In the 1920s and 1930s the Russians invented a discipline called Kul’turologiya (Culturalogy) which was suppressed as an ongoing enterprise by Stalin in 1937, but was resurrected after the collapse of the Wall in 1989. In the same period the Frankfurt School developed in Germany until Hitler forced it into exile, only to re-emerge in Frankfurt after its American exile in the 1960s. In the 1980s Cultural Studies emerged in Britain, until it suffered rearticulation at the hands of a deeply reactionary political establishment, and many of its authors dispersed to UCLA or Australia. In the late 1980s, first镶边ization, then structuralism, and ultimately post-structuralism debated culture as myth, resistance and anti-falut until, ultimately, the culture of the market took over and the discourses could only be sold to Yale or Harvard as the highest academic bidder. In all cases when these forms of cultural critique return to their native lands, they are not (cannot be) the same, because the years have elapsed, the social conditions have changed, and the ideas carry with them something of the stench of exile.

What an amazingly reactionary way of looking at all these processes! Reactionary, of course, because it assumes that, like a garden, someone grew it, someone else came and cut down the plants, then some friends of the gardeners took some of those cuttings and grafted them onto plants elsewhere, and then, much later, someone else decided to bring them home when the ground was clear. In many ways all these metaphors derived from turf- or agri-culture do the study of culture a disservice. None of the forms of cultural studies should be compared to well-tended gardens. Rather, if we keep to the belief that they should be seen as weeds which reoccupy the other people’s civilisations, they are therefore cut back. Frequently, by those who do not want the gardens to be taken over. But these weeds are crafty, like ivy, and knew that they can never be eliminated, and that they will grow more resilient strains because the savage pruning gives them a strength beyond the pampered perennials.

These thoughts are stimulated by the contents of this issue. For example, all that bodily stuff about Foley’s Believe It or Not, or Bernard’s toilet habits and the origins of Porn, even more so by the two tributes. Both Alex Wilson (in spite of being a gardener) and E.P. Thompson (in spite of being a stickler for the rule of law) were fighting the weeds which had been bulldozed underground by the Engineers of Culture. Procreation in a Machine age is the key cracking open the concrete. Which is why Culturalogy, Existentialism, Cultural Studies, Post-Structuralism were not moments that we can try to recreate, here or anywhere. They were exceptions to us of being our own weeds in our own mechanistic society. If we try to cultivate them, they become part of the mechanized landscape. This issue of B-S, put together by Hugh Adam, Michael Hochmann (Book Reviews), Lindsay Small and myself, is dedicated to these weeds that will ultimately destroy the nuclear arsenals, the Disney-parks, the war-works of the politically grotesque. Like ‘bodies’ these weeds need no cropping.

We would like to thank Roger Babcock, Stan Fagel and Sophie Thomas for their contributions.

Ivan Davies
"The transformative journey... Magical Blend accepts the premise that society is undergoing a fundamental transformation. A new world is being born, and whether this birth is an easy or a difficult one will depend largely on the individual. It is our aim to chart the course this transformation is taking, and to assist the individual to cope with and contribute to the birthing process. We believe that people's thoughts influence their reality; if this is true then the world we live in is a combination of our highest hopes, our deepest fears, and the whole range of experience that falls in between. Our goal is to embrace the magical behind the mundane. In this way we hope to act as a catalyst to encourage the individual to achieve his or her highest level of spiritual awareness. We endorse no one pathway to spiritual growth, but attempt to explore many alternative possibilities to help transform the planet."

When theorists of the left discuss the New Age movement, it is usually to dismiss it as individualistic, abstract and ideologically confused. While such charges are not untrue, such a dismissal overlooks the extent to which the New Age movement shares similar aspirations, histories and desires with what we call the left that may be instructive for us. The above statement of purpose of the New Age movement, published in the journal Magical Blend is a "New Age manifesto" in the sense that it, like other manifestos of the left, expresses the desire for a "break with history" for transformation, for change. However, what distinguishes New Age "manifestos" (besides their high level of abstraction, their utilisation of the "spiritual" and their failure to articulate concrete or collective strategies to accomplish their goal of transformation) is the frequency with which they use concepts such as baby-rebirthing, reclaiming, recharging and other images which imply that we have lost something which must be regained. In the New Age imaginary, "we" originally existed in a state of unity with each other, with "nature," with our "selves," a unity that was shattered by the serpent of civilization, the apple of technology. In this way the New Age positioning of "nature," the "primitive," the "spiritual" and, ultimately, the past as sites of wholeness, fulfillment, completeness, can be seen as one particular response to various "crises" of modernity, i.e., of "science," "reason" and, more generally, the crisis that has accompanied the re-evaluation of the project of the Enlightenment. But, perhaps, this search for origins, this desire for reconciliation, which appears in exaggerated form in the New Age, is something we need to be aware of in the project of reconstituting the left, and is a symptom of our contemporary "transcendental homelessness," of a condition which some call postmodernity.

The New Age" desires the desire to "reconstruct" a community through reconciliation with various Others, with nature, with the Third World, with the aboriginal and with the divided parts of the self, which are posited as integral to the self. Instead of this New Age fantasy of reconciliation has emerged in reaction to various crises announced by postmodernism, it is, in a sense, a symptom of postmodernity, and can tell us a great deal about the extent to which we invest in various "origin myths" in order to consolidate our sense of continuity with both the past and the future. We will need to acknowledge the extent to which this fantasy is shared, to some extent by theorists of the left, if any reconstitutive project of the left is to be in any way successful. My intention in studying the New Age is not only critical — I will also throw out how, despite what some would call the ideological confusion of the New Age, it provides an interesting point of departure for imagining a "postmodern politics," for it is animed by a critique of technological rationality and the desire for community, and for a revival of political agency that underlies the current attempts to reconstituting a politics of the left.

Furthermore, the New Age fantasy of reconciliation with various Others, with, for instance, the "Third World" or aboriginal, with "nature" (runaway), and with the divided parts of the self (transcendence) provides a point of entry into the formulation of "difference" and the construction of the Other in contemporary social thought. The formulation of difference and the Other provides the most pressing challenge to our capacity to formulate a vision of postmodern politics. First, in reaction to the colonialist impetus to consume or annihilate the Other, the New Age has responded by identifying with, or, in Igeny's terms, "consummating" with, the Other, a strategy which ironically replicates the same denial of difference found in colonialist narratives of the Other. Second, the New Age desire to "protect" nature through its programme of "cleansing," "dotechose-
advocates a duality of difference. In effect, such formulations, which are positioned in political rhetoric as liberal, are reframed in the new age time travel, attempting to replicate its amanitization of difference and lack of concern for the Other through merging with the Other. For example, our own motives are hidden by us and our impetus to find ourselves through identification with the "godess". The "shamans", the Celt, the Cato, the "primitive", the "animals", the crystals, etc. becomes as strange as these figures as "selves" that have lost but can regain. These figure an extension of the self, to prop up the identity of the Western subject and to patch the gaps of the exhausted narratives of the Western subject.

The New Age, then, can be seen as a "symptom" of postmodernity. In order to avoid dealing with the messiness of multiplicity and of polyvalence, the New Age deals with difference by trying to eradi-
cate it. However, the idealization of the primitive in the New Age, in its most generous moments, is symptomatic of an "anthropological nostalgia", a mourning for what we have "lost" and, in a sense, an attempt at reconciliation with others that have been hurt by colonialism and industrialization. The fantasy behind the movement, however, naive and ideological, is to make reparation with those we have wronged by giving them an exalted, purified status. The figure of the primitive in the New Age is an apology for the past.

Similarly the New Age figure of the alien is a repository for our hopes for the future and an expression of our desire for a postcolo-
nial imaginary. The figure of the alien, both in the New Age and contemporary science fiction, reveals the intense awareness of the alien, and of the unknown, the future, as well as ethnic, racial, sexual and other "differences." This figure, however, is grounded in a past and a present construction, for it represents the fantasy of a non-exploitive relationship between two discrete and independent cultures. New Age narratives of "friendly" contact with extraterrestri-
al beings is kept in check by our current theoretical positions of "postcolonialism" and behind current attempts to formulate representa-
tions of the "primitive" and the "animals" as a self-reflective culture, which do not resort to "primitivism", or "ori-
entalism", or other oppressive tendencies that have proliferated in the Third World Third World modali-
ties in the past. A simple critique of the alien as "ideological" overlooks the extent to which the fantasy of alien contact is representative of a new postcolonial imaginary.

Since the alien represents the "most Other of the Others" (as the Other) nothing, the character-
ization of this figure can tell us a great deal about how we view difference. For instance, in popular science fiction, aliens are often portrayed as terror-
ifying, benevolent, and threatening. For instance, the alien is benign, friendly and helpful. Many New Age gurus profess to be able to "transcead channel" alien information, in which we incorporate the alien's advice. New Age literature is littered with references to "transceaders" and other alien entities which offer spiritual guidance.

A recent paranormal commercial is an attempt to combine the anachronistic ten-
dency to transform the strange into the everyday has influenced popular culture and advertising. Here the Pyramids, Stonehenge and other "unexplained natural wonders" are explained as being merely a good-natured and cultured joke on the part of the superior alien entities that created them merely to have a "bit of fun." This theme is also apparent in the Reece's Peanut Butter Cups campaign, which presents circles left in wheat fields in England as an "ancient" and "mysterious" confection. Both of these examples reveal the New Age desire to minimize the threaten-
ing, unaccountable aspect of the alien by denoting the alien's "differences," making this Otherness appear in the realm of the explorable, mundane, and in fact, consumable everyday. They show how the New Age incorporation of the alien into the everyday has been a recent and undiscoverably popular marketing strategy that has infiltrated mainstream advertis-
ing. The appeal of this strategy of anthropomorphiz-
ing the alien resides in its capacity to alleviate une-
as having to reconcile difference by domesticating it. The alien is really human, perhaps different ethnic groups and perhaps different women, are also really the "same." Furthermore, the fantasy of the alien is an attempt to reconcile difference by bringing together the aspects of the alien for us lies in its genre: we imagine it imagining us as a singular species, as a "whole community" of humans. In particular, the "primitive" for the Termini, we as humans are an object of desire, of perfection, something they would like to understand and implicitly to become. For instance, they learn to paint, to dream, to tell jokes, all in an attempt to become more human. The Termini tree to find out why we cry, why we don't like to kill people (i.e. aliens or, in this particular example, androids). I'll allow us to imagine ourselves as "idealized" into three versions, we can good, compassionate, and ethical.
beauty, happiness and harmony in response to the corrupting influence of "culture" and technology. Nature, like the pristine, becomes an "original" which we lose, a "state" from which we become separated. The New Age connotes nature as opposed to culture, to technology and as a "force" within ourselves struggling against the "alienating," frequently dehumanizing, effects of culture. Thus nature becomes a mythos in the same set of dualisms as scientific rationality, but views nature as an extension of ourselves rather than as an expendable resource. Scientific rationality has been practiced on the construction and systematic domination of nature, on a construction of "nature" that is dependent on a set of mutually sustaining binary dualisms between male/female, nature/culture, civilized/primitive. Whereas the legitimacy of indigenous premises of Enlightenment authenticity rests on the subordination of the latter set of signs, the New Age has responded by an elevation of the female's natural/primitive. Nonetheless, the New Age approach still strives to perpetuate the logic of enlightenment rationality through a simple inversion which is still drawn by binary logic.

The crystal operates as a symbol of continuity, both across time and across space, since it reminds us of our connectedness to Others, to our community, to our world. Ironically, however, these objects serve to act as standards for real, yet artificial societies, they come to mediate relations between individuals. For instance, in some versions of the New Age, "attunement" with nature or natural symbols (such as the crystal) takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations. In this version of the New Age, some crystals are called healers and openers, others are conditioners and cleaners. This "natural" individual is not as much a natural person as a natural product. The impossibility of "fixing" difference, the contingent character of identity and, in particular, of the subject, is being translated into a new collectivity and collective identity, "the" crystal. The "New Age" takes precedence over human relations.
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BorderLines will produce an interdisciplinary magazine committed to exploring the complex cultural exchange, political and economic conditions, and shifting cultural and political landscapes. This magazine is open to all disciplines, and we welcome non-academic voices as well. We are interested in the ways in which these conditions intersect and are shaped by the global political economy. We are particularly interested in the ways in which these conditions are shaping our understanding of the world and our place in it.

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Derrida's Bidet: or What Remains of "Blame" in the Age of Expanding Context

By Andrew McMurry

Spill Doctors?

Corporations that brought back oil back a low price, as naturally be through a lot of little lies. The ship had made this passage many times, and with Alfred Newman's confidence, he took his bank.

The next is history, or what passes for it. What the oil spill, as we have seen, has become a powerful influence in the social order. The Bhopal tragedy, a well-known event, was a tragic tells us that oil spilled out, and the local context, oil spill dynamics were learned. As the consequences of dependence on oil was highlighted, and the nationalized product went up at the result of the company that spilled oil, had to be cleaned up.

In the Age of Expanding Context, however, this can never be entirely blamed on "spill doctors", the wind and the slickened, hose-wielding personnel disposed the crude, heated up the boiling puddle of oil as in an evacuated jar of salad dressing: they made it go away. And in the same manner, the emotions the collectivity "we" felt towards Exxon, Roswell, or our own dirty little oil habit would be dispelled by the winds on oil refineries in another Gulf, the thunderous breaking of the capitalist wave, the blue eyes waving a peasant, etc. But a lingering sense of dread remained that the Exxon Valdez grounding symbolized more than a casual treatment of the natural environment. Just as the toxic waste sites in the Alaska oil spill, the effective media spin control, all those public relations and accountability. Who was at fault? Those hands were behind this? Yet the anger gradually aper-
weird and subsidised into mere undirected frustration when it becomes more and more clear this was to be no more than the usual 0.5% of the pie.

