THE FOX

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A DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE

SARAH CHARLESWORTH

"We are living in a period of unprecedented destruction of languages and cultures, of nations, under the assault of highly bureaucratic states. These exist, both internally and externally, a steady pressure, reducing culture to a series of technical functions. Put another way, culture, the creation of shared meanings, symbolic interaction, is dissolving into a mere mechanism guided by signals."—Stanley Diamond

I.

When we discuss a work of art or an art tradition, we are discussing a phenomenon which exists in an integral relationship with the entire complex of human social and historical forces defining the development of that work or tradition. This same complex of social and historical forces in turn inevitably defines the context in which that work or tradition claims significance, and ultimately functions as a force or agent in the ongoing evolution of that culture. Thus we are at once the producers and the producers of the culture in which we participate. This seems so obvious, yet we often fail to recognize that while options may be limited, the value and function of our work may be defined by the social and economic context in which we operate; we are ourselves, individually and collectively, the constitutive agents of the social complex that defines the value and significance of our work. In the same way that we as artists are responsible for the notion of art, by the formulation of art works or concepts, we are in turn responsible to the culture itself in the formulation of the notion and function of art.

In speaking of a social and historical context in which any art work or tradition evolves and is transmitted, it is difficult to differentiate between the political and economic order which prevails at any particular time and place, and the ideological or intellectual traditions which have developed concommitantly; these latter were often than not serve to reinforce and sustain the political and economic order. Institutions tend to claim authority over the individuals and their activity in society regardless of whatever subjective meaning they may attach to their situation and endeavor. The ideological structure of society integrates and legitimizes the institutional order by explaining and legitimizing its objectivated meanings.

If we speak specifically about art in modern European and American culture, we see that its meaning, function, and value within society are clearly institutionally mediated, and that not only artistic values, but the intellectual and ideological forces which explain, interpret and legitimate art practice have their origins in the very same traditions that presuppose that institutional order. Thus the structural system of the art-world, which provides a context for the social signification of art, is itself contextually situated in a social system, the structure of which it in turn reflects. At this point, attempts to question or transform the nature of art beyond formalistic considerations must inevitably begin to involve a consideration not only of the presuppositions inherent in the internal structure of art models, but also a critical awareness of the social system which preconditions and drastically confines the possibility of transformation.

If we recognize the institutional structure of a complex society to be (culturally) all-embracing, then we may begin to see that in attempting to redefine, alter or redirect the social definition or function of art—the manner and channels through which we can effectively work—we are encountering a firmly entrenched and highly developed institutional order: not just when confronting the obvious bureaucratic structure of the New York art world, but encountering the force of that order on every level, from such specific factors as the presestence of socially convenient (marketable) formal models of art (i.e. painting and sculpture) to more abstract socially convenient (non-controversial) theoretical models (formalism, art for art's sake), to the most blatant sociological fact that cultural power is clearly allied with economic power, and that to a large extent the internalizations of the dictates of the productive
system regarding patterns of legitimation and consensus are the very means by which individuals surrender their critical faculties to that system.

A certain ideological inversion or mystification of objectivity, or false consciousness, is apparent in the very fact that in discussing art, we commonly describe the sphere of influence in the following manner: as one moving outward from the individual artist, who, acting out of personal feelings or convictions, expresses himself/herself by way of a statement, traditionally in the form of a discrete work or art product, the social recognition and validation of which is dependent on some internal properties, termed "quality," which bear upon its visual or historical characteristics, outward through a system of institutions responsive to its self-evident merits, which in turn circulate and promote the work according to, the benefit of all those cultural institutions and sensitive enough to partake of its virtues. Hence the artist, as well as his product and the abstract sphere of his influence, are assumed "transcendent," that is, somehow responsive and of effective abstract psychic and social conditions, somewhat removed from the mundane conditions of "everyday life." The historical, social, and psychological factors which bear upon the artist are viewed from the perspective of predominantly after-the-fact analysis, the domain of various somewhat less "transcendent" (presumably more "objective") specialists who interpret and speculate on the myriad social and historical influences and implications manifest in the personal history, life style and oeuvre of the particular subject under study—those factors which bear upon and are implicit in the process of validation or interpretation seldom being taken into account. The art work as a symbol, token of the culture of the individual artist and the spiritual and social dilemmas which that individual struggle in turn reflects, becomes in a sense a sanctified cultural relic, presumably imbued in some elusive, imaginative spirit.

One wonders, of course, why it is the tokens of struggle toward meaning and not the struggle itself to which we respond (or how much spirit we can touch upon when these tokens become the stock in trade of a sophisticated cultural elite). That this conception is naive and idiolic and totally out of keeping with the rather more complex situation in which cultural phenomena emerge, develop, and function ought to be readily apparent; however, attempts to construct a more accurate basis for understanding are not without problems. One obvious alternative model to this idealistic Disneyland is of course a very broadly speaking materialist schema, in which material processes, specifically the mode of production and distribution of goods, services and capital within and amongst societies is the primary and over-riding factor of which all mental and spiritual attitudes and formulations are (consciously or unconsciously) in large part the product. "All parts of the ideological superstructure, art being one of these, are crucially determined both in content and style by the behavior of a more basic structure which is economic in nature." But it would be determinist, in this case, to suppose that the mere economic dependence of the artist, a certain external tie which links artist to consumer and art to society (and vice versa), is the full extent of that relationship, that the economic and social conditions of production are explicit and can be dealt with as such, but rather they are implicit and internalized to such a degree that they define in a more or less conscious manner our self and social consciousness upon which all praxis is founded. The artist may then be unwittingly supportive of ideals or conditions in relation to which he sees himself neutral or even opposed.

While a materialist critique and the dialectical method it implies is eminently useful as a tool by which to reorder our inquiries, to attempt to situate our self-perspectives, to gauge the implications and ramifications of our critical or practical stance, we do well to avoid the narrow and circumscribed nature of this tradition/model, as well as the danger inherent in the very product which is the cultural image of an avant garde. A dialectical or immanent critique, however, takes seriously the principle that it is not ideology itself which is untrue but rather its presentation to correspond to reality. There can be no method of escape, no science, no dialectic, no objective criteria which are not in turn subjectively assumed. The issue then becomes not so much a question of how we can achieve a "value-free" or "objective" model or theory of art practice as it is a question of what values and conditions of learning we in fact promote and provide through our practice of art.

I can no more reduce the "spirit of art," to which I am still responsive, to an entirely materialistic function than I can converse, assume it to be neutral or independent of material conditions. I am wary of the individualism and subjectivism which pervades our self and social consciousness, which I know (when assumed anecdotally) is actually a factor in the collective spirit or consciousness conducive to social change can occur. While being critical of the idealistic and presumptive notion of freedom and transcendence which informs the modernist paradigm, I myself work within the context of that art, that tradition, in part because I am responsive to certain ideals that that endeavor represents and recognize therein a certain emancipatory and self-reflective capacity lacking to varying degrees in other disciplines. My own work is tempered with realism only in the extent to which I feel continually compelled to re-examine and redirect my course in relation to such ideals.

Throughout this essay I use the pronoun "we" or "us" to incorporate myself and others into some abstract notion of an audience, and assume a certain sympathy amongst the members included. This is in part a function of the fact that I see myself as a participant in a real community in which my case might be centered around my involvement with The Fox and my working relationship with other participants; but I also address and appeal to a larger community which is made up of other individuals with whom I share a common tradition, a certain historical and cultural locus, who see themselves and/or have come to be recognized variously as artists, critics, dealers, curators, professors, students and so on. All are at least potentially in a position to make critical choices which will effect not only the internal character but also the social dynamic of contemporary and future art activity. To a large extent, we learn what our purposes are through the systems which we use, just as we learn what is required for survival through the interaction of those systems and our experience in trying to do things. For each of us there is a certain element of contradiction involved in the majority of personal and professional choices that we make, a certain tension between subjective survival and/selves and social interests/species survival. Some of us feel this conflict more intensely than others and we have varying interests and values at stake. It is important, however, that we begin to recognize and elucidate the criteria and implications of choice rather than continue to apologize, rationalize, and obfuscate. None of us, neither artist, critic, dealer, nor spectator, can be said to be free of the conflict of interest when it comes to the making of the cultural phenomena "art." If art is viewed as one aspect of culture or one form of "symbolic action," then the logic embodied in this particular system and the meanings which we attribute to our actions must be considered in relationship to, or more precisely as evolving within and contributing to, a larger context of social meaning. But characteristic of our liberal tradition, both on an intellectual or ideological level (political liberalism, empiricism, logical positivism) as well as on an intuitive or common sense level, is a tendency toward an emphasis on the individual fact or item at the expense of awareness of the relational or contextual aspects in which such a seemingly discrete fact or item occurs. This tendency has been manifest in contemporary art practice, in the privatization of art as an autonomous and self-regulatory discipline, an assembly of static objects of contemplation, as well as in our inclination to interpret the symbolic or gestural content of our actions in a disassociated and superficial manner. Viewed from one perspective, the history of modern art has been a long revolution against the complacency, sentimentality and tidiness of bourgeois culture, a rebellion against the self-assuming and rhetorical aspects of traditional forms, against the threat of submission or distortion of political or social norms—concerns--a veritable march of progress in the name of freedom, of individuality, of art. On a symbolic level, this is apparent on a theoretical level as well. But it is not the very logic through which we hail the theoretical and symbolic tokens of "revolutionary spirit" while embracing those very tokens in an attitude of blind acceptance and self-complicity, a tribute to the failure of that art—and the logic it embodies—to adequately comprehend and respond to the exigencies of a very real social and ideological predicament. But such is the less, transcends and subsumes the. Precisely this independence is not something you can posit and proceed to as-
Leaving aside the question of "great works," it is not true that in forwarding an Ideal self-image of autonomy (both in our concept of discrete self-contained art works and art values in general--in the face of all manner of evidence to the contrary), a working artist now peremptorily defies those same bourgeois values such self-containment was originally deemed to escape. Even the question of bourgeois values is growing increasingly moot. There is a great deal more to be frightened of at this point than the faint of an impure art. When the power of validation and legitimization of human enterprise occurs more and more within an institutionalized system, where corporate power and investment potential are becoming increasingly the social concern by which we signify meaning, it is clear that no private vision, no personal iconoclastic gesture can withstand.

