or discomfort.

The most detailed of Chinese body portrayals are those on medical charts used for mapping acupuncture energy meridians.[27] These routinely represented meridians are not considered as something that exists anatomically, but as useful schema to help locate affective energy points. The various body systems in Chinese medicine, while distinguished from each other, have no boundaries, edges or membranes that would confine their operations and effects (Farquhar, 1994). When anatomical delineation is visible in Chinese art, it is usually due to European influence, or, at least surmised as highly likely (Sullivan, 1972; 1973; Cahill, 1982). This influence on anatomical

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[27] Until recently these charts were seen in the West as reflecting cosmological ideas rather than relating to physical knowledge, that is, until Western orthodox medicine began taking an interest in practices such as acupuncture. See Farquhar (1994) for a description of the Chinese medical body that, she says, is not seen as the body, but rather a negotiated understanding of a temporary state to do with various body systems and requiring multiple forms of diagnosis. She shows that Chinese medical theorists refuse any anatomical certainty and instead "refer to the spatial and temporal fluidity of the physiological effects they can describe" (Farquar, 1994:82).

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representation is not necessarily a matter of cultural chauvinism on the part of these Western scholars, or a case of, for Chinese artists, the denied body of Chinese painting: it would seem more that for the Chinese, the body was not so easily defined.

Cahill (1982) chronicles various instances of European influences in pre-modern Chinese art, but argues that while particular Chinese painters may have adopted Western conventions, or been intrigued by Western images, he confirms they deemed Western naturalism as "nothing but artisanry", only good for catching likeness. And furthermore, that they did not accept these 'imitational' images as true or effective representations of real scenes. Trinh, who cites Cahill's 1982 study in relation to her argument that realism is only one particular form of representation, an *arrested* representation which functions to validate a real, takes this further. She explains that for Chinese artists the depiction of the real required more than imitation, "catching likeness" or verisimilitude illusion; it required the manifestation of the ch'i, that spirit or "Formless that is life", growth, movement, change and renewal. This formless is that which enabled Chinese artists to work with the unknown, with infinity, and "to suggest *always more than what they represent*" (Trinh, 1991: 165, italics in original).[28]

Modern Configurations

Although Western images and artists had some local influence in areas of China from the c16th onwards, Chinese artistic training, like that of c18th European art academies, was copy-based, and focused on past Chinese masters.[29] Excellence had meant a surpassing of the *qi* or spirit of the original in the course of perpetuating tradition. Michael Sullivan (1989), who argues that the educated classes in China long considered Western art a craft, provides this account from the c18th court artist Tsou I-kuei:

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[28] This approach of course is not unknown in the West. Da Vinci, Rembrandt, Goya, Turner, and Monet all make use of blank spaces or formlessness, (that differs from absences filled in by the viewer). The notion of the suspension of closure as found in contemporary Western art practice, from John Cage onwards, is perhaps more radical, and one that may reflect the influence of the East on Western modern art.

[29] See Hsiang (1976), Laing (1988) and Sullivan (1970, 1989) for accounts of the role of Western imagery in China beginning with copies of European paintings made for the Italian priest Jean de Monte Corvino in c14th, and Western prints and paintings and illustrated books brought into China in the late c16th by Jesuit missionary and scholar Matteo Ricci. Ricci supervised European style imagemaking projects over a decade or so in China and was enormously influential, though Hsaing reports that his prints of the Life of Christ were co-opted for Yang Guangxian's c17th anti-Christian treatise *Budeyi-shu*. In the early c18th a succession of missionary artists starting with another Jesuit, Guiseppe Castiglione who served as an artist under three emperors, forged a synthetic court style in which Western shading and perspective appeared discretely in Chinese style works, but this had little influence in broader traditions of Chinese imagemaking.

"The Westerners are skilled in geometry, and consequently there is not the slightest mistake in their way of rendering light and shade (*yang-yin*) and distance (near and far). In their paintings all the figures, buildings, and trees cast shadows, and their brush and contours are entirely different from those of Chinese painters. Their views (the scenic kind) stretch out from broad (in the foreground) to narrow (in the background) and are defined (mathematically measured). When they paint houses on a wall people are tempted to walk into them. Students of painting may well take over one or two points from them to make their own paintings more attractive to the eye. But these painters have no brush-manner whatsoever; although they possess skill they are simply artisans (*chiang*) and cannot consequently be classified as painters" (Sullivan, 1989: 80).[30]

With the initiation of education system reform in China post-1895, demands for Western scientific and technical drawing were to pave the way for Western academic art practice (Sullivan, 1989; Minick & Ping, 1990).[31] Advertising departments developed in association with various printing houses (Minick & Ping, 1990) that had already accustomed the literate public to Western style pictorial techniques in their magazine and newspaper publications. By the late 1920s numerous advertising agencies acting as media agents for foreign companies, particularly manufacturers of cigarettes, soaps, and patented medicines, could be found in China's major cities, and sought artists familiar with Western image conventions. Chinese artists would often train overseas and then return. In the treaty port of Shanghai, with its eight autonomous concession zones for foreign trading powers, the Tien-shih-chai press had been publishing material that included Western style imagery as early as 1884 (Sullivan, 1989), while advertising signboards were visible as early as 1902 (Barmé, 1995).

As Western influenced art and avantgarde developments got underway in Shanghai during the early part of the twentieth century, many features of Western advertising images began to appear in *yuefenpai*, or illustrated New Year Calendar posters.[32]

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[30] The citation in Sullivan (1989) is Downing, C. Toogood, *Fan Qui in China in 1836-37*, 3 vols, London, 1911, vol 2, pp. 108-9.

[31] Amid growing dissatisfaction with traditional education in some quarters in relation to the superiority of foreign economic and political power, scholar-official Kang You-wei presented a charter for change in the form of a long listing of proposals, the 'Ten Thousand Word Memorial' to the Qing court in 1895.

[32] These were originally popular folk images, inexpensive hand coloured prints that were replaced in homes annually during this holiday season. Their bright colours and patterns and their wide variety of subjects decorated walls and doors. Barmé (1995) notes that, in the southern center of Sozhou, calendars accompanying printed posters featuring the Hearth God, or the arrival of spring, appeared as early as the

These were soon to become "the most popular form of mass advertising art" in c20th China (ibid.).[33] This form of calendar poster advertising had its antecedents in the New Year woodblock print tradition of the Song dynasty, and developed within a tradition of 'Beautiful Ladies' calendars disseminated by businesses to their customers.[34] As with paintings in the early modern period these images of *yuefenpai* reveal selectivity and negotiation in their adoption of Western perspectival image-making, and their iconography can be compared to both Western advertising and celebrity images as well as earlier Chinese conventions.[35]

The extensive material collated in one particular collection of calendar images from Hong Kong and Shanghai, *Calendar Posters of the Modern Chinese Woman 1910s-1930s*, (Wu, Zhuo, & Lu, 1994) while not evidencing the entire repertoire of calendar subjects, is representative of the genre.[36] The stated intention of the collection is to show that half a century ago, China had modernized, and it allows for a focused study of particular portrayals of women publicly circulated during a significant period of cultural transition, and gives an idea of the incidence of certain images. Its posters are all graphic illustrations and mainly advertise cosmetics, cigarettes, pharmaceuticals and fabrics. Such images (figs. 124-125) were usually

Song dynasty. By the 1880s they had taken the modern recognizable form. In earlier times, the most popular were associated with Confusian aspirations and symbols for longevity, health and prosperity and many sons.

[33] Shanghai's foreign concession zones had worked as legal sanctuaries for critical and radical writers, intellectuals and artists during the Qing dynasty. See Minick & Ping (1990) for an account of more radical visual and graphic production developments in early c20th Shanghai, and the Fourth of May movement in the aftermath of student demonstrations of 1919. The New Literature and Design Movement led by designer Tao Yuan-qing was influenced by Lu Xun's revitalization of indigenous and nationalist culture through his revival of traditional woodcut prints, while the influence of Western graphics in the 30s led to the use of expressionist styles. The Progressive movement, initially based on what was known as the Shanghai Style with its (re)assimilation of orientally-inspired art nouveau and art deco, saw one of its central practitioners, Qian Jun-tao, become a major figure in a modernist celebration of new technologies and the adoption of photographic practices, and in the 30s, of Russian avantgarde practices.

[34] James Han-hsi Soong attributes this vogue as it appeared in Shanghai to the painting of Kai Chi (1774-1829). "A popular device was to show her in a garden leaning against a tree, often seen with her back to the viewer ...(who) is made to feel as if he is peeking over the garden wall. In other pieces, many of the beautiful ladies appear to be directly staring at the viewer, and the similarity between those compositions and the illustrations of popular novels is apparent." He notes that compositions though appear to derive from the earlier Souchou genre of woodblock New Year prints and popular prints, few of which have survived (Han-hsi Soong, 1984: 78).

[35] In 1906 a department of Western art was set up in Kiangsu-Kiangsi school in Nanking, and another in Peking in 1911 (Sullivan, 1989). In 1912, when Shanghai became host to the first Western based Institute of Fine Art, it was well on the way to urbanization, and much of its populace was already familiar with Western images through imported books, periodicals and advertising. Lui Hai-su, the Institute's founder, who was to study in Europe between the two World Wars, believed that Chinese culture was in decline. He sought "a synthesis of Chinese culture and foreign art" (Andrews, 1994) through a formal art and design program which included oil painting, the teaching of perspective and lighting effects, and the study of the nude (Minick & Ping, 1990).

[36] The images for this publication were sourced from a variety of art magazines published in Shanghai and Bejing from the 1950s –1990s.

produced as tonal drawings in rubbed crayon with pale washes of watercolour, a technique used in the c19th in the retouching of ancestor-photographs to achieve "a heightened realism and tactile depiction of flesh" (Dal Lago, 2000: 126). Introduced into advertising by Zheng Mantao in the first decade of the c20th, these drawn images were easily translated into lithographic prints.

Three main portrayals specific to women are evident in this published collection of fifty-five colour posters. Some twelve images rework the traditional 'paired women' image (fig. 125-126) modelled on the Chinese c19th tradition of paired women, often mistresses and their maids. Seven images picture a glamorous mother with one or two plump, sweet faced, rosy-cheeked children or infants, all adoı. d in Western-style finery. Some thirty-one images portray a woman alone, usually near or within a park or garden patio, or in an interior sitting room (fig. 124). There are no larger groups of women, and no portrayals of extended family groupings.

For all their modern attitude, most of these constituted women are shown as if meeting, or about to meet someone. Francesca Dal Lago (2000), who has looked at these illustrations in relation to other kinds of textual material, identifies the narrative of luxurious endless waiting in the *yuefenpai* genre as linked to Chinese love poetry with its reoccurring motif of the woman in love imprisoned in her boudoir for instance. Many of these fabricated women look directly at the viewer, and, given their various expressions of intensity, coyness, or open warmth, appear to be on the point of greeting us/the female viewer constituted as lover/husband. Some of the women in these emotionally charged scenes are portrayed as obviously biding their time, some playfully, some intelligently - some embroider, or hold books, or even a crumpled, perhaps tear stained handkerchief. The river, the lake, the garden, the park, and even the airport, act as the backdrop to this offered scenario of the crucial moment when the woman is met or come upon. The viewer is drawn into a narrative of yearning, though sometimes the scenario is more film-noir or 'hard-boiled', than romantic, reflecting 1930s Shanghai, with its racy nightclub scene catering to foreigners and wealthy locals, and prostitution at its height.[37] Some of these images evidence a debauched sophistication; women are posed to reveal a bit of slinky underwear, others smoke, their flushed faces and their darkened eyes

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[37] For a discussion of some of the broader popular narratives and romances to be found in everyday culture in China during this period, that contribute to social validation and struggles toward what Giddens termed 'continuity of being', see Mau-Sang (1995). See Radway (1987) for an account of what significance these romance narratives have for at least one group of American women.

manifesting a feverish, excitement akin to some reverie of addiction (fig. 125), while others are more coolly and elegantly poised.

Men appear in only four images as accessories to the scene, but in each case they signify the new spaces and encounters of modernity. In one of the 'paired women' images, for instance, showing a radical shift from conservative portrayal, the women engage in a Charleston-like dance while an all-male band plays in the background. Men also appear in a lavish Western style wedding procession where they partner the bride and her bridesmaids. They also figure in two of the three images that are the most Westernized in this collection, and which most clearly depict the kind of activities associated with the leisure activities of Western high-living celebrities and the wealthy classes. In one image, a male jockey sits on a racing horse being led by an elegantly dressed woman, and in another, a woman is shown standing in front of an aeroplane. The third image in this modern group shows a woman by a swimming pool being observed by men in the far background (fig. 128).

Many of these images appear to stake out the role of modern woman as progressive, exciting, sophisticated, and publicly visible. These are women meant to be admired, perhaps envied for their actions, their daring, their apparent taking up of center stage, and for the very success of their lives and, not least, for their mode of dress. All the rendered women throughout this collection exude glamour, even those passively engaged, or accompanied by chubby infants. They tend to confirm Berger's adage, that media images of women, constructed as sights for men, enable women to envisage how men want to see them. But there is more to this address, for the fantasies and desires of women (which here include certain modernist aspirations alongside some enduring traditional ones), are also promoted.[38]

As commercially invested enactments that conjure the dream of a privileged or exciting life, all servitude and labour is invisible. There is little effort visible beyond a selection of fabric, or, as in an image that stands apart from the other images here in its more casual, incidental approach to portrayal, the switching on of a stylish electric heater after a glamorous night out. Dal Lago argues that the targeting of women in such images is the pivot of modernity and consumerism. Advertisements and illustrations in magazines, newspaper articles and photo-spreads, newspaper

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[38] Francesca Dal Lago suggests that the modern scenarios depicted in *yuefenpai* and elsewhere do not reflect some new public role being assumed by modern women, but indicate women as objects of the new knowledges of modernism, a new importance in public cultural discourse "as the most visual and direct beneficiaries of China's economic and social progress" (Dal Lago, 2000: 112).

cartoons and other satirical images of the time, show 'modern' women, as liberated and self-reliant, but also seek to claim them as victims of liberation, as slaves of fashion in that consumerism depends on an assuaging of 'lack'. A new sexual appeal is established, one symbolically associated with the prominence of particular body postures linked to traditional portraits of concubines and to contemporaneous evocations of prostitution; in this way the modern woman is integrated into notions of being sexually unrestrained, thus, as Elvin (1989) has observed, merging domains that were highly separate in traditional China. The clear distinction between what was considered virtuous and what was depraved, comes under the influence of the idea of a complex interaction of these realms.

> "The intrusion of this dialogue, in a crude form, into China in the early twentieth century was felt by most Chinese to be a deadly allurement (especially when it took the form of a high moral value placed on "romantic" or "free" love, disrupting the stereotyped certainties and obligations of conventional family structure), and also a source of general social anomia, precisely because it weakens the barriers between the "correct" and "depraved" aspects of life" (Elvin, 1989: 268).

In *Calendar Posters of the Modern Chinese Woman 1910s-1930s*, it is possible to see a gradual adoption of the intertextual network that sexualizes the liberated modern woman. One of the earliest images, a 1919 calendar disseminated by a Hong Kong insurance company shows how independence and (purchasable) security start to be linked and visualized. Here two women are placed either side of a table on which rests an insurance deed, their relationship uncertain, since neither dominates the other. One figure is portrayed standing in a relaxed pose, head slightly inclined, with an arm tucked behind her, holding a document. She looks at the spectator directly, bemusedly, yet politely. The seated figure, shown playing a Chinese lute, is just as significant due to her more central placement and size, but this woman's gaze is slightly offset, perhaps focused on her music. Her more diffuse relaxed attention gives an impression that she is comfortable and confident.

The tonal rendering of the image, the formal frontality, the cropping of the figures, and the tight frame of the room corner derive from conventions in Western portraiture or transmitted through the c19th photographic portraits.[39] Although

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[39] Photography was introduced to China in the late 1840s, and by the 1880s photography was in common use professionally in Shanghai. Notions of photographic influence though need careful reflection. Soong (1984) for instance subscribes certain informalities appearing in the mid c19th portraits of Jen Po-nien, a painter of the Shanghai School, to photographic influences, although Jen's

modern in its immediate address - the women seem to be welcoming the viewer/visitor to the household - there is much that follows traditional representation. The women's faces, while differentiated, follow the pale oval shape favoured in traditional painting. Their demure mouths, sweetly smiling and tightly closed, together with their finely delineated eyes, maintain conventional Chinese models of beauty, while their slender generalized figures, also in line with past imagery, continue - with bound chests still the social custom for respectable women at the time this image was made - to elide bodily form. They are exquisitely dressed in Chinese silk costumes, fashionable versions of the *aoku*, with traditional hairstyles.[40] Their discreet pearl and gold jewellery, and the comfortable restrained surroundings emphasize this narrative of financial and moral respectability. It is a narrative tempered though by the glimpse of flesh visible through the side split in the mandolin player's *ao*. Once noticed, this slash of white becomes a sexual marker that resonates with traditional portrayals of concubines at leisure and alludes to the conjoining of the newly independent women and the sexual possibilities of their modernity.

There are formal aspects to this early modern Shanghai image that confirm the complex interplay of traditional and Western imagemaking. The strongly spatialized interior, with its tonal changes giving the impression of different planes forming walls and window structure, is reminiscent of the mixed viewpoints to be found at times in European traditions (fig. 127).[41] When artists are sophisticated in their own arena of visual culture, any awkwardness apparent in adapting Western conventions to traditional systems cannot be a matter of visual naivety. The strange and quaint

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most innovative works post 1880s are historical and mythological narratives following folk woodblock traditions. It is worth remembering that c19th photographs were immensely formal, and that Scarf's (1974/1968) claim that photography contributed to the informal effects of Impressionist painting is not substantiated by the existence of equivalent photographs (Varnedoe, 1980). The most that can seen in painting are certain accidental aspects to be found in some photographs which worked against the aims of photography, and which were conventions and possibilities either already known to artists or visible to them given they were avid collectors of Japanese prints.

[40] The *ao* (jacket) with *ku* (trousers) or *qun* (skirt) was prescribed as everyday urban female dress between the years 1644 and 1911 when the Manchu-Qing rulers enforced a code of dress signifying rank. Originally *aoku* were more loosely cut, but by the early 1900s a more narrow and elegant shape and the high 'mandarin' collar became popular. In the 1920s the *cheungsam* or, or as it was called in the north, the *qipao*, the one piece garment that looks like a lengthening of the *ao* jacket became standard dress for Chinese women. The *cheungsam* started as an ankle length, loosely fitted garment influenced by the traditional Manchu court robe but was given a high collar. By the 1930s it developed into the well-known figure hugging mid-length sheath with high side slits. See Roberts (1997) for a history of Chinese dress linked to contemporary social change and cultural history.

[41] Traditional Chinese and Japanese painting employs combined layouts of oblique projection. The general effect here, given the tonal character of the image, is similar to early Northern European experiments with the mathematical projections and convergences of Italian perspective, particularly the combinations of viewpoints and mixed perspective systems as used in International Gothic painting by artists such as Rogier van der Weyden, Jan and Hubert van Eyck, and Jean Fouquet.

effects that Western viewers experience when looking at transitional styles are mainly due to a mixing of visual systems, and the partial adoption of Renaissance perspective and Western schemas. Here the planes of the window ledge conflict with, in terms of Renaissance expectations of consistent viewpoint, the angle of the sill and the horizontal planes of the tabletop and chair armrests. Gombrich (1968/1960: 227) provides evidence of this adjustment to Western spatial representation from the reminiscences of Yoshio Markino, a Japanese artist who arrived in Europe around this time. Markino writes

"About the perspective, I have some story of my own father. When I got a book of the drawing lessons at my grammar school there was a drawing of a square box in the correct perspective. My father saw it and said, "What? This box is surely not square, it seems to me very much crooked." About nine years later he was looking at the same book and he called me and said "How strange it is! You know I used to think this square box looked crooked, but now I see this is perfectly right".[42]

Gombrich employed this example to emphasize that Western assumptions that naturalism is automatic do not take into account that Westernized viewers are used to reading naturalistic images and are likely to be interpreting the simpler of line drawings perspectively. What it also demonstrates though is cultural learning in respect to relating imaging to certain aspects of sight. Dominic Lopes has argued that gradual adjustments of existing systems of representation toward the more illusionist Western approach create an experience he calls 'revelatory realism', but this move toward may be as much toward the 'look' of things 'Western', as some better match to the seen world, the more "convincing illusion" (Lopes, 1995: 284). For Shanghai women of the early c20th, attuned to the signs of Western imagery as indicators of modern status and wealth, the effect of this image may well have been a refined integration of Chinese and Western idioms, with its appeal residing in its validation of the modern Chinese subject.

Paying attention to the image as a manufactured object may well tease out some of the more subtle aspects that reinforce associations at less conscious levels. The scene is a fabrication after all, a marketable fiction, and ultimately says less about the realities of women, than the ploys of insurance companies, advertising's determinations of women and their supposed desires, and various communicative

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[42] Gombrich's citation is Markino, Yoshio, *When I was a Child*, Boston, New York & London, 1912. pp. 272 – 74 (no publisher cited).

strategies developed by graphic artists. What is adopted from Western advertising, and articulated through the appeals of three-dimensional illusionism, is a set of associations that serve the commercial domain. The women in the Fook On Insurance advertisement, depicted as emancipated and in control, are in effect affirming the efficiency, the might, and the European credentials of the insurance company. Below the company's old gold sign with its name written in both Chinese and English, the phrase 'Capital 1,000,000 Dollars' is set above a modified European scroll decoration, and a Chinese version that includes "registered to the British Government" is set underneath. The corners on both sides of this heading contain European bouquets of roses and violets, their colours in harmony with the green-blue and pink-purple washes of the painted scene. The central scene dominating the page is bordered by calendars edged in gold detailing, their parchment white colouration reinforcing the pale skin of the women. As Stuart Ewen points out,

> "Within the selectively seductive frame of the commercial image, the dominant
> power relations of contemporary society are transmitted, not as a set of
> arbitrary rules by which the exploitation of labour and resources is enforced,
> but as a natural, even beautiful, rendering of things. The secrets of power
> remain protected" (Ewen, 1988: 156).

Cultural realism

Before looking at another, and later image from *Calendar Posters of the Modern Chinese Woman 1910s-1930s,* which shows an even greater adaptation of photographic source material, and Western representational practices, I want to re-engage here with some of the arguments I have been making so far in this thesis, about the way images are played out in different cultural domains.

In the *Fook On Insurance* calendar, the illusionist possibilities of Western imaging are tempered by traditional and commercial signage, and the separate elements used in the image are visible. With images that provide the illusion of a transparent rendering of the seen world, the contrivances are selections from the visual possibilities of encultured seeing, served by particular encoded ways of depicting. But for artists manufacturing all of these images, such elements are *always* the conventions of fiction in that they are selecting, constructing, assembling, and fabricating them. Even closely observed images of nature, whether organic vegetation, bodies, or landscape, are, as Gombrich (1968/60) and, more recently,

Simon Schama (1996) have demonstrated, are often more about allegory than objective record.[43]

Jacques Maquet, examining images across cultures from an anthropological perspective and attempting to define the operations of perceptual images, states "A representation is naturalistic when the painter attempts to convey a visual perception similar to what the retina records when looking at the object - person or thing - in the outside world" (Maquet, 1986: 210). He voices a common understanding of a mimetic relation of looking and imaging. This standard account is fundamentally flawed though not only in regard to imaging, but also perception. The retina does *not* record. *It responds.*

The interpreting of the light patterns and intensities stimulating the retinal cells is largely an unconscious process, and sight might be better described as a perceptual hypothesis drawn from an interplay and synthesis across sensations. As Oliver Sacks (1985) reminds us, blind patients who have their sight functionally restored, struggle to make sense of the patches of colour and light. Sight is not just looking, but an understanding of what you are looking at. The very studies that once sought to objectify sight, those of perceptual psychology, now acknowledge that 'visual processing' includes more than genetic or physical predilections. Rudolf Arnheim's (1970) early definition of perception as "visual thinking" as more a cognitive act than a mechanical event, asserted an understanding of seeing as active negotiation. In Damasio's (1995) account of the integrated feeling-self, seeing is reaffirmed as an ongoing process shaped by personality factors and emotional states, by cultural learning and experience, and influenced by the circumstances, motivations and expectations involved in the circumstances of particular seeings.

What seems to stand in the way of any broad awareness of perception as diffuse, relative, and contingent, is the phenomena of the photograph in that it validates Renaissance pictorial perspective, and appears to model sight. As an image 'captured' through the apparent transparency of the camera lens, the photograph appears as a natural seeing and, in consequence, confirms the naturalness of familiar portrayals, even though the iconography of body types, poses and looks used in

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[43] Even in Ansel Adams' monumental photographs of nature, or observational documents such as John Constable's windswept landscapes, or the most rigorous perceptual record of retinal sensation, as in Claude Monet's light-energy paintings, aesthetic decision still takes place in relation to a desired allegorical effect, even if it seems to involve no more than the framing of the scene, or choosing the site, or recognizing the moment.

Western media and imagemaking generally tends to keep to a limited repertoire, one reflective of certain regimes of desire.

Western naturalism, despite being a pre-modern way of visualizing the world, has for non-Western cultures, been associated with the positivist appeals of modernity. As an objective modality ratified by c15th mathematical perspective and c19th photographic technologies, it underwrites an authorized system of seeing that privileges Western authority, science, philosophy and claims to a better truth. Although to some extent challenged in the postmodern era, it represents a notion of authority and order (Foucault, 1983/70) predicated on fixed subject-object relations prefigured in existing social hierarchies.

The Fixed View

The effect of photographs is to confirm their enactments of social relations as natural, when they emphatically maintain them. The very familiarity of forms to be found in this fabricated reality invites examination since the most common portrayals are a site of the one of the most normalized essentialisms, that of two distinct separate genders. As Elizabeth Grosz observes "…how bodies are conceived seems to be based largely on prevailing social conceptions of the relations between the sexes …(they are) a neuralgic locus for the projection and living out of unreflective presumptions" (Grosz, 1994: ix).

To return to the collection *Calendar Posters of the Modern Chinese Woman 1910s-1930s*, the image that appears the most removed from traditional Chinese portrayals of women is one very familiar within Western media of the 1930s. It portrays a woman in a bathing costume kneeling alongside a hotel swimming pool (fig. 128). While a drawn image, it references the Hollywood starlette publicity photo, which reached great popularity in the Western world between 1930-1960 and which features an inviting pin-up girl or actress, healthy and friendly (Hess, 1972). It is structured as if the low viewpoint and the woman's crouching pose were a consequence of a photographer's desire to record the figure and backdrop together. And this backdrop is indeed significant, in that the scene's bit players, the men who look with apparent pleasure toward the woman, are a crucial part of the image's specular play of 'who is looking at who' – and why.

The woman is shown in a playful, yet provocative, half kneeling pose. Her open face and full smile here though combine to evoke a genital tease. Compositionally, the

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genital lure here is strong. Starting from the downward vee of the mouth and chin, our gaze is taken to the neckline of the bathing costume, a pointer further accentuated still by the vee-edge cutting into the costume's undulating stripes. Even the nautical clips on the woman's costume echo this downward arrowing. The completion of this visual momentum though is thwarted (though symbolically rewarded) by her upright knee, while her arms and the edges of her shadow contain/trap our path of vision and direct it to the labial folds of the lowered leg – aesthetically and/or sexually - with the upright leg acting as phallic stand-in. The viewer is positioned as present within the scene, and provided with the opportunity of looking pleasurably at the woman without a sense of being scrutinized in return, since her constructed look is directed toward someone slightly to the left. This still leaves the possibility of engagement open as the narrative develops in the viewer's imagination.

For all its male-centred appeals and structures, this image also stimulates a particular female fantasy of sexual power relating to the desire to have control over events, linked here specifically to that of a life of pleasure and luxury. This is not some evocation of women's independence from men, but suggests a power in relation *to them*, and a power located in sexual play. The woman is portrayed as the focus of attention and reveling in it. Radiant and central, she presents herself with great delight, and apparent reciprocation – with male approval implied given her expression, and the gaze of the men in the background. This relay of looks is amplified in the female swimmer in the background looking back at the group of men, one of whom appears to look at her.

This Shanghai bather image makes good use of its photographic enactments. Its carnal appeal is directly constituted by its photographic inheritance as a transcribed evocation of a body, which once was there, in front of a camera/photographer. The engaging facial expression and the arrested particularity of the bather's pose goes beyond what Solomon-Godeau (1991) describes as the photograph's excessive "trace of the real" in that it is also a portrayal coded as glamour, wealth, and leisure.

The pose of the bather figure has a currency that goes beyond the accidents of the seen. In a modern Chinese context, the pro-active nature of this pose though may well have resonated with an iconographical network of meanings evoked by raised or bent legs. Dal Lago (2000) for instance traces the sexual associations of a particular *yuefanpai* pose sometimes manifested in traditional Chinese images as the

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ankle crossed over the thigh (in the West, a highly masculine pose), which provided optimum display of the erotically charged 'lotus' foot. This pose, appearing in Chinese traditions such as *meiren*, the 'beautiful ladies' - often courtesans and concubines- originally acted a focus for romantic love. As Gail Hershatter (1994) reminds us, since marriages were arranged in China, courtesans were associated with romantic love and had a role as chosen social companions.[44] This pose was then adopted for the more explicit sexual portrayals in erotic painting, and then used in the advertising photographs employed in the late c19th by the new and prominent prostitute industry in urban Shanghai.

Dal Lago argues that the modern woman was inherently sexualized in becoming visible in public and male domains - and not the least because of the overlap between images of the stylish modern woman and the cutting edge glamour of the upper-class prostitut , "one of the most visible types in the milieu of the international metropolis" (Dal Lago, 2000: 138). In modern Shanghai media, illustrations of modern women with their legs crossed drew on traditional erotic imaging and converged with Western signs of independence, sexual and otherwise, and also, as Dal Lago demonstrates, the new concerns for etiquette applying to sitting in public while wearing the short modern skirts of the twenties.

A recent story carried in Chinese newspapers about brothels and corruption made a brief appearance in Australian newspapers, and the accompanying photograph was a similar image, even down to the striped bathers (fig. 130), as that in the calendar collection. In this image though, the figure is stripped of any location or narrative detailing and functions specifically to indicate 'prostitute' for both Chinese and Australian readers. The pose reveals how images may operate emblematically, and, in this case circulate as a sign coded as sexual enticement with its tease of display and concealment.[45] The smile and facial expression linked to the pose effectively translates what might be assigned to a service role - and one that might be interpreted as involving fellatio in any sexual enactment - and an assertion of this

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[44] Gail Hershatter argues that discourse on prostitution in Chinese cultures and modernism needs to be placed in relation to struggles over the meaning of modern marriage and points out that when May Fourth intellectuals mounted a campaign for a companionable marriage between equals, "all that was left for the world of the prostitute was sex" (Hershatter, 1994: 172). See Hershatter for a detailed account of the hierarchy and differentiations of early c20th Shanghai prostitution, its narratives and associations, its links with tour guide agencies, massage parlours and dance halls, and the role of gossipy publications known as the "mosquito press".

[45] Thomas B. Hess observes that such images, caught between the voyeuristic public who wants to see more, and the social public who seek to constrain sexual display, are subject to canonical restraints: "the image tends toward an almost Byzantine frigidity, and assumes some of the symbolizing force of an icon"(Hess, 1972: 227).

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role being *her* pleasure.[46] Although this image is most likely to be merely a file image without any real link to the story at hand, its photographic status still authenticates this as a real sight, its truth maintaining fixed conceptualizations of women, and, in this case, women who are 'ready to play'. The perceptual referencing remains important because the seeing of the woman is paramount to its role in imaginary enactments of such narratives.[47]

What gives visual imagery its power is, following Lacan (1977/1949), its functioning as a nexus of meaning determined by sexuality, desire and identity. For Lacan the pivotal moment in the establishment of the ego is the leaving of the "the lack of a lack", the plenitudinous order of the Real into which one is born, and an event that is triggered by the infant's visual differentiation of itself from its mother through its image in the mirror. It is a separation that defines one's very mode of being. The ensuing sense of loss is one never to be redeemed/filled and signals for Lacan an ontological split with nature/the Real. Elizabeth Grosz, revisiting Lacanian theory in relation to mental conceptualizations of the body, explains that the dynamics involved in all imaginary relations of the erotic/libidinal and aggressive impulses and drives are prefigured in the mirror-stage of development when "the child is fixated by the image, enamored and captured by the specular double" (Grosz, 1990: 37).

This fixation on the visual image, its role in the imaginary, and its capacity for triggering emotional reactions is a lasting one. Grosz argues, and away from any Oedipal scenario, that this is not so much result of any trauma related to this foundational scene and the infant's process of separation or differentiation, but a matter of "delight which, for Lacan, is an ensnarement and a lure as much as a pleasure" (ibid.). She suggests "The child joyously celebrates the recognition of its

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[46] Kneeling in Western culture signifies service, lower rank or submission, even abjection and a conflation with low and dirty (See Stallybrass & White, 1986). This needs to be looked at though in relation to the theme here and its treatment. Hevia (1994) has argued that kneeling, other embodied gestures of service, and the *koutou* were crucial in the constitution of Imperial power and that such body rituals had a dignity and a range of meaning different from the West, but his focus is on court ritual. Images of the women have a different historical lineage and network of associations.

[47] For a survey of a similar transition within Indian calendar images of women, see Uberoi (1998) writing in the exhibition catalogue on images from her collection. Uberoi's identified feminine types are 'Good Blessing/ the auspicious and fertile bride'; 'The dangerous and protective mother goddess/woman as nation'; 'The devotee-lover'; 'Woman commoditized'; 'The unity of opposites'; The goddess as consort/wifely subordination and devotion'; 'The sister's protective blessing'; 'Woman as temptress/ the vamp figure'; and the 'Woman objectified'. Uberoi notes that while the calendar image tradition was dying out in early eighties, that the visual quality and the exuberant energy and characters of Indian heroes and heroines can now be found in new television genre of the mythological serial.

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specular image or the form of others" (36); indeed, that a child's fascination for the image intensifies as the child recognizes the image *as* a representation.

In psychological understandings, systems of cultural meaning function to absorb impulses and drives through the performance of particular narratives. But the kind of narratives surrounding the image and the body vary enormously depending on a multitude of factors to do with cultural context.[48] Kenneth Clark (1960/1956) argued that the objectified body, controlled and controllable, and linked to the sexually profane, lay outside the historical trajectories identified in his explication of the nude. Though the antecedents of the modern profane nude may be traced to the sanctioned high art representations of beauty such as in works such as Titian's painting of the Maenad in his c1518 *Bacchanal* (fig. 129), images of the nude are not always produced as Berger insisted, as a display for male sexual desire. But they may be recuperated as sexual images all the same. Just as images may be looked at without regard for their historical context, or their whole pictorial offering, or their metaphysical and metaphorical meanings, they may serve other functions than those to do with the producer's intention. It would seem that many kinds of images may be examined, looked at, and treated *as* pornography. Sandra Buckley's (1991) study of pornographic industries and publications in Japan suggests that any object or situation or action may be enrolled in the pornographic imagination, but in images such readings are invited, evoked, or strengthened through recognizable cue'

In the West images bridging the sacred and the profane body are initially found within the privately patronized erotic tradition which privileged prints, drawings, watercolours, book illustrations, and a rich array of secret objects of amusement that intersect with the history of pre-animation kinetic toys. An overtly sexualized nakedness cloaked in the respectability of high art began to appear publicly under the auspices of c19th classicism, and then less disguised in the work of Realists such as Millet, Courbet and Manet. The pornographic image appears among the earliest daguerreotypes which innately transformed the erotic nude through their capacity for a disturbing, excessive carnality, their inclusion of everyday flesh (Williams, 1995). As soon as photography was commercially viable, the pornographic industry rapidly expanded, reaching all levels of male society. Linda Williams (1995) and

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[48] Narremore and Brantlinger (1991) for instance in their introduction outline six kinds of visual or artistic cultures - high art (canonical, sanctioned), modernist art (critical, experimental), avant-garde art (political, self- reflexive), folk art (traditional, pre-industrial), popular ('low' art and entertainments), and mass art (industrialized entertainments) which overlap and relate to some degree, but with quite different expectations, functions and reception. Differing realms of cultural production, even if not Narremore and Brantlinger's categories, also have different practices, intentions, values and outcomes.