And this remains perhaps the most haunting revelation to emerge from the EKON plummet; namely, that there is now no longer any incentive to blame for such events because their causes, like the events themselves, have become too complex to decipher and too chaotic to control. The contexts in which events occur have become illimitable — resulting in decontextualization, a condition wherein blame finds its rest point nowhere and everywhere. To pin it simply, those who appear most directly negligent are merely iconic of the greater negligence of our entire planetary culture. If in effect, we must all share in the blame, for no one is really blame-worthy at all. Blame, like so much else, is going global, and rendering the localised conditions under which responsibility was normally assumed, quite simply, irrelevant. The conclusion: "Blame" becomes a noun without referent.

**In Defense of Slick Willie**

It has become a truism that we no longer live in a Newtonian universe, where effects were linked explicitly with causes and could be sketched, theoretically, with a certain degree of confidence. Major events still happen — disasters, oil spills, political and social scandals, environmental catastrophes, wars — but causes and effects appear as intensities, pulsations, waves and ripples; they do not settle into discrete, identifiable elements.

"Taking responsibility" may once have meant bearing a reducible embracement of such discrete elements, like a ship lodging a dangerous cargo. But presently, in its death throes, responsibility has become a quantity that, like water, soaks its own level; it settles on those who don’t have the wherewithal to deflect it further from the effects of its movements, and delinkages described here are not necessarily bad or wrong. On the contrary, the refusal to be held accountable is and the consequent de-shouloring of responsibility are theoretically defensible positions, and indeed obey an inexorable logic.

Words like "accountability, responsibility, liability and blame" no longer work. Their circumference is ever-differentiable, a correlation of a number of trends of modernity; the revolutions of science such as the vanishing structure of the logic of late capitalism; the erosion of the "subject" as the central locus for understanding and the rise of the almighty and the disappearance of transparent reference points.

The growing weight of unaccountability finds expression in Hansard Simpson’s apoplectic "Thanks to blame": it is encoded in the technocratic and institutional centrality of apologies for obscure failure, most famously in the accountant’s phrase "mistakes were made." Gone is the assurance that "MacArthur’s squad [will] return;" instead we have bland Bushisms, such as "I’ve heard it before the loop," the motto of the

**Ecology**

John Muir said, "whom we try to pick out something, we find it hitched to everything else in the scheme of things." "Every thing is connected to every thing else" — so says a New Age maxim. Intertwinedly, "we" have become the new buzz word in every field from computer science to environmental policy.

Paradoxically, a billion-bull universe is junked in favor of the machinestasis of relativists, particle/wave dualities, strange attractors...

In biological terms, the "food chain" has been replaced by the "food web." A food chain is a barely ecological notion, but it did allow some recognition of the importance of plants as a foundation of a particular ecosystem. In a food web, energy passes linearly through the links in the system and any break in the chain could spell disaster for all components. A hypothetical example: the fox eats the mouse and then the grasshopper eats the grass; all those higher up in the chain suffered when the wheat crop was destroyed by wheat rust.

Now, by contrast, in the food web model the energy fluxes associated with ecological change arise and disperse multidirectionally, often without easily discernible origins or ends. A number of events occur when the wheat rust enters the area: grasshoppers migrate to better feeding grounds; mouse population declines; rabbit population increases; hawks benefit from the rabbit explosion; seeds increase as hawks switch to meat for survival; land is allowed to follow allowing recrudescence of native plants; losses go hungry and their fitter are smaller; and so on, in uncounted directions. Although the wheat rust appears to be the identifiable catalyst of change in both cases, the web model illustrates adequately the continuity, connectivity, and cyclical nature of ecological evolution. On the other hand, the determination of cause and effect becomes more troublesome in the food web model. As in the food chain, the observer might try to "blame" the wheat rust for the food decline, but it is not clear that the rust initiated the declines, nor even that a food decline is necessarily a food decline but a rearrangement of a previous balance. Other species have increased.

And we should not forget that the wheat is an introduced plant to begin with, and thus the pre-rust balance was itself artificial.

The very sophistication of the ecological paradigm thus results in a more sophisticated and nuanced ver-

**Economy**

In business, decisions are made in response to changing market conditions. Failure to understand the market can result in bankruptcy, loss of profits, and closure. When a best decision is made, popular mythology hints that it beeds will figure-

ally roll. But even in business points does not necessarily remain in the primary parties. In point of fact, the real hurt stemming from bad decisions is shifted to workers, consumers, and those dependent industries, or more generally, the consumer, whose choices are shaped the market in the first place. The system, like the Catholic church, is rigged to provide winners absoluto, here in the form of Chapter 11 protection, government bailouts, tax write-offs, and gold-

parachutes.

Yet those whose blunders most immediately put the corporate ship on the rocks — the shareholders, the taxmen, the government, and the politicians — who predict the market trends — are the Captain, the Moon, the woods are hues; for their responses to market con-

ditions are merely programmatic, and follow the easy logic of the alcoholic who believes the bottle will never be empty nor the hangover too painful to bear. The very existence of capitalist economies depends on the two linked identities of immaterializable resources and insatiable consumption. If there is a prob-

lem with those assumptions, how can the people whose livelihoods must prove their success be blamed? Thus, in economic terms, responsibility is auto-

matically coded to the market; it is the market thatulti-

mately must bear the brunt of the messy it creates.

Yet what is the market? It is the perfect scapegoat, since it is composed of everyone and everything and therefore appears to be impartial, inscapable force, like the weather. (And even in the confused aftermath of a hurricane or flood, "blamed the weather" is perhaps the most accurate statement one could make.)

Let us consider the situation in more detail. Liberals decry the conventional wisdom that the Ski bonds and other related financial debentures are attributable to an amorphous "greedy 80s culture" — which thereby implic-

ates everyone who lived through the 80s decades equally indisposed of those most directly involved. Even then "those most directly involved" — Reagan, Bush, congress, World Street, bank developers, speculators — have obtained in some parts the status of tragic heroes, and
rightly so, for their ability to profit was sanctioned by a complicitous public long encompassed with the possibility of unlimited wealth creation. So the failure to silicon silk purses from sow's ears does not mean therefore that the magic doesn't exist, but that fallible magicians botched their spells. Mistakes were made. Americans have internalized the rules of the capitalist shell-game, and they believe that anyone and everyone can obtain the status of millionaires. Unlike in the Philippines, the American Marcos receive social sanction for their accumulations. If they "work hard and play by the rules," the sky's the limit: and if they appear to have gone crazy, it is ultimately because the system didn't correct their excesses. The system is at fault, the system must be adjusted, perhaps capital gains taxes should be lowered. But the system is us. In a crypto-Catholic context like this, how can any one individual be damned for greediness?

Thus, culpability for the tremendously expansive S&L bailout is dispersed outward from Washington and urban financial zones into the hinterlands, even to future generations. Nixon commands to "stop the fingerprinting" and "take the rodents" as our "next great" battle, "lightweighting" becomes the clarion call, "we must share the burden," the Wall Street cleanup—"we must all share in the stonewall for the sin. In the understandable but theoretically indefensible transition to this kind of group Explication, small wonder that a Texas tycoon made rich at the public trough can act on a born again populist messiah for the presumably guiltless common man.

Responsibility for the Exxon Valdez disaster is similarly and correctly devolved onto the hood of an energy-hungry and evidently self-righteous freighter that eco- insensitive pipelines must be built, that wars must be fought to provide him with oil; for in the age of expendability, industry simply burns a purview of oil and their apologists and benefactors in governments act solely in the service of the all-powerful consumer. Democracy of the wallet. The collapse of the nuclear power industry, the clean-up of toxic waste, the retraining of primary industry workers, all of the social and economic costs incurred to repair those spectacular failures of the industrial mentality—instances where people suffer for being in the wrong place at the wrong time—might be viewed alternatively not as the price of progress but as part of a national strategy to expiate sin through the dilution of blame. Shirked blame of insalubrious guilty parties we must all take the fall.

S ubjectivity

And this is now the diffused condition of blame in our webbed culture. Bad things still happen to good people, but it is useless to try to determine beyond all doubt who should be blamed. False, capital crime, rape should be easy to define; yet even when murder most foul is sought out, the murderess is almost by definition insane, or at least sick, with the consequences of bad childhood and negative environment. Criminal psychologists argue convincingly that offenders are simply the inevitable products of an undermining classist, racist, sexist society. Society is a total system; from which the criminal's motivations for lack of it only appears to emerge spontaneously. Society therefore must be held ultimately responsible for its criminal excesses.

Of course we still maintain codes and standards by which to adjudicate responsibility, and there is no question the law does pronounce guilt and innocence. All of this opportunistic legal inertia does much to conceal the societal consciences but little to halt the unaccountability of blame, as most forward-thinking jurists realize. On the other hand, part of the conservative right's agenda is to deem the liberal penchant to place blame squarely on all but the accused. Yet the right's nostalgia for stocks and gallows only reminds us of the theoretical poverty of their position. Far from building more prisons and increasing executions, we ought to call for a theorized future in which malfunctions are seen and medically treated for what they are; burnt pustules on a filthy body politic. T ext ualit y

A final theoretical matrix for this phenomenon of unaccountability draws upon the post-structuralist dictum that "It is not the horse that is wrongheaded, but the rider." Derrida says it is the same or saying "there is nothing outside of context." This means, in effect, that every space in the kitchen, there is no simple way to isolate the taste since the melange depends for its flavor on each component. You may say it is too salty, but you should blame the salt which is not salt, but has been mixed in by the pepper which informs it, and you certainly have had the complexity added by the pinch of dill. More another asporal before you could have anything on the recipe. And then another. And still another.

This expanding contextualization presumably would be baffled by some sort of reasonable "reining in." In more grandmarnierite it is like "but I don't like it!"

Thus, blaming in loco parentis progressively more difficult because the expansion is governed by the postmodern flight of meaning itself. In what context does the word "blame" exist? The sense of context might be traced to words and where do we decide to interrupt the ripple-effect of dilettante frames of reference, and in whose sense the blame is to be understood? This self-blaming of Massachusetts Exxon oil demand at first seems governed by a meandric penchant for first cause but the blame cannot find a clear focus it will not settle on anyone at all, and the very notion of responsibility, unlike heavy cruds, evanesces. Culpability is ceded them to too many actors, to the socio-hist.-cultural, to the nature of reality itself. Even Exxon can credibly appeal for acquiescence, as it recently has, because the initial settlement nearly proved that, given the legal climate, culpability follows the money.

W hether B la me?

So what can we expect when it becomes theoretically incorrect to say "xax culpa"? As has been suggested, one highlight will be the growing reactionary consensus for punishment of the body as in sacrificial retribution for the flight of sin. A return to Foucault's famous causality seems in the offing, when the brutalized flash paid for the weakness of the spirit. Only this time, the body is made to be not only passively affected, but actively removed—in ritual responses to the social polity's nos- talgic taste for blame. (This is all presaged by the class- men.)

Outside of the legal system, the person is doomed morally instructive—whence the general tolerance, for example, of Clint Eastwood revenge flicks. We will allow the possibility that against all our notions of law, they are only "tried" who are sent to the stand for passing cocaine through the narcotics pipelines of South China near the Philippines, and the London and the Hamptons. As the most visible manifestation of the U.S. drug culture, such youths will be tried and pay for this sin of our entire nation bounded by various forms of escapism.

We can also predict that blame, despite its practical disappearance, will continue to be theorized, Derrida, for example, knows better than anyone that the true view of the world creates linkages between wildly dis- parate elements, horse context on context, and makes meaning—much "blaming"—undecideable. But to him, this does not mean that blame cannot be pronounced, only that the attempt to fix blame is always political, i.e., that blame can arise only in a context and entails certain responsibilities for the blamer.

One useful tactic, then, for those who wish to avoid being targets of blame in our ineluctable reactionary culture will be to recontextualize blame so that it instead adheres to those who possess in blaming. People who blame generally do so according to principles they think are actually beyond praise and blame. But, moronic antithesis, such folk themselves become vulnerable to blame, thus the "same" totalitarians act as "different" totalitarians. A blamer wishes to shut down the play of signification and the consideration of other contexts. Also, and significa- tively, in many "evince" is to distance oneself from the structure of responsibility by blaming others one attempts to asume oneself from blame.

On the contrary, one should attempt to be so responsible to the contexts of "responsability" that one may risk appearing irresponsible. For example, when Derrida considers the Poul de Man affair, to those who accuse the latter of new thinking taking responsibility for his anti- semitic wartime writings writes of the "mirror of irresponsability in defending him. Derrida can say that those who are most irresponsible are the critics who will not do the work of deconstructive reading, who do not read de Man and Derrida himself—with enough attentiveness. These critics, say Derrida, without sufficient rigorous or self-critical thinking, are likewise irresponsible to the totalitarian smear, to bring the discussion to rest without probing the limits of de Man's discourse—as well as the limits of language itself and their own necessary implication therein. In effect, they do not wish to be fully responsible for their charges of irresponsibility.

Derrida, on the other hand, the defender of the accused, cannot be considered irresponsible because he opens the possibility of mitigating contexts. He wishes to trace down every linguistic level, tease apart every abstraction, place de Man's words in context in context. To some this seems like obscurity, post-structuralist bullshit. But at bottom, Derrida remains untouched by the apparent odioiusness of his defense because by multiplying contexts for de Man's obviously execrable writings Derrida can concretely purify the contextualism of his own discourse—by demonstrating time and again the impossibility of reeding and thus of making blame stick. And by nigntailing his horror arguments to refigure the impurities of their own accusations, Derrida is able to shift the charge of irresponsibility to them. As the old joke goes, the beer cannot escape the rabbit if the rabbit shifts its position; the answer being no, the beer wipes himself with the rabbit.