Much "theoretical" or "analytical" work in the past few years has served to focus our attention on the conventional or conceptual underpinnings of our contemporary art practice. So-called conceptual art represents, among other things, an attempt to redefine art value or significance in terms of its ideological rather than physical ("experiential") attributes, but, as has been apparent for some time, to the extent that conceptual art is dependent upon the very same mechanisms for presentation, dissemination, and interpretation of art works, it functions in society in a manner not unlike previously more morphologically oriented work. Thus the extent to which its significance as art (or as idea) is dependent upon or inferred by its existence within the traditional context, its value or function within the culture is conditioned primarily by patterns of response traditionally associated with that context. This is a world in which honor is ritually bestowed, values assumed and rarely created. "Art as idea" was once a good idea, but art as idea as art product, alas, moves in the world of commodity-products and hardly the realm of "idea." The significance that early conceptual work bore in relation to previously held assumptions regarding formal requisites of traditional art practice is not to be denied, but formalistic innovation in and of itself is of questionable value. Since it is assumed that the intentional aspects of an artist's endeavor extend only to the making of a work or a proposition, and its placement or "documentation" within the prescribed context, the use or function of that work (aside from its existence as art history) is no longer an aspect of art. The artist is thus severed, exempt from a symbolic level, from his culture. He responds to and assumes the role of art in isolation.

If art "lives" primarily by affecting other art (as is often claimed), then there is no mechanism by which such an art can recede or redefine itself except out of a logic internal to the closure "art." Thus we are confined to a large extent to the progressive reduction and expansion of inherent formal relations; such "conceptual innovations" as may occur are subsumed within the system to which they refer. A tradition keyd to the demands of the competitive market, responding to the stylistic or formal elements of innovation, sees no use or value in the implications of change beyond the historical progressivity which it promotes. This is the ultimate consumerism: Ideas become the property of the inventor, and as such are no further use to the community once claimed.

We move away from the tyranny of the picture frame only to discover that of the gallery, the market, and so on, and as it begins to become apparent that the privileging of the art object cannot be dissociated from the privileging of the context and tradition in which the object appears; we begin to wonder whether the very sense of that history or sociology, which is the shape and dynamic of our discipline, is not so much the momentum of a free and critical consciousness as the order of a definitive social and economic reality, the pervasiveness of which we are only just beginning to grasp.

Inversely, we might begin to inquire whether the retreat from the objectification, commodification and institutionalization of traditional art models, which has characterized the tactics of certain movements (ideally) radical segments of the art community, is not so much a function of the realization of inherently noxious qualities which those models possess, as the instinctive recoil against which we have lately begun to grasp.
city; that is, the will to change, to re-examine, and, more importantly, to "call it as it is" the tools that make radical and contextual critique conceivable. Suppose we imagine this capacity as a medium, a methodology, and not an end in itself. We can leave as much as we can, through the "failure" of concept art as we do through its partial success, while being critical of the (self-presumptive and reductionist aspects of formalism tradition, we exist as its inevitable heir.

III.

Our dilemma at this point is profound and problematic in its circularity. If we assume any theoretical stance or critical viewpoint (by which we mean to assess a previous or other presumably "more naive" position), we must do so by use of a logic which justifies or lends authority to our current more "sophisticated" outlook. This new position claims precedence over antecedent or rival theories, and yet does so at the expense of obscuring its own presumptions. Thus we are always in a position of revealing the "false" foundations of one logic while claiming another similarly founded. This is, of course, where traditional Marxist social "science" as well as many sociological or anthropological models, particularly the structuralist models, break down. You cannot, on the one hand, claim that all knowledge is culturally determined, socially derived, and then turn claim the objective validity of your own theory. In this sense the dialectic becomes immanently useless as an ideal working model but in practice something of an impossibility. So we proceed amidst contradictions.

Dialectical critique implies that one cannot view any object or subject as a means, for in the very act of viewing or depicting our object, we grasp self and subject as situated in the same historical moment from whence we depart. "Faced with the operative procedures of the nonreflective thinking mind (whether grappling with the philosophical or artistic, political or scientific problems and objects), dialectical thought tries not so much to complete and perfect the application of such procedures as to widen its own attention to include them in its awareness as well, it aims, in other words, not so much at solving the particular dilemmas in question, as converting those problems into their own solutions on a higher level, and making the fact and the existence of the problem itself the starting point of new research."2

That this model does represent at any given moment a logical closure which is immensely problematic in application is readily apparent, but its explanatory as well as normative potential in the ideal is compelling. What is called for is not the replacement of one authoritative model with another, but rather the gradual creation of a community, a discourse, an art, which is not so much the reflection of our competitive and antagonistic pursuits as it is a common vehicle through which we might continually examine not only our own values and assumptions, but those of the culture of and to which we ideally speak. We might seek therefore not so much to regulate our cultural praxis in relation to the existing norms, as to understand, elucidate, and evaluate the normative import of those activities in which we are historically, presently, as well as potentially engaged. Thus the philosophy, the theory, the strategy and the ethics of practice become one with praxis itself. And yet this joiner of theory and practice in the ideal is always subject to and modified by conditions in relation to which we must continually re-evaluate our position. It is a dynamic and self-regulatory critical theory by which we attempt to understand and evaluate our own (art) practice in relation to social practice in general, and to evaluate social and historical conditions as they are effective of and become apparent in our practice of art.

If it is true that "the creation of a thing for the sake of a thing is itself an objective human relationship to itself and to man," then it is on the level of this relationship which we must question our function, for it no longer has much meaning to speak of the thing (art) in itself.

At the dawn of the 19th century, Hegel predicted that art would no longer, as in the past, be concerned with the central concerns of man. Hegel saw the role of art becoming increasingly marginal as science moved into a stronger and more central position within society. Art, according to Hegel, would cease to be serious, as it became increasingly pure and disengaged. By moving into a marginal position, art would not lose its quality as art, but it would nonetheless cease to have direct relevance to the existence of man.

We have lost touch—no other with ourselves and with each other but with the culture of which we are a part. It is only by confronting the problem of our alienation, making this the subject of our work, that our ideals take on new meaning. We move to become one again with culture in our sense of shared concern.

NOTES


FOR THOMAS HOBBES
MICHAEL BALDWIN AND PHILIP PILKINGTON

1.

The editors wanted something written about New York. What a bizarre idea.

One prevailing emotion (is that what it is?) is our inordinate snobbery in relation to the community allegedly under scrutiny. Why are so many of them so thick? Is perhaps not the sort of question we should be asking.

Another question: Why are there so few real conflicts? There seems to be support for Parsonian Open-Society-recommendations in the critical-to-ing and fre-ing of New York's art community.

It's easy to say that the prevailing critical condition is that all existing rules for the correct consumption of 'res' objects which fall into various genetic/sociological classes... This, in contradistinction to considering the social conditions of practice. The last remark may sound like prejudice... but it seems to suggest something deeper, more 'historical' than might at first seem obvious.

A facile observation is that there might be a better location in New York vis a vis 'change' if the artistic community were full-blooded reactionary, rather than thin-blooded reactionaries.

There are a lot of non-teachers' pets on the one side, and a lot of drones and slack mouths and excess saliva on the other. Some of the conceptual illuminati are still making the mistake of assuming it's their job to sort-out the epistemological casualties left behind by the drones (etc.). Some of the illuminati want to join the drones on their own terms.

A day in the life of N.N. in New York... Why does it bring the worst out in N.N.? Perhaps it's because it's tedious to watch people spend a great deal of their time living in the store--self-managing the organization of experience from the outside. That's bad grammar and paradoxical, but it also describes something observable.

(A lot of the N.Y. community doesn't get into our picture: we don't know much about many painters, patterners, milliners, manicples and wives of Brooklyn.) Many of the rest--about whom something is known (felt) --adhere more rigidly to the ideology of the status quo than the self-images of the reformist might supply. Are there any reformers any way? What would they say about ideology?