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Solomon-Godeau demonstrate that it is not only the trace of the real of these kinds of picturings that enables them to be looked at *as if* real.[49] It is the excessive "offering of the flesh" that from the start, was found to be particularly effective for pornographic pleasures, and a new pornographic genre developed based on tensions around exposure and the hidden (Solomon-Godeau, 1991: 225). However, I would argue that in 'soft pornography', the widely disseminated, 'acceptable' pornography for many cultures, this excess of carnality is suppressed. Playboy nudes may reference these images and the shock of the flesh, but their appeal is largely constituted through denial of corporeal realities and by rituals of reassurance.

The European nude had its antecedents in the subtle anatomical details of the Eastern and Egyptian representational images as substitution for the living body and the preservation of the soul, as early as the third millennium BC. In c5th BC Greece it developed a narcissistic mirroring relation to humanist conceptions of deities. The ancient Greek models and their Roman formulations were revived and reinvigorated in the Renaissance, to survive and proliferate over the centuries despite, as Kenneth Clark notes, having "suffered some curious transformations" (Clark, 1956: 23-25). Clark traced the development of some eight types of nude images in European art, differentiating them largely according to humanist demarcations of ideal ('Apollo', the 'Antique Venus', and the 'Renaissance Venus'), or ordeal ('Energy', 'Pathos') and transcendency ('Ecstasy'), with naturalism, the Gothic, and the abject all brought together under the notion of 'The Alternative Convention'.[50] Formalist experimentation and concern for order were categorized as 'the Nude for its own Sake'. Yet he excluded c19th salon images from his account of the nude. Nude painting in the c18th had become increasingly sensational, and by the late c19th, salacious (and increasingly misogynist) portrayals of women modelled on the conventions of Venus were endemic in academic art.[51] These idealized formularized images of the early c19th were easily appropriated for commercial photography;

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[49] Williams (1995) argues that Mulvey's model of the male gaze overemphasizes phallic mastery and desire (master narrative) and the reality effect (technological determinism). Williams' concern is not that such processes do not take place, but more that they are overgeneralizations resulting in reductive, "crippling" descriptions of both gaze and effect.

[50] Clark does not argue these beyond Western practice though says that though it may seem that the nude as a means of expression and a subject of contemplation is of universal and eternal value, that the nude in other cultures has different functions.

[51] It is worth comparing such images to Manet's contemporaneous *Olympia* as a way of recognizing Manet's recognition and exploration of this desire. Another trajectory into earlier traditions is equally telling. See Dery (1999) on the visceral appeals of Clemente Susina's c18th wax anatomical models, particularly *The Dissected Venus* posed sensually and designed to reveal the various stages of dissection. Dery maps out the links between the male erotic imagination, the erogenous eye, violence, morbid carnal desires, and the collusions of pornography and medical anatomical practices.

having some social sanction as art images, they laid the foundation for the art pretensions that are often ascribed to modern 'soft porn' images (Brown, 1981).

Twenty years after Clark's thesis on the nude, John Berger, critiquing the ethics of the swinging sixties and its pop culture, attempted to collapse these various renditions of the sacred and the ideal into one form - the contemporary profane - and into a single function: the objectification and commodification of women's bodies. In this Berger follows Horkheimer and Adorno. What they saw in the repetition of bodies of desire though was not merely sublimation, but repression, the image both stimulating and depriving, and the audience compelled to consume them "even though they see through them (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1973/1944: 167). Ewen (1988) too sees "Photography's powerful ability to mediate style ... (as) rooted in its simultaneous affinity to reality and fantasy...it looks real" (Ewen, 1988: 90), and facilitating the compulsion to look and to engage with the propositions of the industrialized pornographic "disembodied image".

The Profane Nude

The front page of a 1993 Hong Kong edition of Playboy (fig. 131) portrays a woman devised for looking and coded for play.[52] The woman's youthful appearance, her tussled hair, the discreet pose, and the addition of the baby rabbit, explicitly codes her role as that of child-like and tame 'pet'. The pronounced 'cuteness' of this image, with its soft lighting and coloration making connections between the rabbit's fluffy form and her bodily softness, appears to be one which has a widespread and particular appeal for Asian consumers and audiences. Here, the woman is shown looking directly at the viewer in a way which invites appreciation of the held rabbit, and other kinds of holdings, while her expression also seems to communicate a vulnerable kind of appeal or longing. A fantasy of the 'innocent' playmate involves the desire for an encounter free of critical responses. This masquerade of the sweet

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[52] Playboy, with Marilyn Munroe on the frontcover, was first published by Hugh Hefner in November 1953, with the bunny then the signature of the magazine and 'enacted' by bunny hostesses in Playboy clubs. It was regarded as part of the vangarde for sexual liberation encouraging men to see sex as fun. See Krassas et. al. (2001) for a study of the sexual imagery in the American edition of Playboy finding that the pictorial feature converge on a single construction of women's sexuality. The Krassas study, following Goffman, categorized and checked images according to role/identity; whether the women were shown exercising a "feminine touch" (they found half the women touched themselves; no men did so) ; positions of submission, ingratiation, appeasement (I would add 'readiness' to these. In 1965, 78% of the women were standing; in 1995 only 38%); sight-line, and "licensed withdrawal" (interpreted as showing signs of "psychological removal", but more isolation, nervousness, and invitation to nurture/protect). Krassas et. al. also incorporated 'body display' as a sexual code, and noted indicators of social status and dependency. Facial cover-up was determined a marker of depersonalization, and like Downs (1990), they used a taxonomy of degrees of body exposure. They found poses became less contorted, and models more personified over the years. They also looked at race designation (and found that less than 5% of models were non-white).

irresistible child interacts with another level of evocation. Her kneeling position and her cupped hands are those familiar in the figure of a servant, and produces the effect of the woman's pleasurable attendance on the (male) reader/viewer.

The lack of background in this image acts as a blank canvas, inviting the viewer to complete the scenario imaginatively, or investigate the magazine further. This vacancy visually highlights the figure, so that she is marked off, removed from her own surroundings, indeed, her own existence. A tight central shape, framed only by text, she is instantly noticeable; and in performing a phallic shadowplay through the positioning of her arms, her promise - and that of the magazine - is made clear.

This cover image is the lead to a twelve image 'portfolio' inside the magazine starring the same woman, introduced as 'Zhao Ming', "a piece of Taiwanese jade waiting to be carved".[53] There another 'soft' image, accompanied by a list of her vital statistics, shows her leaning on her elbows, hands still cupped around a tiny sleepy rabbit. Her figure is cropped at her waist, setting up a classical composition with the focus on her smiling face and breasts, their shapes repeated by her elbows and the rabbits ears, just as the top of her shoulder blades, rounded and just visible, echo and emphasize the shape of her breasts. In another four other images this young woman is shown sitting or lying on a bed, blue jeans pulled down, a top being taken off, appearing as though in preparation for sexual activity, although the poses are awkward and obviously staged for body display. In these images, her legs are tucked away or out of sight, her thighs and bottom, with crotch discreetly covered, are accentuated and framed by her clothes. There are no props or backgrounds, apart from the clothing used to enact this performance of undressing. In the other seven images, the woman is staged in a more frontal sequence for some crotch tease - the emphasis on suggestion rather than overt display (fig. 132). The clothing used to mark off areas of the body is either large sized men's clothing - a shirt and tie - or conventional sex lingerie and high shoes in conjunction with props, and mainly chrome or black techno furniture, commonly associated with male domains. She is located within *his* habitat.

Many of these photographs appear to reference the two other visual 'portfolios' in the magazine featuring Western women. Although the similarities may be merely a

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[53] The accompanying biography says that Zhao Ming came from a good home, but always wanted to do something exciting. At a friend's place she meet a manager who asked if she would like to be an actress, and she persuaded her parents to let her go to Hong Kong. There, as an artist, she had to learn many new things such as singing, dancing, acting and make-up.

consequence of a limited repertoire used in this style of pornography, it is also possible that the bunny girl feature on 'Zhao Ming' was produced in relation and reaction to the others. The two portfolios, one showcasing a Western model "Jennifer Lavoie" enacting the erotic possibilities of a country holiday, and the other a folio of fourteen images of various European 'beach babes' titled 'Lifesaving Angels', are much more diverse in type and style, look as if they have been sourced from the parent Playboy publication (figs. 134-135).

To emulate modern Western genres is to embrace a whole range of technologies and practices that are without obvious local antecedents, yet, for something to 'take on', some cultural grounding has to be in place. Tagg (1988) has shown how the photograph as object production, as 'currency', is distributed and circulated, but Bourdieu (1965) demonstrated how the photograph is consumed within certain social relations, and is subject to particular social rituals. And in this case Chinese erotic art, provides a cultural lineage of objectification of women that meshes easily with the popular pornographic pleasures of Western consumer culture.[54] Not everything translates smoothly. The type of representations using the Asian model for instance are limited, though some of this may well be a matter of preference. Some lack of sophistication is apparent in image construction and shot set up. Conventional studio locations and limited props are not restrictive in themselves, as testified by the quality of the front cover 'bunnygirl' image, but, on the whole, they are used with more obviousness.[55]

Indeed, all these Playboy images incorporate something other than a body, in setting up their narrative dimension.[56] Images that eschew props are often to be found in porn publications, but a story can still be composed from myriad details, from pose to the composition, the mood of the light, or even the background colour. Hence the women are on display here in ways that maintain voyeuristic pleasures, a looking

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[54] This image tradition is often conjoined with sanctioned concubinage and sexual bondage, that is profoundly embodied in the cruel and disabling practice of binding the feet of young female children, a long standing aristocratic practice referred to in a c12th text (Beurdeley 1969) and one that eventually was perpetrated by peasant classes on their daughters for the sake of desirability, status and conformity, even though they relied on the physical labour of women.

[55] There may be less opportunity for local photographers in most Asian countries to do the kind of location work visible in the European images, but eroticism, and the pleasures of sex and/or of power, are not reliant on place. Rather, the use of country and beach locations seen respectively in the images of 'Jennifer Lavoie', and those by Wayda, signal the possibility that other fantasies merge with sexual desire in an industrialization of what has been described as "the dream of escape" (Berger, 1972; Labowitz & Lacy, 1985: 173).

[56] Hess observes "Given the rigor of the main schema of the pinup, it is not surprizing that an enormous amount of fantasy and repressed emotion were released in those areas of the picture not controlled by the sexual dialectic" (Hess, 1972).

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that has its own gratification, in conjunction with imaginative scenarios. (If the body or sections of body were to fill the page, as is often the case with hard porn, the viewer would be clearly located in a physical proximity.) In the feature series, Zhao Ming always looks out, making eye contact and engaging with the viewer, in contrast to the Western images which have a much wider repertoire of performance and gaze within the stock narrative of 'introduction' (fig. 133), although they are still restricted as types.[57] Where women are shown looking down or closing their eyes, it is as if to suggest sexual readiness, either as in some pre-orgasmic state, or as if experiencing some kind of 'on heat' anguish, (which seems to necessitate the exposure of some sexually significant part of their body to the air) (fig. 134). 'Jennifer' (fig. 135) sometimes looks around as she engages in various activities, or closes her eyes as if involved in some personal sensuous pleasure, but her ever-present open smile continues to place her in relation to an observer.

Reflecting on Convention

These types of images represent a ritualized tradition working on excitatory triggers.[58] The high art nude, by comparison, is far more diverse, and far more ambiguous. Contemporary postmodern art is different again; in its continuing dialectic with all kinds of representation, it references all kinds of images, including industrialized stimulatory sex images. Artists such as Morimura, for instance, interrogate conventional Western pornographic representations for the fetishistic codes which signal their employment as strategies of arousal. Freiburg (1996), discussing the strength of his play with the Western art tradition, suggests that the Japanese have an obsession with surfaces, patterning and formal poses. but it is clear from Morimura's work with its reversed perspective, that the Western image industries might equally be described as obsessive, though their repetitions might be

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[57] This difference is also to be found in women's magazine advertising. See Frith, Cheng & Shaw (2004) for a review of studies on the visual representation of women in advertising. In their own content analysis of advertising representations of Asian and Western women in terms of three categories of 'Classic-Feminine', 'Trendy', and 'Exotic/Sensual', in women's magazines in Singapore, Taiwan and the United States. they cite Maynard & Taylor's (1999) study on the Japanese version of *Seventeen*. The study showed that Western models were generally posed as defiant and independent with serious expressions, while the Japanese models were sweet, and girlish and cute. Frith, Cheng & Shaw found similar results in their study, commenting that such child-like depiction was inherently diminishing of women as fully fledged adults in society. They also found that Asian models were just as likely to enact direct eye contact as the Western models, despite all cultural expectations of demure eyes-down protocols for Asian women.

[58] See Hess for a history of the modern pin-up and an analysis of their rituals for male tribalism. Hess points out that pornographic images though passively accepting conventions of the nude in art, invert such images, focus on what artists ignore: "the obsessional, the fetishistic, and the pornographic" (Hess, 1972: 225), and though left with a sediment of _uman sensation, can have more vitality than the most skilled academic painting.

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masked by naturalistic effects.[59] Reworking a famous playboy Marilyn Munro centerfold, for instance (fig. 136), Morimura performs a display of attenuated tension, the pose and jutting breasts artificially defined as in the original image of Munro. Here though, the femaleness of the body's signage is disturbingly contradicted by Morimura's male forearm to the point where the ritual collapses, enabling the extraordinary configuration at work in such representations to be observed.

Dialogic responses to sexualized representation can be found in Manet's and Morimura's inversions, or the parodies of Dada and Pop art such as those by Mei Ramos or Allen Jones.[60] Such works show that sexual imagery is not dependent on nakedness or even sexualized posturing.[61] The sexual image is dependent on a context designed for the performance of particular encultured pleasures, with the observer construed as "a surface of inscription on which a promiscuous range of effects could be produced" (Crary, 1990: 96).

Linda Williams promotes a model of diverse viewing pleasure in which the Cartesian ideal observer is no more, with the loss of perspective in modern imaging reconstituting an embodied viewer, for whom "the boundaries between body and world on the one hand and body and machine for viewing on the other begin to blur" (Williams, 1995:7). The encounter with the real is a *haptic, immediate* pornography, its corporeal illusions delivering an "immediacy of sensations" (ibid.). And Williams argues that the erotics of pornography "result from the many practices constructing the bodies of spectator-observers as an amalgam of disparate and decentered perceptions" (8).

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[59] Freiberg argues that this argument treats Japanese art as unchanging and isolated. It also disregards the variety of practices, even in the past, and across the popular and official art realms that constitute Japanese image making.

[60] Mulvey's well known 1972 critique of Jones' women as phallic fetishes ignores the dimension of parody and thus the idea that Pop art imaging offers a critique of popular and industry representation. In this Mulvey seems to be representative of an early and limited kind of literalist analysis although her argument that Jones' images exploit this kind of imaging and re-invigorate an apparently objectionable rendering of women, needs to be considered. Yet Jones' work can be seen as an unstable site of postmodern inversion. Can one enjoy Jones' images, his recognition of the implications in sexualized images of women, and recognize that his images are *in* the game as well as *about* the game? See Brooks (1997) for a survey of postfeminist positions on representation.

[61] Buckley is critical of the "content-and explicitness-centered" definitions of a pornographic image as taken up by the US antipornography movement (Dworkin et al.) which she claims do not take into account "the contextual complexity and fluidity" of pornography's shape-changing, and its shifts "across time and space boundaries" (Buckley, 1991: 183). She argues that it reduces anything to do with representation of the female body to pornography, and that the movement's campaign strategies create an atmosphere of fear and an extreme conservativism which stifles artistic experimentation and expression.

Seeking to locate this new way of seeing in "the body's vulnerability to sensations" and its capacity for "hallucinatory fabrications" rather than "the reality of the referents causing these sensations" (9-10), Williams insists on taking the content and image character of the image into account. In keeping with Grosz' reminder of the delights to be found within specular games of recognition, Williams suggests that rather than pornographic photographs offering "a debased, excessive reality", that they evidence a capturing of "an exhilarated and ecstatic spectator-observer" (11). This capture is achieved through an enabling of physical immediacies particularly those of new sensorially engaging visual technologies, whether the still images of photographs or the moving images of film.[62]

While today, the status of the photograph as a sight, however fantastic the subject, competes with knowledge of its fabrication and artifice, the most constructed/selected pose entails both contradiction and pleasure. Those photographs most likely to be published, exhibited, or otherwise circulated and reproduced, usually manifest iconic features, even when still being read as 'a found moment', or some chance encounter with time, or a revealing what normally slips past everyday seeing. The momentary nature of the photograph, its freezing of expression, viewpoint and boundaries, its flat space and its material and aesthetic character, constitute a curious record of 'life'.[63] Far from photographic sources providing a better account of reality the conventional photograph further distances lived experience. What it facilitates are specular pleasures, whether those of "ocular possession" (Crary, 1990:127), or the sensations of one's own body responding to such lookings (Williams, 1995), or those resulting from the enacting and scrutinizing another's view.

Although photographic micro-moments can evoke movement, action, and context, past or future, the carnal, the experiential, vitality, memory and so on, a photograph, as Sontag (1977) puts it, turns reality into a shadow. It is a fixed, concretized

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[62] In her examination of the role of sensation in c19th visualities, Williams raises the issues of different observers, different subjectivities, and different sexualities. Even the most radical of the pornographic productions, *Arcade E*, that Williams describes in the course of her mostly non-judgmental analysis of the pleasures and engagements of pornographic materials, she finds conventionally male, or, as Williams puts it, misogynist and phallus-centered (1995: 36). Allowing that pornographic images displaying women are likely to be directed to male audiences, and keeping in mind the more openly advertised soft porn publications, Williams argues that for the vast category of hard core images depicting sexually active heterosexual couples, the audience is not so easily determined. For images designated for homosexual viewers, the audience is even less certain. The possibility of different seeings, and different responses is implied through this discussion.

[63] Painting rendered the stereoscopic experience of the synthesized two-eyed view in the modelling of rounded 3D forms. The stereoscopic camera achieved an effect of depth but only as a stacking of layer upon layer: the objects or figures remain flat like a cut-out.

shadow, "a richly informative deposit" (ibid.: 180) that invites an obsessive scrutiny fuelled by the "oppressive sense of the transience of everything" (Sontag, 1977: 179). In the earliest experience of the mirror-daguerreotype, notions of representation were set aside in a recognition of the photograph's capacity to act as an imprint. Elizabeth Barrett's passionate avowal of the daguerreotype as having a worth beyond anything produced by the noblest artist, in that it was a memento of those she loved, like a lock of hair, indicates this imprint sensation and the obsessive looking. In a letter written in 1843 Barrett explains:

> "It is not merely the likeness which is precious in such cases - but the association and the sense of nearness involved in the thing...the fact of the *very shadow of the person* lying there fixed forever!" (quoted in Sontag, 1977: 183).

Nearly one hundred and forty years later, Roland Barthes (1984/80), coming to terms with his mother's death, searches through old photographs for something of her truth or essence. He sees the photograph, not as "shadow", but as a literal "emanation", the radiations or luminances from a real body touching him, and through this essence, he discovers something "inexplicable" - the *air*, a kind of intractable supplement of identity, a luminosity which accompanies the body, something moral and mysterious. Barthes too links photography to time and death. He calls it a natural witness, a "clock for seeing" and pointing to the absence of the referent as the "already dead", indeed, an imperious sign of his and everyone's own death. As he describes it, the photograph's metaphysical presence and historical relation to "life/death" is "reduced to a single click, the one separating the initial pose from the final print" (Barthes, 1984/80: 92).

As Barthes noted, in the stilled images of photography and painting, the subject may look us in the eye (111) and do so without evoking the ironic effect characteristic of direct postmodern filmic address.[64] Unlike the ongoing shifting transforming flows produced by moving image technologies, photographs have a striking presence, and further, we seem to have an almost infinite capacity to recall them. A memorable image is likely to be a clear iconic representation and it may even be the model for encoding one's own experience. In remembering oneself for instance, an act or appearance is likely to appear re-encoded as a 'still'. In contrast, the imagery of the television or cinema screen is a transitional time-based event rather than an image-object. Filmic events, like dreams, tend to be far more elusive to memory. When

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[64] This self-reflexive 'stepping aside' from the illusion is apparent in Rene Clair's 1924 Dada film *Entr'Acte* and occurs in mainstream film from Tony Richardson's 1963 *Tom Jones* onwards.

films *are* recalled, they may be recalled as a stilled flash, or a specific moment within a flux of more vaguely differentiated happenings, or the recall may even utilize a photographic-still seen in the media or recalled from advertisements.

The frozen character of photographs facilitates the sign potential of even the most accidental of pictures. In advertising and media imagery this is enhanced by the purposeful maximization of iconic qualities, developed toward completeness, idealism, and fetishism. Even when cast in more random, perceptual form, these images are not so easily marked off from so-called conceptual images, in that they are also coded constructions. The term 'conceptual imagery' is used as a catch-all to designate all kinds of images outside of perceptual systems, and it includes coded symbolic signs and extends to expressionist, naive, stylized and decorative and informational schemas. While I would argue that all imagery is both conceptual and experiential, there still remains a need to differentiate images. For instance, the kind of iconic imagery that features gestalt forms, and tends toward wholeness, frontality, completeness, clarity and emphasizes characteristic features, differs, though is clearly related to that which emphasizes identifying features to the point of fetishism, with the part standing for the whole. This differs again from schematized symbolic imagery reduced to its minimum features, or images that map or record observation - images, which Gombrich (1968) has shown, still need to be based on symbolic schemas to facilitate recognition and meaning. That there is no simple or precise terminology in place is no doubt indicative of a certain lack of everyday attention or concern.

Perfection, Death and Mastery

The strategy used by Raphael Santi in the c16th in constructing an ideal female form by amalgamating the most beautiful parts of various bodies now appears, with corporeal perfection currently on the consumer agenda, to model what Ewen terms the "dream of wholeness", a frozen, timeless, if formulaic, infallibility and certainty. In response to the world of fragmented images, parts of bodies become "building blocks of a complete ideal image" (Ewen, 1988: 89) but result in a subsequent loss of the infinite possibilities of life. Ewen notes that "Photogenic beauty rests its definition of perfection on a smooth, standardized, and lifeless modernism, a machine aesthetic in the guise of a human... Against the flat, clichéd view of reality that they portray in the fashion photograph, all elements of lived experience constitute potential flaws" (ibid.).

Ewen's critique of consumer culture traces the means by which the body motif has become associated with self-motivation and power ascribed to individualism. His study shows how the built/sculpted body and the disciplined/fasting body reveal a Foucauldian determination of the individual body as "the object and target of power" (Foucault, 1977:136). What appears to be mastery (of one's body and one's life), Ewen shows to be a matter of self-subjection, a social control mediated by style, and corresponding to late nineteenth-century science's claim to identify "a system of human typologies which would allow various authorities (religious, police, medical, educational) to identify inborn predilections toward "virtue and vice"...giving, as historian James B. Gilbert argues, "inequality a rational, scientific justification" (cited in Ewen, 1988: 196). The mastered body is posited as a controllable, malleable and conformist body, with its operations mechanized, routine, predictable. Ewen warns that

> "As frozen, photogenic images - in ads or style magazines - become models from which people design their living spaces, or themselves, extreme alienation sets in.... the human subject is in jeopardy; destined only to be defined as a *consumer*" (91, italics in the original).

In the Western nude pornographic tradition and its cultural reworkings, the ubiquitous ideal body is an implicit mastering presence, an omnipotence, a body that acts on the body imaged and bodies looking. The portrayal of other operates as the counter-point to projections of the observed self and the observing self. In the pornographic *Playboy* image this presence is an illusion constituted through a performance of the fantasy of a preliminary sexual engagement or some invitational frisson most often triggered by breast display.[65] In soft porn publication an obsessive staging evidences fascinations around vaginal exposure that is constituted as an Oedipal absence or tease, rather than some phallic measure of explicitness.[66] Even when the model is not looking at the viewer, directly placing him in her look, he is still represented as her possessor-to-be, no matter how the details of the relationship might be imagined. This same woman's body, determined as a sight, is that same body to be found in the everyday media: in publications that target women the promise of mastery passes to the female viewer. Her mastery depends on her

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[65] Frith, Cheng & Shaw's (2004) content analysis of advertising also confirmed stagings of this sexual provocation particularly in representations of Western models as exotic/sensual types, and regardless of the category of the product advertised.

[66] See James Downs' (1990) taxonomic study of the nudity and nude images in Japan which measures degrees of nudity in relation to degrees of body exposure.

sexual control, her ability to attract and facilitate pleasure, which more often than not involves her submission to male desires.

Moving image pornography still juggles between enabling the enactment of the gaze and the mirror play of its doubling, and a production of fetishized stills and close-ups that deliver a climactic charge or clear focus. Different media play out these delights and pleasures using different strategies, but pornographic effect is not dependent on any particular media, or aesthetic, or quality of production. For all of photography's carnal excess, video, illusionist painting and comic strips have all been hugely successful in evoking sexual responses, and I imagine that even the most arcane secret symbols, might be incorporated into the circuits of sexual arousal. Sandra Buckley's study of the relations of sexuality betw   , manga publications and the Japanese sex industry for instance shows that even the most innocuous objects can be used for pornographic evocation. Despite government prohibitions on explicit nudity, Buckley found not only the full repertoire of Western pornographic conventions in adult Japanese comic books - with some ten million sold monthly to both men and women –but also hugely innovative "graphics of representation through nonrepresentation" (Buckley: 1991: 186).[67]

In the modern voyeuristic realm, the penis is never represented but given imaginative reign through the blank spaces and various phallic substitutes and plays out a Lacanian creation of presence through absence. As Buckley observes, "In the Edo period the phallus was everywhere. In the pornographic comic books it is nowhere" (187). Instead everyday people and articles are sexualized and "located in

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[67] Downs' (1990) study notes that the explicit depiction of naked bodies, and particularly the depiction of genitals and pubic hair, is subject to censorship in most Asian Pacific countries including Japan despite its rich history of sexualized culture and sexual display. In Japan prostitution and massage parlours are openly visible in particular areas such as Kabukicho, and the presence of love hotels, explicit nudity in news, documentary and investigatory stories in the media, the fantastic and bizarre sexual content of Japanese manga, and a history of erotic and explicit sexual imagemaking from the Edo period, indicate a thriving sexualized society. Some 30,000 to 40,000 porn magazines are also imported annually, and as productions and publications intended for public consumption all genitalia, pubic hair, and acts of sexual intercourse are normally edited out, or blurred. Yet local 'girly' publications are openly displayed on newstands, and many of them feature hometown porn actresses displaying pubic hair, while 'art photography' publications display the full range of conventional 'cheesecake images, as well as full-frontal nudes. 'Photo magazines', read by young men *and* women, contain 'cheesecake' shots and images of couples having intercourse with the crucial bits obscured by dots. Downs argues that in Japan nudity can also be located in traditions of humour and sentiment, or contextualized within themes of family and motherhood rather than sexual or erotic meaning. He suggests for instance, that the breast-feeding scenes in Juzo Itami's films, *Tampopo*, 1986, and *Taxing Woman*, 1987, which he claims so puzzled and disturbed many Western viewers, may, for Japanese viewers, work across both nurturing and eroticism. Since the breast is indeed a nurturing part of the female body, this interpretation may be culturally wider than Downs assumes. His study's focus on instances and degrees of explicit display of body parts seems itself reflective of a conservative Western male sexual fetishism.

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an idealized space outside of the "real" "(ibid.) where fantasy and the mundane merge. Given this inventiveness, censorship is no obstacle to the marketing of pornography. And encountered across all kinds of activities, and taken together, such various instances constitute a coherent conservative narrative. Buckley examined the ways a wide variety of pornographic production in the commercialization of sex linked to other activities such as the sale of sex aids and props, and found that even historically this network operation was apparent with shunga images of the Edo period linked to the brothel industry. In modern Japan, comic books and pornographic computer games reference other kinds of productions and industries.[68]

The appeals of pornography vary in different genres to reflect differences in audience desire.[69] In her analysis of comic book narratives Buckley found that though "the comics-for-girls are potential sites for the exploration of difference, the comics-for-men act as mechanisms for sameness" (192); that men remain trapped in the "closed system of technoporn" (190). It would seem that choice within male pornography is usually only a choice within a closed circuit of possibilities, and functions to mask repetition, discourage boredom and to be just stimulating enough to make way for further consumption. Jonathan Crary describes the pornographic body as one constructed by "the perfection of technologies of attention, in which stimul··· images can produce the same effect repeatedly as if for the first time" (Crary: 1990: 96). The photographic, pornographic image is one emptied of any self, beyond the performance of a sexual service toward the maintenance of a normative, predictable and sexualized sign of 'maleness' through the enactment of certain male-centered desires of detachment, control and mastery. This ritual of reassurance across all cultural forms whether comics or computers, is a ritual rationalized, as Crary puts it, as an "optical neutrality" (96).

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[68] Stories in recent 'bishonen' publications, for instance, are interwoven with film stills, reproductions of ads showing male bodies, advice columns, details of transvestite and gay clubs. The Japanese comic book is seen by Buckley as requiring reader participation in a contextualization of images according to familiar codes, and an narrative ordering of disparate images and references, derived from an ever-shifting milieu of fashion, movies, and gossip. She notes that these same interactive variables are also available in the love hotels through choice in gadgets, projected images, sound, smell and light effects, or in karaoke bars where singing patrons choose from an array of objects such as feathers or whips to touch images of orgasmic women displayed on the large video screens.

[69] Sandra Buckley discusses 'Penguin in Bondage' in which a player has to beat a cast of eighty monsters created by a mad scientist. The player is provided with a cast of 'bunnygirls' and 'angels' whose preferred sexual activity, hormone levels, degree of intelligence, level of violence, and pain endurance can be selected along with various items to be used on monsters, or female characters (1991:163).

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Images have the power to validate us. We desire particular kinds of objects/photographs, because their fascinations and pleasures have value or significance for our sense of self. The pornographic image suggests that desire is for the image and its stimulations rather than real sexual contact. As Labowitz and Lacy have observed, in pornographic production, real sexual passion is curiously absent. Indeed they have argued that pornography's images express a clear and virulent hatred of women; that what it reinforces is male bonding, and that what it confirms are ideologies implicitly validating misogyny and the domination of women. As they see it, "It is the desire to own, control, and destroy, encouraged by the advertising industry, which has been packaged as a model of possession itself" (Labowitz & Lacy, 1985:124).

In soft porn this combination of sex, power, and violence is not overt but can be located in various codings of dominance and vulnerability, in the presentation and implication of incipient male action/ threat/mastery that operates as an encultured and commodified condition of response or arousal. Carol J. Clover, discussing the popularity of men's action and war movies, has proposed that "a capacity for sadistic violence is what finally distinguishes male from female"; and that it is this violence that functions "to hold the gender bottom line" (Clover, 1995: 214-215). In war and action genres, any sign of the very real possibility of male masochism appears as a threat to gender boundaries, or risks evoking homosexual scenarios, and is therefore repressed. Clover reminds us that Freud declared "that the most deeply embedded male anxiety has to do not with castration in any blanket or straightforward sense but with the fear of standing in a passive or "feminine" relation to another man and the particular sort of castration that might proceed from that." (Freud, 1973: 252, quoted in Clover, 1995: 210). Even so, any such fear of a passive status is predicated on what already exists for women in the way of abuse, exploitation, containment, regulation and punishment.

In societies which have strict protocols regarding the sexual behaviour and appearance of women, images of the Western female body, seen as free of the constraints of traditional sexual mores, contribute yet another level of meaning to essentialist renderings of women, one which confirms women as inherently promiscuous, and sexually and emotionally volatile. Bodies cast in this mould have no history; they are nature, and exist without complexity, depth, or contradiction. As creatures whose sexual appetite is potentially voracious and dangerous (to men's

designations of themselves as men, to patriarchy, to traditional social orders) their bodies need to be covered, controlled, chastized, and, if need be, destroyed.

The pornographic body becomes a fetish through which viewers seek to reenact their loss of nature, (Benjamin, in Buck-Morss, 1991) and for men to deny all that which they see as feminine or woman/mother (Buruma, 1984; Theweleit, 1989) in order to reconfirm their separateness and reinstate that very difference which marks them 'men'. This narrative, characteristic in the West of certain cultural productions such as film noir, or the fantasies of the warrior male (Theweleit, 1989/1977, Turner & Carter, 1986), is recognizable in the pronouncements on women in repressive fundamentalist regimes of all kinds.

The Art of Body

The nude photographic tradition, recently revitalized within the realm of 'art photography', operates somewhere between formalist and new realist approaches and the look of chic punk fashion photography. Exemplified by portfolio publications such as *Black and White*, it is reflective of the market orientation of this arena with its connections to advertising, journalism, and fashion. Recent approaches have adopted the look of Bill Hensen's dark Romanticism though such images reflect an excursion into the sexual only so far as it can be recuperated into 'the look', the controlling of appearance - and desire - incorporating glamour, style, celebrity, and consumerism.

Modernist art relations to the nude though, post- *Olympia*, have often been interrogatory and revisionary. Though Degas' images reclaimed the corporeality and specificity of women's bodies, Cézanne's *Great Bathers* series and Matisse's *Odalisques* reinstated the classical pastorale or nude in formalist terms that maintained women as nature and given, and they need to be located in relation to the Symbolists' reactionary and dramatic reassertion of the female nude as a marker of otherness, sacred and profane, for they share the same discursive ground of late c19th patriarchal society. When utilized for expressive and primitivist functions, from Gauguin's revitalization of the Lost Paradise theme to the savagery of Picasso's 1907 *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, the nude becomes anti-illusionist and anti-idealist. The modernists not only break away from such ancient designations, they recognize the power inherent in representation itself, particularly those residing in relations between looker/artists/narrator and their objects of portrayal. Picasso's

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Watcher series of etchings for instance explicitly acknowledges the artist's power in observing/representing and problematizes the position of the artist-observer-voyeur by portraying him as fascinated beast made monstrous in his obsessive, invasive, and menacing watching. In casting himself as the brutish male who endlessly looks, Picasso demonstrates self-reflexively how his ego and constitution of self is displaced onto his portrayal of women. In expressionist and naive works, images of the body remain significant too for conveying subjective feeling through the visual/visceral charge that they generate in the viewer.

Avantgarde responses to the pictured nude though, beginning with Duchamp's 1912 *Nude Descending the Staircase No.2* 1913 and his parodic *Large Glass (The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even)* (1915-23), have long been those of opposition. In the Dada realm, body representation is either refused, or de-aestheticized, or employed sardonically, with the nude a pastiche, parody or otherwise treated critically, or simply ignored. With depiction set aside in some strands of modernism, the body sometimes has been an absent but still powerful presence, displacing focus from the represented to the producing, reactive body.

It would seem that taking the representation of a body beyond its classical-consumerist paradigm might be a difficult enterprise, but it is possible to identify in current art practices, now de-centered across cultures, numerous realms in which representation of the body remains central. Body images of any sort might for instance be directly employed in an effort to explore and redefine what it is to be human, often in relation to the increasing technologization of the body and its environment. They may link the human body with nature or animals, or seek to discover the body afresh or recover something strange, or explore possibilities in shape-shifting, or, buying into the power paradigm, suggest relations with technology, or even, as in Yi Bul's 1994 sculptural series *The Visible Pumping Heart* with commerce.[70] Or, artists might use representations of the body in ways which resist conventional associations, meanings and surface representations.