To conclude, then, it seems that when the concept of "blame" at last reaches the end of its tether and vanishes into the ashes of non-accusation, the most "responsible" thing to do would be to speak up vociferously for the nega- tive responsibility of others—and pray that when the time comes they'll do the same for you. This way everyone's one way clean.

Andrew McMurray is a graduate student at English at Indiana University Bloomington.
Alex Wilson

Obituary: Alex Wilson by Judy Berland, Rosemary Donahue, Peter Fitting

Alex Wilson died on October 26, 1993, after a lengthy illness. He was 40. How to communicate the devastation of that illness, that death? No one lived life more generously, or gave more of the gifts of beauty, spirit, and language. His death was an enormous loss. Yet he left us with feeling thankful for what he gave us. Those who knew and loved him will struggle with that poignant equation for as long as we live with his memory, for as long as we live.

"For all the promise restoration holds out, it's not a cure-all. ...Yes, I have to think that the value of restoration lies in the chance it gives people to do hands-on work with natural systems and to learn about them. As we ponder the possibilities for life on this planet in the next century, restoration points the way toward a new natural philosophy, one that celebrates our relationship with the rest of nature. Its rituals — collecting and tending plants, bringing life back to urban wastelands — hold out the possibility that Aldo Leopold called it a mutually beneficial relationship with the landscape, a relationship that integrates technology, ecology, and human lifestyle in an expanded notion of community, a new idea of home."

Alex Wilson
"Reclaiming the Earth"

Values that also shaped his journalism and cultural actions.

Watching Alex work in a garden was (as many have commented) like reading his sentences. He worked with physical grace, deft skill, intuitive balance, and a deep appreciation for the beauty of the word and the world. Each had its own pace, its own rhythms and textures, smells and tastes, its own magic. His generosity, spiritual warmth and openness to pleasure infused his materials and touched everyone he knew. He faced a difficult death — before AIDS took his life, it took away his garden and his language — with singular grace, calm and compassion. In his last months there was only the love of his friends and caretakers. That was, and remains, without end.
**Forms** of popular display, rather than being divorced from official museum culture, form a constituent part of what Tony Bennett has termed 'the exhibitionary complex.' This complex, Bennett points out, extends across a range of institutions including non-profit art, anthropological and science museums, as well as for-profit museums. Bennett's own study refers to the great world exhibitions of the nineteenth century. Considering exhibitions as vehicles for displaying power, he emphasizes the significance of an internalized surveillance function that the spectator becomes aware of his or her integral role in the exhibition. This form of intersubjective relation, he believes, functions to educate a citizenry by enlisting the public as subjects rather than objects. Taking a different tack on the question of intersubjectivity, I will describe how exhibitions which consist of encounters with live people, or replicas of human beings, both locate and destabilize conventional states of apprehension.

The phenomenon of human spectacle, while unearthing the strange within the everyday, also profited from employing marginalized, and often disabled, human beings. While this and history of exploitation must be acknowledged, my aim in considering senses exhibitions is to contextualize later recuperations of agency through practices of self-exhibition. What is interesting to me is that exhibition rhetoric that incorporates people functions to produce a face-to-face encounter, which, to varying degrees, engages the spectator with a representation that 'looks back.' This situation raises not only the question of enunciation, but also implications on the effectiveness of bodies within the display context. Keeping in mind, however, the question of 'who speaks' and 'how,' I will identify the claiming and subjecting of bodies across a range of historically specific sites of the 'exhibitionary complex'.

Madame Tussaud's wax works, a popular medium during the French Revolution, illustrate and articulate power relations through corporeal display. Rather than a sideline to official public culture, these commercial displays quite literally embodied key proprietary shifts of the turbulent political context.

Marie Groebholtz (later to become Tussaud) had come to Paris to appear to her uncle, a Swiss doctor named Christopher Curtius who modeled human bodies in wax for his Salon de Cire. Curtius' exhibition included various thematic arrangements of coloured wax effigies portraying the famous and the infamous. A popular tableau was 'The Royal Family at Dinner,' which enabled ordinary people to gaze closely at life-sized effigies of Louis XVI and his family. It was customary for the royal family to freely admit the public while they dined. For those who could not make the trip to Versailles, Curtius' spectacle proved a successful alternative. He produced the tableau working from Marie's sketches, which detailed the colors and times of family members. To augment its authenticity, the queen's dressmaker, Rose Bertin, was commissioned at great expense to dress the effigy of Marie Antoinette.

Curtius and Tussaud's enterprise afforded them unconventional mobility across classes. Marie lived with the royal family for nine years as art instructor to Madame Elisabeth, the king's sister. Curtius had a sideline in erotic miniatures for aristocratic customers. Yet, despite his niece's court affiliations, his political sympathies were aligned with the people. The museum was open to all classes as long as visitors were properly dressed in wigs and stockings 'no matter how threadbare.' Curtius' success in Paris enabled him to open a second exhibition, the Convente des Grandes Folies, devoted to notorious criminals, which was a forerunner to the Chamber of Horrors, subsequently to become a trope of wax museums worldwide.

During the Paris riots of 1793, a mob arrived at the door of the Salon de Cire requesting Curtius' life-sized wax work of Louis

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**EXHIBITING BODIES: ARTICULATING HUMAN DISPLAYS**

By JENNIFER FISHER
Both a significant articulation and point of divergence between the display cultures of the museum and the gallery, Toussaint’s sharp closure ensured the Enlightenment taxonomies of the Louvre’s collections, it was Madame	
Toussaint’s museum that eventually procured this technology of death to sensationally augment the Chamber of Mummies. In 1854, Toussaint’s son Joseph purchased the blade, lifelike, and closer as well as scale drawings of the guillotine from the grandson of the “Terror” of 1793, the executioner of Lewis XVI.

As a presentationist mode, the people of Toussaint’s displays consisted of still tableaux of wax effigies. The exhibition of live human beings, however, operated on another level of display practice. During the nineteenth century, the extension of European imperialism increased encounters with alterity. Living human beings were sought out for the express purpose of exhibition in side-shows, World Exhibitions and circus acts. P.T. Barnum was amongst those who sought agents throughout the world to procure so-called human curiosities—aliens, six-headed twins, hermaphrodites, midgets, dwarfs, giants, the physically and mentally disabled, and groups of aboriginal people. (Robert Bogdan describes three types of ‘tricks’; those born with physical abnormalities, those produced either ideologically—i.e., displaying ‘primitive’ types—or physically—the tattooed woman—and those which were faked—the four-legged girl where one set of legs belonged to another girl behind a screen.)

Barnum’s American Museum, which he bought in 1842, was billed as New York’s greatest display of curiosities and oddities. Amongst its collection of oddities and oddities was “Frankenstein’s monster.” As an unorthodox cousin to museums of art and science, Barnum’s exhibits were framed by superlative captions which translated to what he could get away with.” Likewise, his hyperbolic self-promotion found a market in people’s capacity to be attracted to the ‘sensational,’ however ethnically questionable. Barnum’s American Museum marks the institutionalization of the ‘side show’ in its conventions of presentation and as a social formation. Human beings had been exhibited previously, but the Barnum’s, by procuring and exhibiting parts of the original guillotines. Surrounded by the wax impressions of decapitated heads, of both, and other relics of the Revolution, the guillotine became the centrepiece of the museum’s collection.

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Straton, barnum began his performing career by rechristening him General Tom Thumb and molding him as a Victorian minstrel.Thumb’s form of reflexive ‘exhibition’ involved singing songs and telling stories. Barnum’s live exhibitions also resided in his museum. While the potential existed for ‘live’ exhibitions like servant classes—to serve life-long, inescapable contracts, there was also the possibility for certain star exhibitors to jump social classes. The aristocratic titling of giants and midgets was common practice, perhaps prototypical of the entertainment industry’s social system of status based on ‘class’ was displaced by fame generated by publicity.

Postcard photos were sold by Barnum’s performers to promote their performances and to supplement their incomes. As both a resident and ambassador of the museum, Thumb toured widely as a celebrity and a frequent guest at glamorous dinners of the rich and royal. Straton is significant here in how he negotiated the narrative he was obliged to script: tactically seizing the privileged space of his position as ‘hipster’—distracting audiences with routines which translated to what he could get away with.”

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um in St. Augustine Florida into a dinner party scene consisting of human curiosities, among them Tran Thieu. Similarly, the Ripleys Believe it or Not museum at Niagara Falls includes an exhibit of wax models of popular 'human oddities,' photographs of amusing freaks and a stuffed two headed bull.

Within the display, a sign beside a 'dreaming-room' type mirror invites visitors to curl their tongues—a genetically determined trait that only a few people can do. Moving on through the ambience of neon lights, signboards and the cacophony of sound loops, the exhibition script eventually circles back to a quiet dark space—the other side of what is actually a two-way mirror—which confronts more repressed instincts hinting cursorily at their faces in attempts to curl their tongues.

(Which, of course, you have just done yourself!) In this way, visitors unwittingly entertain on the 'living freak' component of the display.

Within the contemporary fine-art discourse, the destabilizing effects of subduing the viewer-as-the-viewer have been mobilised by artists working out of feminist and post-colonial positions.

Jenna Lue's Artificial Facades involves 'exhibiting' herself in a museum vitrine along with 'the contemporary artifacts of a Levantine man,' her divorce papers, college diploma and a labeled string of her name, birth date and tribe. In the context of New York's collection at the Warner Library, this attempt to destabilize sexuality and affirm sex in the context of the AIDS crisis. During the show she describes her transformation from Ellen Steinberg into 'Annie Sprinkle: Porn Star!' in a slide show of before and after photos. According to Sprinkle, 'the bigger the breast the bigger the body, the bigger the star.' Sprinkle's stories from her days in the adult entertainment industry provide, in her accounts, evidence and tolerance of sexual preferences. In preparation for her widely publicised Public Cervix Announcement she draws on songs while continuing a friendly banner. After inserting a speculum to expose her cervix, she invites members of the audience to peer inside her with a flashlight. This performance appropriates visual display practices of the medical discourse to break the taboo of shame about genitals, to advance aesthetic appre-
Board Games, or I Was a Member

by Marcelle Lean

'Oh, yeah! Harder! Yeah! Faster! Yeah! Faster!'

For six years, most mornings, I would eat my breakfast to the cadence of noisy (and if I was lucky, scarupted) sighs punctuated by mechanical thrusts of bodies. My eyes would be glued to the television screen while I would sip my coffee and chew my delicious muffin, until, all of a sudden, laborious screams from the television accompanied by a triumphant 'Esculation!', yelled by one member of the working panel would startle me.
Everyone would have to abandon breakfast to scribble the summary sheets what they had just witnessed: the ultimate, unprompted, successful accomplishment of a sexual act performed by a superhuman over-whelming a revelling woman with gallons of semen. While she is moaning with the bedlamic privilege of rubbing the stuff all over herself, he seems to have an unquenched craving of semen being silently and slowly spraying around. In the middle of this frantic agitation, a panelist’s shrieking voice would claim to have seen the semen hit the woman’s eye or mouth or chin. The video would be immediately stopped and an intense discussion would start.

The object of the argument would be to determine whether the sexual partner received the semen on the face and whether ejaculation was accomplished in a degrading way. In some contentious instances, especially when the semen landed in or on the mouth, in the region between the neck and the chin, on the hair or on the temple, the members of the viewing panel would discuss whether or not these gray areas were parts of the face. One member would argue that if the semen enters the mouth, it is not on the face; another would debate that a drop accidentally appearing on the corner of the lips means nothing; but somebody else would question whether the semen really got on the chin or on the neck. The leader of the pack (that is, the vice-chairperson of the panel) would take the initiative to rewind the tape so that we could all see the scene again in slow motion, frame by frame. The pre-censorship members would call for an elimination of the scene, the others would refuse to give in to that taunting of visuals. A vote would be taken, and the majority would win.

A few months earlier, in September 1960, the ‘repressive’ majority had won: fifteen members, out of roughly twenty-five who then comprised the Ontario Film Review Board, had gathered in Barrie on a two-day retreat. Their job was to label sexual activities, as well as clarity, define and draft criteria for guidelines aimed at ‘adult’ sex films. With the help of facilitators, the meeting, initiated by Robert Payne (then Chairperson of the Board), resulted in the categorizing of seven items weighted according to members’ standards of tolerance. ‘Exhibition on face’ was listed as an example under the category ‘Degradation-Indignities’ which was defined as ‘an abusive act that injures or debases a victim. Especially if it has no degree of diminutiveness on the part of the victim, which could be a living being or a corpse.’ (OFRR, Adult Sex Films: Rating Guidelines—September 1960). Other examples recorded under the same category were ‘defecation, urination, forced penetration.’ On a scale of one to four, ‘exhibition on face’ was weighted three, reflecting a high degree of intolerance, topped only by ‘portrayal of a minor (a person intended to represent a person under the age of 18) appearing nude, in a scene which is sexually suggestive or explicit.’