Do the inhabitants of the artistic Big House (in both available metaphoric senses) ever act any 'outside'? Even the plumbers and carpenters are offfamily artists. The only non-artists (or art-pundits, etc.) known to artists (or art-pundits) are more economically (etc.) powerless than the artists. Before anyone reaches mistakably for a handkerchief, it should be noted that many artists are rich. Historically non-vacuous sociality is a vain hope.

New York's artistic community approaches the condition of a lumpenbourgeoisie. We want to show some of its characteristics.

This is being written out of the gutter--stilled of critical purchase. The Caponism of much of the intellectual output compounds the proliferation of privatized quasi-dialectical. It may be argued that the basis of the art-market hierarchy (which is in some places non-classical) may be found in the assumption of privacy of output.

'The dominant ideas of each epoch are the ideas of its ruling class... Don't think of this in relation to successful people... artists... That particular sort of resonance situation is well-known. It might be more instructive to think of it in relation to mystifyingly popular-as-an-anti.

Some people have embarrassed Marxism in one form or another. A perpendicular metaphysical-ideology may be pursued. 'Set up a revolutionary holy war and make the observation (pace Marx) that Reactionaries have only interpreted Marx (or Bakunin) in what's necessary (from the ideological perspective) to change them.'

It's a commonplace to say that the increase in consumption has rules, some of which are generalized into the context of quasi-esoteric merit-objects. It's less usual to say that many artists are more-or-less integrated in the system of exploitation. Where-with most critics and enthusiasts?

Another normal thing to say (is for us) is that bureaucratization corresponds to the rationalization of experience from the outside. Its corollary is the observation that, as a consequence, individuals seek private solutions to social problems.

'The consciousness of what are called needs and the methods of their satisfaction are likewise historical products, depending in large measure upon the stage of civilization a country has reached... and depending, moreover, to a very considerable extent upon... under what conditions... the class of free workers has come into existence,' (Marx, Capital, p. 22).

Marx's system of political economy, his whole theory of crises and (by implication) his assumptions as to how socialist consciousness arose (arises) were based on his theory of wages. Many extreme Marxists, as well as inexplicable ones, still look at the dialectic on the same basis. It corresponds to a conception which is equivalent to treating work-constitutional necessities of ideology (remember, we don't mean reactionary, or simply bourgeois ideology) as theory in the same way as reactions would like to treat it/them in practice... but can't... as objects: workpotential, it is still claimed, is integrally a commodity.

Ideology is not, in our sense, an instrument of moral reform. Many of the more well-meaning artists of whom we are aware seem to make this mistake. Feasible comment will have to be concerned with pointing to the opacity and inertia of institutions willingly convoluted by the avant garde, reformists, people who discovered political economy last week and sundry others. 'Constantly growing conditions of change' is (at best) Trotskyist incantation. We leave out modernists, etc.--obviously.

Writing about New York could easily slip... Into some spiritus haesuperstructure archivisms because it was more than writing about art. Furthermore, the authentic problem is not to be served in generalizing to the Olympian height of expensive Marxian analysis.

We are forced to consider the demand from the inside (historically) and provide the picturesque only occasionally in a story of bureaucratics degeneration. Any social/cultural observations will be transformed by apparent congruence rules generated by the pervading Kulturlogik. Selective modal filtration takes place via hegemonies... And anyway, we are bound to generate disjunct referent-complexes in relation to a specious ('public') true structure. This sort of complexity was never envisaged in the genre-fixed structurist tradition.

Perhaps what we ought to do is examine some conditions of going on in New York. This in a non-esoteric way... remember a favourite Lukes quote. We've written so long and so complexly about/within ideology that we might think that we'd demonstrated some complexity: anyone who can't understand at this point (neither laughing nor weeping) might look at some other things we've written.

It might be argued that one has to leave the West in order to find instances of ideology. Again, this is ideology in a non-neutral sense: think of a complex mesomeric hybrid--anti-bureaucratic ideology, the ideology of the problematic (dialectic); the ideology that's a revision of the resources of expression; ideology that's in confrontation with de facto conditions of rationality... contra bourgeois rationality and a socializing function. There is an important sense in which the possibility of ideology is the possibility of the modali-
ties of social action... given that the deontic
ethical indices of ideology do not (obviously)
have concrete correlates. It seems they can’t...

Back to the West. Wouldn’t we rapidly
uncover another place (aside from New York) to
talk about if we had any way kept up
with the ideal of an ira ideological practice? The
judgement that they did do has art in Cuba and
Algeria is merely a reflection of the consump-
tion-determinants of the international
museum.

Back to the question. Why do we have
friends in New York and why don’t we have
any (many?) friends in Algeria? There’s a
sense in which one would want to dem-
strate a pre-attitude to the statement that
ideological interest is a negatively accelerated
function with respect to economic-cultural
suspicion (practice) approaching an in-
verso-function. The statement is hope-
less, since it presupposes a hard and fast an-
ter to the problem of cultural (learning)
resonance. It might further be argued that,
in accepting the statement, one would not be
asking something: one is asking highly transforma-
tional entities... intraspatial transformations
are not identical with interspatial ones. De-
politization in the West doesn’t inter alia rec-
ommend third-world policies.

All right, we’re discussing New York.
It’s a figure against a ground... New York is
the general phenomenon: it is simply the case
that the wider area of the problem of social
organization is not that of transformational
entities... interspatial transformations are not
identical with interspatial ones. De-
politization in the West doesn’t inter alia re-
commend third-world policies.

And let’s not dig up Jackson Pollock, or asses like
W. Rubin, or any other mandarin of the modern
tradition.

The problem of an ideological expression
veered on, or a function of the mass (or
socialist) activity of the working class is
essentially bound to a functional network of
historical conditions. If we are going to say
this, however, we may have to look at the
superstructural conditions and dynamics of
history. So much for one caveat. But we still
have something like an essay... but we are
bound to express cultural/historical dysfunc-
tion-congruity with respect to what the condi-
tions of learning (by Yemen) might be. Inter alia,
someone might discern what looks like a
teleologically asymmetrical cultural tenacity.

The latter won’t be discernable as an abstract
or metaphysical exercise in sociological analy-
sis. It’s a real problem to sort out reflexive
definitions with respect to the indices that
constitute ‘environment’ in theory and in
practice.

A subtitle was suggested: ‘New York, its
only hope—return to Europe’. It was point-
less. It’s much easier to say that (e.g., mod-
ernist, neo-modernist and post-modernist...
conceptual art activity) represents an
almost complete ossification of any conditions
of a feasible or non-bureaucratic ideology. And
many new-born ‘Marxists’ might be added to
the list. Traditional revolutionaries mark time
while ‘progress’ in one form or another con-
tinues space. New York society infants have
instilled the most superstructural and
inconceivable form of this appropriation in
their manipulation of after-after (quasi-dialog-
ical) naive critical formalism.

Modernism, even in its most attenuated
sense (and this covers nearly all of the dynam-
ics of New York art-practice) is consonant with
the modernization of capitalism in the
development of interventionism, etc. There
seem to be very few instances of classical eco-
omic crises (cf. earlier and later remarks about
conditions of change). Most artists in the West
are fully integrated into the system of exploita-
tion. The implicit ethos of New York art is
more than paradigmatic—negotiating an un-
critical docility in exchange for the possibility
of practice within the non-academic-security
of acquisition.

We have to revolve ‘superstructure’
toward a related range of cultural practices...
learning... away from... a specifically
dependent content. And crucially, we have
to revolve the ‘base’ away from the notion
of a fixed economy or technological abstraction...
That’s not a species of malfeasance of a
novel kind. It would be appaling to sustain a
brute base/superstructure relation just so to
have a slightly better economy. Some restriction, however,
should be put on ‘totality’ as the description of
structure. Hegemony has been (re) introduced
by some writers as heuristic in this connection.
It emerges as a structuring concept. Hegemony
is postulated as having some inordinate depth.
It corresponds to a generative saturation of
dialogic and material life. It won’t hurt
Grassian if it’s said that it might be thought to
constitute a primary bound of rationality...
...this, insofar as the conditions of rational-
ity might be thought to be socially determined.
The question may be asked whether a
daesinformatum has been reached, such that
the feasibility of a transformation of practice is
feasible in the New York market. Much tradi-
tional Marxism-revolutionism has not been
adequate to the task. The question raised in
general must be regarded here as a neighbour
of the question of what New York’s Kunstwelt
does have to historical ideology and what is
now feasible given an answer. We are looking at
the non-praxis of an academy’s epistemia
at best—even Chomsky.

Answering some of the questions will
involve self-consciously coping with ‘eine
verschwommenheit’ (a blurred function); this doesn’t
mean that we’re advocating a relativistic in-
terpretation of ideology. There is a reciprocal
interpretation of the theoretical and ideological
factors in a particular system locality.
That’s an almost incredibly porous general-
ization, but it might be sufficiently plausible to
stop people staring fixedly at a socio-
economic standpoint and hoping for a critical
purview of the situation. One does not hope
for Keynesian ‘horrid conversion’ in New York
or anywhere else.