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[70] Yi Bul (known also as Bul Lee) is primarily known as a performance artist in Korea but her work encompasses sculpture, installation also. Like Nam June Paik, her performance of self as artist is a constant mediated presentation as well, and she confronts all notions of traditional Korean femininity with a persona of bravura, energy and wit. Her beaded fish decaying in zip-lock plastic bags (*Hwa-Um*, 1992, *Majestic Splendour*, 1997) in a rich comment on mortality are among her most well known works internationally. For a survey of her work, including her *Hwa-Um* exhibited at the 1993 Asia-Pacific Triennial, see Lee (1995). See also Ewington (1994) who tells of Yi Bul coaxing/bullying people into swapping various pieces of clothing at the Asia-Pacific Triennial conference, a strategy which confronted the preciousness of identity, property, and sociability.

The body itself takes over body representation as both mediator *and* media in body art, with images intertwined with event and documentation. And in much radical and provocative work such as Yi Bul's 1989 *Abortion* (fig. 138), or the photographic and installation work of Julie Rrap, bodies are presented or depicted in ways which re-enact particular dimensions of the voyeuristic gaze for critical exposure. Rrap, like Morimura, inserts herself into Western art history using photographic images of her own body to merge the traditional artist's model and the artist's own body. In other work such as her 1991 installation *Resistance* or even earlier work in the eighties, beginning with her 1980-82 *Disclosures* and those represented in later survey exhibitions such as *Pleasure of the Gaze* (1985), *Body Images* (1986) or *Sighting References* (1988), Rrap employed photographic images of own body, often naked, to insert intimate or sexually explicit images "within critical debates that centre themselves around the oppositions of power (powerful/powerless)" (fig 139).[71] Her more recent work moves away from restagings of body traditions or depiction to challenge our denial of flesh-body. Her 1996 *Blindspot* series, (fig. 140) for instance, employs medical imaging technologies, and consists of fifteen iris prints, each showing a small section of skin, printed on holland blinds that are able to be raised or lowered by viewers. The images were initially produced with a colposcopic camera which magnifies the skin, and gives it the appearance of glistening flesh. This installation was accompanied by an 11min. video *Sniff Movie* made with a laproscopic camera which closely scrutinized the external body.

In Rrap's work, as in much feminist and post-colonialist work, the representation and referencing of the body are crucial for addressing exclusion and misrepresentation, and in working toward a recognition of representation as a politics, despite the difficulties of reclaiming the body's over-determined image from patriarchal, imperialist and racist memory.[72] Many artists even make use of those histories and determinations. Lee Wen, for instance, in his ongoing

[71] Quoted from artist's statement in catalogue, *Resistance: an installation by Julie Brown-Rrap*, Queensland Art Gallery, 1991, p. 2. See also Alexander et. al (1998) and Moore (1998) for further discussion of Rrap's explorations of body, representation and art history.

[72] What many sixties' feminists realized was that the female body, no matter how it was portrayed, could always be recuperated as a sexual object by any viewer so inclined. Feminist art of the 1970s concentrated on portraying women's experience rather than women's appearance. They also began to engage in counter chauvinism, that is, anti-male, pro-female work in an angry confrontation of accepted social practice and an attempt to appropriate or reverse male power strategies, only to find that women were so over-determined as sexualized beings that there was no simple reversal possible. In the eighties feminist activists such as the Guerrilla Girls demanded that the art establishment recognize women's art which was diverse, anti-heroic, often experiential, and autobiographical. Highly transgressive 'shock' assertions of female experience, an often raw, confrontational, activist artmaking, took centre stage, other more complex practices were also developing. These were often more Duchampian and emphasized satire, humour, parody, simulation, pastiche and, as with Rrap's work allegory and a play on expectations.

performances and public holy man-style wanderings of his series *Journey of a Yellow Man,* (fig, 141) makes his almost nude, yellow painted body a metaphor for subjectivities determined by body, race, gaze, and history, but one that also transcends those constraints through his unfettered movements within new and strange places and his chance engagements with new contexts, new people, and new possibilities.[73]

Grosz notes that "the body is commonly considered a signifying medium, a vehicle of expression, a mode of rendering public and communicable what is essentially private (ideas, thoughts, beliefs, feelings, affects)" and moreover, she points out that it operates as "a two-way conduit" sensing the external world and expressing its internal states (Grosz, 1994: 9). In the West, the fields of body art and contemporary dance, enacted by bodies, explore body not only as subject, but also as a technology for producing meaning, experience, and offer examples of the communicative body working directly toward self-understanding (Frank, 1991).[74]

The employment of the body as *a vehicle* for art ideas for instance, reflects an understanding of the performative nature of body, and can be seen in the Futurists' development of the mechanized performer who embodied the energy and dynamism of contemporary technology. Performances such as Balla's 1914 *Macchina Tipgraphic and Piedigrotta* were responses to Marinetti's call for an utter totality of

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[73] For example, his *Journey of a Yellow Man No. 5: Index to Freedom* 1994, presented at the 4th Asian Art Show held at Fukuoka Art Museum, extended into the streets to engage with everyday consciousness around race and Asianness.

[74] Body art' is a catch-all term for an enormously varied field intersecting with performance art, but it is possible to point to some of the multiple trajectories of embodied becoming-subjectivities and significations that have developed alongside, and in relation to, mainstream body practices and narratives and portrayals of the c20th. It meshes with a vast range of practices and knowledges to do with kinetics, the aesthetics and politics of the body, enculturation of the body and visual, aural and performative practices. For surveys of its development and practice see Goldberg (1979); Steinman, (1986); Fraleigh (1987); Marsh (1993); Schneider (1997); Broadhurst (1999); Demster (1999); Miglietti (2003); Thomas (2003). 'Contemporary dance' is the term for radical art dance beginning in the early c20th. It began as a form of expressionist barefoot modern dance initiated by dancer-choreographers such as Isadora Duncan, Rudolf von Laban, and Mary Wigman, and taken into high art practice by Martha Graham, and Sergie de Diaghilev's *Ballet Russe*. In the forties Maya Deren brought contemporary dance and film together in a meshing of Surrealist ideas and Eastern-influenced mysticism. (See for instance Maya Deren & Talley Beatty's 1945 *A Study in Choreography for Camera* and her 1946 *Ritual in Transfigured Time,* a collaboration with Rita Christiani and Frank Westbrook). Post World War II, contemporary dance as performance art took a key role in the New Avant-garde, and its various art directions, from Duchamp and John Cage's ideas of chance, spontaneity, and assemblage, to minimalism, and anti-art propositions embracing conceptualism, critical provocation, and transgression. Its theorization has passed through the various orthodoxies of humanism, semiotics, Marxist representational politics, and the feminist gaze analysis, but it has always invited some form of phenomenological consideration. Today's New Dance tends to be seen as a propositional and experiential mode that investigates and constructs emphatically embodied, interrelated subjectivities. See Steinman (1986); Fraleigh (1987); Adshead-Landsdale & Layson (1996); Dempster (1999); Thomas (2003) for detailed accounts of this body-centered practice and its concerns.

passion and energy to be manifested through the body. In his *Manifesto of Futurist Dance* 1917, Marinetti provided instructions on 'how to move' to achieve 'metallicity'. This was not some escalation of the 'aesthetic of torque' identified by Schwartz as an industrialized enculturation of the body (1992), for the kinetic awareness and structures of Futurist performance and art are not rationalist propositions. Futurism was more focused on expressive, excessive experience, in keeping with the orgiastic fantasies of power and annihilation (Theweleit, 1989/1977), and a delirious celebration of mechanization. Though admiring of the work of Nijinsky, Isadora Duncan and Loie Fuller, Marinetti, demanded that performers go further than 'muscular possibilities' and aim for 'that ideal multiplied body of the motor", and proposed productions such as 'dance of shrapnel' and 'dance of the aviatrix'.[75] In keeping with fascist dream here, the individual was to be subsumed within a greater force, and was considered only one component in the total production which aimed at a merging of actor and scenography, and a compression of sound, scene and gesture (Goldberg, 1979: 18-19).

In Russia, and in the German Bauhaus, the Constructivists abstracted the body into geometric entities reflective of Cubism and Suprematism.[76] In Kruchenykh 's 1913 Opera *Victory over the Sun* with its sets and costumes designed by Malevich, the actors moved puppet-like to the rhythm dictated by the artist and director. Later performances used mechanical figures reflecting Futurist ideals of speed and technology, with their forms visually broken up or dissolved by blades of light, or truncated, deprived of hands, legs or torsos (Goldberg, 1979). In "Production" theatre beginning in 1916, the social, disciplined and communal body was enacted by the Russian Constructivists, their interest being in communicating art and politics through spectator engagement and participation promoted through a fusion of popular and esoteric theatre and entertainment traditions.[77]

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[75] Contemporary dance lent itself to these ideas of the passionate expressive body. In 1913 Valentine de Saint-Point danced a highly experimental evocation of futurism in *Poem of Atmosphere*, combined with projected coloured lights and mathematical equations, to music by Satie & Debussy. See Tisdall & Bozzolla (1977) for the Manifesto of Futurist Dance 1917 and Apollonio (1973) for other futurist manifestos engaging with the performed body.

[76] While teaching at the Bauhaus, Oskar Schlemmer created performances from 1926-29 where the body became a formalized element in physical, spatial matrixes. In his 1926 *Gesture Dance*, for instance, a notation system was used to plot the dance, while his 1926 *Game with Building Blocks* and *Dance of the Stage Wings* employed informal spontaneous movements to explore formal possibilities of form, movement, and interaction. In 1927, in works such as *Dance in Space* or *Slat Dance* he began to use a constrained body as an abstract structure within geometric divisions of space. See Goldberg (1979) for a fuller discussion.

[77] Remarkably, it synthesized popular and folk forms of theatre, such as music hall, circus, variety, and the puppet show tradition, physical theatre in the form of the body eurhythmics of Emile Jacques-Dalcroze and the eukinetics of Rudolf von Laban, circus acrobatics, and Japanese theatre.

The body as *performed subject* appeared with Kokoschka's 1909 raw and violent expressionist performance in Vienna, *Murderer, Hope of Women,* in which aggressive 'veins' were painted over the outside of performers' bodies. (Goldberg, 1979). In Dada's refusal of establishment values and militaristic culture, the bourgeois body became a focus for ridicule and absurdity. In Dada evenings in Zurich, beginning in 1916, and later in Berlin, alongside puppets and shop mannequins that were social metaphors for a humanity of dummies, or mechanized beings, the mask was employed extensively as a means of transforming the 'civilized' self, that same being who espoused a rational war. Although antecedents to Dada performances lie in the carnival, and taken up by the avantgarde in Alfred Jarry's 1896 *L'Ubu Roi,* Dada's engagement with the body, particularly given Duchamp's kind of body play was to operate more distantly as irony and parody.[78] Performances such as *Parade,* a nonsense 'ballet' centered on a circus parade, staged in Paris in 1917 by Cocteau, Satie, Picasso and Massine, among others, differentiated its characters through their obsessively repeated actions, and nonsensical habits. In 1929, the surrealists Antonin Artaud and Vitrac, influenced by the writings of Marat de Sade and Bataille, founded the *Theatre Alfred Jarry* in Paris. There they attempted, under the notion of Artaud's 'theatre of cruelty,' to produce a new viewing body, transformed in a "theatre that wakes up hearts and nerves... serious theatre which upsets all our preconceptions, inspiring us with fiery, magnetic imagery and finally reacting on us after the manner of unforgettable soul therapy" (Artaud, 1970/1958: 64). In attempting to connect with and arouse sensibility, the body within *Les Mysteres de l'amour* and *Le Jet du Sang* enacted a visual language of expression within brief cinematic-like images of a violent, lurid fantasy world obsessed with death.[79]

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[78] Jarry's *Ubu Roi* was a revamped schoolboy satire which reveled in rude and revolting indig :ies. It centered on a character modelled on Jarry's old physics teacher represented as an infantile and outrageous king of an imaginary Poland. In the context of avantgarde art and performance in late c19th Paris, it became an infamous event seen as lampooning the establishment through a barrage of shock tactics. See Esslin (1968) for an account of Jarry's work in relation to the avantgarde. Duchamp's propositional work interrogates body representation in art. See for instance, *Nude Descending A Staircase,* 1913; his imprint pieces, for instance, *Female Fig Leaf,* 1950, and *Given: 1. Waterfall, 2. The Illuminating Gas, (Etant donnés)* 1946-66 (with its shocking peephole exposure of a naked female body referencing Courbet's 1866 *Origin of the World* suggesting the complicit destruction of art and truth.) His work also encompasses 'gender' performances as in 'Rose Selavy', and events staged around 'body' such as *Nude Chess* 1963 held during Duchamp's first major retrospective exhibition at Pasadena Art Museum.

[79] The initial scene of Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali's 1929 *Un Chien Andalou* in which a man gone bestial under a full moon, slices open a woman's eye, gives some idea of the potential of this Theatre of Cruelty. Bataille's writings also give a sense of this liberatory transgressive revolt against social restraints on desire. Film would seem to have a particular affinity with the transformations of the unconscious through time-lapse, and editing transitions, and bodily engagement. (French Impressionist films such as Abel Gance's 1929 *Napoleon* with its extreme accelerated montage-editing, split screens,

Performance art, which became prominent from the 1950s onwards in the Western art world, initially consisted of Neo-Dada events enacting absurdity and chaos, and creating satirical works which might in Wolf Vorstell's words "awaken consciousness".[80] The explosion of performance art in early 1960's America and Europe featured participatory, communal, and political action events, meshing with libertarian counter-culture, with emphasis on what has been termed 'democratization' and 'dematerialization' (Marsh, 1993; Lippard, 1973).[81] It also manifested a refusal of art-making as the production of something collectable or marketable, that is, 'product'. In the improvisational and often collaborative programmes of avant-garde and fluxus performance/events in both the US and Europe during and after World War II, artists such as Yves Klein, Merce Cunningham, the Judson Dance group, focused on the body in various ways. It rapidly expanded into a field of diverse intentions and forms, which included body

and extreme close-ups explore this affective territory). Surrealist films such as Jean Cocteau's (for example, *Blood of a Poet*, 1932, *Orpheus*, 1949) are more stylish and cool in feeling, while Bunuel's taste for the absurd works against sensory engagement or disturbance. See Kuenzli (1987) for a comprehensive introduction and discussion of Dada and Surrealist film. Artaud's vision of "fiery magnetic imagery" is more evident in experimental film and underground film such as Kenneth Anger's latesixties films such as *Invocation of my Demon Brother* or *Puce Moment*. In cinema production, with the work of directors such as David McLean (*Blue Velvet, Twin Peaks*) taking avant-garde 'disturbance' into the mainstream, the violence and sexually charged drama of dreams and in-between states is enacted upon the viewer in disturbing and sometimes monstrous ways, but entertainment productions working toward visceral effect for its own sake are unlikely to be what Artaud meant by "soul therapy". Some science fiction film, with its license to explore subjective states, might get somewhere near this though. The *Alien* series and the recent *Matrix* trilogy may well enter 'theatre of the cruel' territory. For discussions of the appeal of violence and horror as entertainment, see Twitchell (1985).

[80] The earliest US performance art took place in 1936-38 at Black Mt. College (which had links to the Bauhaus through Albers who had taken up a position there) when Schawinsky conducted his *Spectodrama*, a formal (constructivist) and pictorial experimentation and also *Danse Macabre* - a production "in the round" with cloaked and masked audience. In 1948 Black Mt. College revived Satie's *The Ruse of the Medusa*, featuring Elaine de Kooning. Buckmaster-Fuller, with choreography for 'the mechanical monkey' by Merce Cunningham, sets by Willem de Kooning, and music by John Cage. In 1952, Black Mt. College summer school staged *Untitled Event* based on Zen Buddhist attitudes of subjective reality, cause and effect, which employed chance relationships, improvisation, found music, no predetermination. John Cage's first MOMA concert with its found 'noise' music employing notions of chance and "indeterminacy" was held in 1943, though his more famous 'silent' work *4'33"* a soundscape made up of noises occurring within a specific space in time first took place in 1952.

[81] In the NeoDada context, everyday phenomena, including the body and its actions, were interpreted and employed as random events without causal relationships. Cunningham for instance, in his 1951 *Sixteen Dances for Soloist and Company of Three*, taking up ideas already set in motion by John Cage, employed natural everyday movement alongside the 'nine permanent emotions of the Indian classical theatre'. The actions and movements of the performers were structured by chance, determined by the toss of a coin. In 1960 Klein, in a satirical take on the role of the artist's nude and establishment determinations of art, staged *Anthropometrics of the Blue Period* where naked women covered in his signature blue paint registered their own body image by pressing themselves against a large canvas. Documentary photographs show that a formal orchestra accompanied this event, which seems to have been attended by a very ritzy black-tie, po-faced audience. In the Judson Dance group, set up in 1962, performers such as Steve Paxton, Tina Brown and Yvonne Rainer were developing new forms of 'democratic dance' including pedestrian movement and that interactive dance practice called Contact Improvisation, which aimed at spontaneous movement and contact with partner(s) at all times. As well as enabling creative, chance encounters and new kinetic possibilities, Contact Improvisation manifested as a metaphor for all kinds of human intimacies, rivalries, contests and connections.

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art, and its complex trajectories. In Japan, body art, deriving from Japanese traditions focused on the body, and expressing a radical resistance to social conservatism was already a feature of avantgarde practice by the 1950s within Gutai Theatre.

Western body art, was a particular interest focus for early feminist practitioners. Some such as Caroline Schneemann in works such as her 1963 *Eye-Body* and 1964 *Meat of Joy* (fig. 137) tried to reclaim the representation of women bodies by joyously celebrating (both women and men's) physicality and sexuality through various unscripted Dionysian body Happenings. Her performances staged re-engagements with the power of fertility and female sexuality to invoke matriarchal and ancient Goddess mythologies. Others engaged directly with social constructions and repressions of the female body and sought ways of representing women that avoided voyeuristic enactments or sexualized spectacle. Dance-based performances such as those by Trisha Brown or Yvonne Rainer for instance developed conceptual 'anti-art' propositions that denied the iconic role of the female performer. These early practices have since multiplied into numerous and diverse directions. Generally working with and across cultures, they now mesh with other body based traditions in a cultural globalism that has always been in action in some form, a globalism now heightened with contemporary communications technologies, diasporas, and the ease of travel. Many artists such as Marina Abramovic, exploit and rework body images toward enacting power, presence, gaining attention, or even work toward raising consciousness about matters repressive, biological and cultured, or producing particular reactions and experiences (figs. 142-143). Other artists concentrate on counter-production with diverse and complex portrayals that contrast and expose the sexual fantasy and misogyny and the ritualization of gender within popular culture, media images, and everyday normal appearances (fig. 144).

That this plenitude of bodywork and diversity of representation is largely confined to the practice of art is telling. Whether or not successful in influencing subjectivity or raising consciousness, it contrasts significantly with the narrow and circumscribed paths of those regimes of representation that dominate public media and popular production, and points to the limited but specific functioning of industrialized commercial media and its everyday images in determining an anxious stimulus-addicted compliance to the capitalist order.

As an intertextual event-based practice that interweaves with art's representational politics, oppositional critique and counter-imagery, working across spaces and

different contexts, body performance is largely an ephemeral practice, but it still produces images, whether those imagined from written description, recounted by those witnessing the events, or those fixed in documentary images (figs. 137-138, 141-144). Dal Lago (2000) observes that in China where exhibition practice is likely to attract unwanted official attention, temporal art forms, whether body performances or events, or video tape, are facilitating radical ideas, subversive practice, and underground culture of the kind that needs to be encapsulated in some embodied provocation. The public reach of an art that is centered on taboo realms, whether those of fantasy, sex, and the erotic, or prohibited discourse on oppression or indeed, any political comment may be limited, but there are ways of using what is acceptable for political effect. Nicholas Jose, who lectured for several years at Chinese Universities and was Cultural Counselor at the Australian Embassy in Peking from 1987 to 1990, has observed that "Some of the most suavely, painfully skeptical art I saw came from within the heart of academic realism" (Jose, 1994: 83). It may be the orthodox looking social-realist painting appearing in the National Art Exhibition that "with subtle irony subverts both Chinese history and its falsification" (84).

Art harbours myriad values, and knowledges excluded or not appropriate for mainstream and global culture; its cultural practices go beyond socially sanctioned, or mainstream endeavours. Contemporary art challenges the idea that the perceptual visual is *inherently* dominant, or, as Haraway might put it, the only visual that counts in the West, and destabilizes the certainty ascribed to objectivity. In the following chapter, I engage with cross-cultural studies to assist the recognition of the variation and richness within and beyond visualization, at risk in the homogenizing forces of globalism. While it might be argued that mainstream practices of non-Western industrial countries show considerable variation and cultural power despite having 'bought the system' of Western technology, this chapter shows some of the tensions evoked by modernism and Western values. It employs various accounts of cosmological foundations and beliefs, and cultural contexts in order to argue for a theory of the senses that recognizes extreme difference and cultural incommensurabilities centered on experience. Such a theory would acknowledge that any knowing/feeling takes place in relation to a "structure of general technoprosthetic virtual possibilities" (Derrida, quoted in Patton & Smith, 2001: 22) that includes images; indeed, that the very production of 'experience' is a mediated intuitive engagement in which meaning is also revealed in whatever cultural systems, technologies, and sensory regimes are favoured.

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109. top: Giotto, *The Mourning of Christ*, c1306
wall painting in the Cappella dell'Arena in Padua

110. bottom: Massacio,
The Holy Trinity, the Virgin, St. John and Donors, c1427
wall painting in Sta Maria Novella, Florence

Figs. 109-110

111. Nude Male Torso from Harappa, Indus Culture, (c2500-c1500 B.C.)

112. Indian *Yaksh*, 100-25 B.C.

113. detail, polychrome painted terracotta tile, Later Han Dynasty or Early Six Dynasties, c220 A.D.

114. torso, Sui dynasty (589-618 A.D.)

115. Bodhisattva, Tang Dynasty (618-906 A.D.)

116 Yen Li-Pen, (d. A.D. 673) 'Emperor Wen-ti Of the Ch'en dynasty' from *Portraits of the Emperors* series

Figs. 111-116

117. detail from a copy after Wu Tao-tzu (d. 792 A.D.), the *Eighty-Seven Immortals*,
(This is a c14th work copied from an c11th copy made by one of Wu Tao-tzu's followers, Wu Tsung-yuan,
a minor artist.)

Fig. 117
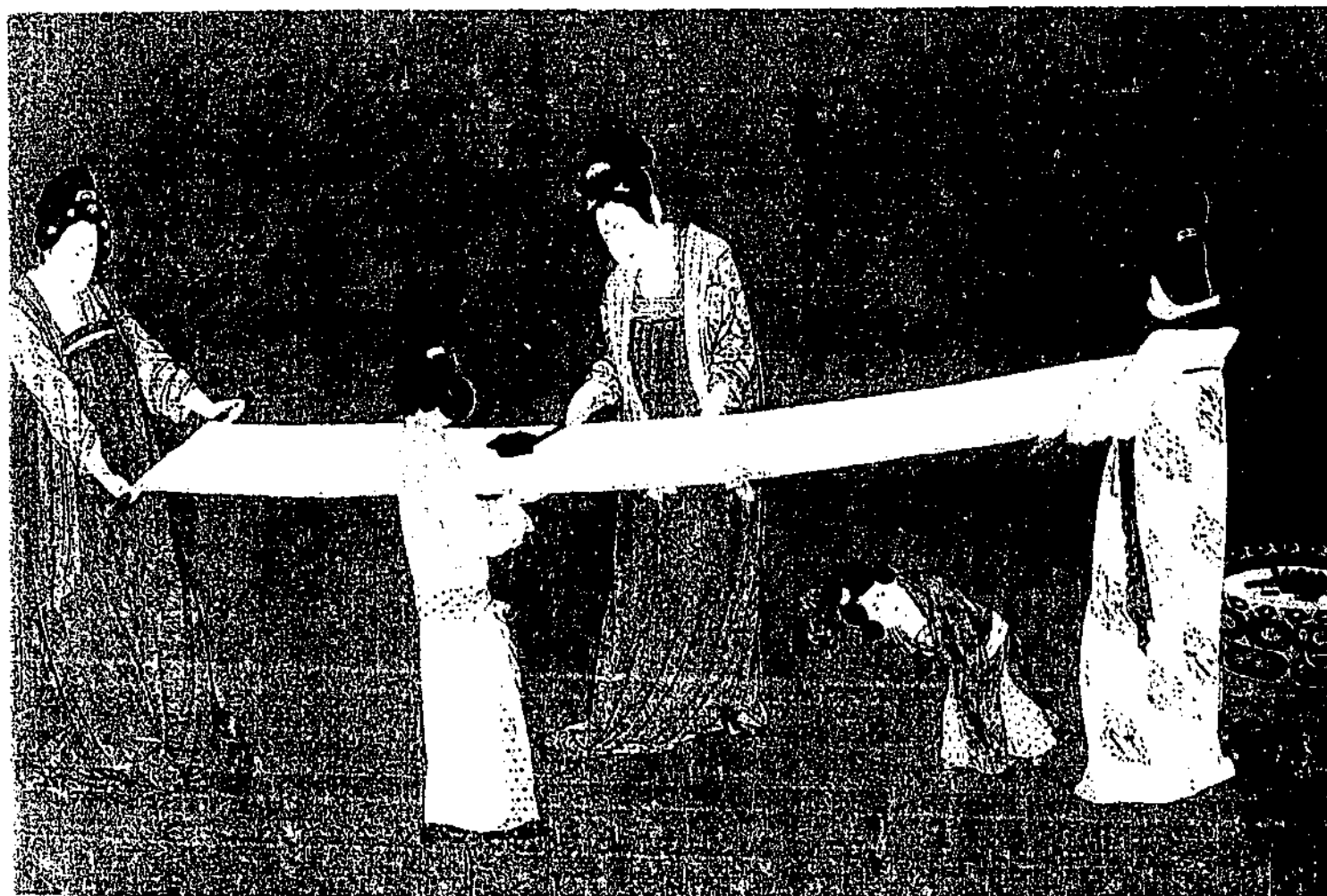
118. Chou Fang (active c780-810 A.D.),
Palace Ladies Listening to Music, section of handscroll, Tang dynasty
119. *Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk*, c12th
Northern Sung court hand scroll painting.
Figs. 118-119

120. Chang Tse-tuan (active 1100-1130)
Going Up River at Ch'ing-ming Festival Time, early c12th,
detail from handscroll, ink on silk.
An example of the realist technique soon to be abandoned by Chinese painter-scholars.

Fig. 120
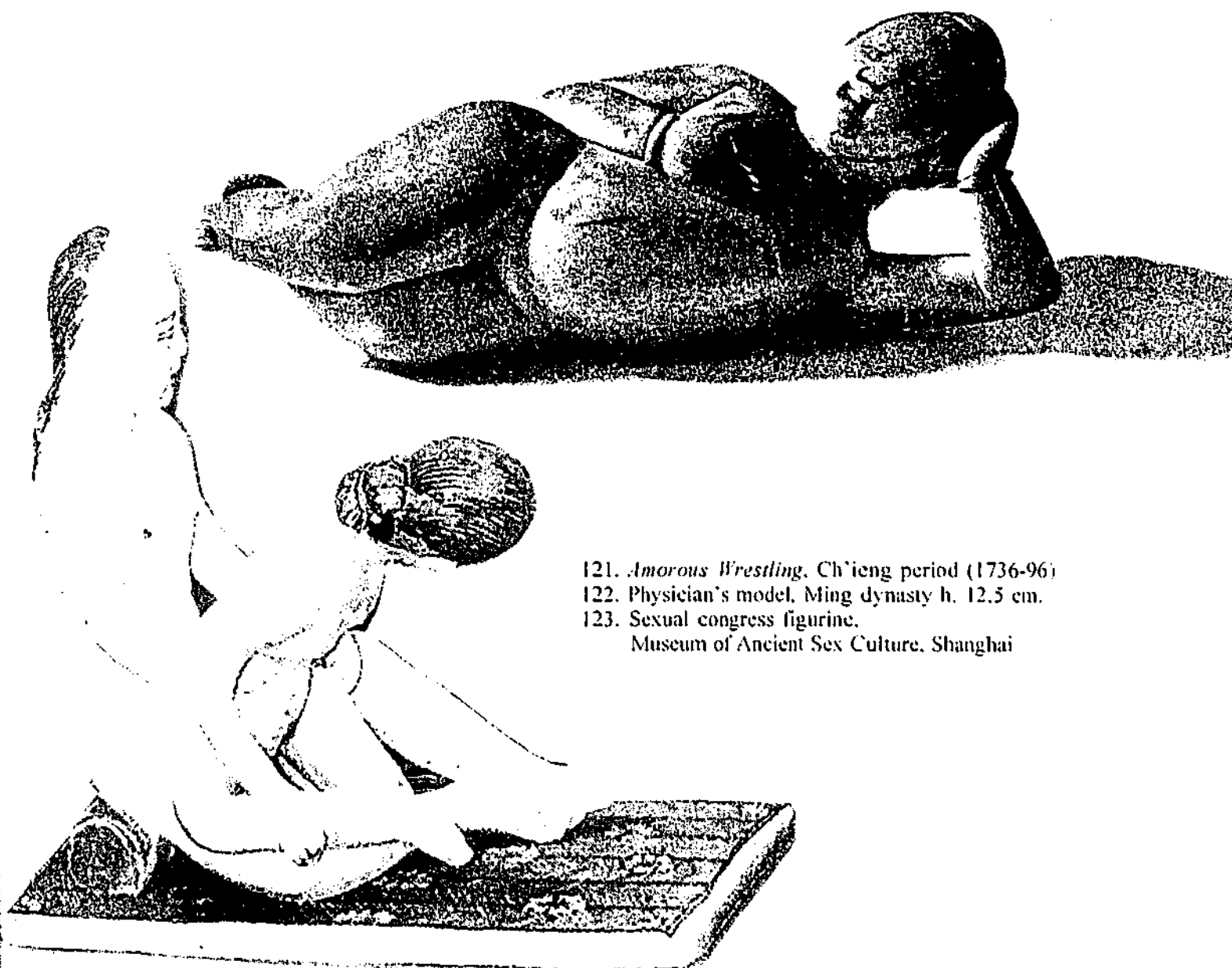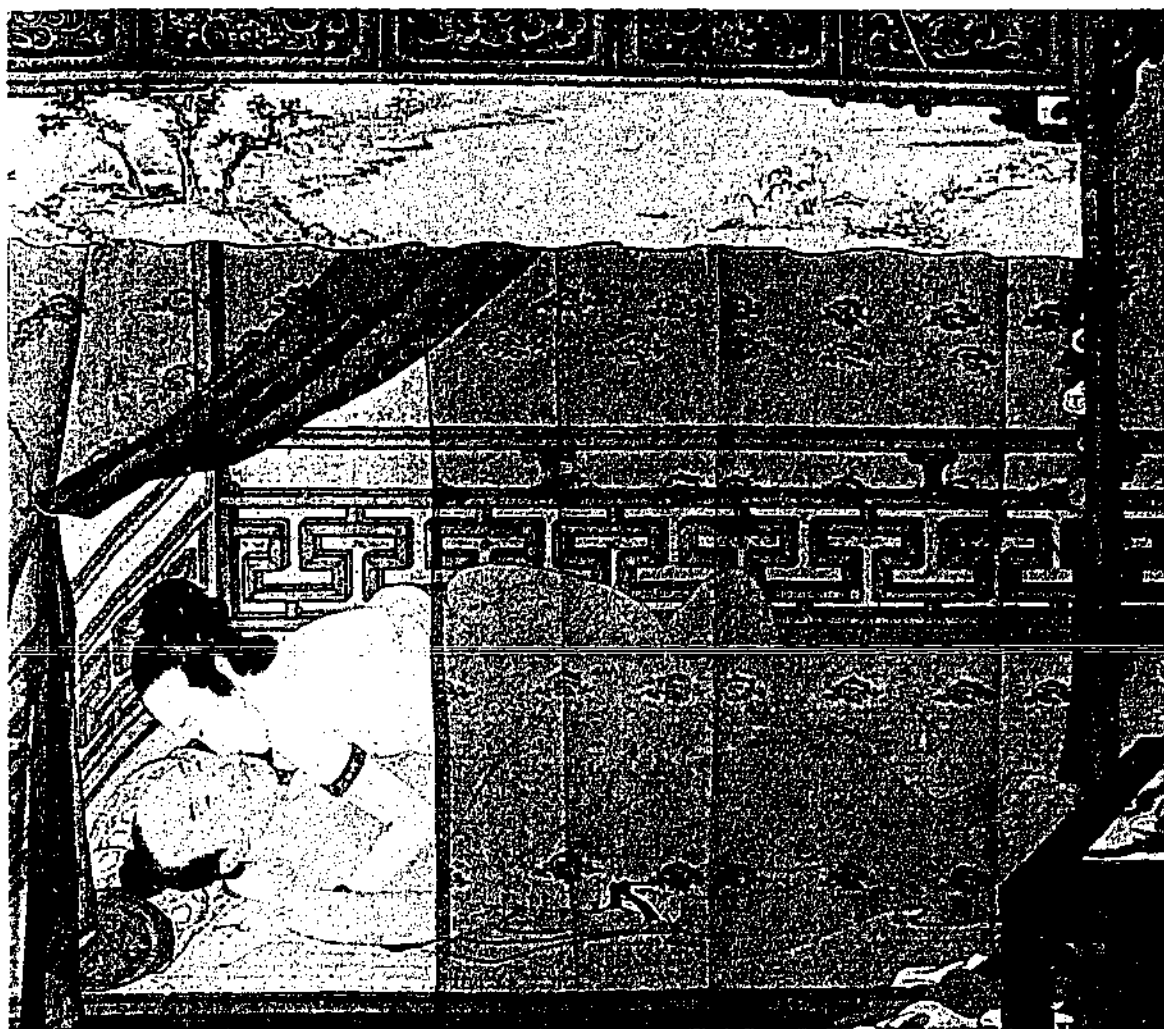
121. *Amorous Wrestling*, Ch'ieng period (1736-96)
122. Physician's model, Ming dynasty h. 12.5 cm.
123. Sexual congress figurine,
Museum of Ancient Sex Culture, Shanghai

Figs. 121-123
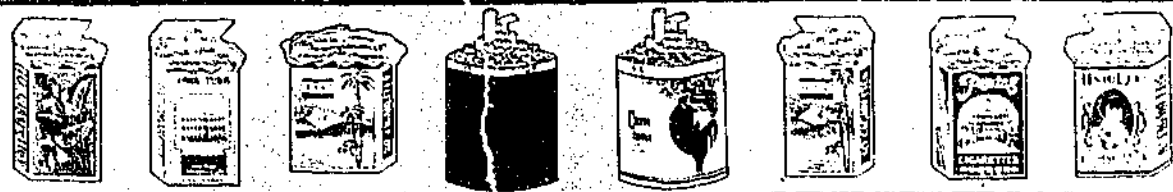
124. *yuefenpai*, advertisement for cigarettes, Hua Dong tobacco company Ltd. of China

Fig. 124

125. *yuefenpai*, advertisement for cigarettes, 1920s

Fig. 125

126. *yuefenpai*, advertisement for The Fook On Assurance & Godown Co. Ltd., 1910s

Fig. 126

127. The Master of Flemalle, *Annunciation,* centre panel of *The Merode Altarpiece,* c1425-28

Fig. 127

128. *yuefenpai*. Zhi Guang, Woman beside a Pool, 1930s

Fig. 128

陀地女全面復甦

Daily diet of sleaze ... Fat Dragon's column in the Apple Daily newspaper — Picture: RUSSELL SHAKESPEARE

Beijing backs off to give HK leaders a free hand

129. top: Newspaper Image
McGregor, Richard, 'Fat Dragon breathes fire into cross-border spice-trade'. *The Weekend Australian*, July 5-6th 1997, p. 13

130. right: Titian, *Bacchanal*, c1518

Figs. 129 -130

PLAYBOY

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131. Frontcover, *Playboy*, Chinese edition (Hong Kong)
Photographer: Hilda Hsu, vol. 85, August, 1993