In February of 1961, the whole Board met again to finalize the weighting and the guidelines. The majority reneged on some of the definitions, blunting the facilitators, the relaxed atmosphere of the retreat and the air in Barrie for their earlier attitude. In 1966, the year I was appointed to the Ontario Film Review Board, so one dared dream of such debates. The Board had entered a transitional era. In December 1984, the Censor Board officially shed its infamous name to be rebaptized the Ontario Film Review Board. The reign of Mary Brown as Chairperson and champion of censorship ended with the appointment of Ann Jones in August 1986 as her successor. Regardless, little changed. The porn films sent to Ontario rarely showed explicit sexual activities. At the time we were operating in panels of five members (now only three because of budget cuts) led by a vice-chairperson supposedly in charge of eliciting relevant remarks, sometimes arousing discussions that would culminate in the classification of films and videos. The inquiry came from the amended (1975) Theatres Act, a blue booklet now replaced by the amended (1983) Theatres Act, a red booklet. This table contained a section (Section 14) that was the basis for two working documents. One of the basic documents is a set of guidelines which are reviewed yearly. At a glance, the neophyte can see four columns of classifications, in turn defined by such criteria as language, violence,
nudity, sexual involvement, horror, subject matter/treatment. For example, in the category "Violence," the reviewer finds that "graphic portrayals of violence, torture, abuse, horror, extreme bloodletting, sexual violence integral to the plot," and "graphic depiction of violence, sexual abuse, torture, murder, bloodletting." However, in Section 14 of the 1988 Threats Act, another statement appears:

"After viewing a film, the Board MAY refuse to approve a film for exhibition or distribution in California..."

The use of the verb "may" enables the reviewer to question not only the classification of a film, but also to cut, edit, delete, censor or ban a film. Free interpretation of Section 14 justified the custom, puritanical position of Mary Brown, as expressed in her letter to the Board in 1985. Interestingly enough, the legendary organ of repressive was well liked by her colleagues.

When in Board, I had to go through the initiation ritual of watching the "Take-Out Real," a scene of film that opens with a woman seated on a bed, and her understanding this, "Take-Out Real" originated by Mary Brown in the early eighties became her number one to rally public opinion on the censorship issue. The film displayed extreme images of horror and brutality, ranging from snippets of films to films showing women having intercourse with men, and dogs. These sequences were cut out of context and put together in such a way that their excessive violence could only turn on passionate pre-censorship reactions. Mary Brown would show the "Take-Out Real" to visiters, including easy-going to understand what the Board was about. As a result, the Board was banned, between 1986 and 1989, when films were associated with cuts and cuts into the restrictive category regardless of context. Porn had become a disgusting commodity from which one could not be protected. The impractical of such attitudes lingered to this day in some reviews.

In 1986, these marks were so fresh and severe that the Board was often reduced to counting the number of times the word "tack" was used.

The presentation of a film or video is recorded by the vice-chairperson on a summary report and signed by all members present at the screening. The vice-chairperson and the majority are visible on the front of the page; the members who constitute the minority sign the back of the report.

The summary report, which is a legal document, refers to the Threats Act to support and justify the reasons for a chosen classification. It works like an identification card where the film's title, genre, length, major language, and type (Glamour, art house, etc.) in the discussion panel which was not mentioned with pleasure. Classification time, I asked for the verdict rejected unanimously.

I look back with nostalgia at the private conversations I had with a professor of the meaning of the obscene. For the Finch video, I had on film festivals, Mary Brown's paper, "The Daily Night 5: The Torsomaker was unanimously classified 'Restricted' with two information pieces: 'Racial violence' and 'Frighening scares.' In case a member feels very strongly, he or she can ask for a cumulative vote, a process by which other members screen and classify the contentious film. When a film does not go to general distribution (as indicated in the summary report), it can run for a limited time on exhibition and be shown as many times as requested. Paul Morrisey's Mixed Blood come back so many times that all members must have seen it at least three times during one of their tenure. Watching this hyper-violent and ultra-violent film for the second time felt like punishment intended for Alex, the protagonist in Kubrick's Clockwork Orange, and relatable inflicted on the relatively innocent members of the OTIB by the wrong director. A distributor can also appeal the decision of a panel by simply re-submitting the film to the next newly-minted group who had not classified it (some exceptions apply). The decision reached by the Appeal Panel is final and can only be contested at a lower court by the distributor. The fate of the distributor's product depends entirely on the members and vice-chairpersons. Panels are put together according to members' availability, not according to their compatibility.

The chairperson, whose job is administrative and representative of the whole Board, is appointed by the Premier of the province. The vice-chairperson is also appointed from the same channel. During my tenure, some members came through political routes: connections, supplied to the meeting came to the Board because they had an honest interest in movies. (Although I am an unconditional film buff, I wish I could have attended a meeting without my name being included in the list of those who attended.) The term of office for the majority is one year.

A tense bullet then entered the performance stage, the boardroom. Very often pastime took center stage. It is close to the subject of the Home Office, that is, the use of the word or the settlement of the fair distribution of screening days or the opposite, and what the Board could say I committed. In the middle of contentious disputes, the Board was left unresolved, deferred to the Policy Committee. Vice-chairperson were elected by the Board at the meeting to voice the grievances of members and act asbuffer between chairpersons and members.

In 1987, I became the Chairperson of the first Policy Committee. Ann Jones, Censor Board Chair of the time, acted as the leader of her authority up to the day she was dismissed. The Censor Board was not set up to voice the grievances of members and act as buffer between chairpersons and members.

Ann Jones, or at least her name, was a prominent and skilled legal scholar. In the 1970s, she attempted to maintain a dignified image of the OFIBR by giving the meetings some structure. She classified rating censored film as unacceptable by the creation of a Policy Committee in 1987 and the description of "brown's "Take-Out Real" (circa 1989), the requirements of the cumbersome en-terprise of censorship.

Ann Jones's successes, Robert Payne (1990-1992), tried to harmonise the members' views on standards of tolerance regarding sex in porn movies. The discrepancy of these works was so confusing that distributors would submit their products with a prayer: they had been left with no amendment in their跨境 to reason with us since

Borderlines 31

Borderlines 31
the classifications had grown so unpredictable.
During his tenure, Robert PAYNE was an intelligent
mediator and listener, who treated everybody with
dignity. In the summer of 1982, a new rift
between the Minister and the Chairpersons involved
an inexplicable isolation of the latter. In September
1992, he was promptly replaced by Dorothy
CHRISTIAN as the new Chairperson. Ms. Christian
had served on the Board throughout the old school
members.
As a film addict and a celluloid consumer, I
shocked in alarm by the summer of 1986 and
1992, I screened as many films and videos as I
could, besides attending the Floating Film
Festival, the yearly Montreal Film Festival, the
Toronto Festival of Festivals, and going to see
films in cities like Paris where I quarrelled over French
films, or in Hong Kong where I saw The Lover in its
integral form before it opened in North America.
As an art activist, I was given the concrete
opportunity to fight for the freedom of expression
of filmmakers in all genres of film and video,
including pornography. From screening hundreds, if not
thousands, of porn flics. I certainly gathered a
wealth of information about myself, about the
attitudes of my colleagues and of society regarding sex.
Some members had to leave the Board to protect
themselves: they had become casualties of the
insufferable violence and vulgarity to which they
had been subjected as censors. When video opera-
tors were arrested on charges of obscenity (around
1990), when Project P disagreed with the members' classifications and attempted to stigmatize them
publicly, all the layers of accumulated experience
explooded. We became voyeurs in an open zone
where the pro-censorship and the anti-censorship
camps (jazzily clashing) Memories of long,
dogged, passionate debates tearing us apart and
turning us against one another still linger in our
lives. An alumni radically marked by her experi-
ence at the Board, found artistic expression writing
and illustrating erotic poems. I, with two other
alumni, wrote a script on pornography and its
effects. In this attempt, we felt a need to share
our knowledge and experiences with the public. At
the same time, in a cathartic movement, the writing
enabled us to "cleansing our brains," to expurgate
the dirt, the violence, the on-screen degradation we
do to witness day after day.
My experience on the Board broadened my hori-
sions, and I feel that I served the institution with
zeal and integrity. I donated my time and energy
writing reports, preparing arguments, often speak-
ing to various groups. Those of us who enjoyed
working hard and devoting ourselves to cinema
were browed upon by other members and people
in general. For the public at large we were censor.
i was dewing a reeding by bill bissett

in a hi school n th toxik land fill recentlee discovered undr th playground n monitor constantees was above what they call normal that day

so all th windows uv th school wer kept closed as th principal bs md 2 me its better 2 b safe than sorre

i certainelee cudnt agree mor i md yes n i recall that th universittee had tried 2 fire th lew professor who had discovered toxik land fills leeking

in so manee real estate local deal ees so important 2 th ekonomik development uv th whol community

its also tertifik 2 know what n th normal rate uv toxik leeking is n

that ther is a normal rate whm that cant hurt us

at all n that just closing windows can so effectivlee deal with ames possibil damage

n totalee sell off a building

Front & Back Cover Images by Guillermo Deisler (Deutschland).

Excerpts from the diary of a Neandertal Dilettante by Richard Gessner

Jan. 7 Middle paleolithic era

We completed the tiny papier maché mastodons today and are about to display them on our prominent eyewr ridges; many of us fear that we will be subjected to ridicule because inexplicably the obtuse bosses will grasp our satirical intentions ..........

Jan. 9 paleolithic era

Today our history of groupies teacher gave a lecture on the inevitability of geniuses throughout the ages building a spaceship from the countless autobiographies which have been requested of them; I must confess that I don’t quite grasp the concept of remarkable beings in a filmic paper construction exploring the vast frontiers of geniuses, lackeys, and dabbler in other solar systems; but I don’t let on to anyone about this because if I did I would undoubtedly be taken for something less than chic and maybe even be placed in the same category as those who are still diagramming cave drawings.

Jan. 23 paleolithic era

Just recently we have been learning to draw picasso running towards us holding a small pad of paper; who or what picasso is remains to be seen, according to the professor he doesn’t exist yet. This evening I decorated several real caves with thousands of images of this unknown figure and find it hard to suppress extreme satisfaction in doing so; I just hope that my feelings of mirth are not unjustified because as the professor said once on who picasso is still remains to be seen; since I; the professor; and my fellow students all am fragments preserved in glass cases in natural history museums by the time picasso is born we have no way of knowing whether or not he was somehow involved in the arts. Perhaps I should be more skeptical, for all I know picasso might be a ne’er do well who lives at the Y.M.C.A. who is in a constant state of trepidation over the fact that he might be an immense ruffled pair of anthropomorphic bloomers in a world peopled by omnipotent seamstresses who are vehemently against ruffles.

Feb. 5 paleolithic era

Today there was a long dispute among some students over who’s vertebral in who’s spine would make a better set of dominoes; the neanderthals or those of modern man; soon this frivolous activity gave way to a rally protesting against the spine becoming erect through the passing of time; the visible alternative presented was to remove the process of evolution so that the spine will become so curved that it could easily be mistaken for a hoolia hoop; I still don’t understand why such grave issues must have such frivolous conclusions.

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Jan. 23 paleolithic era

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Feb. 5 paleolithic era

Today there was a long dispute among some students over who’s vertebral in who’s spine would make a better set of dominoes; the neanderthals or those of modern man; soon this frivolous activity gave way to a rally protesting against the spine becoming erect through the passing of time; the visible alternative presented was to remove the process of evolution so that the spine will become so curved that it could easily be mistaken for a hoolia hoop; I still don’t understand why such grave issues must have such frivolous conclusions.

Excerpts from the diary of a Neandertal Dilettante by Richard Gessner

Jan. 7 Middle paleolithic era

We completed the tiny papier maché mastodons today and are about to display them on our prominent eyewr ridges; many of us fear that we will be subjected to ridicule because inexplicably the obtuse bosses will grasp our satirical intentions ..........

Jan. 9 paleolithic era

Today our history of groupies teacher gave a lecture on the inevitability of geniuses throughout the ages building a spaceship from the countless autobiographies which have been requested of them; I must confess that I don’t quite grasp the concept of remarkable beings in a filmic paper construction exploring the vast frontiers of geniuses, lackeys, and dabbler in other solar systems; but I don’t let on to anyone about this because if I did I would undoubtedly be taken for something less than chic and maybe even be placed in the same category as those who are still diagramming cave drawings.