Mannheim’s attempts to get over his own
mechanistic determinism-relativism with the
freshness of the deailing’ involve ‘the fictitious
structural postulate. Overt ‘life-transformations’
are indelible to his theories, and the ficti-
uous postulate is introduced to cope with that
fact. Intellectuals are ‘mobile’ (intellectually
and socially historically) because—you guessed it
—they are intellectuals. The ideological func-
tion of these angels is supposed to be the
transformation of interest conflicts into idea conflicts.
The Lackschichten-totality is no more than a
methodological principle, but Man-
heim’s is supposed to be ‘empirical’.

Contrast Mannheim, art practice is dialecti-
ically ideological—not ideological. The latter
means ‘purblind to the modifications and trans-
formations of its sphere of operation’. You
might remember ‘Ideology and Utopia’ as a
boring reactionary book: (e.g., voluntary att-
achments) are made (chosen) from a middle-
way ideology. Pace Lenin, ‘There is no middle
way’. It is perhaps necessary to posit a fairly
wholistic picture of historical materialism.
This would not be a ‘structural whole’—and,
particularly, it would not be Mannheim’s
logically simple progress (objectivity) of
history.

When does Anthony Quinton-political
philosophy/theory become self-conscious of
its ideas as distinct from and instead of its in-
terests? Para-Socratic self-knowledge is arcane.
For Mannheim, the intelligences provide a self-
consciousness for a political movement via
ideas. Oh really? Somebody is trying to sell
as a highly restricted and ‘noise-free’ notion of
attachment to a group—attachment sans
historical embedding into the group set.
We are supposed to be a political function.
And it’s not even the Lukacsian ‘ought’ that
points to the whole. The whole is supposed
to be a fact. The idea of mass interpenetration/
integration is chimerial and not any sort of
condition. (Try to sort out a logic of ‘joining
pre-conditions’). Anyway, we’re talking about
a dumb view of the ‘political world’... The
‘political’ world is ideologically categorized—
that’s supposed not to be materialist-non-
socio-economic and its also supposed to
be non-dynamic. ‘Group interests’ simpliciter
must be idealistic. Hence ‘POLITICAL
SCIENCE’.

Self-serving and snug ideas about ‘the
whole’ and the possibility of choice of class
interests within it: our friend from the
London School of Economics tells us that you/we
have to know your one specific position in
‘the whole’. This corresponds to a simple-
 minded view of collective forces and class
interests (cf. Michel, Lenin, Trotsky...).
What is postulated is a de facto (daesin-
formatum) structural/postulate about econ-
omic growth? It is absurd to postulate a de
facto ‘whole’ and then explain the possibili-

The historical character of Christian ideology is discovered in literary contexts with an undeniably recherche relationship to the Gospel of St. Augustine. Similarly, it could be said that the historical reality of 'practical Marxism' is to be found more in Kautsky's vulgarizations, Bukharin's 'ABC' or Lenin's 'Karl Marx' than in Marx's writings as such. Many activists have followed these schematic accounts (and they've also written new ones). Concentration in these accounts is focused on 'objective contradictions', and ideology (of the relevant kind) was seen as arising from the economic condition of the wage earner—from his exploitation as part of the social product. Theoretically, attention remains on the 'subjective contradictions' and there are many different 'dialectical-organization-principles in praxis' accounts. Economic questions provide the incipience of ground. Traditionally, however, there has been no university of reponse (reply) to, or explicit formulation of, an answer to apparently imperiously

The phenomenon of privatization is discernible as a function of the bureaucratization of practices. 'Privatization' may be thought to extend as far as the preservation of 'low profile modalities' in practice. It is also a function of the disappearance of the dialectic of production at the point of production. Bureaucracy has become the new social order.

In the formation of Marx into Marxism (which embodies all kinds of revision, etc.) the dialectical vector of an ideology/learning incitement, etc. would have to be disavowed as the term is understood. And certainly it would be argued that what we've discerned as structural transformations imply that any such ideological perspective is merely utopian. Others might suggest we look at all the utopian rubbish that's churning up in the past.

It has to be remembered that what's being advocated is not a new non-problematic non-intentional but-incipient truth, but a particular problematic practice, socialized and regarded as practice. For this there have to be new institutions capable of operating in the social-structural interfaces (etc.) there really are and not a background leisure activity—like drumming up revolutionary content.

The concept of transubstantiation that 'whole' as a monad within is. Structure just becomes inhuman—mechanical in its basis, the pathological structure of judgement in relation to, dynamic, point (s) of reference. Young-left thought again is in a process of being endearingly 'radical philosophy'...

'Defence not defiance' was a Trade Union Congress slogan in the 1940's and 1950's. Many wage-labour disputes began and ended (according to Roger Hyman in 'Marxism and the Sociology of Trade Unionism', 1973) at the point of production. Lenin would doubt have said that 'The End of Ideology' was premature for bourgeois sectional consciousness, but no answer to that book lies in ideological causality.

Open society criticism abounds as production—or, at least, as indispensable to it. Two thirds of total global production consists of objects of consumption. Accumulation takes place on familiar lines via 'the proliferation of needs' and collateral syste... Slavish or not, it seems that one of the ways to avoid excessive Marxism is to try and support some form of base-substructural distinction. It seems quite feasible to regard the 'superstructure' as 'the determined' de dicto... and 'the material conditions', etc. as not universally determining. It involves an intervention into complex sets. This is as much a bar to epistemological snobbery as to simplistic correlations.

It may be asserted that the 'critical action' within the framework of practice (and within aspiring frameworks) is commensurate with, if not indispensable to, the maintenance of stable conditions of production within that framework. This remark applies strongly to 'reforgers', and to many (all) dissatisfied because of a lack of acclimation—the 'observer' and the intelligentsia who carry the seeds of human advancement, even if we need a religion, how can we find it in the turmoil of the red bookshop? (J.M. Keynes, A Short View of Reality, 1923) Pray for turmoil. The function of the devil in New York seems to have been transferred from an 'ideal' base to disappearing necessity (cf. above). The participants (better, dramatis personae) must look, on their lived set, a community as a corporative organism. For instance, in time, as the time of the universal of discourse. Referring to 'outside' is generally a further mystification. The community, as a consequence, moves according to the modalities of the bourgeois amnesia. A functional interpretation of base and superstructure is (very nearly) indispensable to the socialization of any possible ideology possibility... indispensable to the enculturation of art as practice. Remember the 'special' restrictions above on the use of ideology.
"You know what I think about Chapelle's right wing policies. But you can say one thing about him, he's not a paper tiger. He doesn't pretend to be something he isn't like Jones and Samwell."

But you can't simply blame the officials—they only reflect the rank and file to a large extent.

A. In this case that was clearly not so. If it was, then there would never have been any need for letters of 'advice and instruction,' but if national, district and branch officials claim to be left-wing then their job is not simply to pander to any reactionary need, but to lead.

Look at what happened at Stoke. The Convenors have a long history of retreating on issues of principle. Under Measured Day Work they have been more and more the messengers boys of management. Nevertheless, they were too weak on their own to sell out. They yielded the official stamp on things. Once this had happened they were well away.

At the JSSC on Monday 27th August, a determined effort by militant stewards defeated the unanimous vote of Simpson, Wild Morris and McClusky to avoid a mass meeting to reverse the decision to scab. What happened?

Firstly, the man responsible for moving the resolution calling for blacking of machines was none other than Morris, who was opposed to the idea! When he did move the resolution, he attacked scab labour once, and the International Socialists twice! Secondly Eddie McClusky, RC member of the community Party couldn't find any loud speaker equipment. Amazing! But the convenors and company used the day's delay to great effect. The company announced a gigantic financial crisis all of a sudden. The delay of a day, at a time when sections were spontaneously walking out, defused the whole situation. Thirdly at the mass meeting, despite all this the vote was at worst 50-50. Simpson without hesitation, announced a 2-1 majority for returning to work.

Even despite this disgraceful behaviour, several sections refused to return to work and meetings broke out all over the place, with stewards tearing up their cards. It is not true that the convenors and national officials 'reflect' the rank and file. To a large extent, the rank and file reflect the lead they get. This clearly shows by the Linwood situation.

Q. How do you see us rebuilding Trade Union organisation in the plants, and preparing for the struggle ahead?

A. As we pointed out earlier, Measured Day Work has transformed the situation in which the shop floor operates:

1. It has undermined the democratic relationship between the stewards and his section under piecework.
2. It cuts down the extent to which any section can go it alone.
3. It puts much more power into the hands of the JSSC and top table and outside officials.

More and more, the trend is towards factory-wide struggles, not just over wages and bi-annual negotiations, but victimisation, shoddy work, and the like. M.D.W. forces the stewards more and more into being the defenders of the 'agreement'—not the representatives of the shop floor.