Fig. 131

132. 'Zhao Ming', "a piece of Taiwanese jade waiting to be carved", *Playboy*,
Hong Kong edition, vol. 85, August, 1993, p. 61
Photographer: Hilda Hsu

Fig. 132

問題來了：應該在何處喊救命呢？在莎莎（右圖）看管的滑浪區？哈妮（對頁）看守的密蘇里泳池？還是那個碧波粼粼的海洋？那裏有茱莉、積奇蓮、嘉芙蓮或梅莉莎拯救你。我們提議你暫時閉氣，準會有人爭相替你……。

133. Image from 'Lifesaving Angels' portfolio, *Playboy*, Chinese edition, vol. 85, Aug., 1993, p. 37
Photographer: Stephen Wayda

Fig. 133
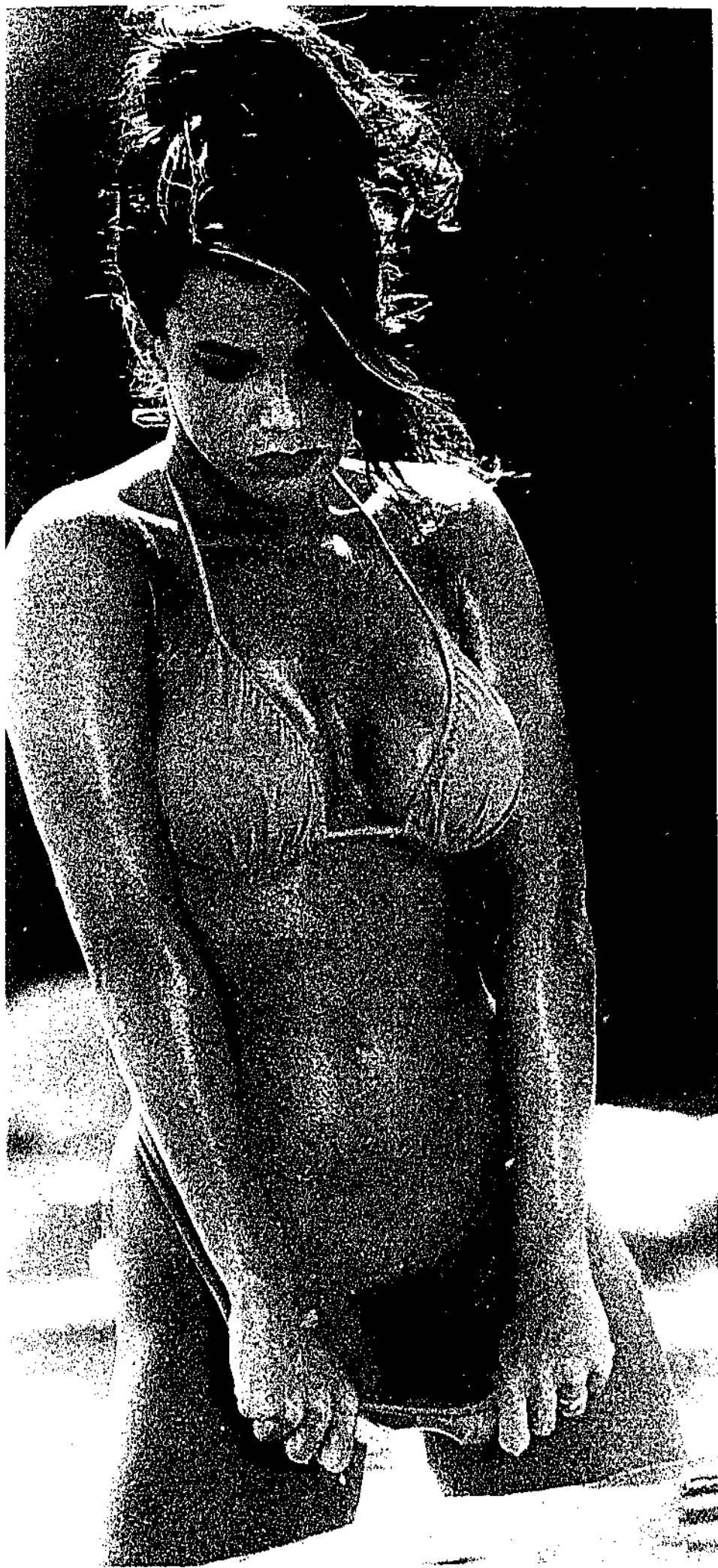
你會被深深迷住。在做後不到半小時，你便不顧一切，連激流也當作等閒，穿上緊窄的蛙鞋，便撲進水中游泳，以求讓熱情的救生員來拯救。今年夏天，里一親善專家，請到海灘去。六位最嬌艷的救生員就在這裏。她們會著把你在明眼花繚亂，然後才從旋渦中把你拉出來。莫莉 (Molly Carter) 便是個好例子。她是加州一個海灘的救生員，日落兒的眼淚大，有很多故事。在夏天，我們平均一天拯救四十個人，她說。去年，她救了一個德的國家水球隊的隊員。了那使不分明波搭進漩渦當中，但又又自否認，他不肯讓人拯救，特別是女人。不過，在比明尼或維馬海灘，以及親見莫的拍她的同事的加州馬利布海灘，都不乏願意被搭救的人。事實上，我們所見到的每一個男泳客，都瘋狂地拍泳或揮手呼救。

倩莉蓮 (左及上圖) 在加入比明尼的救生員行列之前，本是佛羅里達州的泳池救生員，1992年，她當選為該年度的春湖小姐。梅莉莎·利京 (Melissa Leyking) (右上圖) 是美國加州州立大學長灘分校的學生，主修體育。她喜愛陽光、滑浪和拯溺。德薩斯州人莎莎·魯丁 (Sasha Rudin) (右圖) 也是一樣，她則在一間中學的泳池看顧一班可愛的男生。

134. Image from 'Lifesaving Angels' portfolio, *Playboy*, Chinese edition, vol. 85, Aug., 1993, p. 31
Photographer: Stephen Wayda
Fig. 134

135. Image from 'Jennifer Lavoie' series, *Playboy*, Chinese edition, vol. 85, August, 1993, p. 95
photographer: Richard Fegley
Fig. 135

136. Yasumasa Morimura, *Red Marilyn*

Fig. 136

unexpectedly her research into archaic figurations

revealed striking precedents images of her lived actions
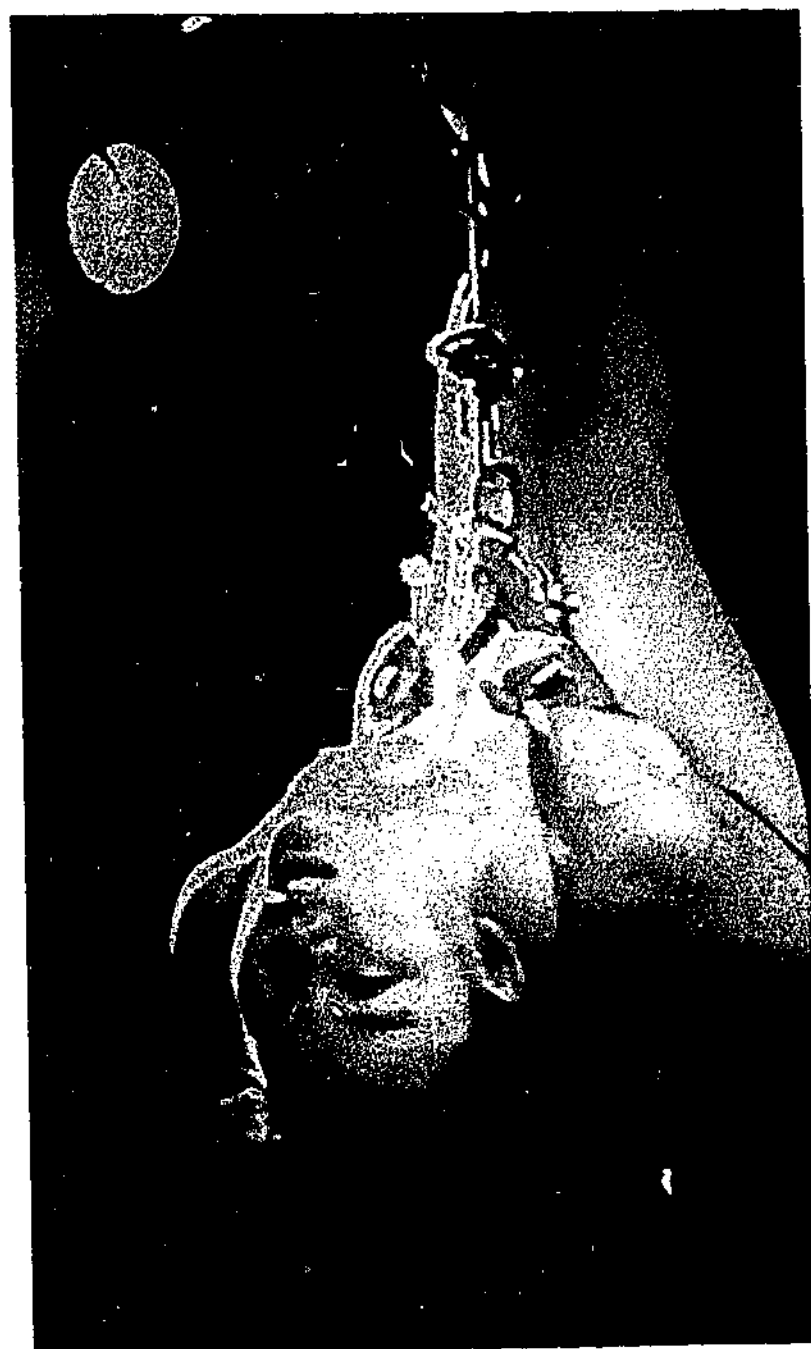
137. Carolee Schneemann.
Unexpectedly Research,
1963-1991,
8 of the 16 colour prints
comprising the work

138. Yi Bul's performance
Abortion 1989,
Dong Soong Art Center,
Seoul

Figs. 137-138
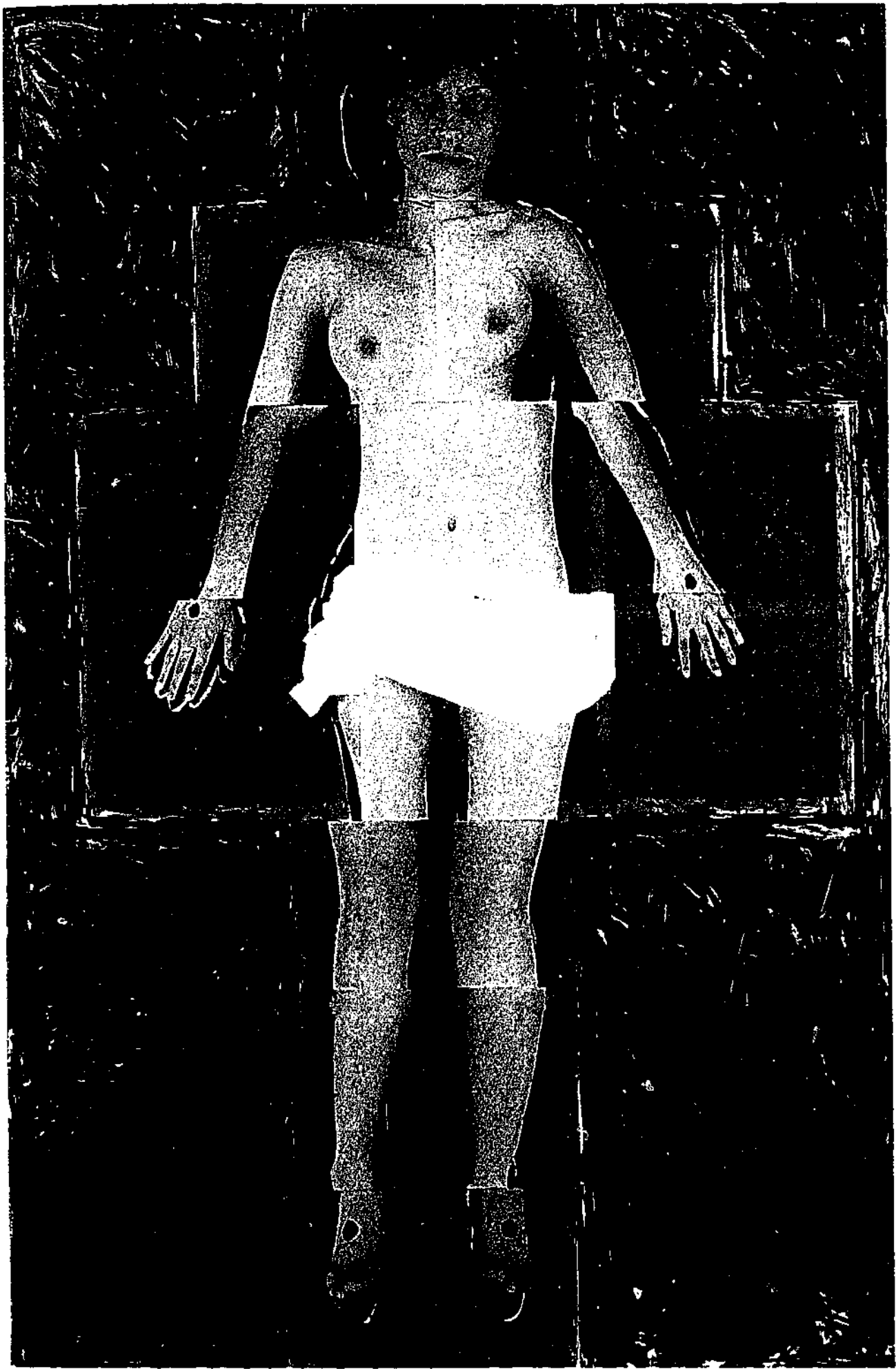
139. Julie Rrap *Personas and Shadows: Christ.* 1984

Fig. 139
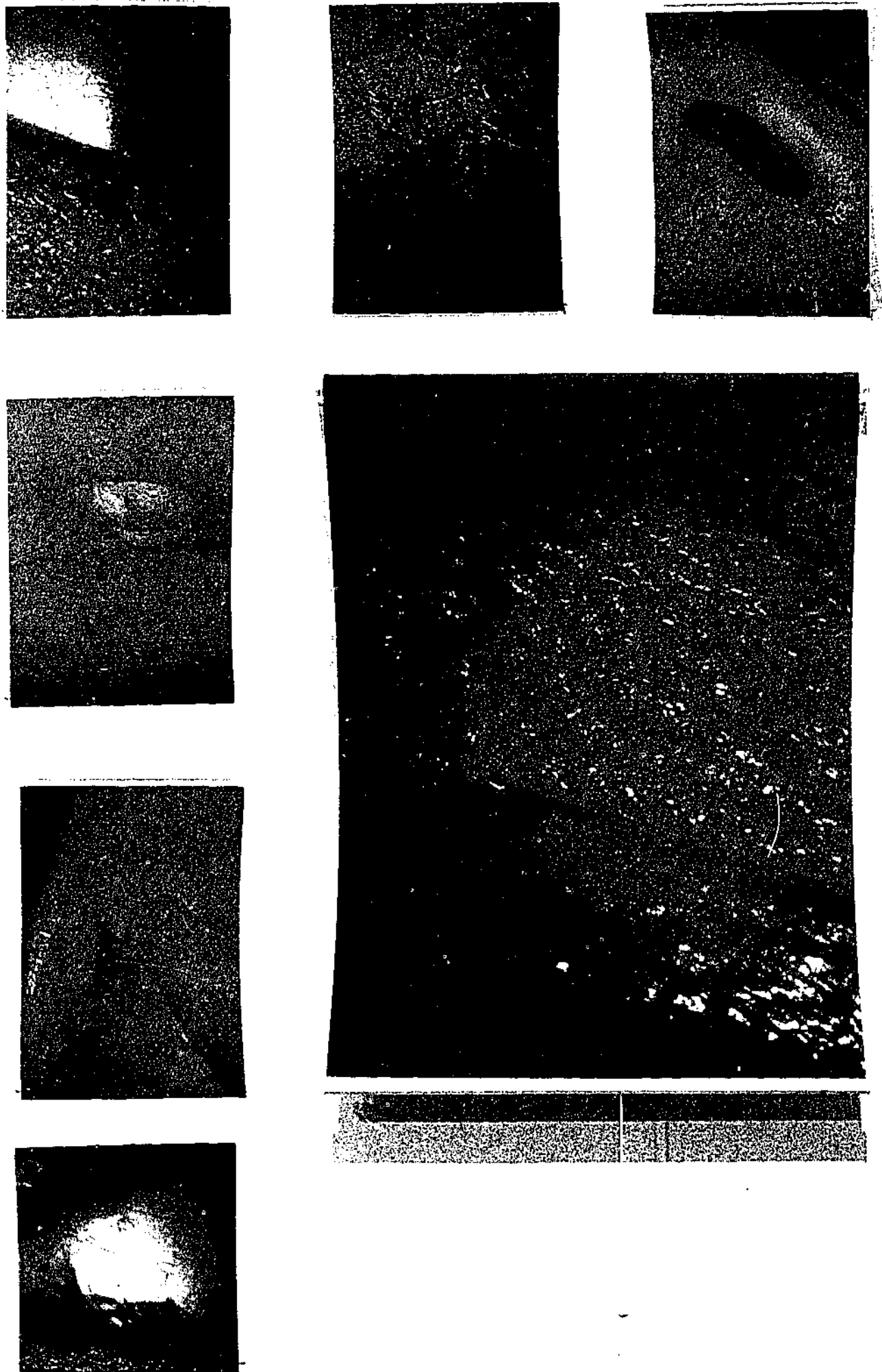
140. Julie Rrap *Blindspot*, 1996
from *Holland blind* series: iris print, image produced with colposcopic camera,
accompanied by an 11min. video *Sniff Movie*.
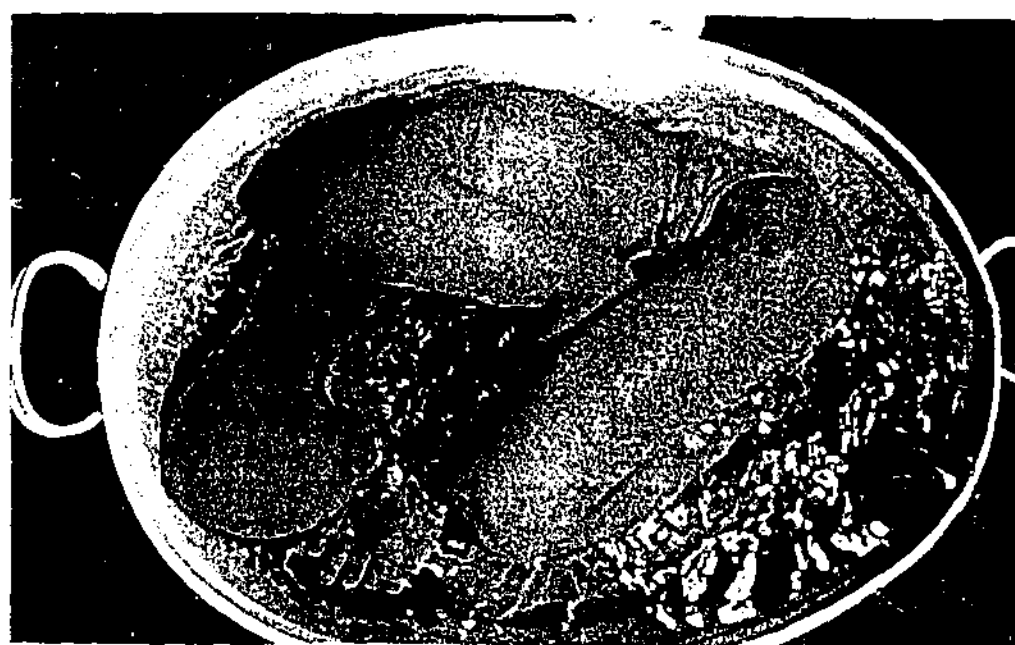
Fig. 140

141. Lee Wen *Journey of a Yellow Man*

top: *No. 5 Index to Freedom,* 1994, 4th Asian Art Show, Fukuka Art Museum

bottom: *no 11 Multiculturalism,* 1997, text, mixed media performance,
Asia-Pacific Triennial 'Beyond the Future'

Fig. 141
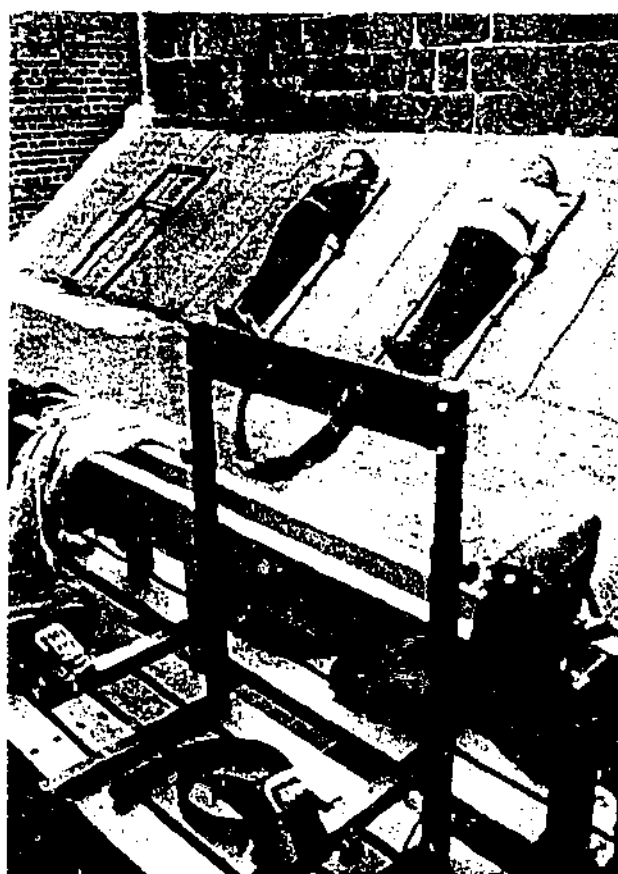
142. top: Marina Abramovic, *Performing Body*, 1997,
lecture and performance, Venice Biennale, edited version Melbourne, 1998

143. bottom: Marina Abramovic, *Escape Installation at the City Watch House*,
Melbourne 1998

Figs. 142-143

144. *Cruel/ Loving Bodies Exhibition*, 2004, Shanghai, Beijing,
   photoworks, performance/video works

   He Chengyao: top: *Testimony*, 2002, middle: *99 Needles*, 2002, *Illusion*, 2002,
   Leung Po Shan: bottom: *Balcony*, 2001, '*Flower Inscription*', 2002, *The Devotion I*, 2001

Fig. 144

145. "I think the art world had more trouble coming to terms with me being a potter than my choice of dress."
Ceramicist Grayson Perry, as Claire, his alter-ego, with his wife Phillipa and daughter Flo, after winning the Turner Prize in 2003 at London's Tate Gallery for a series of vases dealing with death, child abuse, the class system and sexuality.
Fray, Peter. 'Artist Frocks up to collect Turner', *The Melbourne Age*, 9/12/1903

Fig. 145

Chapter 6

Ways of Knowing: Boundary Revision

It may not be possible *to think* the body, that is, if thinking is intellectually defined, and a conscious rational process.[1] But there are other ways of knowing, and other kinds of 'thinking'. Even as we perceive we think, that is, we produce an understanding some of which might be termed recognition. The divide between mentation *or* sensation, depends on mental process being equated with conscious thought, yet it is more likely that thought's consciousness is a matter of degree, or threshold, with lots of vague apprehensions taking place before some kind of clarity arises.[2] Different kinds of thinking take place in accordance with specific circumstances and expectations. Far from the mind operating as the director of self-being, our consciousness or awareness is much more likely to be a 'coming to focus', and holds the possibility of all kinds of shifts and degrees of attention, and the intermingling of all kinds of perceptions, thinkings, embodied experiences and memories.[3] All kinds of awarenesses too are possible, whether those that might be formulated in images, or words, or those vaguer sensations, formless, or nameless, even those arising from our breathing, heartbeat, the feel of clothing or air on skin,

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[1] "If one really thinks about the body as such, there is no possible outline of the body as such. There are thinkings of the systematicity of the body, there are value codings of the body. The body as such, cannot be thought, and I certainly cannot approach it" (Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, "In a Word", interview with Ellen Rooney, quoted in Butler, 1993: 1).

[2] Merleau-Ponty described this process of acquiring knowledge as residing slightly below consciousness "by the third eye" (Merleau-Ponty, 1993/1961: 127). The general sense of formlessness and fragmentation would appear to derive from the need to minimize the distraction of vivid sensation of the kind experienced by Luria's (1968) Mr. 'S' who was so overwhelmed by his limitless detailed memories and rich visual-sensory thoughts that it interfered with his ability to read, and to understand in synthesized, abstract or shorthand ways.

[3] For examples on some of the literature describing these experiences see Luria (1968), Ehrenzweig (1970), Ornstein (1973), Marks (1978), Johnson (1987), Danesi (1990), Howes (1991), Classen (1993), Cytowic (1994), Damasio (2003). See Neisser (1963, 1974), Holt (1964), Kessel (1972) for early positions on the multiplicity of thought and recognition of its sensate-image character. See Merleau-Ponty (1993), Leder (1990), Lingis (1994), Damasio (1995) in relation to bodily apprehensions. See Barthes (1984), Lury (1998) also in relation to consciousness and looking at photographs; see Deleuze (1989) in relation to film experience.

or the rush of our blood. Mentation encompasses memories, visions, projections, and more structured practiced, controlled kinds of thought. It includes abstract thought, intuition, and the experience of spontaneous 'flash' understandings.[4]

There are those for whom controlled consciousness of thought appears to be their dominant mode of being, with intellectual, languaged activity their paramount cognitive experience, but the sense of a 'mind in control' is a common experience. Grosz points out that it is the body's refusal of rationality that points to non-rational zones, and shows that rationality is promulgated as a state of being when it is a thinking system (Grosz, 1994:3). In keeping with Damasio's (1995) propositions, rationality seems to be a particular performance of consciousness, one whose focused engrossment masks other processes.

This chapter aims to challenge ocularcentric-antiocularcentric constructs within hegemonic Western praxis and its manufacture of truth and culture, by looking at what this Western preoccupation with rationality and its predilection for particular kind of visualities opposes and even represses in its determinations of knowledge,[5] Case studies here are not so much a compendium of visual ways of knowing but are a means of reconsidering the sensory modes of images in relation to other sensory systems. It locates a variety of visual and cultural practices in relation to the authoritative Western mode of representing *and* producing bodies, and within certain sensory paradigms subscribed to other cultures.

What is it to Image?

Michael Taussig argues that mimesis, "the faculty to copy, imitate, make models, explore difference, yield into and become Other" (Taussig, 1993: xiii) involves the "bringing of sensuousness to sense" (xviii) and enables the copy to draw on the character and power of the original. While this explication fails to account for images or models that outstrip the original in character or power, Taussig goes on to argue that "construction deserves more respect" (xvi) because generally, and despite our understanding that life is culturally constructed, it is clear there are limits to how

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[4] Visual activity is understood to be paramount in the formation of concepts and in abstract thought (Locke, 1959/1894). Derrida observes "To theorize means, as you know, to see, to contemplate, to gaze, as in *theoria*. This rhetoric moves in what you would call the interzone between different modes of perception, of senses, of sensible perceptions" (Derrida, in Patton & Smith, 2001:16).

[5] The idea that 'to see is to think', (Danesi, 1990) is merely one aspect of the interrelations of culture and vision. It has also been argued that vision itself is transformed by visual representations, that we see by way of our images (Benjamin, 1931/1977; Snyder, 1980; Wartofsky, 1981).

we are able to use this knowledge to invent our reality.[6] "No matter how sophisticated we may be as to the constructed and arbitrary character of our practices, including our practices of representation, our practice of practices is one of actively forgetting such mischief each time we open our mouths to ask for something or make a statement" (xvii-xviii). It seems we cannot act freely.

The paradox in examining visual production in non-Western realms, using established Western hierarchies of cultural value is that it privileges only those cultures whose practices are similar to conventional, traditional art of the West. Even when objects and images made for religious rituals, ceremonies or as memorials are granted recognition as art by Western observers, the performance, the rituals themselves, the costuming, ornamentation, body marking and even the way actual bodies are physically developed (Polhemus, 1975) may be categorized as other than art, and subjected to another kind of discourse (Geertz, 1983).[7] Yet, as Anthony Forge (1965, 1970) found, in struggling to decipher the material culture of the Abelam of the Sepik River, meaning (and value) does not lie in disparate things, but in their interrelation with each other and within social beliefs and practices.

In this context, Michael Mel builds on James Clifford's (1986) critique of the 'taxonomic shift' in ethnography where objects, once classed as artifacts, came to be reclassified as art, but in ways that were still reflective of the colonizer's framework.[8] Mel insists that indigenous contexts have their own ways of seeing and of making sense of their 'art' (fig. 146). He argues that indigenous perspectives need to be considered in view of the limits and the potentially destructive aspects of 'the popularity of Western ideas of progress", although he qualifies this argument as not intended to "be read in relation to or against Western knowledge. It is necessary to strive beyond any sense of the articulation of cultural difference ... (we need to) articulate the system in its own way - within its own terms of reference" (Mel, 2000: 42).

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[6] Taussig's argument on the central role of mimesis in cultural production is not necessarily tied to illusionist practices for he contends that mimesis is tied to correspondences necessary for sympathetic magic but in ways that are not always obvious, visible, or related to seen appearances.

[7] This value-based demarcation has been in place since the eighteenth century, with Fine Arts being defined as architecture, sculpture and oil painting. The minor arts included drawing, printmaking, mural painting, watercolour painting; decorative arts and crafts encompassed ceramics, glassware, metalwork, furniture and fittings while domestic arts indicated women's production, such as clothing, household linen and textiles, tapestry, embroidery, lacemaking, porcelain painting, as well as cooking, and family and household management.

[8] Mel is of the Mogei people of the Mt Hagen area in Papua New Guinea. As a performance artist, and an academic, he is positioned within practice and theory, and moves between cultures.

Theorists such as McLuhan (1962), Wilson, (1971), Worth & Adair (1972), Carpenter (1973, 1976), Howes (1991), and Taussig (1992, 1993), working toward what Classen (1993) terms an 'anthropology of the senses', have argued that different sensory modes dominate different cultures. Classen raises questions of fundamental difference in cultural practice and the importance of context by examining the sensory order of a society and the ways that is revelatory of its social and cultural order. "Do societies which emphasize smell tend to display any concomitant cultural traits, such as a preference for content over form, spirituality over materialism, synthesis over analysis?" (Classen, 1993: 104). If this is so, not only are the kinds of images associated with body as an object and site of Western study likely to be absent in some cultures, that is, prior to Westernization, there may also be a wider variety of perceptions and reality concepts even in the realm of the visual.

Jonathan Crary locates the West's visual emphasis historically:

"The subsequent dissociation of touch from sight occurs within a pervasive "separation of the senses" and industrial mapping of the body in the nineteenth century. The loss of touch as a conceptual component of vision meant the loosening of the eye from the network of referentiality incarnated in tactility and its subjective relation to perceived space. This automatization of sight, occurring in many different domains, was a historical condition for the re-building of an observer fitted for the task of "spectacular" consumption. Not only did the empirical isolation of vision allow its quantification and homogenization but it also enabled the new objects of vision (whether commodities, photographs, or the art of perception itself) to assume a mystified and abstract identity, sundered from any relation to the observer's position within a cognitively unified field" (Crary, 1990:19).

Fabian says of the West's intellectual "contemplative" view that its "fundamental assumption seems to be that the basic act of knowledge consists of somehow structuring … ethnographic data" (Fabian, 1983: 159) and that "the root metaphor of knowledge remains that of a difference, and a distance, between thing and image, reality and representation … between a beholder and an object" (160). To offset this approach he advocates critical concentration on the West's "fundamental epistemological convictions", and particularly "the unfinished project of a

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materialist conception of knowledge", sensuous-human activity, the Hegelian concept of praxis (159).

In Benjamin's fragmented descriptions of perception as kinetic and temporal (Crary, 1990), and even tactile (Taussig, 1993), is the recognition that "modernity subverts even the possibility of a contemplative beholder. There is never a pure access to a single object; vision is always multiple, adjacent to and overlapping with other objects, desires and vectors" (Crary, 1990: 20). Benjamin too posited that this embodied synaesthetic perception was countered by a modern vision, "the standardized and denatured" perception of the masses that "would resist its effects, a revivifying perception of the present caught up in its own afterimages" (21).

In the illusionist image, there may be an engagement that, rather than enacting the distant separate spectator, enrols the viewer as participant. That engagement, given what Crary calls its "empirical immediacy" (24), may well be totally involving, and a pleasure in its own right, momentarily countering the disparate flood of everyday stimuli. Yet, perceptual, or naturalistic illusions, as pervasive and riveting as they are, are only part of the story on visual images in the West, past or present. In visual and graphic communication studies, from Gombrich to Massorini, the domain of visual 'appearance' is usually differentiated from *non-perceptual* images, or 'conceptual' images that encode experience, information, knowledge and belief in ways other than 'scenes'.[9]

'Conceptual' images have been described as those that *make ideas visible*, in opposition to mimesis, or those that image the already visible. Jacques Maquet, in his anthropological cross-cultural study of aesthetics in art, exemplifies a conservative position on the differentiation of images:

"Antithetical to naturalistic, or perceptual, representation is conceptual representation. The sculptor, painter, or engraver wants to convey some characteristic of the represented entity which the artist thinks to be its essence or concept and which is not visible. For instance, I make a drawing of an adolescent's body as I see it, as everybody sees it, and as it would appear in a photograph: it is a naturalistic image. Suppose I want to show that this youthful body is transitory; transitoriness is its essence, it is an element of its concept, but it is unseen. In order to convey the idea of transitoriness, I may draw the skeleton

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[9] Conceptual images may be entirely abstract, formalized systemized constructs decipherable only within specific cultural signification and knowledges. The term includes all those pictorial images that employ informational systems, or use particular schematic or symbolic elements.

under the skin and flesh, thus suggesting that death is already present in this adolescent: it is a conceptual representation" (Maquet, 1986: 210).

Employing the term conceptual in the way Maquet does confounds seeing, making, and those differences signified by the terms 'perceptual' and 'conceptual'[10] for presenting the skeleton as if it might be seen, is to represent a conceptual idea (transitoriness) *perceptually*.[11] In practice, images are rarely pure or separate 'types': and any degree of mix of perceptual experience and schematic, spatial or symbolic systems might be found in an image, even when these are not employed consciously or recognized as such.[12]

Although the description "as I see it, as everyone sees it" demonstrates the common view of the naturalness of a naturalism predicated on the assumption of a universal seeing, it is in conflict with some of Maquet's own cross-cultural findings. Seeing itself might be described as an involuntary and unconscious conceptualization. It is an interpretative forging synthesizing reactions to bodily stimuli with sensitivities and expectations created by biological preparedness, and cultural and environmental learning (Damasio, 1995). It can be habituated or flexible: the artist's vision is claimed to be especially flexible, "an ongoing birth" (Merleau-'onty, 1993/1961: 129). As with the processes of speech or thought, the speed of such operations and lack of awareness in seeing can mask all construction, decision and its intentional character. When the outcome of such sense making is words, the abstract character of words still points to the intelligence of this invisible operation; when the outcome is an approximation of sight, 'a look' in an image, the apprehension of that as intelligent learnt construction seems to get lost.

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[10] While more varied and specific terms might help to differentiate image types, it is more the habit of oppositional thought and the privileging of perceptual naturalism which creates difficulties. If, as Nelson Goodman (1978) has argued, images were *always* thought of as conceptualizations of some kind, perceptual images would be merely a specific form, related to illusions of space and appearance, however that might work for particular cultures.