Jan. 23 paleolithic era

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Feb. 5 paleolithic era

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The Last Train
by Gil Auffray

1. The train was travelling at great speed across a snow-bound landscape. It could have been anywhere. White infinity was unbroken. No marks, no traces, nothing.
Max was sitting at a table in a first class compartment. There was no evidence of time, no proof of place; yet Max felt it was England, knew the year was 1966.
He was Indian wrestling with a fugitive called William. Their bet was destiny, but it was not clear whose. Max was winning when the carriage door burst open. Snow flew in. Max looked up and saw the ticket inspector climbing in.
It was the tradition then for ticket inspectors to run alongside trains between stations. Max was not surprised, he only felt the man was rather old for such a demanding job. He noticed that his beard was frozen which forced him to perform the "dance of ducks". Unsettled by the apparition, Max lost the game.
The inspector was trying to tell Max why his unusually large ticket was not valid on Sundays when the smoke-alarm interrupted him. At its shrill sound, the inspector panicked and quickly vanished into the fragile decor of the train which, in a flash, had become an abandoned cargo express. Suddenly plunged into darkness, Max fumbled for the exit.
Max opens his eyes, lights a cigarette. It is 8 a.m. on a sunless Sunday. Max tries to recollect his encounter with the inspector. In vain, he cannot remember his dream. Instead his sleepy brain is invaded by the high-pitched voice of someone who somewhere is already telling a joke on T.V.
The joke seems to be about a man who finds himself trapped with his Saturday shopping between moving borders, and is unable to reach his home. When he finally does, his house is no more. Where it stood is now a wasteland whose flat horizon is only broken by the lone figure of the landlord asking the tired traveller for the back rent. A hiccup. A sharp pain in his stomach. His vision of the blue wallpaper begins to blur. Max stubs his cigarette out on his map of London, rolls over to the edge of the bed and vomits over the threadbare carpet. Gate Force 5. Sea passages, Strand of Dover: rough to very rough. The Vikings have stayed home watching a joke on T.V. They are laughing, Max is sickening.
3. A few minutes later, Max steps into anonymity.
His pale body, almost transparent, seems to be crawling towards what his landlord calls "the shaving cream parlour". When he finally reaches it, he searches the bin for a spare blade, in vain; the bin is all emptiness. For Max there is nothing to do but to watch his night shirt shrink under the yellow light, but the cracked mirror, already full of past images, does not reflect the long awaited face.
"Where am I?" Max jumps at the voice and looks harder into the mirror. "You're lost in a small forgotten basement on the outer-limits of the city." The voice continues. "You're sitting on a pile of out-of-date telephone directories. You're drinking. You're drunk, so drunk that you doubt your own existence. A ray of cold blue light falls across your face. You blink at the TV screen. A politician is showing you his teeth. They reflect an empty room. You panic. You try to read your T-shirt which proudly displays the following line: I am here." Reassured, you go to sleep. The voice quickly fades away. In the mirror, Max glimpses a blurred figure waving goodbye in the distance. Max does not recognize himself.
4. "Shake well before opening," Max shakes the bottle of juice. "Best before-see date on lid." Max reads the lid. "We are all foreigners, no date necessary." "How long have I been here?", that voice again, Max freezes, suddenly aware of his timeless solitude. He drops the bottle which smashes on the brown lino floor. He tries to read his T-shirt. It is blank; and Max notices that it is dirty.
5. Destination Joe Space, a dark and greasy café which is also a refuge for Max. The plate is chipped, the eggs greasy, the chips frozen, Joe is in a bad mood. Max feels a great tiredness from his previous efforts, he lights his last cigarette. In one of the corners, two pinball machines invite Max to forget his difficult digestion.
What a Guy, He Thought
by Alice Burdick

he has always been sheltered by an overhang, a loose anonymous board of culture, his room is organized and clean, all dust is banished to the backyard air when it is found, he's got velvet paintings that gleam from the corners of his room, and he's also got brightly brocaded picture books.

he has always been silently insecure about thinking and deciding, so he's got a pattern fixed up. It's like his mind is a vegetable sorting machine, it strikes back all new thoughts. Those thoughts he eventually deems to be acceptable he lets into his brain, sorts them into categories, and then he leaves them be until he decides it absolutely necessary to refer to them.

he has always been subject to, um, self-rejection. His body isn't pleased with what he consumes but also doesn't like it when he throws up. He's always tense, like his tight arms never feel like swinging, even when his hands do. He can never really please his body, he's not comfortable around himself.

It's growing difficult for him to sit quietly, but he figures he has no real alternative, the room slowly darkens, and the shadows become larger until the only light shining is the lamp of his table lamp.

Excerpts from Ars Magna
by Domingo Cisneros

And now you are here, far away from urban life. You want to know our way. And as soon as possible. Idol! First, like a serpent, you will throw away your old skin. Then you will fast for three days. In solitude. You think only about creation. And learn to tame daydreams. Take advantage of time. Sharpen your instinct. Throw out your sorrows. Quit your centre, to be free. Forget. Only in loneliness will you be ready. Now open yourself, go one, fly. Look and feel with courage. Relax in pleasure and peace. Come back with sincerity, strong works that can survive the madness of this civilization. But never forget, ever, that your soul has been sold to Ars Magna!

*****

You will say: drunk on ancestor's tears, I barb and disturb cathedrals, pagodas, synagogues, mosques, pyramids. I am darkness, the unknown, a scar's shadow. I carry with me a bundle of stones, bones, wood, feathers. Time stops. On a cloud, a tree. I will offer creations to the cardinal points. To the centre, up and down. I want a wolf heart. Right now, here, in this very moment that you are listening to me.

*****

You will be charged with creating prohibited images. The panther of censored words, of words never spoken. You will have the elements as allies. You will unbury prohibitive truths. You will bring our segregated divinities back from oblivion. You will learn to break chains, to love more, beyond yourself. To clean up your own shit. You will defend and fight for Mother Earth, with all the tools of the craft, forever. And you will love Ars Magna above else.

*****

Ars Magna, Total Art. Forgotten read. First Religion. Vital force. Return to the lost magic of the arts. Ars Magna, because all religions stole our visions. Because the bureaucrats of the sacred castrated, killed, annihilated our artists. Ars Magna, because life is at stake.

Pens Bring Down the Berlin Wall
An interview over beer with the expert
by Robert Dassanowsky-Harris

Pens can even scrape out cement between cinderblocks pointedly mentioned
the trauma of sword
yet a plowshares kind of purpose
an equation, I answer
it can also be flung into eyes
pierce, jab, Bleed its targets
a poetic justice, I laugh--
pens to prohibit the victim from reading
scribes are all wrong, he interjects
words can be warriors, but their midwife should also be violent
no words
just outwit, injure, then scrape your way
out of encampments
and all with the tool of poets?
yes, he triumphs, mightier than
and much easier to hide
I add that typewriters are forbidden in areas
no doubt due to the braze factor
the heavy blow to humanity that copy machines
would be, not of Samsa, but pushed
out of upper windows
he glares daggers and signs foam
if fired pens could carry words of resistance
he laments, just tears the paper
throwing coins on the tray instead, missing and hitting his neighbor.

Hodgepodge Aesthetics
by Kim Ackerman

Inspired Appetites
Encourages me
To nibble nearby.
So find me a corner
That caters with atmosphere,
But I'm still hungry.
So I imagined a cabbage roll
In my soup,
It added nuance.
...You are too hot in my mouth:
A thick broth, on a cold day.
I want to be a real woman
Plant stanzas of vegetables
Proofread weeds.
"There's no fuel like Old Fuel" So they say, everyone else does.
"A place to live, a place to grow,
They call this land Idaho.
Ads echo with decadence.
Filling a wall with poem, yellow in the middle
Soft cooked. Whore's jasmines and her
Critical appetite,
She eats the boundary.
Hinged slats, one before the other.
Those blinds seduce my
Need for symmetry
Beside me Thespian Litter.
Stage Props,
Disguised as conversation.
Bee Hive Women share dog stories-set peeves.
Famished, I down a kaiser,
Swallow a rhyme.
Perish, Then Publish
by George Swede

Putnam was the only one getting off the train. When the door parted, people surged into the already packed car and the normally passive poet had to fight his way out. In the passage leading to the escalator, Putnam backed against a wall to avoid the stream of commuters and slumped off his knapsack. He pulled out a pen and a thick notebook, sighed deeply, and wrote down the four lines that swirled in his head:

Arrested by images
like a fish swimming against the stream of life

Putnam put the knapsack back on, but kept the notebook and pen in his hands. On the empty up-escalator he looked again at the poem. On one level, it was a description of himself returning from night shift while everyone else was going to work. On another, it was about the poet alienated by his calling from the rest of society. Putnam sighed. The poem resonated. It felt good.

An old lady on the packed down-escalator smiled at him. This happened to Putnam all the time. She thought he was a cop. His security guard's uniform was the same colour and design as that of the city's finest.

Putnam went through the exit turnstile and recalled with fondness the bearded and lumber-jack-shirted poet who had been writer-in-residence at his alma mater. "What or who is this poem about?" the great man used to shout. "If you don't know, how do you expect the reader to know?" He was right. The four lines were not enough. The poem needed more detail. Otherwise the reader was left holding an iced beer glass, but no beer (a favourite image of Putnam's mentor, much anthologized for its episodic character). On the other side the busby street the sun had risen over the old upper-class neighbourhood where he and his mother lived.

Images swarmed in his head and he wanted to get them all down before they got away:

The Old Poet

In the brain of the old poet
the first colours of dawn
send scintillant punk neurons
into a frenzy of dance

The old poet shouts
Homeric lines
about the rosy-fingered dawn
and wakes the birds
who start to sing

Every continent
has an old poet like this

to start the day

Putnam sighed. This was great stuff. Sitting all night in front of security monitors had produced nothing like it. He would put the poem in a drawer for a couple of weeks just as his five-life-to-the-brim mentor had suggested. If it still impressed him then, he'd send it to Shaft, the best literary periodical in the country. When it came out in print, his mother would certainly take him to his favourite cafe, chocolate with lemon icing.

In the middle of such fantasies (Which help sustain young writers as they pursue their lonely craft), Putnam stepped from the curb directly into the path of a speeding Porsche. The driver, a twenty-year-old drug trafficker late on his morning run, though he had struck a cop and accelerated to 100 kilometres before causing a thirteen car pile-up a block and a half away.

Two good citizens, a window washer and a stockbroker, pulled the unrecognized Putnam from the street. The window washer listened to Putnam's heart, got up and shook his head gravely. The stockbroker hurried away. He didn't want to become a witness in a manslaughter case and lose valuable time away from the exchange. His hands were covered with the victim's blood. That was enough. The window washer wiped his hands with one of the wet cloths in his pant pocket and phoned the police. He found this almost as exciting as his new home in St. Elsewhere.

Two young policemen arrived thirty-five minutes later and pulled out their notebooks. They cursed because every available space was already taken up with reports about the pile-up. Then one of them noticed the spiral binder Putnam still clutched in his stiffening fingers. The cop pulled it free, turned to the first blank page and began to write the report on Putnam as the ambulance arrived.

Mrs. Philemona Rathbone, Putnam's mother, said the driver of the Porsche, as did anyone who barely suffered a scratch in what had become the biggest car accident in the country's history. The old lady did not fret for the money, but to vindicate her only son. She felt that everyone was placed on earth for a reason. Obviously, Putnam was meant to become one of the nation's greatest poets. Nothing else could explain his lack of contact with reality and why he chose to work as a security guard, a job that, in her opinion, required only minimum awareness. The Porsche driver had prevented her daughter Putnam from fulfilling her destiny.

Putnam's last poem was on the back of the policeman's report, which became exhibit number eighty-two in the trial of the unrepentant Porsche driver who blamed everything on the young security guard. During preparation for the case, Mrs. Rathbone's lawyer, wondering how he was going to put forth the great destiny argument, accidentally turned over exhibit number eighty-two and found "The Old Poet." Quickly sensing the dramatic possibilities, he used it as a major part of his courtroom presentation. As a result, "The Old Poet" was reprinted in a number of legal files for both sides and appeared in all the newspapers in the country as well as in the two national news magazines. In the nation's literary history, no poem had ever received such widespread attention.

Mrs. Rathbone hired a secretary to type all the poems she found in a binder in Putnam's study. Of course, she told the secretary to leave out the comments the writer-in-residence had written in the margins. She wisely felt that quotes such as "this image needs a blow-job" and "pass all over it and start again" would do little to enhance her son's literary reputation. The old lady then hired a printer to turn the collection of poems into a book she called The Old Poet. Copies were purchased by the legal firms representing both sides and interested spectators of the trial. Without the knowledge of the court, Mrs. Rathbone sent free copies to every member of the jury.

The nation-wide publication of Putnam Rathbone's poem and the subsequent printing of his collected works, greatly aided the arguments of Mrs. Rathbone's lawyer about her son's great literary potential. The result was a settlement more than twice the amount the drug trafficker's lawyers thought they would have to pay and larger than any of the other thirteen settlements.

*  
I had to guess at the events in Putnam's life immediately prior to the accident, but feel quite certain that the available facts are compatible with my reconstruction.

From Putnam Rathbone's collection of poems (all fragments with the exception of "The Old Poet"), I have selected one that provides a fitting ending to this story:

Excited images

mob the tip
of the poet's pen

Unable to resist, I have tried to complete the poem with these lines written as faithfully as possible in the style of the short-lived poet:

Driven by their genes
to leave their mark
on a blank page
TWO POEMS
By Gary Barwin

GLYPH

where a = b:

pnee poop
xbufs tpeoe
b gph

line 1:

done the sound of a poem - done - the a a tiny pond, a moon risen from the tips & lost by cloud, or pomme as if o its picture filled by arrow off the head of a frightened child.

tpeoe, kapoo -- the sound of arrow hitting apple, poop, poetry truncated, "try" broken off, q the p reflected as in a pool of water, as if p poetry tried suddenly to turn its head

line 2:

xbufs, tpeoe the spot where the confident father aimed, the spot where the young saint ended his alphabet, the teacher marking it x wrong, bufu -- buffs -- affictionados, they've taken a shine to it, then later, ex-buffs, their enthusiasm dimmed, gone cloudy, they've polished it off & now regret it, g x crossing it out, taken the apple back.

tpeoe, typed over it, typo vers (fr.), voo -- no sillibrance in their "voice", "voo" calling out as the arrow hits its mark. kapoo, no time for reflection now, too late to cut it short, diving first, then thinking of water.

line 3:

b, an existential imperative, the apple bisected, the command follows. "b", speckled with droplets of water, apple juice, the moon covered by clouds in the mist. gph the gasp as the apple falls, as the cold water closes, as the poem is thought of, the sudden breath like gph, a gospel remembered, the young saint writing, coming to something like a glyph.

RED DOGS OF DAWN

wind up the gramophone, play that scratched caruso platter, let us change into tennis clothes and hide under the couch for the red dogs, the red dogs of dawn have arrived, they are at the door bowling, their voices a bed full of ants, they've gathered on the welcome mat & are watching the door, their pupils swim like wounded fish across their sweaty eyes. & their tongues hang from their faces like broken arms.

my body is a plain white counterop, my fear is a dish washer gone mad. i open and close the cabinet doors of my nervousness, i open and close the cabinet doors of my -- my body is a formica tabletop, their sweaty tongues are drooling up my dress, my curtain rod, a candlestick, i undress & take a bath in the cloud of their damp breath. if only i were a missile, an airplane, a subterranean cove, because i forget which part of the bible the dogs wrote, though i've seen them gathered at night by the swimming pool, hurrying each verse before dawn.