This means, militant stewards can no longer operate on behalf of their section. Since most key issues are factory wide, so the militants must organise on a factory-wide basis—and eventually combine and upgrade. This is where a group like the International Socialists comes in. In every factory (as we have started to do in Chrysler) we aim to group the militants together to throw out a common policy towards the problems facing the factory. Acting together in putting our ideas to the shop floor, we will get more influence and can become an alternative to the top table, especially in critical situations. We need to spread our ideas to every section. We have found that regular bulletins and rank and file meetings from the shop floor, have helped considerably.

For example, the Chrysler Branch, despite being relatively small in relation to the workforce as a whole, has been able to affect recent struggles.

1. In the 'shoddy work' dispute, it was the Chrysler I.S. Branch members and others forming the Ryton Action Group, which led to the highly effective flying pickets which stranded Chrysler. At each stage in that dispute, the strike committee was ahead of the works convenor Gibson and many of the stewards (only 40% picketed at all) and the Ryton Action Group—supported by the best stewards—was ahead of the strike committee. Had it been left to the strike committee the dispute would have petered out in no time at all, in pointless picketing of Ryton.

2. Also in the 'shoddy work' dispute, it was the Chrysler I.S. Branch which took the lead within the Stoke Plant in organising support for the Ryton pickets, and which consistently argued against the line of waiting to be laid off. Within the convenors were paralysed, the best sections were organising support and—for example, after the middleweight was sacked—taking industrial action.

3. During the electricians dispute it was I.S. members and other good trade unionists, in the Stoke Stewards room, who defended trade union principles. When, after the mass meeting of Friday 24th August, all seemed lost, it was our exposure of the introduction of non-union sub-contract labour to do ETU work, which helped swing things back in favour of another mass meeting to reverse the Friday's decisions.

Where the convenors took a lead, we backed them to the hilt. But usually, they retreated. Not only do we react to attacks on the shop floor by the management, because we look outside the factory as well as inside it, and because we see the whole society in class terms, we can, unlike the existing convenors, see the attack coming before its too late.

Thus in 1970, in Stoke Bulletin 9, at a time when only a tiny minority of stewards at Stoke were clear about Measured Day Work, we wrote: "When Ford started the scheme 30 years ago, Ford workers were the highest paid in the motor industry. During those 30 years they sunk to the lowest paid."

Increasingly it is only socialists who can plan the resistance to the attacks of companies like Chrysler.

On top of this we have to build a really powerful and democratic combine organisation. Virtually nothing was done by the combine committee during the shoddy work dispute, and the main meeting of the stewards convenors during the electricians dispute was convened by management TO LAY DOWN THE LAW. International links are also vital. This will be a hard job but must not be left to be the trade union jetset of outside officials. We in I.S. will do all we can to help this process through our members in, for instance, the Detroit plants of Jefferson, Mack and Dodge Main.

Horley, Oxfordshire

GLOSSARY

A.S.T.M.S. Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staff. A coterie of activists—mostly devoid of political character. They invest heavily in recruiting (e.g.) University staff of Radical Philosophy, Winter 1974 for a boring report on one of their member's (admirable) activities and demise at the hands of an incredibly boring professor of something-or-other.

Jock Gibson Transport & General Workers Union chief convenor at Chrysler's Ryton (U.K.) plant.

Jack Jones General Secretary of the T.G.W.U. Journalistically, he's regarded as the architect of the recent 'Social Contract' (between the unions and the Government (P)). He's also a fairly respectable figure (for a Socialist) in the eyes of the press. President and General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. He's a former C.P. member regarded by the press as a dangerous Marxist.

Hugh Scanlon Another Chrysler (motor) plant in Coventry.


It's a pity this glossary looks a little like a Hans Haacke Politikum item. The purveyors of the fat and the sledge of Bundestagologie aren't interested in much in the way of solidarity. It looks as if Beuys' and Haacke's academy is for aesthetic democracy as the methodology of a secure (and opaque) institution. The extracts above demonstrate a radical alternative to their 'demoocracy'.

16
THE ARTIST AS ANTHROPOLOGIST

JOSEPH KOSUTH

"The reflective assimilation of a tradition is something else than the unreflective continuity of tradition" - Rolf Ahlers

PART I

A FRAGMENTED AND DIDACTIC ETHNOLOGY

OF SCIENCE AS RELIGION AND IDEOLOGY

Consider the following mosaic:

1. Albert Einstein:  
... whenever one undergoes the intense experience of successful achievements made in this domain is moved by profound reverence for the rationality manifested in existence. By way of this understanding he achieves a far-reaching emancipation from the shackles of personal hopes and desires, and thereby attains that humble attitude of mind towards the greatness and mystery of existence, and which, in its profounder depths, is inaccessible to man. This attitude... appears to me to be religious, in the highest sense of the word.

2. Karl Polanyi:  
... if we decide to examine the universe objectively in the sense of paying equal attention to portions of equal mass, this would result in a lifelong preoccupation with interstellar dust, restricted only at brief intervals by a survey of incommensurate masses of hydrogen—not in a thousand million lifetimes would the same occur to give man even a second's notice. Our vision of reality... must suggest to us the kind of questions that it would be reasonable and interesting to explore.

3. Martin Jay:  
Hobbes and later Enlightenment thinkers had assimilated men to nature in a manner that made man into an object, just as nature had been objectified in the new science. In their eyes, both man and nature were no more than machines. As a result, the assumption that nature repeated itself eternally was projected onto man, whose historical capacity for development, so closely bound to this subjectivity, was denied. For all its progressive intentions, this "scientific" view of man implied the eternal return of the present.

4. Max Weber:  
All the analysis of infinite reality which the finite human mind can conduct rests on the tacit assumption that a finite portion of this reality constitutes the object of scientific investigation, and that only it is "important" in the sense of being "worthy of being known." Only a small portion of existing concrete reality is colored by our conditional interest and it alone is significant to us. It is significant because it reveals relationships which are important to us, due to their connection with our values. We cannot discover... what is meaningful to us by means of a "prepossessing" investigation of empirical data. Rather, perception of its meaningfulness to us is the presupposition of its becoming an object of investigation.

5. William Leman:  
So long as Christianity remained a vital social force in Western civilization, the notion of man as lord of the earth was interpreted in the context of a wider ethical framework. Religion's declining fortunes, however, led to the gradual secularization of this notion in imperceptible stages, and in contemporary usage it reveals few traces of its Judeo-Christian background. The identification of mystery over nature with the results of scientific and technological progress, in connection with the cultural antagonism of science and religion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, distorted the traditional framework. For Francis Bacon there was no apparent contradiction between his religion and his hopes for science to free the image of man as the lord of nature clearly helped him to unite the two; but the Baconian synthesis, so characteristic of the seventeenth century, has not endured. The purely secular version of this image retains the various associations derived from the political analogy discussed above while shedding the ethical covering that both sustained and inhibited it. In its latter-day guise, mastery over nature loses the element of tension resulting from the opposing poles of domination and subordination in the religiously based version and adopts a multidimensional character—the extension of human power in the world.

6. Stanley Diamond:  
Just as, in the nineteenth century, the social organization and techniques of modern industrial capitalism emerge as a world force, so the idea of inevitable progress in the name of science becomes a fixed ideology. The revolts having succeeded and then, quite obviously, having failed in their social promise, it appears as if all the frustrated passion was mobilized behind the idea of a regnant science.

7. Bob Scholte:  
If the emancipatory and normative interests of "scientism," especially as practiced in applied domains, are contradictory to illusion, if no position can ever be entirely free and transcultural, and if our native or cultural application may either simply hide ideological presuppositions or unwittingly generate reactionary political consequences, does not the self-corrective, self-critical, and progressive nature of scientific activity eventually ensure consistency, transparency, and viability? I would argue—following Rodrikh and others—that this would be possible only if "scientism" were to be served as much as possible by a self-critical course, that is, one which would emancipate it from any obstructionist stance. This, of course, is highly unlikely, since the paradigm's own assumptions, procedures, and aims militate against a radical and contextual critique. The basis for this lack of self-referentiality lies in the widely held assumption that there is, and should be, a discontinuity between experience and reality, between the investigator and the object investigated. If we accept the assumption (which, frankly, is rather untenable or practical, even from a strict scientific point of view) the scientist can afford to remain largely indifferent to his own existential, sociological, historical, and philosophical environment.

While "scientism" may express a peripheral interest in the intentional consciousness of scientific investigation, it does so only to use or to purify existential circumstances for the sake of scientific objectivity and replicability. Though it may utilise and contribute to the "ethnomet hodologies" available at any given time and may avail itself of a culture's norms and values, its professed and ultimate aim lies in transcending the sociocultural settings and particular time periods in which scientific activities are located and developed. Similarly, if progress demands at least some awareness of history, "scientism" nevertheless remains largely indifferent to the historicity of scientific prove as a whole.