[11] A naturalistic depiction of the skeleton will probably reference information gained from visual documentary sources that record or construct appearance. If instead of anatomically *underlying* "skin and flesh" X-ray style, this skeleton was more an expressionistic rendering, or a symbolic or schematised kind of formation (possibly *overlaying* the figure), the image might more accurately described as *a mix* of perceptual and non-perceptual elements. Even makers of illusions, in seeking to invoke the sensation of looking at real events, places and people, whether fantastic, virtual, or natural worlds, employ aspects of perceptual experience in conjunction with established conventions or codes for picturing the seen world. See Gombrich (1968) for a study of the conventions of illusion.

[12] The identification and understanding of these as systems or languages is something that normally comes after the event. For the maker such elements or systems are often deployed intuitively whether toward some specific goal that is clearly articulated or something more unworded, or open ended, and used exploratively. In so far as there are very different kinds of image systems, the categories of 'conceptual' and 'perceptual' imaging may be useful in teasing out their different effects, intentions, and references, but when descriptors lose sight of how the image is *constituted*, understandings of images as particular and various kinds of objects get lost.

Maquet has argued that naturalistic representations are more open to control than conceptual ones; that naturalistic images are unable to hold the viewer's gaze for long in terms of structure thereby immediately directing attention to the entity represented; that they open a window on the world.[13] The meaning of a conceptual image - that is, non-perceptual – he sees as deriving from its aesthetic "level" and from the multiple references that may be encoded in a sign. Conceptual images, he says, are not so much obscure, as polysemic, which he says "makes the rulers' control of their subjects' thinking more difficult, since they cannot be sure that beholders will apprehend the "correct" meaning". He concludes from this that conceptual images can train minds to look behind appearances, and hence the prohibition of modernist and conceptual works in the totalitarian states of Nazi Germany and the USSR. (Maquet, 1986: 221).[14] Perceptual images of course, are as potentially polysemic as any other image, although they may be determined through cultural usage toward a fixed reading of a natural scene. Not only may the same image mean different things to different people, but meaning may change as one views the image, from viewing to viewing, and over time.

What stands outside this dichotomy are those images which are prominently aesthetic or expressive, creating sensation or making use of established cultural codes for experiential purposes whatever form or direction that might take, to invoke the intelligence of feeling.[15] W. J. T Mitchell (1994), in reviewing structuralist theories of realism, particularly Nelson Goodman's relativist arguments that refuse resemblance as the basis for realism, (Goodman's argument being that even

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[13] Even if a transparent referential relation did exist between what is seen, as with windows or mirrors, we still look at images (including photographs) as we look at the world, scanning, inspecting, deciphering, relating, making meaning. Despite Merleau-Ponty's (1993/1961) assertion that art draws upon brute, pre-human meaning (though it may well seek it), there is no brute level of truth when it comes to how things look, let alone how they are imaged.

[14] It is perhaps more that non-perceptual images or anti-illusionist images have the capacity to remind us that all images are constructions, and that all meaning is culturally produced, that they are seen as a threat to totalizing regimes of all kinds. See Mosse (1991) for an account of the image regime implemented by the Nazi's, and other essays in the same catalogue that cover the Nazi prohibitions of degenerate art. See Tupitsyn (1988) chp. 1 'Socialist Realism: The State as the Author' for an account of Stalin's prohibition of formalism and modern art in 1934 and the enshrining of Socialist realism as the only art permissible. Tupitsyn shows though state control over imagemaking was virtually absolute, that instances of expressivity and anti-illusionist montage can still be found.

[15] See Witkin (1974) who employs this term in a critical appraisal of art and social value, pre-empting some of the ideas of Damasio (1995), Gardner (1985), Classen (1993) and Heywood (1997) in relation to sociology's neglect of cultural hierarchies of the senses. This expressive-aesthetic domain, best understood in its equivalence to music or soundscapes, may be representational, and even reference 'natural appearance' to create alternative effect. It includes energetic or gestural images that rely on the apprehension of the presence/absence of the artist, and aesthetic responses for their intelligibility.

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schematic or symbolic conventions may produce a cultural realism) proposes a view of representation that breaks with the circularity of the divide 'real-not real':

" (S)uppose we thought of representation, not as a homogenous field or grid of relationships governed by a single principle, but as a multidimensional and heterogeneous terrain, a collage or patchwork quilt assembled over time out of fragments. Suppose further that this quilt was torn, folded, wrinkled, covered in accidental stains, traces of the bodies it has enfolded" (Mitchell, 1994: 419).

What such a model might do, he says, is

"help us understand a number of things about representation. It would make materially visible the structure of representation as a trace of temporality and exchange, the fragments as mementos, as "presents" re-presented in the ongoing process of assemblage, of stitching in and tearing out. It might help explain why representation seems to "cover" so many diverse things without revealing any image of totality, other than the image of diversity and heterogeneity...why the "wrinkles" and differences in representation, its suturing together of politics, economics, semiotics, and aesthetics, its ragged, improvised transitions between codes and conventions, between media and genres, between sensory channels and imagined experiences are constitutive of its totality...an improvised totality. The theory of representation...would have to understand itself as an act of representation...an intervention, an experiment, an interpretation of the world that amounts to a change in the world" (ibid.).

Asking "What is beyond representation, different to it, antithetical or other to it?", Mitchell emphasizes that "*nothing* lies outside representation". This unrepresentability, he explains "is the tradition of the aesthetic sublime, which, which posits a realm of absolute negation, of radical otherness and unknowability" (ibid.).

Beliefs, Secrets and Sorcery

Abelam art in New Guinea relies for its power and affectivity in initiation and other ceremonies on the affective, magnificence of its polychrome painted surfaces (fig. 147). Bright colour is separated from the everyday, to the extent, according to Forge (1970), that when Western magazines come into Abelam possession they might tear out brightly coloured food advertisements, particularly those showing ham and corn, and display them at the base of the ceremonial house walls, believing them to be European 'tambaran', harvest ceremonial images. And, of course, in a way, they are.

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In his studies on the Abelam of the Sepik district of Papua New Guinea, Anthony
Forge conveys something of the complex workings of this affective domain:
"(T)hrough their early experiences, particularly in the context of the tambaran cult,
boys and young men acquire a set of fixed expectations about what they will see in
two dimensions, that is on the flat; and hence that polychrome two-dimensional
paintings become a closed system, unrelated to natural objects, or to carvings and
other three-dimensional art objects, or, indeed, to anything outside the paintings"
(Forge, 1970: 269). In an earlier paper, Forge compared the art of the Abelam and
another Sepik tribe, the Iatmul, with that of Arnhem land practices, foregrounded
this idea as "(Can) meaning …only be discovered by relating each individual piece
to a rite in which it has a function, a myth that it illustrates, or a decorative purpose
it fulfils?" (Forge, 1965: 23). Forge was to conclude that where in Arnhem land, art,
myth, and ritual were interlocked and interdependent, and yet seemed to be "three
different ways of expressing aspects of the same thing in words, in action and
visually, none of them being complete without the other, and none of them being the
entire expression on their own" (24), Sepik practice was very different. In the case
of the Iatmul, visual production such as masks, carved figures and so on, had little
connection to their myths. Indeed, with the Abelam, "there was a notable absence of
mythology" (ibid.).[16]

Forge related the Abelam disparity of myth making and image tradition to
differences in environment and economies, but he also stressed that "if any system
of symbols is to be found in art, it does not lie at the level of overt symbolism…(but
at) the level of the relation between symbols, and at this level it may not be
perceived by either the artist or the beholder" (25). Instead Forge sought meaning in
the underlying structures of art, ritual and architecture through highly detailed
analyses.[17] His 1965 documentation of symbolic meaning (prised "piecemeal" from
the Abelam), describing "correct and ancestral" ways of making, was superceded in
1970 by his argument that certain fixed expectations around graphic representation
prevented the Abelam from 'seeing' pictures, "that is making sense of anything in

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[16] In keeping with other research on the Abelam (see Geertz, 1983), Forge was only able to identify
three Abelam myths, two of them concerned with the origin of the long yams, and the other about "a
primal female who created fire", none of which had any connection with the most important images and
carved figures, the *nggwalndu*. The Abelam though, known for their towering and richly painted spirit
houses, have a "dramatically creative" culture in which even the most mundane domestic utensil is
designed and incorporated into ritual meaning (Losche, 1984).

[17] This is worth comparing to Losche's research (1984) which is more inclusive and describes rituals,
performances and the all night dances attended by Abelam of all ages, and focuses on the ceremonial
yam gardens. Even without a rich array of myths Abelam beliefs appear to pervade all aspects of their
life and produce a web of affectivity controlled through various objects and ceremony.

two dimensions that was not part of the closed system" (Forge. 1970: 269). That included a marked inability to make sense of certain kinds of photographs even though the Abelam had been in contact with European culture from 1937.[18] For all of that, Forge was still able to train Abelam boys to assist him in identifying and cataloguing his field photographs "after a few hours of concentrated looking and discussion on both sides" (288).

In 1965, many questions about Abelam culture remained unanswered for Forge. For instance, "Why should a painted band of flying foxes be a virtually universal feature of Abelam ceremonial house facades?"(Forge, 1965: 28). What he ultimately documents is a lack of articulated belief, evasion, resistance, and contradiction on the part of the Abelam, which requires that he discover their beliefs by making his own connections.[19]

His 1965 study for instance, traced the suggestive presence of the phallus in the prows of carved houses, and then found correspondences within the yam cult, its overt presence characterized by giant ceremonial figures with large penes. These figures were often carved with totem animals close by their penis, "smelling or sniffing the semen" was the usual explanation given to Forge. Taking all of these aspects into account, and the importance of food responsibilities in Abelam society, Forge defined the function of this phallus "as an organ of nourishment" for the Abelam, a concept which led to his discovery of the symbolism of the flying fox. When told that the single line inscribed on it, was the ' single breast' of the flying fox, Forge deduced that it was then another instance of penis, and therefore a fusing of the primacy of a maternal sign with the phallus within a construction of a nurturative cosmology parallel to that given to women.

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[18] This is evidenced in many descriptions of first encounters with photographs by people unused to them. See for example, Segall et, al, (1966), Gombrich (1981), Carpenter (1976). Forge (1970) noted that often the men returning from a couple of years work on the coast, would bring formal portrait photographs with them (in those days, usually taken by Chinese photographers) and these presented no difficulty in terms of recognition. When it came to deciphering figures in action, in profile, or any pose other than full frontal face or figure though, the Abelam could only see the person, even when their image dominated the photo, if Forge drew a thick line around the edges of the figure. If a photograph was black and white they would be able to identify a house as ceremonial, but not which house it was

[19] See O'Hanlon (1989) who discusses this more fully, citing a number of other reasons given by various theorists for silence on the part of Forges' subjects, including the probability that these kind of productions can only be constituted through symbolism; that the ideas cannot be verbalized because they are in conflict with other fundamental aspects of that society; that what is going on is not reducible to words; and even that the function of art is to mystify social relations of production.

In 1970, Forge's earlier speculations on the penis as an organ of nourishment were no longer evident.[20] Forge concluded that there was "no secure iconography" in Abelam art; that their design elements are essentially ambiguous, with no one-to-one correspondence, and that interpretation was dependent on context and the viewer. He emphasized that Abelam art is about relationships.[21]

> "One of its functions is to relate and unite disparate things in terms of their place
> in the ritual and cosmological order. It does this, I would suggest, directly and
> not as an illustration to some text based in another symbolic system such as
> language. One of the main functions of the initiate system with its repetitive
> exposure of initiates to quantities of art is, I would suggest, to teach young men
> to see the art, not so that he may consciously interpret it but so that he is directly
> affected by it" (Forge, 1970: 290).

There may be other reasons Forge moved away from his earlier inquiry into Abelam iconography, but what is clear is his rejection of linguistic determination as an explanation of the nexus between images and behaviours. The Abelam, says Forge, do not ask what a painting *means*.[22] Forge moves to a position similar to Geertz who criticized Western structuralist formalism as leading to an "externalized conception of the phenomenon supposedly under intense inspection but actually not even in our line of sight" (Geertz, 1983: 98).

By 1970, Forge's understanding was that graphic images were produced not as representations of oral traditions or myth, but existed in their own right as an independent communication system for the initiated. His description of how the Abelam boys are shown ceremonial paintings and objects while undergoing initiation without much idea of what they or the accompanying rituals signify, show

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[20] What later anthropological work has since shown, is the existence of cults around this 'organ of nourishment' centered on literal, but secret enactment of semen ingestation, "men's milk", as part of initiation processes. These provide a significant focus for male mentorship, sexual relations and loyalties, and fulfill family responsibilities including the nurturing of nephews. See Herdt (1981) for his extensive documentation and writings on this subject based on his field studies of the anonymous people he calls the "Sambia" who live somewhere in the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea. See Lingis' (1991) recent discussion of this research in relation to the fluidity of body enactments, sexuality, and cultural difference.

[21] Losche (1984) traces Abelam interrelations to all things, human society, the spirit world, and the environment. She found that the Abelam view of the world centered on the men's magic yam gardens and their ritual channelling of the *nggwalndu* (spirits who affect the growth of food). Initiation was directed toward men attaining the proper spiritual state for the cultivation of the long yam, while much of women's conduct focused on their successful observance of taboos and their various supports for the men's long yam cultivation.

[22] Losche (1984) notes that though the Abelam have no word for art, what we would regard as art is termed *maira*, literally 'secret. Paint is considered magically potent with its use restricted to senior men, while ritual objects are often dismantled after use to avoid their power.

that the function of such objects was to affect, to evoke particular reactions. Forge observed that the boys learnt to associate them with the terror and pain that always preceded their display. The objective of the ceremony, says Forge, was to sensitize them to various dangers, including those involving sexual contact with women. His description of the re-entry of the initiates into the village after a period of seclusion that varied from three weeks to two months shows this connectivity between seeing and danger. They return "gorgeously painted and wearing huge feather head-dresses. The face-painting is in the style used for yam masks, *nggwalndu*, and initiators, except that the eyes are closed and painted over entirely and very thickly with yellow paint, so that the returning initiates appear not merely blind, but creatures who have no provision for eyes at all" (Forge, 1970: 276).

This overview of Forges' gradual recognition of the role of affectivity is intended to indicate the way intellectual expectations govern interpretation and seeing. Thus, what is observed is seen according to whatever one's mental set. Some immutable resistant element in the observed event means eventually that either something has to give, or enormous effort will go into reconciling contractions.[23] Mimesis has always had its limits as a theory of representation.[24] Angela Zito, in response to the question "But if texts do not record or imitate, what do they do?" (Zito, 1994: 107), emphatically refuses the notion of cultural productions being "merely innocent and mute metaphors of something else" (ibid.). Symbolic networks (Geertz, 1983;

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[23] See O'Hanlon's (1995) study of changes in New Guinea Highland shield designs from the 1930s to the 1990s for his discussion of the difficulties anthropologists had determining the their representational or symbolic meaning. "I was forced to conclude that what I wished to read as 'symbolic' was little more than a set of fairly rough and ready mnemonics, used to recall and refer to design motifs" (O'Hanlon, 1995: 473). For an example of the way contradictions might be accommodated, see Alland's (1983) comparative and formalist study of children's drawings. Unable to reconcile his findings of variations *between cultures* and similarities *within* (that is, cultural difference) with his 'nativist' theory of universal structures (which follows Chomsky's notion of precoding in language structures), he makes a number of accommodating moves. Though he finds little evidence to support universal aesthetic preferences for 'good form', he suggests that still to be identified universal aesthetic principles may underlie the observed diversity. He also points out that in any case the drawing of children might resist any such search given that, as with language, "precoded skills may require time for their emergence to occur at the proper time of development" (Alland, 1983: 2). And he also brackets off the very different drawings of one group (Barak children from Sarawak) as exceptional, inexplicable, even perhaps due to some variation in experimental controls or instructions given at the time. (There are a number of problems with Alland's study. His description of children's responses to task, and the presence of researchers and camera, suggest that many children found the task and context intimidating. No engagement or motivation was supplied for this task, beyond doing what the researcher wanted, which, as if looking for confirmation of art as creative play, was termed a "free" drawing. There are also inconsistencies in wanting to look at 'naïve drawing' but then including within the observed subjects, children with little exposure to images in their culture and no known drawing experience, very young children still at the scribble stage, and children who had a substantial visual education.).

[24] Within Taussig's (1993) attempt to define mimesis in relation to an embodied seeing, a tactile seeing, in keeping with Benjamin's optical unconscious, mimesis is expanded in ways that go beyond mimesis as copy, as facsimile. Taussig shows that while mimesis engages the somatic realm in ways that account for the power of certain images, it does not mean that mimesis involves representation; the processes of recognition and response may not self-evident.

Thomas, 1991) may be seen to ratify and reinstate social order in ways far removed from Western systems developed for enacting seen experience, but they are also affective systems.

In her study of the c18th Chinese Imperial ritual of the Grand Sacrifice, Zito shows how a web of meanings served to embody and maintain hierarchical subject positions and traditional relationships (Zito, 1994: 106).[25] She describes how an interplay of imagery and ritual employs body conceived metaphorically as a vessel, in which shifting boundaries move between inside and exterior surface, to interface with and interpenetrate other bodies and surfaces. These interconnections function to produce subjectivity, specifically through the materialization of the Emperor as that of an articulation or voicing of cosmic order. This is not a metaphorical referencing; the emperor is *an energy* which is made visible or brought to form by process, the enactments of the performing body, and focused on the preservation of boundary, of difference, a taking "place at the (body's) edges, on its surfaces and through its senses, which act as gates to the outside world" (117).

Zito visualizes the effect of the emperor and his officials, dressed in their elaborate robes and hats, performing sacrificial rituals upon the great white marble altar. "The human body as vessel (was)...clothed in a tissue of silk whose symbolic web marked out the participant as centerer" (118). As in official portraits of the period, the Imperial robes were inscribed, that is, their surfaces were embroidered and woven with signs of the dragon, with the Emperor's robe differentiated by colour, and further embellished with the ancient Twelve symbols.

In Chinese culture the potency of the sign as a means of focusing energy appears to have particular importance beyond courtly ritual. Lynn Pan, in her narrative history of Chinese immigrants, for instance, describing San Francisco's Chinatown before the great earthquake and fire of 1906, notes,

"You don't see any dustmen in Chinatown, but you do see a paper gatherer, a poor shuffling scavenger whose job it is to pick up any litter with writing on it and put it into the wooden deposit boxes with which Chinatown is dotted. The paper is burnt in special incinerators, and the ashes collected and taken on boats

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[25] See also, in Hevia (1994), in the same collection of papers, a reference to the possibility of using kinetic perspectives in looking at ritual, "bodies do more than carry signs of inner qualities; they also seem capable, through their movements and the actions performed, of inscribing meaning in space, of physically configuring it" (Hevia, 1994: 190). Like Zito, Hevia's interest is in how ritual action enacts and produces power relations.

to be flung into the ocean beyond the Golden Gate Bridge. All this because, with their immemorial reverence for the written word, the Chinese cannot bring themselves to throw away paper with writing on it the way they would scraps of ordinary rubbish" (Pan, 1990:101).

Yao Soucou (1997) highlights similar potencies and reverences in the contemporary period within Xu Bing's 1988 print installation *Tian Shu, A Book from the Sky* (fig. 148), a work that has become very well known in the West. It comprises of a series of series of books, hung scrolls and notice boards (presented as Chinese 'big character posters'), printed up from over four thousand elaborately crafted, but fake Chinese characters, complete with index and glossary. Yao suggests that *"Tian Shu* moves resolutely from form to meaning in one moment, and back in another" (Yao. 1997: 192) and that the work brings into focus the Chinese pride for a cultural product that derives from an ancient civilization. He contends that "…it achieves a dialectic between script and motif, words and meaning" (ibid.), and sense and nonsense that ultimately acts as a criticism of the Chinese nation-state's systematic, yet meaningless control. Yao points out, that for those in the know, the impossibility of reading the books draws parallels with Chinese traditions of coded, esoteric, women's scripts, idiosyncratic and secret scripts; that it evokes even the nonsense scripts of ritual papers, or 'charm papers' written in the blood of temple priests mutilating themselves while in a trance.

For Yao, *Tian Shu* is a work that addresses and critiques "Chineseness" in a multitude of ways. Its political critique, he argues, is created by its "immaculate adherence to Chinese calligraphic form and its resurrection of a traditional aesthetics" (193). He describes how the work moves from pleasures and memories evoked by the enactments of the script and its frisson of denied meaning, to its "sensuous pampering of desire, a subtle affirmation" (198) of the social status and knowledge/power nexus surrounding the acquisition of Chinese literacy. Observing this "semantic entanglement " as one "shuttling between attraction and repulsion, coyness and surrender" (203), reminding the viewer of the cruelties of Chinese history, while evoking the pleasures of its cultural accomplishments, Yao comments on its power as a means of 'knowing' China and formulating an identity in relation to an ancestral China and to the contemporary nation-state.[26] He describes his experience of the work as an apprehension of the crisscrossing of energies, appeals

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[26] See also Davidson (1994) for a survey of his projects and an interview with Xu Bing who says that for him art is a way of "participating in culture more broadly".

and knowledges underscored by his pleasures of the literary references in "intricate form and magical beauty" (205). Xu Bing's work is seen as having the power to function as a "technology for dreaming" (206), and thus facilitating the liberation of impossible worlds.

Fascinations for writing as *performances* of power have often been observed. Edmund Carpenter recounts the story of tribal men in remote areas of New Guinea who, given "the most fleeting exposure to writing" then were inclined to develop their own 'writing' systems, proudly exhibiting their efforts to excited onlookers.[27] "Strange notes are sent to patrol officers, and missionaries, or left for them in villages. Scraps of paper with markings on them are hidden in sacred bags along with amulets and other treasures" (1976/1971:71). He reminds us that all kinds of inscripted and pictorial mnemonic traditions can be found in technologically 'simple' societies, but they work in different ways, toward different ends. O'Hanlon (1995) for instance, describes the taking up of Western writing and graphics in the decoration of the great New Guinea Highland shields (fig. 149) that have been revived in a recent renewal of intertribal war. He argues that words and images are incorporated on these shields not for their linguistic function but as design elements in keeping with the earlier emphasis on an overall aesthetic effect. Effect is paramount in that it signals the necessary state of moral and spiritual readiness for battle, and creates fear in enemies. O'Hanlon also shows further intricacies relating to identification, political affiliations and the reworking of meaning for battle strategies are also involved.

Western descriptions of the consequences of cultural enactments within anthropology tend to be confined to social effects. Yet, from ancient Egyptian tomb painting, Australian aboriginal ceremonies, the bright colours of Abelam painting, to Ongee body painting, 'proper practice' or correct enactment would seem to create something along the lines of aesthetics as vibration, resonating within the body, and beyond. When Stafford asks, in relation to c18th European articulations of medical knowledge, "What is the connection between visible surface and invisible depth?" (Stafford, 1993:1), she points to the realm of signification called metaphor. Yet there are transformative properties in the visual, conductive capacities that fuse the intentionality and vitality of mark-making with aesthetic affectivity and symbolic

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[27] Much of Carpenter's observations are grounded in his intention to expose the duplicity involved in the universalizing trope 'family of man', and he shows an inclination toward the subversive and the absurd.

meaning, and which have little to do with the play of representation.[28] It is what abstractionists like Mark Tobey have evoked in paintings like *Edge of August* (1953).[29] In this work (fig. 150), what Tobey calls 'white writing', is suspended between mark and meaning, to create intensities, energies, and an intelligence (as an awareness of subtle sensory structures) which work towards some ecstasy of depth, light, air and even sound.[30] Its transparent luminosity with its effects of light derived from dense continuous surfaces of minute signs can be experienced haptically as an energy field, as mystical resonance and presence, evoking a sense of breath, as an atmospheric vitality, teeming with microscopic atomized life.

Merleau-Ponty referred to "the vibration of appearances" in his discussion of Cezanne's painting in which he recounts how Cezanne would "look at everything with widened eyes "germinating" with the country side" in his search for "his motif" which seemed to grab him. This sensitivity to the object-effect enabled Cezanne to catch the very vitality of the landscape, welding it together through lookings, partial views "caught alive in a net which would let nothing escape" (Merleau-Ponty: 1993/1945: 67).[31]

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[28] In his study of Waghi body practices and adornment O'Hanlon (1989) contrasts the Melanesian sense of the body surface as the 'social skin', and a site of cultural attention and symbolic elaboration, with adornment and decoration revealing personhood, with the Euro-American practices where the surface of the person differs from the inner person. See also Stathern & Strathern (1971) for the classic study of body adornment and decoration of the Hagen (belonging to two language groups whose territory is west of the Waghi valley region) whose aesthetic production is centered on body display within festivals, rather than say, masks or figurines. See Caplan (2000) for an anthology on European tattooing and body marking, which ranges from ancient cultural traditions to more recent practices, and for a study of contemporary developments associated with youth and underground culture, and placed in contrast to Waghi adornment practices see Benson (in Caplan, 2000).

[29] Abstract expressionist artists focused on internalized states of being. Exploring psychoanalysis for its insights and its assemblage of mythological archetypes, the body itself came to be implicated in notions of personal languages and iconographies, and its dynamic (Froman, 1993) or energy came to be understood as the foundation of painting. East-West influences in late c19th and early c20th art ideas became interactions when the avantgarde, began to travel. There was no doubt an element of cultural plunder associated with some of this, but it was not a simple modernist appropriation of form. Artists such as Tobey, Jackson Pollock, and Robert Motherwell, embarked on extended research and even first-hand investigation of art practices, performance rituals, and beliefs within various cultures. Tobey for instance converted to the Bahai faith in his youth and was interested in Oriental, mystical and cosmological beliefs, ancient forms of images, and shamanistic, psychic aspects of surface and sign. He began studying art in Chicago, but went to Japan in the 20s to study calligraphy and oriental painting with Chinese painter Teng Kwei, and also studied Zen. He travelled extensively and during the 1930s lived in England before returning to states to work on WPA projects during the depression. After 1935 he began to use sign elements in his work, ultimately abandoning all realistic references.

[30] See Barthes' meditations on the Japanese haiku: "the end of language: there is a moment when language ceases…this echoless breach which institutes the truth of Zen…an enormous praxis destined to…jam that internal radiophony continually *sending* in…to empty out, to stupefy, to dry up the soul's incoercible babble…the blank which erases in us the reign of Codes" (Barthes, 1984/1970: 74-75).

[31] Froman argues that what Merleau-Ponty observed as a reversibility between seer and seen in the kinetic and visual interplay of painting, that is, the tracings, markings, and movements of the artist instigated by their observation, becomes in abstract work, whether lyrical, organic or expressionist, an art that takes up the dynamic foundation of painting, and "opens possibilities for different modes of world-apprehension" (Froman, 1993: 338).

For Meleau-Ponty, Cezanne's struggle and doubt are directed to an expression of a world that stripped of "the imposed order of humanity", a penetration to a nature of truth (ibid.). Where Merleau-Ponty here casts art as a mystic enterprise, Benjamin Whorf in his observation that "The Hopi actually have a language better equipped to deal with such vibratile phenomena than is our latest scientific terminology" (quoted in Classen, 1993: 11), points to a widespread sensibility toward energy and to belief in rituals that have the power to shift energies or create pathways through which energy may flow or be drawn.[32] In such domains aesthetics appear to be employed in a tuning and connecting of energies. What is precisely involved in 'correct' and presumably potent rituals is harder to examine. To investigate such rituals in relation to their own claims for themselves, poses epistemological and ethical dilemmas, not the least since this domain is that of magic and supernatural power, inherently secret, wherein the theft of knowledge is believed potentially destructive or dangerous. Since the West refuses magical events, this warning is usually discounted or interpreted as one masking the vested interests of the shaman, or a symbolic means of social regulation, which ironically probably provides some protection for such knowledges.

Howard Morphy in his study of Yolngu aesthetics in men's painting, argues that the Yolngu "are clearly concerned to produce effects on the senses by which the success of the work can be judged they do not have to be interpreted to have an impact" (1989: 22-23).[33] The Yolngu see this aesthetic effect as a "manifestation of power emanating from the Ancestral past" (23). Some artists manifest it better than others, so, although all Yolngu paint, the more skilful painters - not necessarily those more creative - are entrusted to do ceremonial work. Morphy notes that there is refusal on the part of the Yolngu to attach special status to the ceremonial painters, with all

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[32] See O'Hanlon's (1995) study of changes in New Guinea Highland Waghi shield designs from the 1930s to the 1990s for his discussion of the difficulties anthropologists had determining the representational or symbolic meaning in early practices. "I was forced to conclude that what I wished to read as 'symbolic' was little more than a set of fairly rough and ready mnemonics, used to recall and refer to design motifs" (O'Hanlon, 1995: 473). Symbolic and metaphorical codes found elsewhere in Waghi culture were not extended to shield designs. What he and other anthropologists found though was that the overall appearance or surface was meaningful. Brightness or dullness was thought to correspond to "the inner moral condition of the warriors with respect to issues of concealed treachery, unconfessed anger, and unhonoured debts" (475) supposedly resolved in prewar rituals and preparations. O'Hanlon reports that he was "repeatedly told that the appearance of clansmen whose internal relations harmonious... would be so overwhelming that I would be unable to even bear looking at such warriors"(ibid.).

[33] The Yolngu, also known as the Murngin, live in north-east Arnhem land.

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roles given importance.[34] In this description of the production of coffin paintings Morphy indicates a separation of authority and production in ceremonial painting that also problematizes the Western insistence on reception and the importance of the spectator :

> "Apart from the artists, hardly anyone seems to look at the painting except occasionally to see whether it is finished or not. Senior men with rights in the painting may occasionally look at it and offer instruction on a point of detail. Other men may occasionally offer assistance with the cross hatching especially if time is getting short. As soon as the painting is completed it is covered up with a sheet of cloth and will never be seen again" (26).

The languaging of Yolngu painting differentiates between design, pattern and colour. *Miny'tji* is the particular term for meaningful designs and patterns, originating from the bodies of Ancestral beings, designated by them as part of *Mardayin*, the sacred law given to the people of the land. *Miny'tji* encode the past and the creation of the land, and contain the power of that Ancestral being, a power which may be harnessed when the designs and patterns are produced ritually. *Miny'tji* variously manifest in the animals, people and places interlocked in myths, and are employed in numerous forms, whether "a sand sculpture, as a design in string, or in painted form as a body painting, bark painting or painting on a ceremonial post", with details varying in relation to medium and available space. Morphy proposes that Yolngu artists aim initially at producing a correct Ancestral design, but then work on it for purposes of enabling its power, and for enhancing the beauty of the ceremonial object.

"In outline form the design…is relatively safe and free of Ancestral power. At this stage the painting is referred to as 'dull' or 'rough'. The power and beauty of the painting are acquired through the painting process and in particular are associated with the final stages of the painting" (27). And while the outline drawing of yellow and black on a red background, considered a shade or a shadow of the finished potent image, might take less than an hour to produce, the final stage of cross

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[34] While Morphy's article, a later version of a paper presented at an Oxford seminar "Aesthetics and collective representations", signifies a welcome shift from a semiotic, linguistically modelled decoding of cultural phenomena to a recognition of the experiential aspects of this visual performative realm, the investigation is framed by Western concerns. See Smith, (1961) for an idea of the speculative discourse which articulated these concerns some thirty years earlier, who asked: What is the status of the artist in other societies; how is a work of quality judged; what scope is there for creativity, what is the function and meaning of cultural objects and images? Nevertheless, Morphy's findings exceed the objectives of such epistemological horizons, and suggest that the Yolngu's own exegesis is represented to some extent here.

hatching might take as much as a week, and gives not only a clear definition of the separate components of the design, but also creates *bir'yun*, "a shimmering brilliance". Both these qualities of definition and energy are important in considering the success of the work. The significance of *bir'yun*, was first documented in 1937 by D. Thompson but then was left unpublished in his field notes (5.8.37). Morphy notes that Thompson described the visual effect of the cross hatching as the "scintillation" of light, "intense sources and refractions of light, the sun's rays, and to light sparkling in bubbling fresh water...the flash of light, the sensation of light one gets and carries away in one's mind...emanating from the *wangarr* (Ancestral) beings themselves" (28). Thompson also noted that paintings of different clans might have quite specific expressions of this quality, that for example, the *bir'yun* of the wild honey design of the Gupapuyngu clan was that of "fresh water and the light of eucalyptus in flower" (29).

Discussing the Yolngu's association of this light as that which "makes the heart go happy, makes it smile", Morphy revises Thompson's translation of *ngoy* as 'heart' to its more abstract notion for the Yolngu's as the "seat of the emotions" more located around the gut.[35] He links *ngoy* to the euphoric light-headed sensations experienced also in the blood letting ceremony, with blood ritualized as that of the Ancestor. Morphy notes that all the pigments and raw materials, from a specific kind of red ochre to particular animal fats, used in the executions of such painting are prized for their glossiness and sheen, and highlights the importance of fat in animals and humans for nutritional and restorative purposes. In doing this he also establishes a link with this kind of aesthetic brilliance and the Yolngu conception of body: "As far as the human individual is concerned, people who are plump and sleek are thought to be healthy and may be thought to be endowed with spiritual power. Thompson (1975: 7) reports that to be too fat can be dangerous because it arouses fear and jealousy in others" (31). The qualities of brightness as reflected in colour and light are reflected in Yolngu songs and poetry as in this following example which recounts the sexual seduction of a group of Western Arnhem land women by the long-penised men of Goulburn Island.

"The tongues of the lightening snake flicker and twist
Flashing above, the people of the Western clans

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[35] He also notes that elsewhere Thompson (1975) records *bir'yun* as able to evoke darker emotions, particularly in association with *mar:rr*, the shark Ancestor, whose eye blazes with anger and vengeance when killed. While *mar:rr* is associated with life forces - health, happiness, strength, and fertility - it is also associated with death, and has a dangerous dimension in relation to the vulnerable, anyone spiritually weak, bereaved, and those recovering from serious illness.

All over the sky their tongues flicker.

Lightening flashes throughout the clouds, flash of the Lightning Snake.

Its blinding flash lights up the palm leaves

Gleams on the cabbage palms, and on the glistening semen among the leaves."[36]

Clifford Geertz, recognizes the centrality of the experiential in cultural production in his discussion of African Yoruba carving as in conflict with the way art is theorized.[37]

> "The realization, that to study an art form is to explore a sensibility, that such a sensibility is essentially a collective formation, and that the foundations of such a foundation are as wide as social existence and as deep, leads away not only from the view that aesthetic power is a grandiloquence for the pleasures of craft. It leads away also from the so-called functionalist view…that works of art are elaborate mechanisms for defining social relationships, sustaining rules, and strengthening social values. Nothing very measurable would happen to Yoruba society if carvers no longer concerned themselves with the fineness of line, or, I dare say, even with carving. Just some things that were felt could not be said – and perhaps, after a while, might not even be felt – and life would be the greyer for it" (Geertz 1983: 99).

When Geertz looked at Forge's work on the Abelam, he made the point that what images may be 'about' can be "direct", rather than illustration (of something found elsewhere). Where the Yoruba use scars to signify civilization, the Abelam use colour to sign power (101).[38] Geetz' extensive reflection on "the matrix of sensibility" aims at refuting ideas that the art of "un-lettered societies" has no internal dynamic, or that conversely, the art of developed cultures is autonomous and internally responsive/determined. In the process of this argument he points to the need to incorporate aesthetic response into culture:

> "…"the sense of beauty", or whatever the ability to respond intelligently to face scars, painted ovals, domed pavilions, or rhymed insults should be called, is no

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[36] This comes from the Goulburn Island Song cycle belonging to the Dhuwa moiety in North East Arnhem Land, These are the words of the third verse of the song, cited entire in Morphy (1989).

[37] Critical of looking at art instrumentally or ideologically, or only in terms of its social functioning, and though open to art as a cultural practice that materializes "a way of experiencing" (and, an enrichment of life), Geertz still determines the signs and elements of art, an aesthetic, "ideationally connected" semiotic system.

[38] Geertz argues that this kind of meaning goes further than mere vitality or intrinsic appeal. "Whatever the innate capacities for response to sculptile delicacy or chromatic drama, these responses are caught up in wider concerns, less generic and more content-full, and it is this encounter with the locally real that reveals their constructive power" (Geertz, 1983: 102).

less a cultural artifact than the objects and devices concocted to "affect" it. The artist works with his audience's capacities... Art and the equipment to grasp it are made in the same shop" (118).