Contributors to the Rampike Literary Supplement 82:

Guillermo Dörfer is a superb textual-graphic artist who has appeared frequently in Rampike magazine. He lives in San Diego, where he's a writer and artist.

Richard Gremer lives in New Jersey where he thinks about birds and things inside his head.

Gill Auffray may well be stealing siles on fright night in England when he isn't eating a siles.

Franko Aguirre is conducting performance experiments in Lisbon, Portugal.

Alice Burdick has recently moved to the west coast of British Columbia where she continues to write.

Domingo Canorea makes his first entry in Rampike with this essay. Welcome Domingo!

Robert Rossenbock-Harrison is a young experimentalist working in San Francisco, California.

Kim Ackerman began writing in England, and also has material in the upcoming issue of Rampike magazine.

Piero Aletti Arica has combined performance poetry on a C.D. which is now available in all.

George Swain lives and works and teaches and writes and drinks about Laos in Toronto, Canada.

William Mark Sutherland is a multi-talented individual from Toronto working in music, visuals and text.

Helen Latrappa, Toronto graphic artist/writer, was introduced to Rampike by her former poet & impresario — David McPadden!
are you borderline enough to read?
When Does Post-

Modernism Begin?


Slobodkine, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch, 1962, beginning of the Soviet thw.

Cuban Missile Crisis, October-November 1962: nuclear brinkmanship. The Cold War peeks.

"Benoit Open University" initiates television-transmitted courses, 1962-63, the medium that brought "the news from nowhere" now brings "knowledge from nowhere."

Andrew Sontag, "Notes on the Author's Theory in 1962," Film Culture Winner (1962). Sontag's theory—that the director is the "author" of a film—enters the English language press: the personalization of the medium.


Betsy Friedman, The Feminine Mystique, 1963, the woman's movement begins anew.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s nonviolent Birmingham campaign, 1963, used by force, armed race, gives venting resistance and world opinion, in the industrialization of segregation.


Cal Tech's Masatoshi Nomachi discovers plasma, "quasi-fluid, real gas source," clearer, faster, brighter than anything known, before: remnants of the ancient universe.

Video sculpture pioneered, 1963, in the United States by Nam June Paik and such.

Peasons into style begins, 1963 (according to Littel Schill), 1964 (according to Charles Schill). The visual keynotes of Peasons being that he had no life style or, if he did, it was very original and very strange and very attractive to people... and Dukaschek. Each time an American somewhere in Buffalo "destroys" Peasons, every critic is on the right track, every critic is wrong, every critic is right, every critic is wrong.

"Amboy is dead," Joes Albees, 1963, written to Harold Rosenbarg,

"Expressionism is dead," Leo Steinberg, 1963.

French Ministry of Culture closes and raids Leecons Care, 1963. The end of the beginning, a new age of anthropological responsibility.

Direct "hot line" established between the White House and the Kremlin, 1963, proving that the Cold War has peaked with the Cuban Missile Crisis.

March on Washington, August 28, 1963, the biggest demonstration in Washington history: a new generation demonstrates that their civil rights must now be colorblind in America.

Assassination of John F. Kennedy, November 22, 1963. "Wounded of this generation..."

Super Scomm. The Great Civil War Commissary, Scientific American, January 1964, the "split brain" with its two conscious worlds signals the end of theelmsrooms and the reevaluation of non-linear thinking.
62
"The top five singles and two albums were all by the Beatles. April, 1964, the media of culture by numbers is reached according to Sidney Zion."—Richard Schaefer, Intimate Screen, The Culture of Celebrity, 1960-1983.

61

60
Leslie Fiedler, "The Death of Avant-Garde Literature," New York Herald Tribune Magazine, May 17, 1964. "But the literature major and his wife, along with the second generation literature majors who are their children, constitute a new middle-brow audience, whose appearance testifies to the technical exhaustion of the avant-garde."

59

58
Jack Dyer brings Paul Butterfield out to rock him on electric guitar at the Newport Folk Festival, 1964, to boot,hoarse, tears in Pete Seeger's eye, signifying a generational change.

57
"Widespread purchase of color receivers begins in the United States in 1964." The second generation of commercial television begins.

56

55

54
The scanner of the color of the rug of modernism is difficult to determine. Cr 1964 and the construction of a modernism called Secur-Parch. whose architect, Charles Moore, created flat roofs and plate-glass windows and instead based his design on formal northern California homes—Wanda Sykes, "Working, 1962."

53
"The scanner of the collapse of the rug of modernism is difficult to determine... Cr 1964 and the construction of a modernism called Secur-Parch, whose architect, Charles Moore, created flat roofs and plate-glass windows and instead based his design on formal northern California homes—Wanda Sykes, "Working, 1962."

52

51
Estimated date at which California passes New York as the most populous state, circa 1964 (confirmed by 1970 census, doubles New York state by 1993 census. The American imagination increasingly defined by Los Angeles rather than New York.

50

49
Chinese nuclear bomb test, October 16, 1964, nuclear proliferation to the Third World takes First and Second Worlds by surprise.

48
Stennis Senate, "Notes on Camp," Fortune Review, Feb. 1964, a lettered, non-linear, imaginative, and intentionally incomplete article. This article is William Kranes' argument for the birth of Po-Mo: "The whole point of camp, Miss Stangely wrote, is to decenter the serious, thereby defining the special temperament of postmodern culture.

47
Flight to stop Disney's Magic Kingdom six months with its moated road through Sequoia National Park begins to realize the Sierra Club and inaugurate ecological activism, 1964.

46

45
March 10, 1965, first space walk: Alexei Leonov of the Voskhod 2, substantial to earth first steps beyond near earth.

44
Tom Wolfe, The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flaked Sanguinean Baby, 1965, the New Journalism begins the work as hip instigator of the author.

43
Ralph Nader, Unsafe at Any Speed: The Designed-In Dangers of the American Automobile, 1965, testing on General Motors bare-handed, the consumer movement begins.

42
Sudden death of David Smith, the last great pure sculptor, Modernist sculptor, 1965, when he rolled his steel truck off a curve near Washington, Vermont. After Smith, large-scale metal sculpture would increasingly be fabricated by technicians for the artists.

41
University of British Columbia "Median in the Message" multi-media performances, 1965, illustrates McLuhan's dictum and leads to a generation of expectations elsewhere (e.g., Time magazine's report of the event and in Vancouver art: Intermedia Theatre, Theatrical Cenotaphs, Co-op Radio).

40
Leslie Fiedler, The New Manhood," Partisan Review, 1965, "the post-humanist, post-modernism, post-white, post-barbaric world is a post-jewish world by the same token..."

39
Raising middle class expectations, circa 1965, the Baby Boom generation begins to come of age and demand spiritual satisfaction, physical satisfaction, and artistic expression instead of mere "consumer models" or "his Richard Schaefer's phrase.

38
"The ideal of a broad education for students wants down the walls with the explosion of academic activity and discipline in the 1960s..."—David Bunk, writing in the Globe and Mail, November 14, 1962.

37
Breakdown of the previous distinctions between painting and sculpture, e.g., in Roentgen, No. 2, Landscape with Campanile and Trees, 1965, made of vacuum-formed butyrate plastic painted with acrylic but looking like a landscape seen through a window and hanging on a wall: it could be either.

36
Replica of Marcel Duchamp's Large Glass (1917-23) by Richard Hamilton, built and exhibited at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1965 ( Tate Gallery keeps it to do on it the floor and shatter it to complete the effect of the original, dropped accidentally in 1916). The conscious simulation of modernist high art begins.

35
The winner of New York, circa 1965, the rivalry of intellectuals, writers and artists to the composers of America: the cost of living in Manhattan leads to less experimentation and the showcasing instead of work developed elsewhere: the decentralizing politics of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and Humanities (NEH)—Leonard Wolff, New York, Culture Capital of the World, 1949-1982 (1983). 34.

34 "In 1960 the famous "cosmic microwave background radiation" was discovered by Anna Wintner and Robert W. Wilson of Bell Labs and exploited by Robert Redford's group at Princeton. Predicted by the Big Bang theory, this striking evidence for an expanding universe, "cooling, slowing, decelerating" universes.

33
James Baldwin gives up on America, leaves, 1965, to return from France in 1977 after which he commentates on the Arab-Oil Crisis of 1973-4: "It is the end of the western world. But the end of the western world is not the end of the world."

32
Joseph Beuys performs his first "Aktions", How to Explode Pictures to a Dead Horse at Galerie Schmid, Düsseldorf, November 26, 1965. With his first summertime performance, Beuys initiates the uncanniness of art and its relationship with a resuscitated nature.
The story is...

always

partial...
KILLING OUT OF EARSHOT OF DEATH: HUNTING ON VIDEO

My local video store has a new section. With 140 videos, it is twice the size of the city at "Foralyn" film section. It contains lyrical features such as Autumn Ablaze: Bowhunting Big Bucks Under a November Sky, hunting lodge ads such as How to Hunt and Hunting Doll Sheep and Caribou in the N.W.T., and low-budget recline offerings like They're Going Down. Production values differ from video to video. Some use as many as four carefully directed camera-angles per "kill," while others appear to have been filmed by a buddy looking over the hunter's shoulder. Yet each of these videos records, as one jacket blurb proclaims, "Explicit Live Action" kills.
defending the right to hunt, joins its cause to the Gull War: "Don Fitzgerald has dedicated this video to the American soldiers in the middle-east as they fight for our rights." In the same video Fitzgerald speaks at a meeting of hunters. "After the lord," he says, "the hunting is my first love, and I believe that by giving the kill moment as it was the sun or focal point of being.

Does the modern hunting discount the animal's sentience? Does he believe he's just converting mobile matter into an inanimate object? He claims that a wounded, beached whale is not. "We're at least subject to acknowledge the sentience of the animals. In actual fact, even on these videos, when a porpoise shot to take down an animal, the hunter retrieves for the night and recovers his kill the next morning. The videos say it is standard practice to wait a few hours before killing a beached whale. One video records the shooting of a bear, then follows the hunter to camp where he cheerfully drinks coffee out of carcass of the bear's killing. I am reminded of a Raymond Carver story in which a hunter places a gun-shot in a bear ass, telling to track the animal, goes into town to get a haircut.

This "hunting" of an actually sentient animal is also, simultaneously, the "marking" of a trophy. The moment of kill is a moment of conversion from reality to image. The trophy is a made-up image of the animal. The hunting video is a second-order trophic. As it were, marking "real" images to replace on already stylized event. Yet isn't this hunting real within the scope it defines for itself? So that it applies also to the omnivourity of the real. At the instant of kill, the bear carcass becomes immediately a simulacrum of the live moose. The hunter's libido and his self-esteem and his prestige are all joined in a moment of conversion from live-moose to dead-measurable-simulation. The modern hunter's fantasy is of production and annihilation in the same act. The produced simulacrum is preferable because it belongs to the hunter, whereas the live animal does not. They credit themselves with the size and form of the animal's body. It is as though he personally had caused his bear to grow to 3,000 lbs and to develop a head nearly a foot wide. It is as though he bore him, not just killed him. Indeed he has made him, a trophy. Also, his trophy only confirms himself temporarily, because he needs to go out and make himself real again. He secretly suspects he really hasn't created anything. Ex nihil nihil fit. Out of nothing comes nothing. Simply, fixing the kill in time, the video enables the hunter to believe he has made the event itself. The use of video produces the illusion that he can be other agency, unconstrained by either his historical context or the exigencies of nature. Video enables him to create a rent not only from an animal, but from an event.

In making his trophy, the modern hunter also produces his prestige. If the animal is large enough it will qualify (read quantity) for the Boone and Crockett or Pope and Young record books. Like the other elements of hunting success, this production of prestige is accomplishable by simply doing the right things the wrong way with the right equipment. There are clearly defined techniques for acquiring recognizability. In their emphasis on the "right tool for the job," these video hunters act under the illusion that technical unambiguousness produces freedom. We All Terrain Vehicle and state of the art software and hardware (much of it military origin, e.g. camouflage) permit the hunter to take technologi-
answer to nature, but because all those tools serve him. He doesn't recognise in the gun and tools and camou in ham technology having its own purpo
dose density, its own individuality. He takes for grant
ed in his equipment the intensiveness of applied cognition which its material form objectifies. He lets himself forget he relies on objects which others have made for this purpose. The modern hunter now knows his weapon only in the external game of exe
cution, the skillful individualism it makes possible, not in its unmediated, its indispensable to the orga
nized efforts of others. He knows his technology only in the disproportionate power it focuses in his trigger finger.

While utterly dependent on intensive technology, the modern hunter imagines himself a lone, instinctual pred
ator. He doesn't see that his tools and weapons and camous do not only extrapolate, but also mediate his amas and his will.

The visioning is just the next technological step in this obscuring of the real context of the modern hunt. This high fidelity trophy only re-presents what was already present in the hunt itself, the decal of the actual industrial context on which it depends. In this regard these videos are typical of most contemporary media, which tend to render their subject matter as though with immediacy, obscuring their own mediating role in the view. Such media couplette, and maybe produce, the classic North American appetite for immediacy. These same popular media, by severing events from real contexts, and in time placing their view of world of vivid action and vivid simplicity of one another removes.

In exposing the hunt to the video camera, the hunter also further removes himself from the actual event. His desire for multiple camera angles and slow motion shots leaves the modern hunter "on the cut" with a nature that is more abstract. Nature is reduced to what is transparent to the camera eye. These videos recall Jean Baudrillard's description of the "era of hyperreality" in The Ecology of Communication. In these videos image represen
ates event. The event of the hunt is replaced by the myriad recorded angles and speeds. Extent values which might replace the internal context of the event, the killing and the death. The effect is complementary to the high-resolution photo's, high-resolution pilot's, photo's, hi-res images of mechanical objects, which come to us out of the Gulf War's version of produc
tion. With any amount of visual image over time, these videos cross the line Baudrillard would mark between spectacle and abstraction.