If "scientism" also considers itself empirical and problem-oriented, it usually assumes that facts are facts, that objective methods simply select relevant data, that furthering affects them, and that these "units of analysis" can be processed to yield lawful predictions and functional norms. Its overriding interest in logical clarity and technical preciseness, realizable within the "manageable" boundaries of "planners'" research, further augments only a marginal concern with the ontological grounds and epistemological preconditions which science's own activities nevertheless presuppose or simply take for granted. Finally, when "scientism" is raised to the encompassing status of a philosophical system, its ultimate purpose becomes the rational explanation of a determinate reality in accord with universal principles and objective techniques. Its transcendental aim is to establish and to verify formal laws and general ontological purely. Any relativistic or perspectival alternatives to its scientific Dogma are simply considered irrational, impractical, or—worse of all—metaphysical.

8. Alvin Gouldner:  
... objectivity is not neutrality, but alienation from self and society; it is an alienation from a society experienced as a barful and unlovable thing. Objectivity is the way one comes to terms and makes peace with a world one does not
like but will not oppose; it arises when one is detached from the status quo but reluctant to be identified with its critics, detached from the dominant norm of social reality as well as from meaningful alternative norms. "Objectivity" transforms the framework of exile into a positive and valued social location; it transforms the weakness of the internal "refuge" into the superiority of principled aloofness. Objectivity is the ideology of those who are alienated and politically homeless.

In suggesting that objectivity is the ideology of those who reject both the conventional and the alternative mappings of the social order, I do not, however, mean to suggest that they are equally distant from both; commonly, these "objective" men, even if politically homeless, are middle class and operate within the boundaries of the social status quo. In some part they tolerate it because they fear conflict and want peace and security, and know they would be allowed considerably less of both if they did not tolerate it.

9. William Leiss

The "mastery of inner nature" is a logical corollary of the mastery of outer nature; in other words, the domination of the world that is to be carried out by subjective reason presupposes a condition under which men's reason is already master in its own house. That is, in the domain of human nature, the prototype of this connection can be found in Cartesian philosophy, where the ego appears as dominating internal nature (the passions) in order to prevent the emotions from interfering with the judgments that form the basis of scientific knowledge. The culmination of the development of the transcendental subjectivity postulated by Descartes is to be found in Fichte, in whose early works: "The relationship between the ego and the world of appearances is for neither of them the "total universe" becomes a goal of the ego, although the ego has no substance or meaning except in its own boundless activity."

The persistent struggle for existence, which manifests itself both within particular societies and also among societies on a global scale, is the motor which drives the mastery of nature (internal and external) to even greater heights which both excludes the setting of any a priori boundaries for internalizing heteronomousness (where the force there pressures the power of the whole society over the individual's individual and is executed through means otherwise unconceivable in the course of social conflict. Externally, this means the ability to control, alter, and destroy larger and larger segments of the natural environment. Internally, terrorist and nonterrorist measures for manipulating consciousness and for internalizing heteronomousness (where the individual exercises little or no independent reflective judgment) extend the sway of society over the inner life of the person. In both respects the possibilities and the actuality of domination over men have been magnified enormously.

The ever more active pursuit of the domination of nature undertaken, the ever more pervasive is the individual's domination, the greater the attained power over nature, the weaker the individual's feeling of the overpowering presence of society. So long as the material basis of human life remains fixed at a relatively low level and bound to primitive mechanized agricultural production, the intensity of the struggle for existence fluctuates between fairly determinate limits. The material interdependence of men and women permeates beyond their local borders. Political domination within and among societies is everywhere at work, to be sure, but it is also severely limited in scope. Slowness of communications and transportation hampers the exercise of centralised authority, which outside the sphere of its immediate presence is restricted to intermittent displays of its might, the daily struggle for the requirements of life normally occurs on a local basis. As mentioned earlier, in all forms of society characterized by class division the natural environment surrounding the individual in everyday life appears as actually or potentially in another's domain. The fear of being denied access to the means of survival is a determining aspect of the relationship between man and external nature in the evolution of society. But in the mechanized agrarian economy both rule and ruled are subject to the parasitic regime of nature: the comparatively low productivity of labor, the paucity of the economic surplus, and the small accumulated reserves of commodities generally leaves the design of every one of these is made at the cost of the other's; in this way the group members come to understand and respect one another on a fundamental level and eventually to love one another. The link between the struggle for existence and control of the natural environment is illustrated best by the fact that the intensity of the exploitative labor is directly dependent upon the attained degree of mastery over external nature. Here the decisive step has been the coming of industrial society: the machine and the factory system have expanded enormously the productivity of labor and consequently the possible margins of its exploitation. Thus the heightened mastery of external nature reveals its social utility in the mounting productivity of labor resulting from the technological improvements of scientific control of the biological systems. But why does there also occur a qualitative leap in the intensity of social conflict? In the first place, the economic surplus, which in class-divided societies is appropriated as private property, becomes so much larger and opens new opportunities for the development and satisfaction of needs, both material and cultural, consequently disposition over this surplus becomes the focus of greater contention. Second, certain types of natural resources (for example, coal and oil), available only in specific areas, become essential ingredients for the productive process. An adequate supply of these resources must be assured, and so the commercial tentacles of the productive unit must expand, until in some instances a demand upon supplies extracted from every corner of the planet. Inasmuch as every productive unit becomes dependent upon its source of raw materials, every actual or potential attempt to discontinue or maintain control over the possession of that unit and to the well-being of its beneficiaries. Since obviously no equitable distribution of the world's natural resources has been agreed upon, the effect of that unmediated dependency is to magnify the scope of conflict.

The imbalance among existing societies in the attained level of mastery over the external environment acts as a further abrasive influence. The staggering geographical immensity of Menus' weapons and the capabilities of the "delivery systems" for them aggravates the fears and tensions in the day-to-day encounters among nations, whether or not these weapons are ever actually employed. The most feared nations in this regard may wreak havoc anywhere on the globe, and those less fortunate must either hope for parity or expect to suffer repeated ignominy. The fact that every social order must fear the dependency of not only of its immediate neighbors but potentially of every minor country—a condition arising out of increased mastery of nature accomplished in the context of persistent social conflict—alters the stakes in the dangerous game of human rights.

A fourth contributory factor may also be mentioned, namely, the extension of the struggle

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A fourth contributory factor may also be mentioned, namely, the extension of the struggle
to the realm of the spirit through intensive propaganda (both domestic and foreign) and the manipulation of consciousness... First, it can be epitomized as the conquest of nature—hence human nature. Imperialism was a political manifestation of the struggle against nature and men, associated with the notion of the inevitable superiority of Western civilization, the means at hand for conquering primitive and archaic peoples helped rationalize the scientific perspective in which they were viewed as inferior. Coincidentally, the spirit of reason, the scientific spirit of the eighteenth century, was transformed into functional, or better, reductive rationality, evident, ideally, in the mechanisms of the market, and embodied in the apparatus of industrial capitalism. The arena for rationalization becomes the whole of human existence; as reason is reduced to rationality, the aesthetic and sensual aspects of the person are repressed, that is, they are brutalized or sentimentalized. The "perfection principle" develops in antagonism to human nature or, rather, constructs the definition of human possibilities.

11. Max Horkheimer: As the principle of the self-enduring glow to win in the fight against nature in general, against other men in particular, and against its own impulses, the ego is felt to be related to the functions of domination, command, and organization... Its dominance is patent in the patriarchal epoch... The history of Western civilization could be written in terms of the growth of the ego as the underlying subsystem, that is, internalities, the commands of his master who has preceded him in self-discipline... At no time has the notion of the ego and the balance of its origin, in the system of social domination.

12. William Leiss: The objective of transforming all of nature (including consciousness) into the material of production becomes central, blindly repetitive, and finally self-destructive. The apparatus of production expands infinitely—steadily grows in its Nicene Creed—while all rational criteria for judging the human value of its fruits are subverted. The final stage is reached when the only rationale for production that can be offered is that many persons can be induced to believe that they really want and need the newest offering of commodities in the marketplace. At this stage domination over nature and men, directed by the ruling social class, becomes institutionalized in the psychic processes of individuals, and it is self-destructive because the compulsive character of consumption destroys personal autonomy and negates the long and difficult effort to win liberation from that experience of external compulsion which marked the original relationship between humanity and nature.

13. Max Horkheimer argued, was always part of the social object he was attempting to study. And because the society he investigated was still not the creation of free, rational human choice, the scientist could not avoid partaking of that hierarchy. His perception was necessarily mediated through social categories above which he could not rise.

14. Stanley Diamond: The self-recommendation from the kinship unit, from the personal nexus that joins man, society, and nature in an endless round of growth, in short, the sense of being isolated and depersonalized end, therefore, at the mercy of demons forces—a punishment and a fear widespread among primitive peoples—may be taken as an indication of how they would react to the technologically alienating processes of civilization if they were to understand them. That is, by comprehending the attitude of primitive peoples towards the alienation from the web of social and natural kinship we can, by analogy, understand their apprehension and fear of civilization. Primitive society may be regarded as a system in equilibrium, spinning heliocentrically on its axis, but at a relatively fixed point. Civilization may be regarded as a system in internal disequilibrium, technology or ideology, or social organization and is always out of joint with each other—that is what propels the system along a great track. Our sense of movement, of inconclusiveness, contributes to the idea of progress. Hence, the idea of progress is generic to civilization. And our idea of primitive society is an existing state in a state of dynamic equilibrium and as expressive of human and natural rhythms is a logical projection of civilized societies, in opposition to the latter's actual state. But it also coincides with the real historical condition of primitive societies. The longing for a primitive mode of existence is no mere fancy, or even the fantasy of the educated elite; it is part of an elemental human need, the fulfillment of which (although in different form) is, as we have discovered in the nations of civilization, a precondition for our most elaborate lives. Even the skeptical and brilliant Samuel Johnson, who deserted Boswell for his intellectual affair with Rousseau, had written: when man began to desire private property then entered enmity, and fraud, and theft, and rapine. Soon after, pride and envy broke out in the world and brought with them a new standard of wealth. For man, who till then, thought themselves rich, when they wanted nothing, waned their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others; and began to consider themselves poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbors.