This relation of aesthetics and response appears to go beyond semiotics, and it also tends to contradict his suggestion that "nothing very measurable would happen" in Yoruba or any other society, if artists stopped paying attention to aesthetic character, or stopped producing art.

For Geertz, both meaning and the relations of aesthetic and response arise from use, and he asks that the signs of art be considered a mode of thought, an "idiom to be interpreted" (120). Yet in many respects, his acknowledgement of the intelligence and sensibility of aesthetic response goes beyond what he envisages as a scientific "diagnostics" founded on signification capable of making sense of the huge diversity of art, "and the sources of their spell". Lingis (1984), looking at body marking and scarification, takes aesthetics and response into the realm of feeling. Grosz says that Lingis' description of the 'primitive' body where "Welts, cuts, scars tattoos, perforations, incisions, inlays, function to increase the surface space of the body, creating locations, zones, hollows, ridges: places of special meaning (in some cases) and libidinal intensity (in all cases)" (Grosz, 1990b: 68), is a description of a body that is all surface (no hidden self), one inscribed as a public, collective, social object. Grosz' concern is for the gendered body's social morphology, the form it develops socially, but Lingis' evocation of the erotogenic surface of the body gives some sense of the production of intense energies, which indicate how powerful sexuality and 'aesthetics' may be.[39]

Morphy (1989) is one anthropologist who attempts an account of cultural meaning in reference to the culture's own belief system, and its own practices, while providing entry points for cultural connections. He explains for instance that one of the ways a Yolngu ritual may enhance the power of individuals and their community is to transform the individual into the shining body of the *wangarr*, a process created over the course of a number of progressive ceremonies over several years involving the increasing elaboration of the initiate's body. It is considered such a potent process that while the painting might have taken eight or nine hours to do, it is

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[39] The body's production of energy seems somewhat under theorized. Various body states from to extreme physical feats of strength, orgasmic intensities, even menopausal 'flushes' that immense red heat produced by the female body, or states of ecstasy, or 'madness' would seem to warrant consideration in terms of feeling states and links to visual intensity and stimulation.

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rubbed off when completed, or, at the very least, the cross-hatchings smudged before the person returns to the public space.

This transformation from dull to brilliant, points to an aesthetic of stimulation that, as Morphy observes, transcends cultural boundaries. Perhaps modified by environmental factors, or by individual and cultural experiences of different visual systems, this aesthetic enlists sensitivities of the kind which allow us to experience Yolngu painting in some way that is independent of any other knowledge about their art. This is not to do with ideas about what this transformation might mean. Nor is it a return to universal structures. Morphy emphasizes that Yolngu art cannot be equated relativistically, say to Bridget Riley's optical vibration paintings, since such effects in Yolngu art are "integrated within a whole system to produce objects which are to be understood in a particular way" (Morphy, 1989: 36), and that cannot be directly apprehended. Furthermore, he explains that "The relationship between form and content is a two-way one. The content gives a particular meaning to the flash of light or to the stamping feet of the dancers, yet a flash of light or cloud of dust in turn may emphasize or enhance a particular content, presenting it in a striking way that associates with the emotions that are felt at the time" (37). Such effects, Morphy suggests, enhance believability in that they are experienced as emanating from the Ancestor, as an expression of its power.

The efficacy of this kind of aesthetic-energy practice within magic may well be dependent on belief, in the sense that sorcery is deemed to require a receptive state to work, but it may also have biological foundations, but not necessarily those of resemblance. The crude or arbitrary level of representation common in magical images, dolls or effigies for instance is more schema, an ideogram, than copy (ibid.). What the image needs to be effective is what Frazer in 1911 (1978) called 'connection', through 'contagion' through some body residue of breath, nail clippings, perspiration, footprints and so on. Taussig, even though he argues that the power of images and magic lies in the human capacity for mimesis, observes that in magic the copy is not a copy, but slips towards an alterity.

"...(W)hile the alter-world is deemed to be mimetic with the world of substance, and modeled on it, there is also, as the reference to suddenly altered landscapes and jumping from signifieds to signifiers indicates, a curiously unstable aspect intrinsic to this mimetic doubling" (Taussig, 1993: 122).

In rituals of magic that work to combine mimesis with alterity, there is often some element of transfer or transmutation through smoke, burning, which Taussig calls the "death of the materiality of the image... the end of form" (135), movement, smell, voice, sound, pattern and energy. Many accounts of magical and healing rituals describe the production of some vibration that cuts across all sensory boundaries. Taussig, describing the magnificent attire of Cuna Indian women, observes, "It is they who provide the shimmering appearance on Indianness" (177). In the West, colour therapy, for instance, is now understood to have an effect on mood through the stimulation of particular cellular and chemical responses; if subtle energies are stimulated when we face a patterned wall, rather than a plain wall, how might such energies be focused, contextualized, and employed intentionally toward affecting specific states of body/mind? And of course, they are. In the consumer realm, the aesthetics of flicker, flow, fluctuation, speed, layering, zooming, fragmentary momentary glimpses, add up to a state of perpetual arousal and fascination.[40]

This affective nexus incorporating culture, belief, magic, manifestation, body, and performative ritual, is largely rejected by rationalist and positivist thinkers. It is often dismissed as a form of delusion, or some primitive animistic impulse left over from more unenlightened days, and maintained by charlatans yet it operates outside of 'true or false'.[41] Magic in healing is sometimes described within anthropological and medical narratives as a form of psycho-therapy.[42] Claude Levi-Strauss, for

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[40] As an extreme energetic engagement, even the earliest of Star Wars computer games with its throbbing escalation of heart beat sound and its piercing electronic firepower, was immensely stimulating. See Morse (1998) and Hayles (1993) for a critique of the virtual reality industry "returning to the reconstituted subject the rich diversity of a sensorium that includes visual, kinesthetic, and tactile experience." (Hayles, 1993: 175) and the cyborgian fantasy.

[41] This was indeed Frazer's (1978) view, though that also included various aspects of Christianity and democratic 'oligarchies' run by old men. Those areas of Western art which privilege inward or contemplative art modes, let alone shamanic-like practice, still seem to draw the most intense ire from both postmodern and Marxist critics. The scathing denouncements of the mystical and subjective domain of abstract expressionism invites reflection on the cultural changes at work in art culture in relation to the explosive rise of consumerist culture in the fifties and sixties. Although this rejection is often couched as a rejection of elitism, of mandarin practice, other equally esoteric forms of art seem to have avoided such wholesale political judgments. See Heywood (1997) for an exploration and critique of sociological art theorization.

[42] In a review of art practices in therapeutic medicine, Evans and Greaves (2002) observe that the arts can lead to broader understandings of health affecting processes (such as ageing) than any single dimensional model addressing only the physical. From the point of view of medicine, they describe the arts as involving ways of seeing that re-order the world under an intellectual and imaginative programme that in medicine would be described as "exploratory, diagnostic, therapeutic". They differentiate art though as an attempt to bring about an extraordinary experience, to displace rather than restore the ordinary. They particularly discuss 'narrative-based medicine', and also draw parallels with observation and interpretation common to both realms. See also Oppermann (1997) who reviews some scientific findings on the role of environment and ambiance in healing, and various art projects set up within hospitals. Her study is couched in Western expectations about good surroundings, and would need to be rethought in relation to different cultures.

instance, in his paper 'The Effectiveness of Symbols' discusses a magical incantation from the Cuna people from the Panama Republic (studied also by Taussig) and describes the cure for a woman experiencing a difficult childbirth "who believes in the myth and belongs to the society which believes in it...she has never questioned their existence" (Levi-Strauss, 1972/58: 197). He describes the shaman employing images of a uterine world and working to regain the woman's spirit and to restore her vitality through a ritualized battle with Muu, "the power responsible for the formation of the fetus" who, having exceeded her usual function, has possessed the woman's shadow spirit. In a move compatible with his structuralist quest for a science of meaning, Levi-Strauss construes the woman's pain as alien, as that which the shaman will "re-integrate within a whole where everything is meaningful."(ibid.). That is, once the woman "understands", she gets well.[43]

In Levi-Strauss' view, the effectiveness of the shaman's incantations, like modern psychoanalysis, is due to the way they provide the woman with a language of ritual, action, and transmutation in which the unexpressed and the inexpressible are articulated. He finds metaphors of language to describe how the shaman induces an experience and provides a structure for regulatory mechanisms and orderly functions to take effect in the unconscious. Her understanding or embracing of the Shaman's narrative somehow transmutes into bodily changes. As Levi-Strauss puts it, this concept of manipulation involves a manipulation of symbols, ideas that belong to one kind of reality, together with, a manipulation of organs, to resolve the difficulties of the birthing. If this is so, if effect or transmutation can occur over these kinds of boundaries, then why not others? And further, following Taussig (1993: 24) who asked a similar question about another kind of transmutation, is this magic or technology?[44]

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[43] Levi-Strauss, in his introduction to *Myth and Meaning*, explained he never felt any personal identity, that he always had the feeling his books were written through him, and indeed regarded each person as a kind of passive "crossroads" where "something happens": no choice, with everything a matter of chance (Levi-Strauss, 1978: 4). In that this denial of intention and subjectivity seems remarkably like a description of automatism, (or even some spiritualist channeling), it casts a different light on the influences on the concept of cultures as written through the author and the negation of the individual.

[44] Taussig is discussing Benjamin's contention that the camera and its physiognomic record of minute details, opens up the 'optical unconscious', a tactile embodied knowing, a merging of object with the body of the perceiver. See Wajcman (1991) also for a critical investigation into what gets called 'technology', the investments at work in this, and the effacement of women's technologies, and those of different cultures.

Sensory Differentiations

Classen (1993) observes that Western thought has largely employed two sensory paradigms for understanding the cosmologies of other cultures: the mapped landscape, a kind of visualism that is produced, it is argued, through literacy (Deregowski, 1972), and that of aurality-orality, structured by sound. McLuhan (1965), in his mapping of the relationships of media, the senses, and society, attributed historical changes to transformations in the ratio of the senses, and argued that vision became more important than speech. He claimed that the ascendancy of writing, a visual technology, led to a dominantly objective, linear, analytic and fragmented mode of thought. And on a social level he argued that writing lead to de-personalization, individualism and the division of labour. Walter Ong put it similarly: "many characteristics of the modern West - the emphasis on analysis over synthesis, detachment over involvement, appearance over substance, among others - are related in part to an emphasis on sight" (quoted in Classen, 1993: 15).[45]

What constitutes enough change to affect sensory modalities is difficult to know, but even within late modernity, sensory articulation and communication is complex and varied, while the visual domain itself is more diverse than is generally indicated in contemporary discourse and its descriptions of visual regimes of control and detachment.[46] If, as Johannes Fabian says, our theories of other societies are really *our* praxis, the ways "in which we produce and reproduce knowledge of the Other for our societies" (Fabian, 1983: 165) where does that leave us in consequence of what Classen calls the West's " eye-mindedness" (Classen, 1993: 6)? For Fabian, this very acknowledgement is that which puts anthropology "back on its feet" through a renewed focus on the history of the discipline and its relation to the Other.

Jay, in looking at the antiocularism fundamentally inherent in French theory, points to the importance of reflecting on these different ways of seeing and knowing:

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[45] Ong presents findings on variations in cultural sense systems and problematizes the concept of "worldview" by examining other kinds of knowledge excluded from the West's "marvellously productive visualism" (Ong, 1968: 636) and the consequences of technologized man. His method is to "...to think of knowledge itself by analogy with visual activity to the exclusion, more or less, of the other senses" (634) but there are significant problems with Ong's binary model opposing visuality-writing to orality-aurality, these "nicely distant" sensory systems that Ong links to civilization. Societies are not homogeneous for a start; literacy is often the province of an elite, often a minority, so that correlation of sensory technologies to culture cannot be broadly subscribed. And Ong's argument that the modern world is experiencing a new oral-sound order, (645) privileges language (and given his examples, a classical education), and it reductively encompasses all other modes of sense-making and communication (including the mode of demonstration) in the oral.

[46] See for instance Nelson (2000) for a variety of historical visualities including Western cultures.

"When "the" story of the eye is understood as a polyphonic - or rather, polyscopic - narrative, we are in less danger of being trapped in an evil empire of the gaze, fixated in a single mirror stage of development, or frozen by the medusan, ontologizing look of the other. Permanently "downcast eyes", he says, are no solution to these and other dangers in visual experience" (Jay, 1994: 592).

If we are to work toward ways which facilitate dialogue and understanding in regard to other cultures, it is important that we produce ways of knowing that go beyond deeming them an object of study (in order to contain all difference). Rather than judging, we need to develop hermeneutical responses to the ways people language themselves, explain themselves, (Heywood 1997), depict themselves, enact, and produce their culture.

The gaze, representation, realism, and mimesis are well theorized in Western theory, yet imaging as a diverse, performative, and embodied act seems to be a largely unaddressed and uncharted territory. In those mentalist areas of science that have not yet succumbed to defining understanding as computational information (Bruner, 1990), there can be found descriptions of a differentiated complex vision moving between actual seeing, and all kinds of interior seeings. These in-sights, lacking an exterior stimulus, offer a means of establishing the kinds of processes involved in constructing and experiencing 'a sight'. Such studies, eclipsed by the enormously successful developments, expansions, and ascendancies in the mechanization of 'thought' so vital to information industries and cybernetics (Hayles, 1999), insist on sight as flexible and opportunistic. Their findings suggest that even the gaze, whether the voyeuristic and fetishistic enactments so prevalent in filmic story-telling (Mulvey, 1975), or the self- surveillance implicated in the way bodies subject themselves to social controls (Foucault, 1977), is symptomatic of Western culture. And this culture, Fabian (1983) reminds us, is one with an historical predilection for visual objectivity that enables as a '"spacio-temporal" distancing, and an entrenched political view.

In the late c19th, George Simmel subscribed the apparent reduction in interpersonal communication in urban life to the ascendancy of vision which he determined as the sense most connected to detachment, alienation, and power: "where all are strangers, one simply looks" (quoted in Ewen, 1988). Foucault describes a panoptic sight as both the medium of control in public institutions, and as the enculturation of subjectivity. Many theorists, in line with Benjamin and other Frankfurt school

theorists, link visior with desire and consumption. Berger, for instance, arguing the primacy of the gaze in visual enactments of desire and power, also argued that sight *consumes* because surfaces of oil paintings and photographs have a tactility that serves evocations of materiality, allowing the image to substitute for the thing pictured: "We look, we touch, we buy".

Since the c18th sight has also become the sense of science (Stafford, 1993) in that it is deemed to enable detachment, objectivity, though grounded in a particular view of the world. 'Sight' still tends to be discussed as a given universal based on Western spatial illusion when it is just as likely to be culturally and environmentally 'imprinted', that is, sensitized in particular ways to space, to the urban grid, and not so alert to textural surfaces, to movement, or vibration. Only this century has notion of the subject-observer come into play in the West. The interactive forces of seeing, environment, culture and subjectivity would appear to create a force of their own.[47]

When the visual became allied with science and used as " the revealer of truth" (Classen, 1993: 27, Stafford, 1993) it signaled a restructuring of sensory order. Classen's study of the cultural role of different senses documents the way sight, a more "superficial sense, revealing only exteriors" (Classen, 1993: 7), took over from smell as the dominant sense of the spirit and truth. Pointing to "a certain cognitive and cultural shift as well, visual rationalism (came) to dominate and discredit the early olfactory spirituality" (8). In the pre-modern West Classen traces, not merely the primacy of smell, but its role in "a much larger part of sensory and symbolic consciousness" than operates today.[48] She notes that "Smell ... is by nature concerned with essences, with the life-giving breath which unites interiors and exteriors in a dynamic interchange, and thus provides a very different conceptual model than sight" (16).

Despite the vivid instantaneous non-thought experience of the senses, they can no longer be thought of as some given truth, or even as some pure somatic

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[47] Contemporary media, with its aural and kinetic dimensions is sensorially diverse, and different media forms and even styles have their own mix of modalities, but the quest for a perfect rendering of surface detail, texture, and atmospheric effects is part of the ongoing refinement and homogenization of the contemporary screen and image technologies concentrated on illusionist popular media.

[48] Classen argues that the discrediting of less precise and less productive senses reflects the gradual domination of an industrialized male sensory order, and a corresponding devaluing of women's knowledges and their wider sensory range. This female sensory realm is now marginalized. She contends that the feeling way of knowledge termed 'intuition', and "bound up with a decline of myth, community and domestic manufacture, and a rise in empiricism, individualism and industrialism." (Classen, 1993: 36).

apprehension.[49] Yet in Damasio's account of an integrated mind and body, different local regions of the brain are considered responsible for the construction of different sensory images experienced simultaneously with "sound, movement, shape, and color in perfect temporal and spatial registration" (Damasio, 1994: 95). To sense is already to know in some form. To think of the senses as culturally variable and malleable, is to "shatter conventional Western perceptual models and open us up to completely new sensory universes" (135).

The Western sensory bias is not only that of patriarchal vision, it privileges *particular* kinds of seeings and imagings. It appears to increasingly emphasize fast looking, rather than slow looking or meditation. Many kinds of lookings, including those once associated with Western religious experience, or with the more didactic imagery of church and state, may still be found within art which functions, intentionally or not, as a site for assessing, exploring and producing all kinds of realities, seeings, feelings, and experiences outside the cultural norm. Contemplative and abstract art, for instance, are among the few images produced specifically "just for looking" in contrast to images that function as expression, story, social comment, polemic, or provocation. Contemplative lookings are bracketed off to art or to spiritual practices. Contemporary media promotes the instant image of reactive engagement rather than that of layered sensitivities; it gives priority to the 'read' informational image (Hayles, 1999) rather than the lookings of art, let alone its ambiguities, its questioning, or its realms of feeling (fig. 151).

Classen argues that "Sensory models are conceptual models, and sensory values are cultural values. The way a society senses is the way it understands" (Classen, 1993: 135). She suggests, for instance, that when A. R. Radcliffe-Brown found the Andaman Islanders' descriptions of spirits as floating and vague, as disturbing and imprecise as this was to him, it precisely reflected the particular nature of these entities: "Sensory values not only frame a culture's experience, they express its ideals, its hopes and its fears. Justice and life are conceptualized in terms of temperature or smell. Death is a loss of heat or a loss of odour. Fertility and procreations are colours" (136).

Discussing differences in how the world is perceived, and exploring the changing role of the senses in history and across culture, Classen observes "The myth of

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[49] Somatic apprehension is defined as a singular act, and resists being subsumed under some universalist category such as perception. It supports the idea that one sees and feels differently from one moment to the next, but this is contingent on the circumstances in which any one act of seeing occurs.

perceptual transparency would, indeed, be hard to sustain given the cultural imprint which so many other functions of the human body undeniably manifest" (48). She argues that though the visual cortex is the largest of the sensory centre of the brain, in humans, there are all kinds of cultures that subvert biology. "Sight, in fact, is considered by the Suya to be an anti-social sense, cultivated only by witches" (9). The prime mode of knowing for the Suva is that of hearing.

Among numerous accounts of other cultures and other sensory worlds, Classen tells of the remote hunter-gatherer world of the Ongee of the Andaman islands in the South Pacific, where odour is the basis of personal and social identity, with "me" signified by pointing to one's nose. In this world of "living beings thought to be composed of smell", the movement of breath is thought of as an alternating exchange of odours, and since "it is never possible to inhale and exhale at the same time", it is the life and death momentum that prevents the cosmos becoming still and lifeless (130). In the Ongee world, one's inner spirit resides in one's bones, which are thought to be composed of solid smell. During sleep, the inner spirit maintains life by gathering up the odours scattered by the body during the day. Illness is considered an imbalance of odour caused by cold solidifying into a heavy smell, or by odour escaping too quickly, in which case the patient is painted with white clay to cool and seal in the body's smells. In death, one's odour is released. In acts known as 'shifting smells', companions will blow on one's hands if one feels 'light'; if heavy, one's nose is rubbed on another's cheek. A soft-boned infant is seen as possessing little smell, but accumulates it over time, while an elderly person "loses odour through illness and loss of teeth." leaving pure spirit ready to be born again as human (127).

Classen notes that the Ongee believe that spirits, *tomya*, hunt the Ongee for their odours, just as they hunt animals for food. Community life and such acts as walking in the same footprints produces a shared odour that serves as a protection from these hungry spirits. The Ongee further mask their odour with both smoke and claypainting. After having eaten meat, clay is painted on the body to prevent animals knowing one of their kind has been consumed. Different designs in clay body painting influence the release and the nature of smells, and also aid communication with one's ancestors and with all beings in an olfactory communication code called *mineyalange*, meaning 'to remember'. When spirits are *meant* to be attracted, as in male initiation called *tanageru*, 'blue-red', (meaning light ash-hot red/clay), with the man expected to undertake a dangerous journey to the spirit world, these protective

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rituals are reversed. Classen points out that "Odour is also used almost universally as a means of entering into dialogue with the divine other" (100). Perfumes, incense, herbs, and certain body odours facilitate interaction since "...the ability of odours to travel through space renders them capable of crossing barriers" (103).

Incorporating the Abnormal

These arguments for the flexibility of the sensory order in the cultural determination of meaning is now increasingly being confirmed through neuropsychological studies, mainly focused on 'sense-impaired' people. Oliver Sacks, (1996), planning a visit to a genetically achromatopic community populating the tiny Pacific island of Pingelap, ponders what he might find.[50]

> "...to be not only totally colour blind oneself, but to have, perhaps colour-blind parents and grandparents, neighbours and teachers, to be part of a culture where the entire concept of colour might be missing, but where, instead other forms of perception, of attention, might be amplified in compensation. I had a vision, only half fantastic, of an entire achromatopic culture with its own singular tastes, arts, cooking, and clothing – a culture where the sensorium, the imagination, took quite different forms from our own, and where 'colour' was so totally devoid of referents or meaning that there were no colour names, no colour metaphors, no language to express it: but (perhaps) a heightened language for the subtlest variations of texture or tone. All that the rest of us dismiss as 'grey' " (Sacks, 1996: 12).[51]

Later, on the island, Sacks gives an account of an exchange between his fellow researchers and their university-educated colour-blind guide:

> 'But what about bananas, let's say – can you distinguish the yellow from the green ones?' Bob asked.
>
> 'Not always,' James replied. ' "Pale green" may look the same to me as "yellow".'
>
> 'How can you tell when a banana is ripe, then?'

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[50] Congenital colour-blindness means the retina lacks cones, those colour sensitive cells that normally cluster around the point of the focus and register the fine detail. Sacks explains that in these cases though the light sensitive cells are functional, they become too sensitive in strong light and blanch out. Even in the best of circumstances, visual acuity is about one tenth of normal sight, and without a focus, the eyes continually move around in a jerky fashion.

[51] What he finds is that the 5% of the community with this condition are disabled in many situations such as schooling, and they are disadvantaged socially, but they have certain compensatory sensitivities that allow them to be employed as night fishers or enable their production of textual weavings based on subtle luminescences. Sack's Theroux- like account of his trip is far reaching, socially, politically and ecologically. Interestingly, he includes a brief Huxley-like description of his hallucinations after imbibing *sakau* (kava) which add to his ongoing observations and evocations of different perceptions, experiences, and constructions of subjectivity.

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James's answer was to go to a banana tree, and to come back with a bright green banana for Bob.

Bob peeled it; it peeled easily to his surprise. He took a small bite of it, gingerly; then devoured the rest.

'You see,' said James, 'we don't just go by colour. We look, we feel, we smell, we *know* – we take everything into consideration, and you just take colour!' (37).

We are reminded here that knowledge is constituted through whatever senses we have at our disposal[52], and that they work in an integrated fashion (Damasio, 1995) even if we tend to favour one over another. Elkins (2003) posits that less than 20% of what we understand as conscious vision derives from the eyes.[53] Among Oliver Sacks' (1985) highly accessible accounts of the neurological conditions encountered in his medical practice are descriptions of blind patients whose sight is medically restored. Sacks describes them as 'floundering' when confronted with the vagaries of the seen. To see/recognize the different appearance of objects or faces when face-on or in profile, they have to train their looking, and this they do by referencing what they see to touch. The mobilization of visual and formal elements to evoke tactile, kinetic and spatial sensation through a *correspondence* to other senses or to various aesthetic values and elements from other realms of experience is recognized to some extent in the West.[54] It is well known from written accounts from artists such as Gauguin, Paul Klee, and Wassily Kandinsky. Merleau-Ponty too, describes Cezanne's attempt to evoke all the senses in the representation of objects:

"We *see* the depth, the smoothness the softness, the hardness of objects. Cezanne even claimed we see their odour" (Merleau-Ponty, 1993/1945: 65).

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[52] Elkins (2003) points to the phenomenon of blindsight, or 'unconscious vision' and its opposite condition, Anton's syndrome, to make a similar point about the contingency of the senses and the huge role of the unconscious in seeing. In blindsight, blind people still make correct guesses about colour, motion and orientation, while in Anton's syndrome, patients seem unaware or forget that they are blind, or not to care about it, or note it in any way.

[53] Elkins notes, citing Trobe (2001) and Kline (1998), that some 80% of input that is relayed to the visual cortex via the LGB, or lateral geniculate bodies (that are, he explains, little bulbs in the optic tract lying deeper in the brain than the optical chiasm where the optic nerves meet), does not come from the retinas. Elkins says that how this works is not understood, but information comes from the mesencephalic reticular formation, thalamic nuclei, the posterior parietal cortex, and the optical cortex. If Damasio (1995) is right, the missing 80% of input is likely to derive from unconscious internal modelling based on other senses, body-ground revision, learning, experience, feeling, and memory. Smith is here in agreement with Damasio (1995, 2003) that most people experience a separation of the senses, but "the brain activity that corresponds to seeing does not involve vision alone; rather seeing depends on auditory and somatic events as well as visual ones (Damasio, 1995: xi), with the activity spread throughout the brain structures. Rather than being separate in their functioning, senses appear to be dependent on each other.

[54] See Barthes for a semiotic meditation on the intersensory transformations of Japanese food: tactile, spatial, kinetic. (Barthes, 1984/170: pp.11-26).

This haptic or kinetic seeing-imaging, linked to intermodal experiences of sight, energy, touch, and feeling, finds its counterpart in the associated realms of *L'Art Brut*, in the emotionally charged imaging of child art and naive art, and the psychotherapeutic images produced by psychiatric patients.[55] Related to this, is the experience of synaesthesia. Once regarded as a rare phenomena, linked to abnormal states of reception caused by neurological damage or disorder, it is now believed to be an experience that is diverse in origin, and common to some degree.

In Richard Cytowic's long-term study of a synaesthesiac, a state, "different, but not unheard of" he describes this initial conversation with his subject:

> "You're a neurologist, maybe it will make sense to you. I know it sounds crazy, but I have this thing, see, where I taste by shape." He looked away. "How can I explain?" he asked himself.
>
> "Flavours have shape," he started frowning into the depths of the roasting pan. "I wanted the taste of this chicken to be a pointed shape, but it has come out all round." He looked up at me, still blushing, "Well, I mean it's nearly spherical," he emphasized, trying to keep the volume down, " I can't serve this if it doesn't have points" (Cytowic, 1994: 4).[56]

Interestingly, Cytowic's subject turns out to be an artist.[57] In synaesthesia, one sensation stimulates or conjures up another – so that all sensations mesh together. Cytowic considers that such hypersensitivity, usually considered the result of failing to create a dominant sense as deemed 'normal', points instead to the rich potentiality and flexibility of the senses, and more contentiously, to a deeper inner reality than is available to ordinary awareness. He argues that synaesthesia provides neurological evidence for " the primacy of emotion over reason; the impossibility of a purely 'objective' point of view; the force of intuitive knowledge; and why the affirming of

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[55] See Lowenfeld & Brittain (1964/1947) for a discussion of early psychological and neurological studies on differences in the haptic/body type and 'visual' types, and the tendency for most people (75%) to be a mix of these but predisposed strongly toward one type or the other, without any apparent difference in measured 'intelligence'. Lowenfeld & Brittain summarize a number of studies that suggest that one in four people are dependent on subjective experience rather than vision; that 'visuals' see the whole rather than the details, and that haptics are characterized by marked alpha rhythms even when their eyes are open and their minds are alert. Lowenfeld & Brittain also discuss haptic (emotionally affecting) colour, and haptic (kinetically sensed) space.

[56] The classic case study is A. R. Luria's (1968) research on the man he called Mr. S. who not only experienced synaesthesia, but also manifested an extraordinary eidetic (photographic) memory of apparently infinite capacity, while having difficulties with abstract thinking and with everyday activities. See the research papers cited by Smith (1994), Cytowic (1994), and Damasio (1995) for useful entry points into the science literature in neuropsychology and developmental studies.

[57] It raises the question for instance, as to whether people with synaesthetic tendencies might be drawn to art practice.

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personal experience yields a more satisfying understanding than analyzing what something "means" " (7). Instead of the idea of sensation flowing in from the outside, synaesthesia shows, says Cytowic, and in keeping with Damasio (1995), that sensation also emanates from the active brain, from the inside out.

Linda Smith (1994), reviewing recent intersensory studies in developmental research, confirms that infants are "unambiguously" sensitive to intersensory correspondences from the first hours of life (Smith, 1994: x), and addresses Piaget's view that the binding of perceptions into a synthesized view is a gradual development derived from interaction in the physical world.[58] "Sensory mingling" and synergetic arousal (and its corresponding behaviours) (but not an organized whole given that some abilities are rudimentary in infants, and there is little experience to provide the kind of expectations, plans and prior knowledge that facilitates mature perception and learning) are now regarded as characteristic of immature states, with differentiation tied to development. Smith emphasizes that these intermodalities are not " a singular phenomenon"; the correspondences observed in infants vary according to the senses stimulated, the nature of the task, and level of infant development (eye-hand co-ordination and reaching for instance, linked to visual focus or stereopsis, with vision calibrated to the infant's experience of self-propelled movement). Some dimensions look as if they need to be learnt, with "watching oneself rotate objects" a critical operation in developing a haptic sensitivity to shape for instance (xvi). Smith suggests that given research is only beginning to look at intersensory functioning as an outcome rather than a process the central question is now how interactions between the sensory systems *make development*, that is, how they create 'novel mappings' that enable/encode change.

Classen argues that although McLuhan wrote that "non-literate cultures experience such an overwhelming tyranny of the ear over the eye that any balanced interplay among the senses is unknown at the auditory extreme" (McLuhan, 1965: 28, quoted in Classen, 1993: 135), the interplay at a cultural level indeed exists. It is more the case, says Classen, that we have been "apt to ignore the multi-sensory dimensions of other cultures". We need to take into account "that a basket's meaning might not lie just in its form and function, but in its texture, taste and smell" (Classen, 1993: 136). The ways senses interrelate is highly significant, and Classen in this context, cites the Desana whose visuality, "with its emphasis on integrating and animating colour

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[58] Classen too notes that research on the sensory state of newborn humans suggests that "sensory mingling" may be a natural sensory state, perhaps even a basic sensory unity. (Classen, 1993: 56).

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energies, is surely very different" for the world-view of the Desana is something of "
a sensory kaleidoscope, with colour merging into smell and then into flavour and so
on." (135). To complicate matters, Classen warns that the sense that is the most
symbolically elaborated may not be necessarily the most important for practical
purposes, or for communication.

In pursuing an understanding of cognitive operations and culture, various scholars,
including Levi-Strauss (1949), Jean-Claude Armen (Auger), (1976/71), Oliver
Sacks, (1985), Howard Gardner (1985) and Classen (1990, 1993), have looked at
famous case studies of feral children and idiot savants. Classen argues that even if
children of the classic cases, Victor, Kamala, and Kaspar Hauser, were not truly
wild (wild somehow equating with innocent, pre-cultural), but were merely
neglected, isolated, or hidden from society, they still offer chance to study
exceptional modes of perception.[59] They are children whose sensory orders differing
from the cultural norm (38) and indeed they usefully substitute for what could only
be achieved in some diabolical human infant deprivation experiment.[60]

All three classic wild children were found to have a well developed sense of smell
and acute hearing, and though initially highly restricted in their 'taste' preferences,
they gradually came to recognize and eat a range of food. Victor, who may have
grown up in complete solitude, and never learned to talk beyond signs, used smell
extensively, with all of its potential for registering "presence and identity" (44), and
"as a fundamental and pleasurable means of gaining knowledge of the world" (47).[61]
Victor's sensory preferences were, in order of priority, smell, then taste, followed by
vision and hearing, and lastly, touch. In contrast, Kasper Hauser, who had spent his
childhood chained up in a dark room, was inordinately sensitive. Like Luria's (1968)
'Mr. S.', Kasper could be overwhelmed by stimuli to the point of pain: the noise of a

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[59] Levi-Strauss (1949) among others, has argued that these are really cases of mentally retarded
children. Bettelheim (1959) argued that such children were possibly autistic. Armen (1976) argues for
differentiating between different types of 'wild children'. There are children apparently brought up or
nurtured by animals (such as Sidi-Mohamed, the ostrich boy of Assaba, and the child he himself
observed, the gazelle boy of Spanish Mauritania). There have been children temporarily lost (this group
would include Yves Cheneau, discovered in France in 1962); and there are children (like Victor of
Aveyron, or Kaspar Hauser) who lived in total isolation before their discovery. Another category would
be children who are neglected, and reared with minimal stimulation in semi-secluded circumstances as
with the Californian child, Genie, who was studied by Curtiss (1972).

[60] "Such explorations of other 'worlds of sense'", says Classen, "may have implications for scientific as
well as human endeavours, in that, while the Western sensory model has made possible much of our
scientific knowledge, it is no longer adequate for many of the new directions science is moving in"
(Classen, 1993: 11).

[61] On the other hand, Kasper, who had acquired a few words and phrases from an unseen male keeper
who left him food during his childhood confinement, eventually learnt to speak well.

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drum would throw him into convulsions; all smells were a source of discomfort; touch felt violent, and he experienced metal 'magnetically' as currents of air. Victor and Kamala, who had lived outdoors, were insensitive to some stimuli, and even had to be taught to distinguish temperature. Though little is known about how they responded to spatial structures or illusions, Kaspar with his acute sensitivity to light, found looking at a summer landscape a painful blur of colour and form, and, like Kamala, supposedly reared by wolves, he could see exceptionally well at night.[62]

In looking at some of these cases, Classen observed that the social conditioning the children underwent after their respective discoveries seems, in some ways to have had the result of lessening the importance of sensory data. She concluded that in 'normality' particular senses, extremely amenable to cultural influence, are suppressed, with the result generally being " less sensitivity, but more discrimination".

Intelligence, Feeling, Liminality
Howard Gardner, arguing for the concept of multiple intelligences, has surveyed the many efforts within the West to specify and describe 'essential intelligences'.[63] Gardner (1985) points out that the difficulty with all such 'essential' categories is that they merely reflect an *a priori* understanding that leaves glaring and obvious gaps or fails to acknowledge the vast majority of abilities valued by human culture.

Taking a broader cultural perspective that tries to account "for the skills of the shaman and a psychoanalyst as well as of a yogi and a saint", Gardner posits seven modes of intelligences, which, he emphasizes, are provisional and have no claims to

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[62] There is a problem with Kamala's designation as a child 'reared by wolves' by J. A. L. Singh (Singh & Zingg, 1966) who found these two children in 1920, and who was also the director of their orphanage. She was apparently found with a young sister about one and a half years old who died soon after their discovery. Given the age of the younger girl, Amala, either they weren't related, or Kamala, around eight years old when found, had at least seven or so years of human socialization. Perhaps Kamala was autistic and wandered away with her baby sister into the care of wolves, but whatever the truth of her background, Singh's study offers consideration of different sensory engagements and sensitivities. What is known is that when Victor and Kaspar looked at various representations, they apparently made no discrimination between a picture and 3D carving. This may not mean much though if both of these utilized similar *outline* formations. Indeed Classen (1993) confirms that Kaspar was shown "men and horses" in flat paintings and "men and horses" in relief.