Obesity begins when there is no more spec

tacle... when every thing becomes immedi
ately transparent, visible, exposed in the raw and inexorable light of information and com

The modern hunt is obscene before a camera even enter the picture. The video is pornographic because it records the prior fact of this obscene event. And it is pornographic because in producing outsider explicit trophy, it converts death from gross indignity to "raw" information.

Which is to say death is missing here. The video production of the hunt both immures us in the hyperreality immediacy of the hunter's kill, and puts us at one further remove from the animal's death. With his video camera the hunter produces a re

viewable trophy of his Real Experience. His video record further confirms his hunt as an action that produces freedom from a world of impersonal extraordinariness. He ignores the fact that he himself determines nature as explicit, material surface, in order to then free himself from it.

We should be worried, living in an info-mills which makes bite-size, two-dimensional units of all events, even death. On the news we watch an inhabited building, videoed by the missile that destroys it. The image may fade to grey, but death withdraws from such a scene, in which it is no longer even implicit. The unconscious death of death is the trophy of the video hunter. The fact of death is stark, the implicit truth of the "explicit immediate" media in which we are, with killing monstrosity, immersed. So much killing, so little death.

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Furthe Reading and Viewing


The Beast, Beak and Arrow (Engle's View Productions, 1990.

Big Timber Beafe (Chambrelant et al. : Tom Morin's Control Fries, 1986.

Bowhunting Monarchs of the World (Dave Coleman Productions).


Fishing (Temusek, 1990).

Hamra of Print (Spokane WA: Son West Films).


They're Fine Down (Temusek: Dan Fitzgerald Hunting Videos, 1981).

Edward Palmer Thompson 1924-1993

Cultural Studies, which has become something of a buzz-word for those who see themselves as dissident academics in North America and the Antipodes, did not, of course, spring ready-made out of Lawrence Grossberg's imagination of what the British were up to in the 1960s and 1970s, but was a product of a very real strug

ning involving all the political definitions that were present then and have become more pronounced now. Those of us who marched to Aldermaston and back in the late 1950s and early 1960s, who helped to establish the New Left Club (at the Parissian Coffee House at 7 Carlisle Street in Soho, London), who discovered jazz with Eric Holmberg, who taught evening classes for the Workers' Education Association, who fought with the Fabian Socialist League, who defended (equally) Tom Mboyn, Lenny Bruce, Wole Soyinka, C.L.R. James, Vic Allen are surprised to discover that what we were doing was inventing Cultural Studies.

The death of Edward Thompson pulls us up short. Cultural Studies has become the gospel of this and that. In Thompson's case this involved the petit he distanced himself from fare too close to war and Richard Johnson in a History Workshop conference in an old church in Oxford in the late 1970s, the absurd pomposity recorded by those who only knew him from the outside. And, of course, the labeling, in the Oxford meeting he said, "I reject without reservation the identification of the Marxist tradition of historiography of which I have been taken as our representative of culturalism. This term is Richard Johnson's invention." But, of course, Thompson was all and none of that. It is impossible to think of any of those disputes without recognizing that they were not academic in the sense that much cultural theory is couched, but directly political. On the other hand there was nothing that was technically 'academic' which was not equally political. Ultimately, even the very personal was political. From the death of his brother by a firing squad in Bulgaria in World War II (which he recounted in his first book) to his last book on Blake (Thompson becomes Blake), the literary, the historical, the politi
cal, the personal are one.

His legacy was to compel us to engage with human others, to think ourselves into their situation, whether they were the late eighteenth-century working class making themselves, or those, in the twenty century, living under the terror of nuclear war, who chose to resist the ultimate death machine. If Thompson was the ultimate Luddite, it was because he was convinced that the mechanism of everyday life was not conducive to our social health.

The central feature of Edward's life and work was that it was not academic in the narrow sense of the term. He was not part of confounding academia which saw itself as setting rules, in order to create an academic 'culture' that was sealed off from the everyday, from the masses. Academic world was just as culpable in compromising the problems that face us as were the multidisciplinary corporations, or the politicians who constantly speak of our vulnerabilities. The real test of our scholarship was how it measured up against the harsh realities of everyday life. His vision was directed against those (politicians, academics, even Marxists) who behaved as if their rules, their tribal customs, were the only ones that mattered.

But Thompson will be remembered primarily for the marvellous books on social and cultural history (William Morris, The Making of the English Working Class, Whigs and Hunters, Blake), his many pieces of journalism (in particular, perhaps, those col

lected under the title Writing By Cambridge), his fierce intervention in the theoretical concerns of the New Left (The Poverty of Theory), and his systemic campaign against nuclear weapons from the late 1950s to his death. Ultimately, however, his major contribution to a complete rethinking of how history is written, involving the realignment of people's history, and the involvement of non-academics in the research and writing of that history. More than any other thinker in the British New Left, Thompson, to use Gramsci's phrase, helped to create Organised Intellectuals. Anyone concerned with Cultural Studies today who forgets his legacy does so at his or her peril.

Joan Davies

September, 1993
CLINT

EASTWOOD

A CULTURAL PRODUCTION

By Paul Smith


When the new Clint vehicle, *In the Line of Fire*, appeared this past summer, John Hartman's capsule blurb in Toronto's *NOW* magazine said that the movie "allows Eastwood to draw the line of his own snappy persona." Just what is it about Eastwood's films, or his clearly signified, that everyone thinks he's suddenly "deconstructing" himself, or, rather, isn't that precisely what he does in almost every film last year's *Unforgiven*, his s/m flick *Fistfight*, the sensitive-guy-goes-to-war *Heartbreak Ridge*. All the way back to *High Chaparral* (on his leg) his cap off and his leg? *The Beguiled*. I almost wrote: The Beguiling there for a minute and Tomcat's pre-revolution romantic and comic book store should indicate my level of critical taste, so before I turn to Paul Smith's new book (which explains precisely why the above paragraph is the case), I should just mention

that the best guide to Clint's newest flick (which of course is not covered in Smith's book) is the *Clint's Closest Movements*. Clint fans already know that a far cry from the role of No Name in the Leone trilogy. *In the Line of Fire* is the repeated long takes of Eastwood's character moving body and the close-ups of the formality of his behavioural rituals and of the almost total impassivity of his squinting face composed of the bulk of the film's shots, and their overall effect is to offer the Eastwood body as an object of contemplation and objectification in a way that Leone does only sporadically. In other words, this is a highly formalized representation of Eastwood's body, which is itself a gesture of restitution, literally putting the white man demaged back into the center of the screen.... Eastwood attempts to exploit the power of the image that Leone has bequeathed him, melding it back into the traditional devices of which in Hollywood cinema has been constituted. (36-39)

Smith is equally uncanny in his assessment of Eastwood's play with mas- culinity. He draws as he does an Annie Leibovitz photo of Eastwood all tied up and seeming to enjoy it (if always knew Smith was a better critic: He’s prettier than a woman know.). So, in most Eastwood westerns or cop movies the hero is first offered as spectacle, whom we enjoy seeing move and he eroticized; this is then followed by the destruction of itself body. That is, the heroic man is always physically beaten, injured, and brought to breaking point followed by the obvious thing that the hero is committed to emerge triumphant within the movie's narrative line. This third stage obviously provides the security and comfort of closure and is a crucial element in the production of spectato- rial pleasure, but Paul Willemen proposes that both of the Eastern stages of representation are also in their way pleasurable for the spectator. The first "pseudosex" that of the voyeuristic adora- tion of the hero's body and presence is followed ecstatically and graphi- cally by the unprepared pleasure of seeing the male mutilated and restored through violent brutality. (136)

But while Eastwood's martial or police movies are conservative in their harnessing of elev- en identities, the plausibility of patriarchal power, Smith argues that there is always a hysterical residue or underside to the filmic text. Thus the way in which Eastwood's characters will flirt with identification with women or gays or lesbians, or male impotence, are an unresolved or unacknowledged representation of the body of the male as it exceeds the narrative processes. So it's not the tired old dichotomy of whether Clint meant it or not that is apparently deconstructing himself at every turn: even as the narrative tries out its strategies of containment, it's still plausible. Smith talks about his own tillilation when he sees Clint in handcuffs, he too, threatens to exceed certain critical-narrative processes. Smith is equally critical of Eastwood's recent status as 'autumn'; he shows, for example, how authorship is con- strained by a complicit media and the extent to which Hollywood depends on the myth of "heroic" independent filmmakers. Eastwood's Malpass production company thus fashion itself as "against" the major studios, for instance. Discussing the close of *White Hunter, Black Heart*, Smith writes: "The author/actor makes his movie. He matters the word 'Action' and announces the closure of all the hysterical dramas, all the obsessions, all the self-doubting stories of the patriarch turning in upon himself, and all the narrative texts that he has therefore gone through, and he becomes a director." (262)

Smith's book on the Eastwood phenomenon is as impressive as his practical theorizing at the level of genre, that is, he displays both a love for bizarre or eccentric turns of phrase and a light hand for innovative and novel leitmotivs. Thus, on the one hand, words like "trivial," "sub- vening," "inhuman," "acritical," and "ludicrous" are likely to send you reeling for the OED. On the other hand, "intendent" (a legalistic term Smith uses to mean the intent of a text — as opposed to that of the author), and "tut- rinary media" (a pun on tributaries and tributary rivers: the various magazines, TV shows, and newspaper journalists who constitute Hollywood as an edifice of all-vulgarished) are also useful terms that will most likely spread beyond the province of their author. 

Everyone's talking about masculinity now: what's important about Smith is that he concentrates on a large body of work, organized around one "character," Clint Eastwood. So there's ample opportunity to test arguments, take account of current work, and provide their share of arti- culation. Paul Smith's work here is impressive; no one can write on Eastwood now without referring to it, but the book will also influence the way we think about masculinity in film, the western, and the cinematic apparatus in general.

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Revising Modernism
By Shane Nakonechny


From improessionism to abstraction via the upwardly linear route of neo-impressionism, fauvism and cubism, the positively progressive story of main-stream modernism nicely and unproblematically unfolds. Delimitied by the infamous American art critic, Clement Greenberg, in the 1960s and exemplified by the work of Manet, Picasso and Fellock, this particular trajectory of modernism has long been the ideology of artists, art historians, critics and theorists, as well as the rite of passage for many students of art history, undergraduate and graduate alike.

Greenberg's formulation of modernism's self-critical capacity extolled the peeling away of reality, illusionist art (an "art to conceal art") and the intentional simulation, almost the exactantation of an "art to call attention to art." In pursuit of 'puri- ty' by means of an ever-increasing emphasis on flatness, two-dimensionality and the properties of pigment, modernist art revealed and exhibited the conditions of vision itself, as these were understood abstractly. As Greenberg wrote, modernist painting 'no longer permits[s] sculptural illusion, or trompe l'oeil, but it does and must permit optical illusion.

Paintings such as Pollock's One (Number 31, 1950) (1950) embraced wholeheartedly the modernist aesthetic championed by Greenberg because eye and object connect instantly. In fact, so rapid was the connection that neither eye nor object seemed attached to a carnal body. It is the modernist aesthetic with no 'before' or 'after' but a retied 'now' that epitomized the modernist ambition. In its hermetically sealed environment, it exhibited completeness, silence and atemporality.

In The Optical Uncoupling (revisiting with Benjamin's "A Small History of Photography" (1910) and later, Jackson's The Political Uncoupling: Narratives as a Socially Symbolic Art: 1980), Ronald E. Krauss argues for an alternative history to the above Greenbergian narrative based on vision itself. Not rejecting what she calls the 'official story,' Krauss rigor- ously re-works the modernist narrative through Freudian and Lacanian insight. Akin to the slings of the tongue, the day- drum, or the fantasy that threatens the eye's stability, Krauss' counter-history speaks of those 'other' moments in the visual arts that challenge the hegemony of this modernist logic.

The Optical Uncoupling as a template composed of a rich tapestry of diverse narratives. Ranging from the theoretical to the art historical, and from the anecdotal to the ficitive (such as her enwreploring on Roger Fry and John Ruskin), these various narratives punctuate the text at select moments. With a dazzling array of some well-worked and creatively employed concepts such as informe, mimetic, the uncanny and banality from theorists such as Bataille, Calleo, Deleuze and Lyotard, Krauss analyses the 'other' worlds of modernist artists such as Ernst's collages, Duchamp's ready-mades, Max Ray's photos-graphs and Giacometti's sculptures. These works, borrowing from popular culture objects to devise the images of a rising balloon or a fish swimming resemble the body parts of a breasts (Graze), for example, while their threatins and paririg quality mimics the rhythm of substitution as informe by Lacanian theory. Cools out act as endless and incessant actions from one-part object to another: from eye, to breast, to urinary tract, to sexual penetration. Ernst's 1930 collage novel, A Little Girl Dreams of Taking the Veil, shows the pulse or beat connecting the interior image of the girl to the exterior form of the zootrope. Creating a gestalt only to deconstruct it, its rhythm is jerky. The to and fro swing of Giacometti's Surreal Bal (1930-1) shows anything but modernists' claim to stillness or individuality.