15. Edward Said: ...a genuine culture refuses to consider the individual as a mere cog, as an entity whose sole raison d'être lies in his subservience to a collective purpose that he is not conscious of or that has only a remote relevance to his interests and strivings. The major activities of the individual must directly satisfy his own creative and emotional impulses, must always be something more than means to an end. The great cultural falacy of idealism, as developed up to the present time, is that in harnessing machines to our uses it has not known how to avoid the harnessing of the majority of mankind to its machines. The telephone girl who lends her capsularities, during the greater part of the living day, to the manipulation of a technical routine that has an increasingly high efficiency value but that answers to no spiritual needs of her own is an appalling sacrifice to civilization. As a solution of the problem of culture she is failure—the more dismal the greater her natural endurance. As with the telephone girl, so, it is to be feared, with the great majority of us, slave-stokers to fires that burn for demons we would destroy, were it not that they appear in the guise of our benefactors. The American Indian who saves the economic problem from salmon-spear and rabbit-skin operates on a relatively low level of...
civilization, but he represents an incomparably higher solution than our telephone girl of the questions that culture has to ask of economics. There is here no question of the immediate utility, of the effective directness, of economic effort, nor of any sentimentalising regret as to the passing of the "natural man." The Indian's salmon-spearer is a culturally higher type of activity than that of the telephone girl or mill hand simply because there is normally no sense of spiritual frustration during its prosecution, no feeling of subservience to tyrannous yet largely inchoate demands, because it works in nature with all the rest of the Indian's activities instead of standing out as a desultory patch of merely economic effort in the 'abode of life.'

16. Meredith Tax: In most cultures prior to that of industrial capitalism, artists have been a well-defined and clearly understood relation to some part of their society, some group of consumers. In a primitive tribe or collective, art is the expression of the whole tribe—later, some people may be specially good at it, or hereditarily trained to it, and take on the production of artifacts as their work, but they work surrounded by the community, and work for the community's immediate and obvious benefit. In other periods of history, the artist has produced for a court, for a personal patron, for a religious sect, or for a political party. It is only with the dominance of the capitalist system that the artist has been put in the position of producing for a market, for strangers far away, whose life styles and beliefs and needs are completely unknown to him, and who will either buy his works or ignore them for reasons that are equally inescapable and out of his control.

PART II

THEORY AS PRAXIS: A ROLE FOR AN 'ANTHROPOLOGIZED ART'.

"The highest wisdom would be to understand that every fact is already a theory." — Goethe

1. The artist perpetuates his culture by maintaining certain features of it by "using" them. The artist is a model of the anthropologist engaged. It is the implication Mel Ramoskend speaks of, an implication of a preconstituted socio-culturally mediated overview. Such a reconstituted overview is, as well, the praxis one speaks of. In the sense that it is a theory, it is an overview, yet because it is not a detached overview but rather a socially mediating activity, it is engaged, and it is praxis. It is in this sense that one speaks of the artist-as-anthropologist's theory as praxis. There obviously are structural similarities between an "anthropologized art" and philosophy in their relationship with society: (they both depict it—making the social reality conceivable) yet art is manifested in praxis; it "depects" while it alters society. And its cultural reality is necessitated by a dialectical relationship with the activity's historicity (cultural memory) and the social fabric of present-day reality.

2. Art in our time is an extension by implication into another world which consists of a social reality, in the sense that it is a believable system. It is this holding up what is often said to be a "mirror" to the social reality which attempts to be believable and real. Yet the mirror is a reflection which we take as being real. To the extent that we take it as being real, it is real. It is the manifestations of internalizations which connect an "anthropologized art" to earlier "naive" forms of art activity. Our "non-naïvess" means we are aware of our activity as constituting a basis for self-enlightenment, self-reflexivity—rather than a scientific attempt at presenting objectivity, which is what a pictorial way of working implies. Pictorial art is an attempt to depict objectivity. It implies objectivity by its "other world" quality. The implication of an "anthropologized art," on the other hand, is that art must internalize and use its social awareness. The fallacy of Modernism is that it has come to stand for the culture of Science. It is an art outside of man, art with a life of its own. It stands and fails as an attempt to be objective. Modernism seems to offer two roads—one might be called the "high road" and the other the "low" road. The high road allowing for an impersonalized other-worldly "objectivity," or with the lower road, an idiocentric subjectivity reified "objective" in stylistic terms on the art-historical marketplace. The choice Modernism seems to offer is one between the personal "other world!" or the objective "other world!" with both being "alienated and politically harmless.

3. Thus the crisis Modernist abstract painting finds itself in is that it can neither provide an experience rich with reality, the kind of quasi-religious "other world" believability which the traditional form of painting was still capable of maintaining earlier on in the Modernist period nor, by virtue of its morphological construction and traditional semantic form has it been able to contribute in any way to the emerging post-Modern debates of the late sixties and early seventies. Modernist abstract painting now finds itself as a collapsed and empty category, perpetuated out of nostalgia that parades as a self-parody, due to the necessities of bankrupt mythic historical continuities, but ultimately settling for its meaning in the marketplace.

4. There is perhaps no better example of how crazed and alienated our culture has become than the popularity of photo-realism. Photo-realism has totally internalized pop irony. Its cold sober acceptance of American society's iconoclastic consumer trivia. Perhaps what the camera sees is the desired scientific/technological view of the "objective" world. More likely, though, a camera is a mechanical approximation of how a committee sees the world. It is the perfect bureaucratic vision of "objectivity." The hand-painted mechanized "objectivity" of photo-realism ends in an unproblematical fraud, of course, when one realizes that the selected pastiches of glimpsed reality are glorifications. Two of photo-realism's major practitioners have steadfastly maintained that they were "abstractionists." One of them even paints the paintings upside down just to prove it. They probably are "abstract" in terms of their meaninglessness and alienation. To be engaged in an activity which consists of mimicking a machine in order to perfectly depict depictions of stoned silent vignettes of industrial or commercial artifacts, to sell on an impersonal art market, and to think of it as anything other than "abstract" would be to invite terror.

5. Our earlier conceptual art, while still being a "naive" Modernist art based on the scientific paradigm, externalized features of the art activity which had always been internalized—making them explicit and capable of being examined. It is this work which initiated our break with the Modernist art continuum and it is this work which constitutes perhaps the legitimate history of "conceptual art." This schism in "conceptualism" which occurred between conceptual theorists and conceptual stylists (artists of the "naive" Modernist variety who consider "conceptualism" a stylistic alternative, within Modernism, to painting and sculpture) was a logical result of the dominant popular art-media learning situation. The work of the original conceptualists (which in fact consists almost exclusively of the theorists) as regurgitated and reified in the art press and presented within the art institutions, only accentuated and preserved those features of the activity which complemented and reinforced the Modernist view of art and culture. All but the style was edited out.
The anthropologist must be such a
dramatist. In conceptualizing a primitive society,
he interprets signs and symbols by exchanging
places with the actors. The study of the artist
as an anthropologist. The artist-as-anthropologist
may be able to accomplish what the anthropologist
has always failed at. A non-static, “ephemeral”
concept of art’s (and thereby culture’s) operational
infrastructure is the aim of an anthropologized art.
The hope for this understanding of the human
condition is not in the search for a religious-secular “truth,”
but rather to utilize the state of our constituted
interactio.

10. There is a highly complex operational
structure to art which one could describe as a kind of

PART III

EPILOGUE

“...the savage has his life within himself; civilized man, in the opinions of others...” —Jean-Jacques Rousseau

1. The Marxist critique as well as the evolving
theory and praxis of art of which I speak in this pa-
paper are features of a modern world. The model of
art has evolved into a viable and workable model
based on certain tenets of the same Western civiliza-
tion from which Marx began his work. In the face of
the conspicuous absence of any sophisticated (that
is, real in terms of its complexity) alternative Marx-
ian model, we must use as a given the model of art
as it comes to us in this Post-Modern period. We cannot
do so uncritically, but in terms of an “an-
thropologized art” such a critique is (along with the
study of primitive culture) basic to the activity.

2. It is almost trite to point out that the “non-
naive” artist-as-anthropologist is forced to become
politically aware. This should not be confused
with art which uses political subject-matter or which
esthetically the necessity of political action. “Pro-
test art” is not artistically radical (it is oblivious to
the philosophical self-reflective historical relation-
between the artist and the concept of art in this
society) but is more likely an ad hoc expressionistic
ad media appeal to liberalism.