[63] Gardner's discussion of various models includes Franz Joseph Gall's c18th thirty-seven faculties of the human mind and more contemporary propositions such as J. P. Guilford's 1971 one hundred and twenty 'mind vectors' (Gardner, 1985: 7); philosopher Paul Hirst's more conventional 1974 list of seven forms of knowledge: mathematics, physical sciences, interpersonal understanding, religion, literature and the fine arts, morals and philosophy; and psychologist Larry Gross's 1974 isolation of lexical, social-gestural, iconic, logico-mathematical and musical modes of communication (62). See Boring (1977) also for a discussion of Gall's model.

exhaust cultural or human capacity.[64] Instead of revising established values such as those associated with classical or scientific scholarship, he synthesizes recent understandings from a wide variety of contemporary fields to describe various intelligences that can be related to specific sites within the brain.[65] These modes of intelligences, linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal, also manifest exceptional ability profiles such as those exhibited by prodigies and idiot savants.[66] More importantly, for the influence of enculturation, this variability can be extended to cultural groups.[67]

Feelings make an appearance across these modes as markers of partiality, 'a love of mathematics', 'pleasure in movement', and they are recognized to some degree in Gardner's conception of 'personal intelligences. Personal intelligences, Gardner describes as no less deserving of investigation as any other mode, and as

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[64] Gardner's (1985) comprehensive study puts forward evidence for (at least) seven biologically based categories of intelligence each having their own characteristic symbol system, and their own observable operating rules. Each of these modes is differentiated by an identifiable neural core or set of operations genetically programmed to be activated by certain experiences; a distinctive pattern of maturation, incorporating critical periods of development; and all lead to various levels of expertise and speciality, and contain the possibility of evolutionary pathways.

[65] For all of this, Gardner argues that the notion of intelligence/s is a useful *fiction*, valid only as a scientific construct for discussing abilities and processes that are continuous with each other. Gardner emphasizes that such 'neurologically confirmed' intelligences are likely to be culturally and environmentally determined, constructed, and developed. His arguments are replete with cultural examples that are well in excess of Western norms, but he also allows for genetic and biological dimensions in modal preferences. 'Intelligences', he stresses, need to be regarded as 'potential" rather than certain or fixed in any way. In Gardner's framework of intelligences, the senses are subsumed into multiple structures determined by ability and expertise. Sensory systems are seen as different from these 'intelligences' which work across or mobilize various sensory faculties (Gardner, 1985: 68). The blending of senses and intelligences though is described by Gardner as of utmost importance in that it further unravels set notions about understanding, knowledge and behaviour.

[66] See in this regard, Luria (1968) for his study of the eidetic 'Mr S.' and Selfe (1977) for her study of Nadia, an autistic child who demonstrated exceptional drawing abilities before being socialized. See Gardner's (1985) analysis of Nadia's eidetic traits (pp. 188-190). See Sacks' (1985) chp. 24 'The Autist Artist' in which he documents the improvement in José, a brain-damaged young man whose capacity for drawing leads Sacks into the understanding that autistic artists (he cites a number of studies) are capable of rich expression and perception (rather than mere 'Xerox' copying as if tracing a projected memory-image or calculated in some way). Given that medical understanding and treatment of autism has considerably improved in the last decade, and that many autistic children now achieve some degree of normality and awareness of their own condition, this area would seem to have some further potential for considerations of difference. (I recall reading an article in which a family who had an autistic child was interviewed, and that this child was able to give an account of his experience. At one point he father asked his son why, when he was younger, did he always become distressed and hysterical whenever they drove along a particular stretch of road. The boy was able to tell him that it was because he had the absolute sensation that the hills were about to fall down on them.)

[67] Throughout his study, Gardner provides numerous cultural examples that are considered exceptional and prodigious by conventional Western standards of intelligence and sensibility. These include recognition of the nuanced mimicry of Balinese spectators at cockfights; the memory for visual detail and complex spatial competencies on the part of nomadic cultures; the virtually infinite oral memory exhibited by traditional story tellers; the immense prowess in bodily awareness, focus, movement, grace, strength and skill in cultures where dance is central, or where physical competency is essential for survival; the musical and singing proficiencies that are shown by all members in particular cultures; the heightened abilities of both Eskimo men and women in matters of spatial orientation, and the prodigious feats of navigation in some seafaring cultures.

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constituting an "inalienable part of the human condition". The core capacity here is "access to one's feeling life – one's range of affects or emotions: the capacity to instantly effect discriminations among these feelings and, eventually, to label them, to enmesh them in symbolic codes, to draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's behaviour" (Gardner, 1985: 239). Personal intelligences are seen to turn inward in matters of self and outwards in forming community relations, yet feelings are only mentioned directly in one brief note Gardner makes on the high regard that the Japanese have for someone attuned to *jikkan*, their 'real and direct feelings'. It is within 'musical intelligences' (105-107) that it becomes clear that affect and feelings are being discussed in ways that show a cultural tendency to *rationalize* pleasure, aesthetics, and feelings ('mathematical' dimensions, the capturing 'the form of feelings' rather than conveying them; alluding to specific 'sensitivities'), and marks their alterity to scientific theory.

In contrast, Michael Mel, in discussing Mogei subjectivity in relation to the Western predilections for structure and meaning, situates debates over objectivity and subjectivity, and the 'real' and the 'simulated', within the consequences of postmodernism. Citing Turner's (1990) anthropological writings of the 1960s, which used the term 'liminal' to describe a space of alterity and chaos that promotes a fertile disintegration and creative potential for self and being, Mel draws attention to movement between states: a "process of ambiguity, when the subject is "neither here nor there, betwixt and between the position of assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention" (Mel, 2000: 42).

Mel describes the ways the Mogei recognize the "insatiable desire to make sense of the world" and "construct and impose meaning on complex social formations." He explains that the Mogei's capacity to live and work which relates to their "feelings, thoughts, interests, fears, knowledge, desire" (*Nanga Noman*) is not seen as within the self, conceived as some container closed off from the world, but in relationship to the world (*Mbu*), which includes but differentiates between the physical world, people living and dead, and individual. But

"...the world is not dichotomized into inner and outer realms. The outside is not divided into material and spiritual things. There is only *Mbu*. Likewise, there are no feelings separate from thoughts. There is only *Nanga Noman*. The two are entwined and can only be known and lived this way" (ibid.).

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Mel argues that this way of seeing and knowing, this "singular interconnected and interwoven whole problematizes art and the notion of what art is". (ibid.) Watching/looking (*kanamb*) is as significant as the making of ceremonial objects or performing, and part of the complex relationships and transformations the performance evokes. By being constantly interpellated during the performance, the watcher, rather than being an inner subject looking at an outer event, experiences a blurring which diffuses their relation to the ceremony, and an authenticity deriving from, Mel here quoting Raymond Williams (1977), the "undeniable experience of the present".

This experience is not about confirming a secure place in the world, but a placing of all aspects of *Nanga Norman* in tension, a challenging of conceptions to bring *Mbu* into sharper focus. "In the Mogei context the performance as text is about experiencing the shifts and changes between 'places' of being rather than about the object or thing that seems to represent a people or place or indeed a culture. It is the sound of the performer's voice; it is the smell of the flowers and odour of the performer; it is the performance as process... (it is) about a personal and embodied process that is visceral and emotional...*kanamb* is tangible and can be located between the dimensions of simulation and reality; between play and reality; and between psychological rationalization and actual experience" (43). Mel explains that the very act of filling the 'gap' is the source of *kanamb*, of *jouissance*, in that it enables an experience of ourselves as part of that "immutable" continuum of the world, and he argues that, as such, it is an experience and a way of life that stands against those forces leading towards an impoverishment of life.

In Western thinking there is some resonance in regard to the Mogei's experience of self within the liminal dimensions of performance. The practice of *kanamb*, as Mel observes, is not confined to indigenous life.[68] Elizabeth Grosz reminds us that the idea of an infinite gradation of "animateness" or soul can be found in Spinoza who, she says, proposes that

> "the total state of the body at a particular moment is a function of the body's own
> formal pattern and inner constitution on one hand and the influence of "external "
> factors, such as other bodies. There are no essential attributes, no inherent

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[68] See Broadhurst (1999) who identifies liminal practice as an emerging genre in contemporary performance that is characteristically interdisciplinary, experimental, technologically ambitious, and body-centered. Broadhurst situates her discussion in relation to the inadequacies of traditional aesthetic theory tied to ideas of beauty, truth and linguistic understandings, and describes various performance works, from Pina Bausch's *Tanztheater*, Robert Wilson's *Einstein on the Beach*, and Peter Greenaway's films to the post-punk music performances of Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds.

"nature" for the organism ...The organism strives to affirm, to maximize its potentialities, its powers, its possibilities...the body must be seen as a series of processes of becoming, rather than a fixed state of being" (Grosz, 1994: 12).[69]

For Jay (1994), multiple ways of seeing are an indicator of resistance to a scopic regime that is seen in various ways to reduce, inhibit and contain intellectual and human potential. It is no simple task to change preconceptions and assumptions about knowledge, and how understanding and perception works. Fredric Jameson, identifying the investments within the conservative view, confirms some of the problems involved:

> "The very activity of sense perception has nowhere to go in a world in which science deals with ideal quantities, and comes to have little enough exchange value in a money economy dominated by considerations of calculation, measurement, profit and the like. This unused capacity can only re-organize itself into a new and semi-autonomous activity, one which produces its own specific objects, new objects that are themselves the result of a process of abstraction and reification, such that older concrete unities are now sundered into measurable dimensions on one side, say pure color (or the experience of purely abstract color) on the other" (Jameson, 1981: 229, also cited in Jay, 1994: 153).

Other knowings are likely to produce further instability of meaning, but of this rich array of sensory knowings and knowledges may come new understandings and provisions, new possibilities in sense makings and orders of knowledge, some of which may indeed be alien to past and present Western thinking and its taxonomic codings. These understandings need to go beyond recognition of cultural difference, for diversity has no economic value beyond the performance of culture for tourism and trade, and is clearly at risk. In my conclusion I return to what seems to be at stake in terms of attitudes to the body evident in the global tide of new 'master bodies", images celebrating control, transcending time and matter. I argue in relation to Marxist demarcations of value that cultural diversity needs to be supported in terms of politics, policy, and theorization.

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[69] Grosz though observes that Spinoza's conception of bodies has problems in its lack of explanation in relation to causality or interaction, and in his holistic notion of the body. As a "cumulative complexity" it avoids the two conditions necessary for a feminist refiguration of the body. It does not take into account the "irreducible neurophysiological and psychological dimensions whose relations remain unknown. Nor does it address the understanding that human bodies have the wonderful ability, while striving for integration and cohesion, organic and psychic wholeness, to also provide for and indeed produce fragmentations, fracturings, dislocations that orient bodies and body parts to other bodies and body parts" (1994: 13).

The Illustrated Reference Book of Man in Society
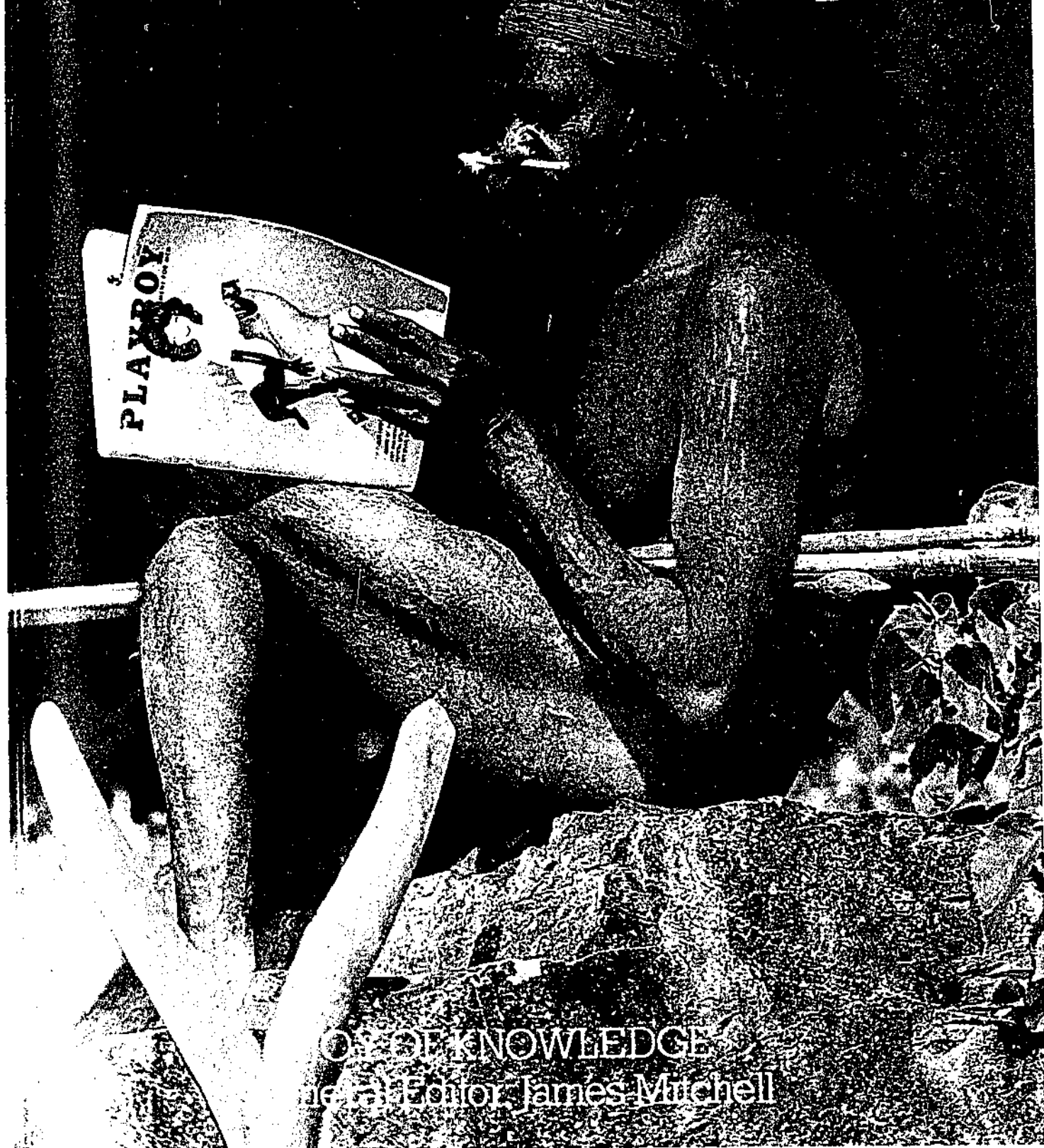
OF KNOWLEDGE

Editor James Mitchell

146. Frontcover (not credited), *Man in Society*
Mitchell, James, (ed.), *The Illustrated Reference Book of Man in Society*, Sydney: Coporteur Press, 1982

Fig. 146

147. Abelam performance and affective actions

left: This Abelam man is readying for the dance after the initiation ceremony. He holds in his mouth a karut, said to be an amulet worn once to give courage in battle, now reserved for yam festivals and initiation ceremonies.

top right: White stones, fruit and bright leaves used for enhancing the colours of the spirit house façade before it is lifted into position; heated sweet smelling leaves in a container are wafted around the façade also.

bottom right: Painting a section of the spirit house

Fig. 147
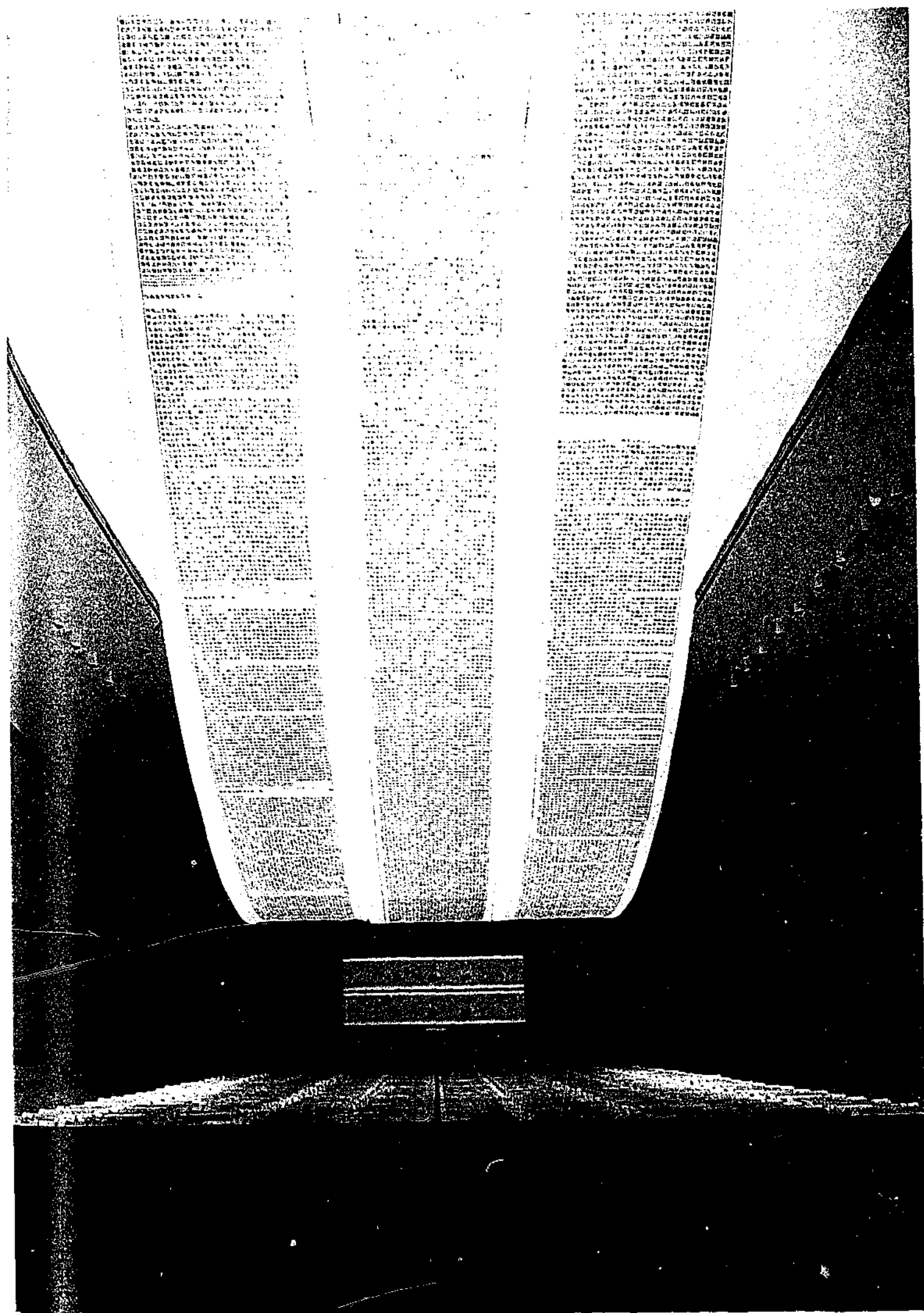
148. Xu Bing, *Book From the Sky*, 1987-91
installation at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

Fig. 148

149. Wahgi shield designs collected in 1995

Fig. 149
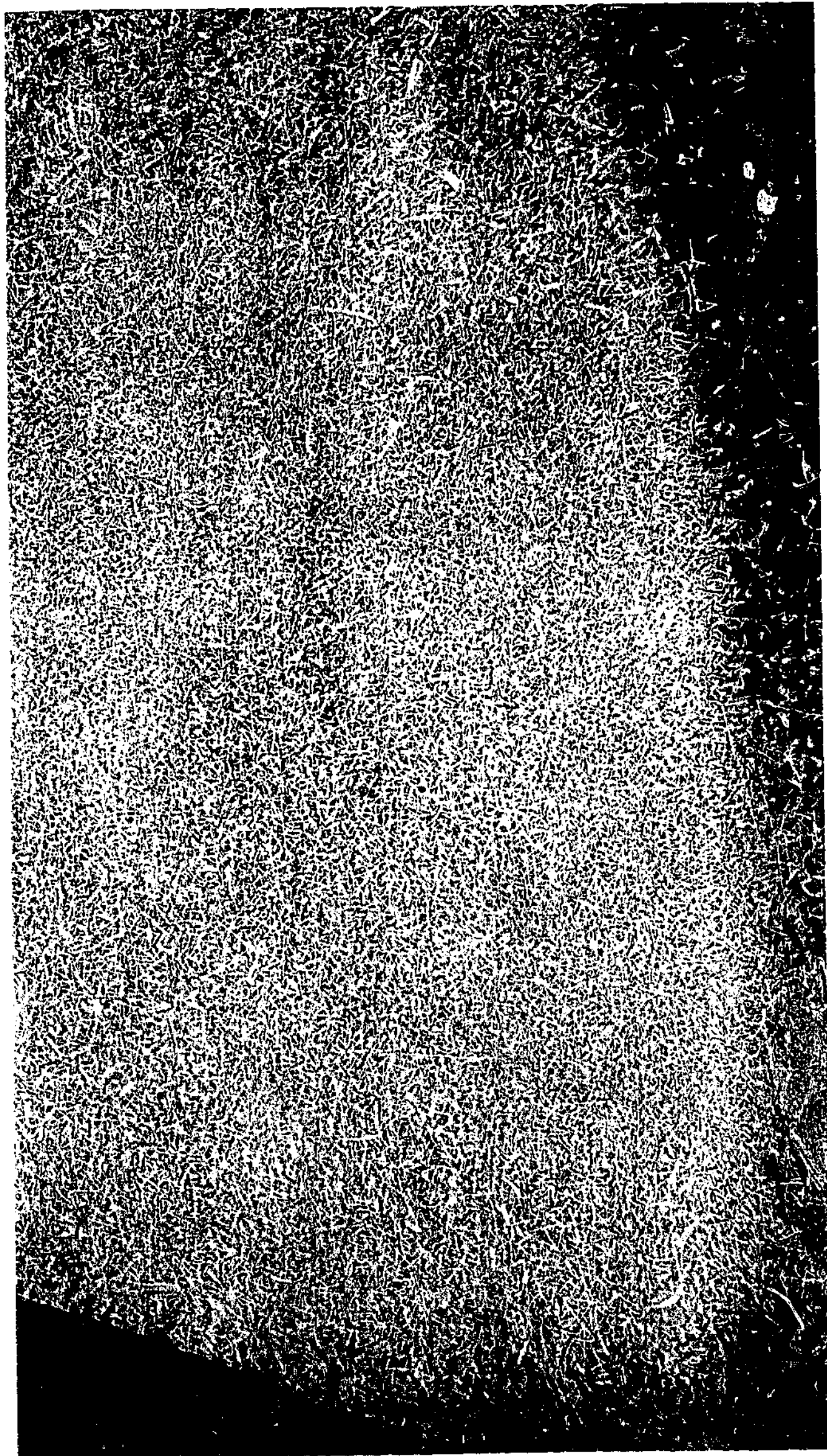
150. Mark Tobey, *Edge of August*, 1953

Fig. 150

151. Lani Maestro, *a book thick of ocean*, 550 pages, 1993.
Part of a video-installation project

Fig. 151

152. Chandra, performance-installation, 1992, Singapore

Indian ritual traditions are used by Chandra to generate conditions or situations to construct identity,
'test' it, then dismantle it. Sabapathy describes Chandra's concerns as "the assertion and negation of
physical/psychic entities in time and space, the power of icons, and the processes entailed in the
fabrication of images." (Sabapathy, T. K. 1993: 42)

Fig. 152

Conclusion

In the many modes of contemporary transnational visual media, whether film, television, and magazine publication, or billboard advertising, or the newer domains of websites or CD publications, all kinds of stimulating, viscerally engaging, and fragmented image-sound-language texts intermingle with naturalistic elements. Given this extraordinarily complex interplay of hybrid textual and sensory languages, the dominance of the cohesive seamless illusion might seem somewhat challenged, but the naturalistic-ideal image operates as a benchmark within a constant everyday dialogic negotiation of the real. It also asserts a standard against which today's real bodies are now measured.[1]

Where in the West, the classical ideal body and its related figures might be contested to some extent by feminism, radical art, the carnivalesque, or by punk/rave/feral youth cultures, such forms of resistance are more problematic for many cultures which strive to maintain their own beliefs and identities.[2] In many non-Western

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[1] The once implicit promise/dream of ideal body/beauty associated with the purchase of advertised products becomes the overt claim when desires for the celebrity lifestyle meet reality TV to focus on plastic surgery and 'extreme' body makeovers. See Kaplan's chapter 'body politics' (1993) for an analysis of how these cosmetic industries who "make large profits out of women's vulnerabilities", construct their subject textually and aesthetically. Kaplan (1997), examining medical handbooks on cosmetic surgery, found that while a text written in the 1930s reflected anthropological fashion on cultural differences in standards of beauty, this was altogether absent in recent publications. The youthful Caucasian was the unquestioned standard of aesthetic value, which in at least one text, Kaplan points out, is explicitly described as 'The American look"; in another text all the drawings were white faces with blonde hair. With certain features like eyelids, both the ageing and the Oriental eyelid are defined in pathological terms as deformities, which Kaplan shows, is reflective of uncritical assumptions that Asian clients would be seeking assimilation and occidentalization, rather than have their own needs. She notes that recent journal articles in the field have begun to address historical perspectives and 'psychosocial' aspects, but not issues to do with race or culture.

[2] Contestations that arise from cultural sites outside mainstream commodity culture may in themselves do little to change anything, though they may well be symptomatic of other associated kinds of behaviours and ways of life lived in tension with dominant precepts. They may also be enormously useful as a praxis for those inclined to resist normality, or as validation for those who harbour different inclinations and values than those sanctioned, or as model or recognition of certain strategic possibilities

cultures, the classical Western form operates as the conservative and *acceptable* face of Western imaging. In this context I want to make one last claim for the importance of a better theory of a politics of images, one that is predicated on the view that images matter, but not necessarily in ways that follow orthodox positions. In the contemporary debate about body portrayals, theorists sometimes renounce textual analysis because interpretation and effects seem uncertain and unpredictable.[3] Or they argue that counter discourses seeking to disrupt dominant culture or spectatorship are futile; or that there is no 'authentic' avant-garde, or any art production "exterior to the circuits of capitalist production" (Cherniavsky, 2000). They refuse all dialectical possibilities within alternative practice because there seems no longer any guarantee of real experiment, or political commitment. In doing this, they attempt to impose an expectation for a purity and political purpose that is external to those counter-culture endeavours, entirely ideological and often prescriptive.

Any demand for a moral or politically effective art for instance, is bound to find art wanting. But to even pit what are usually the small scale, and modestly resourced productions of art against the unbelievably vast multi-million dollar enterprises of mainstream image industries bears thinking about. The reach of radical independent art is miniscule unless it receives social, institutional and theoretical support in terms of public exposure and exegesis toward amplification of its effects. When art gets public exposure, it is discredited because it seems to merge with commerce and market agendas. When art sups with the devil of commerce, its audience is hugely increased, but complexity and difficulty are likely to be erased. An art *for* the people,

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for those wanting to find ways of mediating conflicts between inner realities and sanctioned institutional discourses. This is not to say that artists working in cultures which prohibit even the most conventional depictions of the nude, or which are determined to contain all forms of radicalism, do not try to work in similarly resistant and challenging ways. But the forces of social containment are often repressive, and direct protest against government, or nationalist endeavours and public regulation is often too dangerous.

[3] The way a text might be interpreted differently by different audiences is seen by Cherniavsky (2000) for instance, as reason for a reminder that "the experimental image can never be simply ruptural", as if this discounts all possibility for effect. Cherniavsky, critiquing Silverman and hooks, points out that there already is an abundance of iconoclast countertexts, the implication being that these have had little effect, and she refuses the contestatory possibilities of experimental practices like art because the very notion assumes that the image has authority over the spectator. What she calls for, in contradiction of her dismissal of textual effect, is an art that promotes accountability to other subjects, rather than narratives that focus on transcending historical boundaries, which are, as she rightly points out, central to capitalism's fantasies. Further, Cherniavsky's own demand that theorists continue to investigate the institutional contexts that enable oppositional work, contradicts her denial of the transformative potential of the text, and by implication, the importance of attaining some understanding of how oppositional ideas and practices take hold. From the examples she provides of identification and "crisis of identity", her core concern appears to be that any textual 'transformation' is restricted to the imaginary of art audiences, and does not reach or communicate to those in oppressed subject positions.

is not the same as art *of* the people.[4] The success of the capitalist enterprise cannot be assigned to any failure/sell out/ disappearance/futility of avantgarde art as a sub-culture whether within or in opposition to mainstream cultural practice. Being seen as a kind of entertainment may defuse art's oppositional status to capitalism or politics, but what artists/directors say, and what still needs to be considered, is that specific ideas within the actual works may still have an effect. Difficult art, taken into public arenas, as happened under the auspices of Saatchi & Satchi with its 1997 exhibition *Sensation: Young Artists from the Saatchi Collection* at the Royal Academy in London, or as happens in festivals or 'block-buster' shows or other box office enterprises, is still going to provoke cultural and social questions.

The demand for a real and effective politics begins to look like a demand for a unitary resistance, which Hardt and Negri have pointed out, cannot work with today's diffused matrixes of Imperialist power. Yet, as they, and other theorists argue (see Butler (1990), and Penley and Ross (1991)), there are manifold opportunities for subversion, and counter-production, whose combined effect is a de-stabilization that enables resistance of hegemonic narratives and official values. Art and associated independent cultural practices, while lacking recognizable political power, are particularly rich sites for practices, knowledges, and experiences that work toward a questioning of official or truths.

Tony Ayres' 1997 *China Dolls* with all its sophisticated aesthetic appeal, humour, and integrity is, for instance, in my view, a highly effective counter to both Orientalism and homophobia. Ayres' social critique of 1980's Australian gay culture, and body cults, with his interweavings of autobiography, interview, history, and its stagings of desire around Western and Asian bodies, is neither didactic nor polemical.[5] Work such as Tracey Moffatt's films and photographs also establish a

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[4] Camille Paglia (1992: ix) might argue that the public creates its own culture through ratings and purchase, but this ignores capitalism's production of audience. Smiers (2003) points out that a few cultural conglomerates control the production of mass cultural product. See Smiers' detailed account of the culture wars taking place over production, distribution, copyright and marketing. Smiers shows that intrinsic appeal, or relevance, or quality has very little to do with what gets to be exhibited, published, or screened even in art, but I would argue that a bid for a sustainable art reputation (visual and performance art as opposed to film or applied art) has to field the quality judgments of fellow artists, critics, and curators.

[5] Ayres' *China Dolls*, which looks at the racist and media influenced preferences for the ideal white body, and the bias against Asian bodies that prevailed in the eighties gay scene in Sydney, like much of his work, has been screened on television. His work generally is regarded as subversive, and is also much acclaimed and regularly attracts AFI (Australian Film Institute) awards. Among Ayres' recent productions are *The Long Ride*, a tele-feature, *The Ghost Story*, a televised play, and *Sadness* a documentary based on photographer performance artist William Yang's monologue of the same name, *Walking on Water*, his first feature film, centered on a young man dying of AIDS, and in 2003, his provocative play, *Fat Boy*. For a detailed media survey of Ayres' work that shows recognition of the

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sophisticated sense of the complexities of modern lives, histories, and desires in ways that that refuse to simplify or smooth over contradictory relations. Miglietti argues that misunderstandings and conflicts, and agitations run through all Moffatt's work, "a sort of testimonial of different ways of conceiving of existence" (Miglietti, 2003: 108).[6] Distribution and controlled exposure though are limiting factors in creating audiences for artwork and independent short films.[7]

In the popular entertainment realm, political critique has a far greater reach. Rejection of the logic of economics, competition, and maximum profit, and the imperatives of Empire probably need to exist not just in the active and 'creative multitude' able to articulate and enact oppositional tactics, but also be taken up by that majority of people who do not normally engage with political ideas and debate. Mike Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* and *Fahrenheit 9/11* set new records as the highest grossing documentary films to date. Yet where Ayres represents personal experience, and Moffatt, ironic, disturbing, often hallucinatory stagings, Moore's approach is, like John Berger's, one of opposition, his 'real' truth against officially ordained truth. The mainstream appeal of Moore's films would tend to suggest that his different way of seeing things strikes a chord among film audiences.[8] As he says, "Those that see this movie will never view the Bush administration in the same way

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impact of feature films within mainstream culture, see Crawford, Anne, 'Going beyond the pale', *The Melbourne Age*, April 4, 2003. p. 3.

[6] For discussions Tracey Moffatt's work and significance see also Newton (1994), Mellancamp (1995) and Shohat (2003). See Shohat also for a survey of 'post-Third-Worldist' feminist film and video work.

[7] In Australia, both the ABC and SBS regularly screen independent productions. Screenings within university courses, or other educational centers also help the exposure of independent films, but this is an avenue constrained by the time screenings require within today's pared-back teaching programmes, and the need to teach students about using such productions 'evidentially' or as research, (rather than taking cultural works at face-value or using them merely as illustration). There are also difficulties and costs involved in accessing and borrowing such work, and even knowing what exists or might be useful. In Melbourne there are numerous film festivals showing independent films and non-mainstream or non-Western films, but only a few borrowing outlets handle anything other than mainstream or movie classics. New technologies, particularly internet downloads and DVDs, promise better access and viewing-study possibilities, but new distribution structures and copyright restrictions, and various other commercial interests will restrict or oppose open access. The recent free trade agreement with the US deregulating US media and film imports after 31/12/ 2004 is also likely to affect local production. See Smiers (2003) for a sustained discussion on copyright debates and his suggestions for a range of specific strategies designed to increase distribution of independent films.

[8] The audience reach of Moore's films is also due to the huge media machine of Miramax, his distributor. It is Miramax who might be considered radical here, but the financial returns on Moore's films suggest that they have successfully identified a vast and disenchanted audience who identify with Moore's cynicism about American values. Disney was to have distributed the film, and Moore claims they pulled out in order to protect their tax breaks in Florida where Bush's brother is governor. Disney claims that the film didn't fulfill its family values charter – yet they released an earlier Moore film and also Tarantino's *Kill Bill: Volume 2* (Levin, 2004). See Levin for a discussion of Moore's style of political critique, and film approach. She also makes the point that for all Moore's exposures, that it was the media who did not follow up on the various scandals. At the very least, his films' reworking and amplification of various disturbing events in contemporary America, along with his various political accusations, may generate considerable debate and argument among the American public for years to come.

again". But any argument that would support such popular/populist enterprises while dismissing the political effects of radical or 'iconoclast' art (Cherniavsky, 2000), needs to take into consideration the canny self-serving employment of Moore's 'comic editorial' style address, with his role vigorously constructed at every opportunity as 'spokesman for the people', with persuasion probably limited to an already alienated section of the public.[9] Art's audience is also self-selective and cultivated, but its manifold array of practices eludes any fixed politics or perspective.

Hardt and Negri (2000) have argued that traditional mass revolution (with its potential for suffering and terror effaced in heroic narratives) seems unlikely and in any case futile, since the power of Empire is decentered and flexible, and able to absorb or defuse such opposition. But also at issue, is the *kind* of politic. The filmmaker, Clara Law, for instance, observes "Democracy does not automatically guarantee justice. Everything can be reduced to nothing without the heart".[10] If there is to be any sustainable change in the direction of supporting cultural and human values, rather than a general cynicism and pessimism, or one view simply replacing another, then those very values and allied knowledges and practices need to be shown as worthwhile alternatives to consumerism, its promises of material security engineered through insecurity, and its addictive engagements.