For the artists of the optical unconscious, the beat is deep inside vision. Inertial and transgressive of the constitutive intervals of discoursive and dis- tances of representations and hence, akin to the primary process of the unconscious, it is figurative but in a unique sense of the word. The calligraphy, according to Lacando's Fictions, Figure, this third order of the figurative, known as "bad form," is the heterodie, unimaginable space of the unconscious. Recognizing no difference, it has no stability, identity or order. The concept of Greenbergianism (and the Symbolic Order) relies upon. Analogous to Freud's case, "A Child is Born" (1919), in which one sentence/ some contains several contradictory and overlapping sentences/ scenes, the pulse may also have many places in one place. According to Ernst's art, it does not form a system or a block. But it is also erotically stimulating and repetitive, which accounts for the uncanny. Concrete analysis of the work of Ernst or in Picasso's studies of Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe après Manet (1962).

Known only through the figuration in fantasy, to be pulled out of the figure and into real time, it appears in the form of a rhythm or pulse. Thus, this oscillating presence and absence of pleasure shows the moments in which desire is caught in the formal matrix of dreams and sympathies. Aim to them with the words: "In the Freudian slip, it shows the fragility of the gestalt as the death drive tries to break through."

In her last chapter, Krauss switches from the analysis of early 20th-century European artists to such American artists as Jackson Pollock. In his analysis of the visual, who in one way or another "decode" his drip paintings. Focusing on a multiplicity of often fragmented, often insufficiently articulated theories (sublimation, mimicry, basseos, to name a few), that at times seems confuse rather than cor- roborate the main thesis of the book, Krauss nonetheless provides some illuminating and rather creative interpretations. For instance, she briefly theorizes Pollock's move from the floor (where he executed his works) to the wall (where they were exhibited) through Freud's notion of sublimation, paralleling the human evolution from sexuality to verticity in which vision becomes the privileged sense. Pollock's obsession with surpassing Picasso's genius is theor- ized through triangular desire and mimetic rivalry. Through the notion of abolition, that is, through the model of the detective story in which the murderer always unconsciously leaves a clue behind for the detective to create another narrative from Krauss's point of view. Rather than focusing on "Jack the Dripper" and his electrical, a particular aspect of his work from which to create their own art.

Attracted to Pollock's fame and the form of his work, Warhol executed Polo Painting (1961) on the floor, which takes the notion of liquid gesture literally one step further. Morris Louis's work also shows Sarahau (1959) extends the operations of gravity by allowing the stain of colour to blood down the canvas. Concrete analysis of the work of Ernst or in Picasso's studies of Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe après Manet (1962). Krauss's last chapter returns to canonical artists and their celebrated works.

Where is then chapter five at odds with the earlier chapters? Possibly because many of the earlier chapters are rework- ings of such previous essays as "Cards," "The More Plan" and "Le Vésicle Délirant," which for the most part are reproduced in The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths (1968). Krauss, described as "the Ian/Pulse to See," is reproduced almost verbatim in Vision and Visuality (1988). Containing few surprises, the
The Future of Illusion

BY Julie Adam


Idea permeates everything: the more we protest this ideological taint, the more it insistings on neutrality, universality and other forms of political (ideological) blunders—the more ideology controls us, shapes us, in us. To All Appearances attempts to evade the shadow of ideology while trying to capture it, for "all performance occurs in an ideological blur," says Herbert Blau.

Blau, known for his work with the experimental KRAKEN group and his seminal books on theatre (The Impossible Theatre; Take Up the Bodies; The Eye of Peri; The Audience), uses "ideology" to mean both consciously and unconsciously biased structure of belief, hidden or open, partisan objectives, and "performance to cover theatrical practices from the precession to the street, and the stages of politics. Not only do ideologies perform on the boards of history, but performance, itself an ideological act, "involves questions of property ownership, hierarchy, authority, force, and what may be beyond our reach according to Nontske: the will to power." While tracing the ideology of performance and the performance of ideology in the twentieth century, Blau distances himself from both Marxism and feminism (considering the latter "one of the more interesting discourses of recent years to those with any investment in infantile systems and conventions, habits and rules", but admits to having "been stimulated by...Marxists' revisionist discourse" and the critical insights of some feminist theorists and academic Marxists.

Blau sees ideology as a series of disunities and believes first, rather than "ideological analysis," he is engaging in "a kind of speculative double take on aspects of performance, with attention to the particular circumstances or variable conditions that put them into question." Specifically, what interests him is the instance of emergence or transformative moment at which any practice, in the theatre or elsewhere, becomes like ideology itself, something other than what it appeared to be, like the other itself before it identified itself: that is before it could be distinguished for better or worse from whatever it is it was not. Here that theatre intersects with ideology at the most disturbing level of demystifying thought, for when we think twice about the question of priority, whatever it was appears to be theatre.

This disjointed, untrained investigation of theatrical practice ranges widely and wildly over territory from Shakespearean to Kathakali, Meyerhold to Robert Wilson, Marx to Marxism, Nietzsche to Baudrillard, Aristotle to Brecht, rushing breathlessly over Tatsumi Hijikata and Pina Bausch, Bunraku and Anime, Sprinkler, the ANC and E.T.... It is postmodernism that is guaranteed to enchant some, infuriate others and put to sleep a few more.

In exploring the constantly changing ideology of illusion in a deconstructed postmodern world, Blau must consider as well as everything else a skeptical approach to both ideology and performance (as concepts and practices) entails. As he says in the foreword: "In the book a partial subject is ideology. It is a book without a theme. It has, rather, a sense of things, derived (I think) from years of working in the theatre, a form which can only be repeated by another is both nurtured and disturbed by, or subject to, the contingencies of appearance.

Certainly it is a book with a rich sense of many things, to use Blau's own modest term, but it is questionable whether it is successful in its double address, both to people in the theatre, possibly unaware of theatre, possibly hostile to it, and to those interested in theory but having little knowledge of theatre. The latter will not have it easy keeping up with Blau's casual, aporetic forays into the theatrical world, where he is no doubt comfortably at home, in spite of some intentionally recondite indications to the contrary: conversely, I doubt that too many theatre practitioners, with the exception of theoreticians/academics like Blau himself, will be at ease with Blau's view of staging the stage through (unfocused/redirected, here fogged-up, there smudged); once removed from the -theatrical lens of his theatrical binoculars.

However, To All Appearances raises a number of important questions, for both theatrical practice and cultural theory. Is there anything in all appearance and all illusion expression; character; mask; and costume; imaginary time and space); and at the same time all is concrete material and organized reality (actor/body; real time and space), what does performance reveal? What does it conceal? And what is its relationship to reality? How do we perform reality? Is it reality the performance or the performed? If both, where is illusion? And what is the illusory and elusive nature of ideology? The perceptual process itself, Blau believes, is an appearance based on ideology, an appearance that determines our reality, itself an illusion. Appropriately, Blau explores various dramatic representations of theatrical processes (reality and a number of counter movements, including expressions, epic theatre, egot trip, happenings, performance art, imaginative theatre), and several prominent European theories and techniques of acting (Aristotle, Stanislavski's, Meyerhold's, Brecht's, Grotowski's). He also discusses, as well as specific (ideological) issues of performance, for instance, in the action 'The Spanning Body,' 'Historical concerns with the body and the body politic,' and in 'Distressed Emotion,' theatre's changing relationship to the emotional life of texts, characters, actors, audiences. His analyses are both diachronic and synchronic, often in one phrase.

To All Appearances has special significance for those practitioners of theatre who think of themselves as politicized, for it both describes and embodies (through its own ironic disconnecting, double-threading) the complexity of ideology and its shadowing in performance. Blau traces the legacy of early twentieth-century ideology in the (theater of Stanislavski's and Meyerhold) through Brecht and leftist American theatrical practice in the thirties to happenings in the sixties and postmodernism in general, in performance in the eighties, with shifts in focus from class to gender to race to body to language and back again, always with an eye to the problematic of illusion.

Unlike many commentators, not to mention practitioners, Blau brings his erudite historical perspective and shrewd skepticism to postmodern performance. He is well acquainted with the emperor and has seen his new clothes. Earlier powers, it seems, were more potent.

...the verbal content and incipient dramaticity of much performance piece seem to me, with whatever avant garde, postmodern, or political overtones, in comparison to various segments of Pinter's drama, that, like Beckett's, are virtual models of solo performance or other aspects of performance art.

This is no news to those of us who long for something new but know that so many 'innovations' of themselves, illusory. Neurves, like everything else, of course, is ideologically construed. And what avant garde is it anyway?

There is much to enjoy in Blaue's art times theoretically, at least, others casual and adumbras in ideology and performance, and that, if one can rise above (wade through) the logorhea, the frequent self-conscious and self-satisfied cleverness, the forty-something line sentence that I offer Molly Bloom's...the unwavering of ideas and styles. In Places To All Appearances reads like an uncollected journal, in others like a lurid tale. But some of Blau's statements on modern and postmodern theatre are memorable in their crystalline simplicity, as for instance the following observation:

So far as the theatre is concerned, it has always seemed to me as if Beckett's practice occurred with a certain virtuosity, in the space (empty), the precipitous silences, of the drama of Chekov.

The sentence forces one back into/onto the early stages of modern drama to consider 'realism,' that most complex of ideological constructs. In the silences of a world on the edge of disaster we discern the murmurs of a fragmentary reality. Perhaps now when students ask what the breaking string in The Cherry Orchard signifies—yes, they are still asking and we are still answering—we can say 'the hopelessness of Vladimir and Estragon.'

To All Appearances reminds us that everything is ideology; everything is illusion; illusion is ideology; ideology is illusion. Ideology is reality; reality is illusion; illusion is reality; reality is ideology. Ideology is illusion. We perform ourselves on the shifting sands of ideology...to all appearances.
The B/L List

If you like The Village Voice (and I do) you'll love Elton Witts (and I do). Bravely intellectual yet incisive and rigorous, Witts presents a libertarian look at obscurity and excess (in the oppressive sense of that word), unromantically, sensually and seductively pornographic. Because No More Nice Girls is a collection of previously published essays, it is occasionally repetitive, reconstructing the same theoretical ground to make different practical points. Witts' radical prose, though, is an exhilarating comparison to what passes for academic adventurousness (brackets and "slashers") that you'll want to read the book in its entirety. Witts might be the Emma Goldman of the '90s. S.F.

This book provides a solid account of Emma Goldman's introduction of feminism and sexuality into anarchist discourse. It is, however, burdened by, and reflected in an ideological approach to theories. Critics cite Goldman as "social constructionist" or "social constructionist feminist." Also, H. S. Edelman seems to fault Goldman for not being a late 20th century anti-racist feminist. Goldman's social politics activism exercise her, I think, from needing a good course in theory to be faulted. Nonetheless, the book shows locally Goldman's influences and positions, especially regarding sexuality. S.F.

Every university and under-employed Ph.D. should read this book. Despite its sometimes cumbersome prose, Academia and the Labor of Capital is a witty and engaging critique of "tenure," "research," and the overall artificiality of the university that too rarely gets examined as we should. Cohen's sense of the commodification of intellectual endeavor and the in an earlier book, Material Culture: On the Meaning of Academic Disciplines, is spot on. Cohen's own contractual battles with an unjust university (referred to as a "loafing" as we should, give his book what I'd say is an attractive taoistic/avant-garde dimension. S.F.

This volume brings together a variety of essays and responses presented in a conference (University of North Carolina, 1989) on the occasion of the translation of Jürgen Habermas' The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society. Originally published in 1975, this work not only established Habermas' reputation, but also spawned a wide-ranging interest in the public sphere as an historical and political concept and in the evaluation of Marxist and liberal theories of democracy. The essays collected here have not only the continuing relevance of Habermas' early work and its problematical character. D.W.

The fifth volume in a series on cultural politics by the Social Text collective, this collection brings together various essays which interrelate the notion of the public sphere. While the title derives from Walter Lippmann's oft-cited rationalization of the public (1922), the broader intention of this volume is to provide a critique of Habermas' concept of the public sphere from the perspective of cultural studies and community politics, it thus brings into focus the divisions within the community left over the relationship between culture and politics. D.W.

Year 501 is a vintage Chomsky, exhaustively documented and passionately argued, it portrays 1492 as the beginning of a dark chapter of greed and exploitation, initiated by the pillaging of the Americas and climaxing in the annihilation of the peoples of the United States as the paramilitary of a "new world order." Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Chomsky, the arch linguist, revels in exposing the political double-deal of this "old world order," as much as he displays paid outages in his chronicle of its endless crimes against humanity. R.G.

Raven Song is Lee Maracle's second novel. Maracle, a west coast Native writer known for her storytelling and autobiographical writings, traverses familiar territory in this dazzling, which juxtaposes the thoughts and experiences of two sisters living in a native community on the Fraser River. The common thread running through the book is Raven, the inquisitive spirit who both ponders and impertently that thoughts of these women, finally inspiring action as well as self-restriction. Raven Song is written in a deeply textured style highly descriptive of both the setting and culture of west coast Native life. R.G.

The increasing significance of a critique of consumption practices in contemporary culture has been met by a consistent flurry of texts available on the subject. For those readers looking for a careful overview of the field, Lee's book might be the best. Lee's extensive contribution to the ongoing debate is to link the discourses of political economy and cultural studies, but, while heartening - this is not a groundbreaking development. M.H.

Well, here it is titled "Cultural Studies: The Textbook," playing at a bookstore near you! This admirable collection includes some groundbreaking cultural studies essays, but excludes the temptation to include everything and everybody. It has provided individual introductions to each essay, as well as a succinct overview of the "field" (sorta). M.H.

Given that a systematic analysis of the relationships between cultural studies and critical pedagogy is long overdue, to expect one collection of essays to fill the void is overly ambitious. Between Borders is both wide ranging and eclectic. It makes connections between the various educational practitioners in schools and the university and other cultural workers whose projects are also in some sense pedagogical. Between Borders provides much food for thought, having cumulated over this tasty meal, however, the reader may be left hungering for a more substantial yield. M.H.

Reviews by Stan Fogel, Rhys Gilliam, Michael Hornemann, and David Wallace.

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