There is not always a clear separation between those opposing the two grand overarching forces of Empire or consumerism, and those who sanction them; formational apparatuses that normalize social meaning, and facilitate capitalist enterprise and its assimilation of cultural difference, are varied and multiple. Even the public media, uniform in many of its operations and in the image culture it presents, constitutes an industry that in its need for content and commercial success,

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[9] Morgan Spurlock's 2004 film *Super Size Me*, a self-documentation of the director's consumption of McDonald's foods over the course of a month, is another example of a effective polemical approach turned into a successful piece of reverse-marketing, though more amiable in mood than Moore's work, and it is far more visceral, subjective and expressive. As Spurlock rapidly becomes overweight, lethargic, and seriously unhealthy over a matter of weeks, the film dramatically taps into the politics of body and protests a culture of excess.

[10] Quoted in Williams, Evans, 'Ali delivers a moral tale', *The Weekend Australia Review*, September 25-26, 2004, p. 23. See Clara Law's *Letters to Ali*, 2004 for a film of great political importance that *demonstrates* integrity (whose absence in politics often generates critique and protest in the first place), and a different kind of politic. Laws, better known for her feature films, such as *Autumn Moon*, and *Goddess of 1967*, documents the growing involvement between a Melbourne family and a boy incarcerated in the Port Headland detention centre, one of the Australian government's desert camps. Ali, a fifteen year old Afghan boy, is either not seen, or his image is blurred. Williams comments that Law is able to present him as a brave and lonely boy, *and* the universal refugee, "a phantom among the living".

is far from homogeneous in terms of what gets printed or screened from beyond its own network production and editorial control.[11]

Support on all fronts, for various kinds of art, media, and cultural forms, with their different intentions, practices, outcomes, and audiences, is required. It seems to me that all kinds of art need to exist, including art that only interests artist-producer-expert audiences, who are arguably the main audience for radical, propositional work, yet who respond to it by producing further work in all kinds of art and media realms, and for all kinds of other audiences. There is a distinct lack of logic in supporting difference culturally, and then only supporting popular/popularist cultural production, or 'proper' social documentary, or socially responsible themes.[12] Whatever art is, it is not a form of social engineering that aims at replacing one cultural regime with another.

Valuing Cultural Difference

Within the public and globalized domain, the struggle in deciding between very different values and beliefs is seen to reinforce that postmodern state of mind, a cognitive dissonance resulting from what Jameson (1991) argues is a plethora of superficial choices centered on 'style' working against depth of conviction, experience, understanding. We need to keep in mind Jameson's argument that pluralism itself levels difference, that is, that any Western media performance of cultural difference or multiplicity enacts the sameness of capitalistic consumerism. While there is value in critiquing the present state of things under late capitalism, proposals of a practice that would avoid the leveling of difference have not emerged in Marxist scholarship in the post-Cold War era. Jameson's reference to "genuine

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[11] Some spectrum of political view is visible given that most media claim to be sites where conflict is expressed, explored, and differentiated. And, in Australia at least, trash, political content, and avantgarde production can be found on television screens. In one week in June 2004, a record number of viewers turned their back on *ER, Big Brother*, and even the latest TV 'Reality' gameshow *There's Something about Miriam*, to watch the ABC's screening of *Angels in America* with its various provocations on race, homosexuality, religion, politics and pleasure, illness, and desire. It might be argued that *Angels in America* is clearly part of mainstream US film culture, in that it involves major stars like Meryl Streep and Al Pacino, but the style and delivery were a return to the classical American theatre that produced Tennessee William's *Streetcar Named Desire*. The point is *not* which is the better 'truth' or even provocation, particularly since 'Miriam' challenges mainstream cultural assumptions by being a gender-variant person who has visibly "achieved" an ideal female body. ('Miriam', staged as the prize real men/competitors/contestants seek, ultimately confronts male enculturation and plays on essentialist ideas) but rather the play of difference and audience.

[12] Bourdieu says at one point talking to Haacke: "I think your work represents a kind of avantgarde of that which could be the action of intellectuals. It could serve as a critical analyzer of the moment of transmission of knowledge in relation to the moment of conception and of the research itself. Everything makes me think that intellectuals are not at all concerned about the moment of the *performance*, and that they do not make it an object of research" (Boudieu and Haacke (1995: 108).

social difference" for instance simply invokes difference.[13] Penley and Ross (1991) and Hardt and Negri (2000) have gone further in proposing what "genuine social difference' might be. Penley and Ross for instance describe numerous oppositional sub-cultural groups of practices that reveal critical and creative ways of being. Hardt and Negri, in their recourse to the term "the creative multitude", describe a biopolitical segmented network, communicating and operating flexibly through all kinds of organizations and institutions. This they identify as a movement of critical resistance and cultural and political behaviours that subvert global political rule.

Pluralism in the form of mutual tolerance within a liberal society, which is what Rorty seems to be arguing, does allow for differences to be affirmed, but any democratic politics of voice (Yeatman, 1993) is usually only supported where the functioning of society is not disrupted by such differences. Liberalist assumptions of audience power and cultural resistance need to be tempered with the attractions of capitalism and limits of conscious resistance, and in turn, Jameson's view on the sameness of difference needs to be weighed against arguments that postmodernism marks the dismantling of the West as the unquestioned center of the world (Young, 1990; Trinh, 1991).

In its very reach into other worlds, 'Western culture' is seen to expose itself as already differentiated, as Derrida puts it, not identical to itself, and thus open to the other. But differentiation is not necessarily enacted, and pluralism is not inherently emancipatory without an appropriate ethics of value. The 'truth' invested in concepts such as the Subject, the West, or Western culture may ultimately appear nothing more than the performative effects of language, but those effects, naturalized and invisible in the West, and directed toward new modes of exploitation and domination, are still forces to be reckoned with.[14]

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[13] Jameson asserts that the general ideology (or rhetoric) of difference is not even suitable for articulating such struggles, that it is "booby-trapped" by complicity with its opposite concept: identity. He claims that the dialectic of "neoethnicity" is more the outcome of cultures which have become publicly fashionable or valorized: "...something of a yuppie phenomenon...(more) a matter of fashion and the market, a fantasized collective, than genuine social difference" (Jameson, 1991: 341). Like Baudrillard, he denies the possibility of any cultural pluralism within capitalism. He sees the competing power struggles of groups as the result of "too many" groups, their differences "most often" created for consumer purposes by media interpellation, and an estrangement from the Marxist ideal of the achieved collective.

[14] This is not to deny the dominance of the authoritative discourses of the Western trinity of science, technology and medicine, or the political and economic privileges exercised through the particularly powerful discourses of media and advertising.

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Specific cultural practices might be asserted toward some form of sovereignty, but the question for all cultures is how resistance takes place in conjunction with having already 'bought the system'.[15] Once a cash economy geared to the global market is in place, there may not be any real alternative to capitalism. It is likely though, following Crary (1984) and Shohat (2003), that the adopted Western real exists alongside local reals in ways that play with and across irreconcilable contradictions.[16]

In Western countries, the influence of the real and its ideal body, coded as mastery over nature, although far from absolute, is profound. As an ideality mirrored by institutional and traditional determinations, the iconic and flawless character of the ideal classical body is presented as a *reasonable* measure of attainment in terms of the appearance of the actual body in Western society. From advertising to science, medicine and plastic surgery, the Western ideal is the normative body. Its credibility in authoritative discourses and everyday documentation associated with culture, race, religion, sexuality, or gender is authorized by its aura of objectivity. Against this power figuration all other portrayals of body, and *actual* bodies, risk appearing incoherent or weak, uninteresting, or unattractive, or they tend to function fetishistically as novel, freakish or exotic.

In the consumer world where image is everything, stereotyped and old racist imaginings still circulate, but they are intercut with new alliances to do with cultural status. In the praxis of everyday media presentation there is little exposure of self[17]. The manufactured and fetishized body, is a *sign* of a 'style', of a life that is emphatically not-nature.

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[15] The Western/transnational mediatrix's espousal of consumerist values, incorporates, to some degree at least, the celebration of alternative discourses, values and ways of life as markers of its own status and identity as global progress and modernity. Naturalism with its aura of objectivity, associated with ideas of modernity, and validated by Western visual technologies, has a large role to play in providing a persuasive promotion of consumerism and the commodity laden fantasies of success as life goals. Such ideologies are imbued with a cultural status that is persuasive. *Adaptation* of this real, toward preserving some values and practices while changing others, is a difficult task, since Western technologies, visions, and cultural values are so interwoven (though many artists appear to be particularly good at unravelling these).

[16] In both local and global media and entertainment we see not only hybrid or synthesized productions, but also more unintegrated, mixed forms that attempt to evoke multiple ideas and address a multitude of viewing positions. Shohat observes that this can take the form of a "cultural lingua franca remarked by a "local" accent. (Shohat, 2003: 56).

[17] This is in contrast to art production which often seeks to discover, expose and communicate the personal. See for instance Tracey Moffatt's 1989 *Night Cries* as an example of independent art cinema combining autobiographical elements and self-representation with critical narrative to produce heightened cultural awareness. Such films function as counter-moves rather than alternative views in that they challenge stereotyping with complexity and open endedness.

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'The body beautiful', traditionally used as an indicator of interior beauty, or good fortune, as something exceptional, or as a sign of even some blessed status in traditional narratives of reward (god-given) and punishment (fate), now functions, as is clear from advertising and makeover shows, as a talisman against fate, old age and death. Ways of validating and celebrating being, or other forms of prestige, achievement, or beauty often still exist in art, but are often neglected or discounted in consumer representations: health, vitality, charm, gracefulness, confidence, maturity, spirit, character, strength, serenity, goodness, elegance, cheerfulness, geniality, openness, and integrity, are all subsumed and neutralized by the look of the ideal cloned images. Actual bodies follow to become signs emptied of all substance and experience. In this regime, the ambiguity, and complexity of contemporary identities and recent histories are ignored, while all bodily differences are all too easily determined or effaced.

Where in the West the perfect body 'which you too can have' has evolved alongside disruptive contestations of the carnivalesque, or comic-book parodies and transgressive resistant elements of popular culture, or subcultural practices including the oppositional critiques of radical art, these forms of resistance are problematic for many cultures in the Asia-Pacific region.[18] Non-European viewers nevertheless, may have an inherent resistance to the normality claim of the Western body, while other forms of resistance and alternative images may be produced within local cultural practice and assimilations. It might be arguable as to whether dominant Western modes of representation are having a significant impact on beliefs, behaviours and values, but this will also depend on the understanding of what is at stake.

Transgressive Posturing
In a world fuelled by the fallout of economic rationalist values of ruthlessness and ever-increasing levels of commercial profit, the "shrunken imagining" of political communities, "territorially anchored" (Anderson, 1992: 36) is reworked. The old denigrations of the 'other' based on the imaginary relating of places, ideas and images, or quintessential features are overlaid with a more Malthusian division between the strong and the weak: those that can take charge of life, and those that are victim to life (Ewen, 1988). In the images of the postfeminist everyday media, the sexualized and ideal looking woman is signed for success – the dominatrix rules.[19]

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[18] Just *how* problematic can be seen in instances where avantgarde artists become subject to legal prosecution or regulation in some form.

[19] I am using the term postfeminist here as a term that indicates media hostility to political feminism ratified by the contradictions of liberalist postfeminist positions on representation (that in today's media

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The first feminist histories might have well been what Jane Gaines has called "dictionaries of our bondage" (Gaines & Herzog, 1990: 4). Though they based their arguments on a comparison with the notion of a 'real woman', and used a crude analysis that determined beauty-culture the cause of the sublimation and restriction of women, they were productive in that their approach led to "an understanding of how ideology shapes an adjacent world that functions as "reality" for many people" (ibid.). And they contributed to realizations that whole segments of the female population of the world are left out of mainstream representation, and, to extend this, whole cultures. Yet as Gaines points out, this approach has not been particularly helpful in bringing about change within the culture industries whether advertising, music or fashion, and is limited for understanding how representation actually works. Within the paradigm of the Western heroic tradition and its narratives of mastery and production, a subjectivity that knows itself *seen* as a lesser being is still assigned to the female, and to all others whose alterity can be appropriated as a prop for the traits of the normative male.

A wider spectrum of representation has become visible in mass-media arenas, particularly given recent multicultural and equity policies targeting racist or sexist representation, and in some instances, the entry of pro-active groups into media production. However, cultures that celebrate the abundant full body, or those whose appearances are far from the Western canon are located in relation to and undercut by the relentless proliferation of the high status body, *that which has a price.* This is not merely of matter of competing or different discourses being played out in the public commercial realms. The efficacy of the computer enhanced images of the beauty industry feed on women's own feelings of failure and expressions of doubt and self-revulsion in expectations of plastic perfection, to the extent that even young children in the West negatively obsess about weight, in terms of how they *are seen*, rather out of concern for their fitness, health and well-being.

Anne Becker makes the point that cultures differ considerably in this regard: that it is not *how* the body is cultivated, "*but by and for whom*", that there is a difference when "the body represents a *personal* as opposed to a *community* resource for expression" (Becker, 1995: 37). As a new expression of the Western disgust of

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images don't matter, but that women are able to employ even sexual images for their own purposes; in other words, that images are productive rather than repressive). See Brooks (1997) for a comprehensive review of feminist debates on the usefulness of Foucault's theorization of power. See Bordo (1997) for a critique of Naomi Wolfe, Katie Roiphe, and Christina Hoff Sommers' postfeminism.

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corporeality, the exorcism of the physical formulated as an extreme denial of body has health risks and profound contradictions in cultures whose genetic inheritance endows people with large, big boned, robust bodies, and that connects food with social responsibility, nurturance, and health.[20] In cultures, where everyday bodies are specifically other to Western norms, genetically and aesthetically, various scenarios engendered by the tensions of health, food, consumption, image, identity, and need for validation are also a great cause for concern. The media parade of disciplined, sculptured, glossy bodies is an insult to those blighted by the convenience, advertising efforts supported by those same ideal bodies, and the addictive properties of junk food. The presentation of the gaunt body as a desirable body is also an insidious mockery of those whose lives are laid waste by food deprivation, their horrendous reality abetted, contained and terminated by our real.

In Ewen's reading of fashion and style, all changes which might seem rebellious or potentially transcendent, may be assimilated by consumer culture, and though this totalizing stance is contested by theorists either more liberalist in outlook, or in search of ways of reformulating representation, the emphasis and importance of appearance is not itself in dispute.[21] Within attempts to reclaim the power of a resistant audience in relation to consumerism, proclamations of a new age beyond feminism often give the appearance of "pumped-up rhetoric" (Bordo, 1997: 133) that can be connected to an alternative marketing strategy appealing to and manufacturing images of 'power feminism'.

In the quest for validation of women's power there are contradictions that defy notions of progressive feminist action. Exercising a power of sexual attraction and attention as a means to, or in tension with, the staking of authority and the display of

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[20] See Becker (1994, 1995) for an exploration of experiences of alienation of self from body. Her ongoing study of body and health in Fiji is an ethnographic account of "the variations inherent in the bodily context of experience" and the complicated relationships between Fijian society, self, and body. Becker contrasts her findings on 'self-construal' and cultural value with Western body practices and values to show that self experience is "unequivocally culturally patterned" (Becker, 1995: 4). In the addendum to her 1995 publication, she outlines her recent data on urban secondary school age young women's attitudes to diet and body shape. Increasing exposure to Western values and lifestyles as conveyed through the media are found to be consistent with fears of being overweight and with the appearance of bulimia and other eating disorders, which are extremely rare or defused in traditional culture. For media coverage of this development, see for instance Goode, Erica, 'Fijians starving on TV-rich diet', *The Melbourne Age*, 22/5/ 1999, p. 22, who observes that the traditional Fijian compliment "you've gained weight," now, a few years after the arrival of television in Fiji, (one channel only) is under threat. This article discusses Becker's work also including her 1998 findings that girls who said they watched television more than three or more nights a week were 50% more likely to describe themselves as too fat or big, and 30% more likely to diet than other girls who watched less television.

[21] Elizabeth Wilson for instance, comments that Ewen's thesis "ignores the extent to which fashion is one of the many forms of aesthetic creativity which make possible the exploration of alternatives" (Wilson, 1990: 30).

expertise may well boost self-esteem for some women, but it is unlikely to affect or transform the social order, or create community, or further our understanding of experience, or contribute any political dimension.[22] It is more likely to merely confirm prior demarcations of women as *primarily* sexual. As Bordo comments, "These notions create "glass ceilings"- in the institutional world, in relationships, and in the female psyche - that can hold women back even as they advance in the world" (ibid.). Even where some notion of a masquerade or dress-up is embraced, to be flaunted as joke, challenge, or some gambit to force men to see the discrepancies between appearance and the act/person/power (and thereby enabling them to acknowledge their profound fetishizing of women, thus enabling a transformation of relations…), the political outcomes are uncertain. Gaines observes that women's costuming largely "delivers gender as self-evident or natural and then recedes as "clothing", leaving the connotation "femininity" (Gaines, 1990:1).[23]

If understanding how men's images of women have served patriarchal power has not made any difference to the sexualized determination of women, (Greer, 2000) how might performing that image, differently, make a difference? Particularly when, as Gaines reminds us, "In popular discourse, there is often no distinction made between a woman and her attire. She *is* what she wears" (Gaines & Herzog, 1990:1). If conservative images fuel old notions which have colluded in the marginalization and the othering of women, individual therapeutic aspects of dress and appearance as enacted as some spectacle of difference by the privileged is politically futile.[24] As Judith Williamson (1983) observes, the fashion industry abounds with popular metaphors indicating a recognition of women's self-awareness and involvement in

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[22] If the image of the male body-builder is a template for an impotent armoured isolation, then the image of alluring vamps competing for attention can be seen as its compliment. Women who operate powerfully in the public domain while wearing stilettos or revealing clothing may claim to invest the look of 'come-hither' or brazen sexuality with new meaning, or to rework the network of its old associations, but the very appeal of the image is securely tied to the fantasy glamour of Hollywood movies. Traditional sexual expectations may be challenged by the power and confidence of certain women yet the image is inherently *conservative* of male values. When women believe that subjecting themselves to serious health-risking garments/shoes, paraphernalia, substance, or procedure is worth doing because they then feel good/powerful/sexy, and therefore enabled to act in the external world, then they well and truly have bought in to both old and new regimes. Buying 'the look' maintains women defined in relation to the look, and ensures a circular dependence on consumer images.

[23] In recent years, in a meshing of transgressive subcultural practices resisting conventional containment, and bad-girl sexual fantasy, the connotation in the broad cultural arena is that of 'whore'. In some cultural contexts, this play on appearance may work to problematize determinations of women, but in the everyday, it has little to do with changing the general tenor of women's lives.

[24] I do not want to deny any transformative possibility in replaying the image differently, let alone be seen as taking some puritanical stand on the pleasures involved in playing with clothing and appearance, but even women who appear to represent independence, or who are largely mistresses of their own destiny, are often reinforcing pre-existing looks manufactured to enhance male sex and domination fantasies.

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the re-production of their image, as self-representation. At best, the kind of power exercised through an enactment of sexuality coded as sexual availability creates a confusion of expectations and signs but with dire consequences within arenas not in on the game of masquerade. In many contexts, such co-option is likely to resist recuperation - even when women do it for themselves. And for many cultures any such play of appearances is highly problematic. Without fundamental changes to patriarchy, it remains to be seen how far an active woman (or actor) can go in determining herself beyond prescriptive roles, let alone producing disturbing provocations to male order before, in the classic denouement of film noir, she is punished and destroyed.[25]

The Connective Body

The challenge here is to address self-esteem and desire in men and women in ways which clearly enhance lives, rather than try to match the obsessional images, narratives, and experiences perpetrated by consumer industries. We need to develop ways of discussing, accommodating and redirecting the power of these pleasures. Desire for power, control, acknowledgment, attention, acceptance, and support, all need recognition; broader kinds of self-determination need to be explored.[26]

Resistant readings or alternative narratives would appear to be fueled by different values, and it is argued that many cultures are strong enough to resist Westernization or at least certain of its practices and its core beliefs. How then are images that are used to shore up cults of isolated narcissistic individuality received in cultures which not only value community, but are inherently communal? What does the parade of Westernism *as* a wealthy urbanism to which many cultures can only aspire, do for individual subjectivity and matters of validation?

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[25] Characters such as those performed by Madonna or the kind of femme fatale played by Sharon Stone in *Fatal Attraction* may appear to actively confront the social order - and control men - but they are fictional constructions which are configured for screen viewing and popular culture. They are primarily constituted as sights in relation to the male gaze, evoking the thrill of the dangerous woman who attempts to act upon them. As Gaines points out, "the work cut out for feminist film theorists has been the continual rescue of this image which tends to dissolve into a mist of naturalness" (Gaines & Herzog, 1990:1). Given the publicity gossip machinery of media and its tendency to demolish women in such public realms as politics, this trope can also be seen to function in reality.

[26] Data to do with some aspects such as merchandising, economic expenditure and development, attendance, attention and engagement are readily available. Issues to do with scientific inquiry and its observational methodologies, and its objectives and outcomes may make some kinds of studies difficult, but given the power of science in influencing matters social, such information may be strategically necessary. Data always needs to be considered in relation to the framing of the inquiry whether marketing research, government statistics, or scientific findings. This would not simply mean more intellectual rigor, or a debate about the merits of different kinds of analysis, or even taking into account a multiplicity of perspectives, evidences and practices, but would involve exploring ways of addressing empirical domains, and promoting interdisciplinary and intercultural discourses.

All kinds of body images, many derived from non-Western cultures, are already in circulation, but they work in relation to the consumer context. It may not be possible to counter Western appearances merely by inserting alternative looks. Whatever was once conveyed in such an image becomes something else. Western-style consumer images, given a more local flavour, often appear within the first wave of entrepreneurial developments in emerging global consumerism.

These concerns might appear to subscribe a fatalism to all efforts at self-constitution, but this would be predicated on an assumption of an original local uniformity. As Jerome Bruner reminds us, local worlds are diverse in themselves; he emphasizes the potential of negotiation even for the experiencing of 'community'. Bruner has argued that while coherence and consensus may be important, so too "is the existence of interpretive procedures for adjudicating the different construals of reality that are inevitable in any diverse society" (Bruner, 1990: 95). Bruner sees power in narration: "Stories make "reality" a mitigated reality " (97). Bruner looks at the ways different factions within the pluralist West negotiate agreements, alliances, accommodate their conflicts of interest, and maintain peace through processes of neutralization and narratives of explication, but, as he recognizes, pluralist issues apply to all societies today.

Raymond Williams argued that negotiation and mediation are dependent on "some sense of separate and pre-existent areas or orders of reality" (Williams, 1977: 99). It seems to me that through the sheer relentlessness and hypervisibility of consumer culture, orders of reality other than those relevant to a community can come to dominate daily life, shutting out and paralyzing more traditional perspectives and alternative modes of production within that "shifting world of categories and causation, of attributes and identities" (Bruner, 1990: 92). Culture breakdown rather than renewal does occur. As Bruner points out, when people are utterly preoccupied with basic survival, their capacity to render experience is silenced.[27] The key principle he espouses for continuity of a culture, no matter what its strategies, structures, or beliefs, is not consensus but connectivity. He asks, is not Self "a way of framing one's consciousness, one's position, one's identity, one's commitment with respect to another?" (101).

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[27] He also assigns such breakdown to one or more of the following: deep disagreement about "the ordinary and the canonical in life and what (is considered) exceptional or divergent"; the usurpation of everyday narratives by self-serving ideological and institutional forces which robs those narratives of all credence; and the "sheer impoverishment of narrative resources", to the degree that cultures are so dominated by "the "worst scenario" story...that variation seems no longer to be possible." (97).

Some Utopian Thoughts

The Western self may well be one determined and consumed by lack, a body forever yearning, condemned to be forever moving towards what ever it identifies as its object of desire. In the transnational media, desire is constantly aroused; the tantalizing images of bodily perfection constantly posed as its fulfillment. This body, as the frozen focus of others' looks, is no longer an aspirational metaphor for living bodies; but a new marker of actualization, wealth, and division.

This success of this market strategy draws on what Leder, among others, has defined as our innate urge toward the realization of wholeness, a wholeness that incorporates a "ceaseless interchange" of experience (Leder, 1990). But on the ever sharper clearer screens and glossy surfaces of contemporary media, the perfect body is envisaged as whole, complete - but *in itself* - and separated from experience and relation. In Leder's phenomenological exploration of the absent body, that is, the apparent difficulty the body has in sensing itself consciously (having affinity with Damasio's (1995) exposition of the sensed body as a continuously refreshed background state), Leder comes to see the isolated body as not merely separated, but a threat to self. His solution is to embrace Neo-Confusionist principles of oneness with all things. He advocates a contemplative practice toward "mystical communion" and "unitive consciousness" to "reach down into the soil of an orgasmic vitality where the conscious mind cannot follow" (Leder, 1990: 173).[28]

Leber's vision of connectivity though is not that of Quakers sitting together in silence, or some other disappearance of the self in the larger body of the corroboree or communal chant, but a self communing with nature and being. The following is a section from an example he cites as a demonstration of the joy in mystical communion: "When I am in solitude I can hear a "song" coming forth from everything. Each and everything has its own song; even moods, thoughts, feelings have their finer songs. Yet beneath this variety they intermingle in one inexpressibly vast unity…It is like a stream into which I have flowed and, joyously, is carrying me beyond myself" (172). While such experiences may lead to sharper focus, or have significance for a richer embodiment, the difficulties of human interconnectivity and self-connection remain unaddressed.

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[28] He suggests meditation using sensory experience of some sort - whether that of breathing, sound, or focusing on visual symbols such as mandalas as used by Tibetans or Native Americans, or contemplative art, or on movement as in the whirling dervish Sufi dancers.

In opposing violations against bodies and lives, whether carried out in the name of protection, progress, expansion, security, retaliation, or protest, for the purposes of government, god, business, profit, or the people, we need to reconsider what is meant by normal, real, and valuable. To move past our own enculturation we need to take up the challenge to find ways of thinking beyond that which Judith Mayne describes "as a vague discourse of subversion and alternative scenarios amidst conceptual confusion about just what is being subverted and for what" (Mayne, 1995: 179).[29] Utopian objectives may well be worth considering for their motivational power and revelatory aspects, as much as their strategical employments.[30] How the world is described affects and shapes the world; behaviour and meaning follow expectation. As Mayne observes, there is danger in negating all notions of alternative positions and even 'purer' desires by determining them as fiction, or simply relative.

What *is* of interest in Leber's example of an ecstatic hearing of the songs of the universe, is its sensorial synaesthetic quality, its indicating the senses as wide open, something along the lines of Ong's suggested "world-as-presence" (Ong, 1968: 647). The promises of the sublime, calls to altruism, ethics, deep ecology, or even some re-enchanted shamanic art (Gablik, 1990) may indeed restore some hope and responsibility to sectors of the postmodern world. The greater task however is to break through the isolations, fears, repulsions, strangeness, otherness, demonizations and demarcations that maintain separateness and hostility, the kind of alienation enacted on television sets in front of people the world over. The real challenge is bring this into the experience and understanding of *ourselves*, and *each other*, that is, to ground pleasure and joy, to seek relations, to work with our own feelings perhaps.

Understanding that there are other ways of knowing, seeing, and being, may be intrinsically worthwhile, keeping possibilities open, and moderating the destructions and impoverishments of a globalized consumer society.[31] Different kinds of

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[29] Vague discourse and conceptual confusion might of course signify a Deleuzian knot of tensions around certain entrenched problems of differences that need recognition.

[30] It might help for instance to visualize an alliance of communities worldwide, already visible to some extent within the communicative possibilities of the internet and certainly part of the consumer-communication market's rhetoric, that may turn the tide of disempowerment and disenchantment instituted by consumer culture's saturation tactics towards selling itself as the antidote to the value system it perpetrates. But there are organizational problems and contradictions as Hardt and Negri's vision of just such an constitution indicates: "The only event that we are still awaiting is the construction, or rather the insurgence, of a powerful organization" (2000: 411). Such utopian directions would be further tested by the blandishments of power and pleasure produced the media and entertainment industries, by the certainty narratives of technological industries, and by the undeniable success in the consumer culture's instituting of an imaginary life.

[31] Academic institutions and forums are ready sites for such projects, either through cross-cultural exchanges, or research work. In Australia, universities now include creative art faculties, and employ

validation and engagement than those of media spectatorship or consumerism may defuse the power of media's unremitting parade of improved lasting fresher and brighter bodies, and its death denying promises of a pure post-human rebirth. Validation and engagement though, as the Nazi regime ably demonstrated in its enrolment of the people in its death-dealing performance of the Aryan super-race, are not intrinsically linked to democratic liberalism. The image of the ideal has been all too easily appropriated and incorporated into imperialist ambitions and attempts to exercise of absolute power. Validation of people and their lives depends on a commitment to values other than those of exchange and economics. Smiers, for instance, ignoring the argument that contemporary play with parody and perverse pleasures can be progressive, contends in conservative fashion that

> "We must think of the values such as respect, equality, sobriety, wisdom, conviviality, morality, human solidarity, community, sustainability or the conviction that inflicting pain or celebrating violence should be avoided...What is socially detrimental should not be part of programming and publicity" (Smiers, 2003: 164-165).

Since such values are already visible world wide, and not just in in grassroots community movements, might suggest that Hardt and Negri's (2000) resistant 'multitude' is already flourishing in some ways, but the question of what is 'socially detrimental' needs to be kept wide open. The diverse practices of artmaking, including its less than wholesome exposures of repressed desire, its attraction to the perverse and the abnormal, its iconoclastic traditions, even its degenerate doings, need to be seen as plateaus of resistance that oppose new regimes of cultural imperialism, including exclusive or conservative notions of 'proper' and moral practice. Mitchell (1994) observes,

> "Representation can, must be irresponsible; responsibility can, must be unrepresentable. The lie, the fiction, the false oath, the error, the failure of correspondence, the playful, the irresponsible representation, the unspoken promise, the invisible constitution – all these are not only possible within the polity of representational responsibilities, they are its necessary supplement...Art, culture, and ideology explore and exploit the gap between representation and responsibility, For art, the traditional (that is, modernist) account of this gap is focused on self reference: representation is responsible only to itself, to its own

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artist-practitioner-academics, but artmaking appears particularly vulnerable to debates about costs, resources, values, and outcomes. In relation to art, projects that have currency in cultural or broader matters not necessarily pertinent to art practice are more easily funded. Guest programmes facilitate exchanges though, and artists selected offer a broad diversity, from artists' artists, or those from different cultures, to those who address socially significant issues.

laws of form, genre, affect, its own playful necessity. Toward everything else, art must be irresponsible." (Mitchell, 1994:421-422)

In democratic societies, maintaining, policing, and redrawing the boundaries of private and public, allied with regulatory signposting of cultural expression, should mitigate any need of censorship in democratic societies. Capitalism's power in 'producing' audiences, its success in creating self-dissatisfaction and appetites for seriously misogynist, racist, and murderous, embodied-spectacle is cause for concern. Viewers might not necessarily enact what they see, or be led to social alienation through exacerbations of fear and distrust, or develop corrupt and degraded notions of self, or find their capacity to imagine or engage with something better replaced by reassuring empty rituals, or be crippled by their obsessive focus on traumatic scenarios. Yet viewership as structured in the interests of profit, often bears the hallmarks of addiction.[32] As vicarious stimulating experience, felt by the body, entering memory, influencing expectation, (Damasio, 1995, 2003, Lury, 1998, Morse, 1998), images though cannot be judged merely on their content. How images make us *feel*, might well be a better indicator of their merit in relation to social and human values. But even this relation is far from straightforward. For some, pleasure lies in violation and cruelty.

A politics of the people, espousing community values, is clearly not of itself resistant to fascistic developments, rigid conformism, or terrorist tactics, and a humane ethics is clearly required to mitigate self-interest and totalitarian impulses. In this emergent neohumanism, radical art's propositional and iconoclastic activity for instance, functions to destabilize conformist regimes even when posed as for the social good.[33] Art works are sites where values are contested; art works may even create discomfort of a kind that moves people to embrace new ideas or change their lives. Considering art and other forms of cultural production as domains of expression, enables new kinds of performative self-constituting practice (Grosz & Probyn, 1995, Straayer, 1996), and increased recognition of selfmaking. And more broadly, in its exercise of

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[32] Media discussion of media addiction tends to focus only on pornography and violence, usually framed as a debate between liberal and pro-censorship groups, with very little detailed presentation of studies or research. What gets looked for are 'links', 'direct evidence' to behavioural research. See Richardson, Nick, The Battle for Bodies and Minds', *The Australian Weekend Review*, July 25-26, 1992, p. 2 for an overview of the positions and concerns within Australia for instance.

[33] Neohumanism, already visible in the humanities, tends to be critical of liberal individualism and the logic of profit as a substitute for other values. It embraces contemporary ethical concerns, new global formations, networks, and cultures, with the view to negotiation rather than consensus, facilitating differences of view. As an ethical philosophy it already operates as a counter-force, moderating corporate culture values via publication, consultancies, academic courses, and policy development.

sensory enculturated intelligence, artmaking offers some entry into different ways of knowing and being that may have something in common with cultures far removed from mainstream Western culture.

There is no inherent political liberation in merely embracing the notion of the cultural malleability of the body. As Ewen (1988) points out, this idea already exists within the Enlightenment conception of body as perfectible, teachable, trainable, or open to engineering, and has been acted upon in the production of modern bodies. But teasing out its implications, not only as to what this means for gender, but for thinking about constitutions of subjectivity and embodiment generally, and acting out difference, is something else. Intellectual responsibility involves challenging what all too often functions as a theory of despair or a paralysis of will in regard to influencing the social domain (Ross, 1989, Mitchell, 1994, Worsley, 1999). Mitchell emphasizes critical description and 'accurate' interpretation as the work that resists "global misrepresentation, disinformation and systematic mendacity" (Mitchell, 1994: 425). Intellectual ideas might seem muted in the everyday world, and they may never deliver much in the way of agreement or even coherence, but they still count. And it is the debates that need to be visible. As Hardt and Negri argue,

> "All the elements of corruption and exploitation are imposed upon us by the linguistic and communicative regimes of production: destroying them in words is as urgent as doing so in deeds...How can we discover and direct the performative lines of linguistic sets and communicative networks that create the fabric of life and production? Knowledge has to become linguistic action and philosophy has to become a real *reappropriation of knowledge*." (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 404).

Bodies are, as Hardt and Negri remind us, "on the front lines in this battle" and crucial in the production of a constitution that needs to include self-valorization and demonstrate "absolute democracy in action" (410). What I would advocate is a political-cultural theory that looks at relations of textual content, address, interpretation *and* behaviour, that is, *bodily activity*, image-making included. Mitchell (1994) for instance, argues that representation, considered as an activity or process in which an image-object is a both participant in all kinds of relationships and a relay mechanism in exchanges of power, value, and publicity, can then be seen as "an inherently unstable, reversible, and dialectical structure" (Mitchell, 1994: 420).

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We now know that how we see/ interpret is determined by expectation. Intellectual work might often move slowly, but *its* representations have the potential to create new expectations, and thus new seeings, and new understandings. Where that practice might go in rethinking and rearticulating experience, engagement, vitality, body, and knowledge, is hard to tell, for all kinds of assumptions and alignments may have to be jettisoned in the process. Rather than keep our distance, abandoning the local, we can at least be better prepared to hear, see and facilitate other cultures' truths. To relinquish belief in transformative possibilities of practice, in the face of what is all too often determined as the failure of critical political counter-strategies or consumer culture's rapacious, appropriative capacities is, in my view, a dangerous move. To evacuate from imagery even the possibility of influence because response seems uncontrollable, unpredictable, or to withdraw from ethical concerns in regard to image content because meaning is unstable, is to leave the field open to those who not only believe in the power of the image, but already use it with abandon and in all kinds of unconscionable ways. The work of an effective politics of emancipation is not that of simply countering one image with another, but creating, restoring, and supporting cultural alternatives in all their complexity, difference, and, to some degree at least, their perversity. An understanding of affectivity may counter the some of the risks inherent in this kind of openness.

If we are to stay alive to the mutable, relational possibilities of self, and selves, we all need to *be* artists of a kind, not only controlling the means of production, but suspending social habituations to explore, revalue and reconfigure received truths and images, embracing shadows, and playing with the nameless and unnamable.

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