3. The life-world of abstracted experience of
which I speak would be total and all embracing
if not for the fact that we are all involved within
the context of a culture, which means that in-
sofar as the culture consists of a generalization of
experience which we have grown up in (and
have been mediated by) then that generalization
of experience becomes an aspect of us. It orders and
forces us (our experiential world to correlate to and
equivivo the generalized experience.

4. The cultural change and growth, rather than
being dependent upon natural events and qualita-
tive decisions within the context of a life which
is statically integrated with nature is, in our civiliza-
tion, dependent upon cultural events alone. Science,
obviously through an empiricist illusion, presents
our analysis of nature as a meaningful relation-
ship with it. Science is a religious-like motor
which is perhaps primarily responsible for the ab-
straction of our natural world. Culture is depend-
ent upon the language of abstraction. Culture means
Of care in a primitive society. On the contrary, there is plenty of evidence that among them, as well as among many other races that have passed through ages and ages of war and strife, some races of human beings have been able to conquer and hold aloof from the influence of this great power of love and passion, which, even among savage tribes, has been the great driving force behind the social and political changes that have taken place in the history of the human race.

The art of music, like that of any other art, is a form of expression that is capable of influencing the emotions of others. It is through music that we can express our feelings and communicate our thoughts to others. In a primitive society, where the arts are not yet developed, music is often used as a means of communication between individuals and groups. It is a way of conveying thoughts and ideas, and of expressing emotions. It is a way of creating a shared experience, and of bringing people together.

The art of music is also a way of expressing the culture and history of a people. It is a way of preserving the traditions and stories of a society, and of passing them on to future generations. It is a way of connecting generations, and of bridging the gap between the past and the present.

The art of music is not only a means of communication, but also a way of spiritual and emotional growth. It is a way of expressing the emotions of the human soul, and of bringing comfort and solace to those who are suffering. It is a way of finding peace and balance in the midst of chaos and turmoil.

The art of music is a powerful force for good, and it has the potential to bring about positive change in the world. It is a way of uniting people, and of bringing them together in a spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood. It is a way of creating a shared experience, and of connecting people across time and space.

In conclusion, music is a powerful and important art form, and it has the potential to bring about positive change in the world. It is a way of expressing the emotions of the human soul, and of bringing comfort and solace to those who are suffering. It is a way of finding peace and balance in the midst of chaos and turmoil.

REFERENCES & NOTES

1. I would like to dedicate this section to Terry Atkinson, whose ability to internalize borrowed material and write papers unainted by appeals to
As we stare into the abyss of recession we shouldn't forget that while this may be a day of belt-tightening and belt-biting, it is an age of growth, expansion. The American Dream is coming true for more and more people, and recessions are only temporary set-backs. Practically speaking, since the American Dream can only be realized through growth, growth itself can only be realized through obsolescence. Certainly General Motors and Ford Motors know this; that their cars lasted longer than a few years there would be little increased employment or more research and development, not to mention increased advertising. And the government contributes its share by getting involved in wars such as Korea and Vietnam, wars that "blow up" money in the form of armaments and ammunition, thereby stimulating the production of more arms and ammunition, more research and development, more employment. I'm afraid, however, that the art world has been badly remiss in its contribution to the American Dream: by presenting art as an investment new many new products increase in value as they get older, rather than decreasing. People are encouraged to hoard art. This is clearly detrimental to an expanding economy. As such, I'm afraid the arts have been rather reactionary through the years. I would thus like to suggest a new game plan for the arts, an "aesthetic of obsolescence", so to speak.

1. Every consideration should be given to eliminating objects all together. Conceptual art is a step in the right direction, though barely a large one. For while conceptual artists have begun to concentrate on the "event" rather than the object, that is, on built-in obsolescence, they should also concentrate on getting support for larger events, employing greater numbers of people. The sky's the limit here, there's no telling how many people an artist with ambitious ideas could employ. And insofar as the Age of Obsolescence has rendered social status to a mere function of physical property, the supporters of such art would thus derive considerable status from their support. Moreover, it seems reasonable that they should also bear substantial tax deductions for this support. A movement in this direction would indeed compliment an economy moving from goods towards services.

2. Objets d'art should be restructured. Painting should be confined to acrylics on unprimed cotton duck, since this makes restoration extremely difficult, and very few people are going to go to the trouble of building hermetically sealed rooms to protect this work from environmental deterioration. Photographs are alright if they are fixed improperly. Sculptures should be confined to materials that will rust or decay in a relatively short period of time. And so on.

3. As a result, all establishments devoted to the restoration of art objects should be abolished immediately.

4. The media should be encouraged to decrease the present 5-year plan of recognition to a 1- or 2-year plan. We've got to keep artists and their ideas moving off the streets. We don't want repetition, everybody doing similar things, or else the status is better enough to support new products would be awakened. As such, the media would function primarily as "talent scouts". Critical responses would be strictly gratuitous, even counter-productive.

5. Though nothing can rectify all the reactionary acts of 1964, perhaps some of the serious national government could stem the tide of economic conserva-
tion by endorsing an "important domain" policy in order to buy up all these works. (Recently anybody, many of them were made under government support to begin with.) Initially this would be quite the status of money, but the ultimate benefits for the economy are insurable.

6. Certain ideas still common to much of art would have to be eliminated in favor of those in digous to a here-today-gone-tomorrow kind of art. The idea of "masterpieces" is clearly outdated. So is the idea of artists as heroes—we don't want artists to sell themselves as objects, even if they have stopped selling objects per se. There are many others.

No doubt some things out. The plan needs to be developed in detail. But it does need to be implemented if the art world is to carry its weight in our pursuit of the American Dream for everyone. In this time of high money it is only a matter of time before the art world regains a substantial drag on the economy's long term upward trend.

Mrs. Ballinger is one of the lads who pursue Culture in bands, as though it were dangerous to meet it alone.—Edith Wharton

We all know the problems of high art and money; most of us feel that we and our work are raped by the market system, many of us feel that we'd just like to work in peace, some of us feel as if we have to overserve demonstration against the market system, as well as to our work, each of us feels entitled to handle the problem in his/her own way. But why, for example, do we find art such a respectable means of making money these days? It seems to me that we rarely give the issue of art and money more than an oblique glance, that even when someone is supposedly confronting it headon, they've always got, in a theoretical sense, one eye closed.

No doubt its unfair to single out one person for responsibility, but Douglas Davis' article "Toward the Billion-Dollar Painting" (Esquire, Nov., 1976) happens to be the last one I read. Davis has been one of our better Luminaries, yet this particular article is no more than a rehash of conventional art world Wisdom. While he gives a perfunctory nod to the milder forms of Marxist criticism, he generally invokes (and evokes) the usual battle cries: "The need for art is an need for an arbitrary value. You must pay for it, dearly, but you do not expect it to function or to mean anything. It is the last preserve of madness.

Now I would really like to believe this. It would be easier and I suppose, in a certain existential sense, safer to shudder the weight of historical Convention. But I don't believe it, because criticism of the market system from this point of view never goes far enough. It just doesn't accord with my life in the art world. Does it with yours?

Most of you are as familiar as I am, of course, with the conventional Criticism: the heavy-handed shake of the Entrepreneurs, the Park-bench money makers, the demoralization of artists' estates, unfair tax laws. But this focus takes the art for granted. What about the ways our actual working procedures, our lives, are influenced? I've found that each criticism, by limiting its diagnosis to a kind of nonspecific "moneymen", ignores the highly specific structure that money engenders in our society and the extent to which I, as a Technician, have perpetuated that structure.

It is no surprise, after all, to hear that we all work, become producers, in order to make money. Nor is it surprising to hear, once again, that we are a "consumer society". But making money doesn't completely satiate the notion of production in our society. And consumption is not merely a matter of buying things, a gross reduction to the issue of believing or disbelieving advertising when we go into a store or the issue of buying art we like rather than art that seems a good investment. In other words, it should come as no surprise that the process of production/consumption isn't merely asymptotic to our lives, something we can forget about (like a job) when we want to. When Conventional Criticism concentrates on the monetary "superstructure" of the art world, virtually ignoring the relation of art to this "superstructure" as well as the relation of both art and "superstructure" to society in general, it poses no more of a threat to our art, or our lives, than a horseless coach to a horse. For not only our work, but the structure of our social relationships in general, is based on specific economic relationships of production and consumption. And for the most part these social relationships, reflecting the economic ones, are based on exploitation, however benign it may appear.

I am sure the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas.—John Maynard Keynes

The following is a diachronic scenario, mostly confined to the last twenty or twenty-five years, highly subjective and antiquated with several synec- chonic (homestatic) fragments. For Davis, like the majority of Luminaries, like most Technicians (Davis is both in fact), in fact the whole art Establishment fundamentally asserts that "Nearly all of American art since Eakins has reacted against the bourgeois notion of beauty" while the contradiction of nearly all recent American art is that the decision which seemed most viable "aesthetically", as well as socially, were precisely those which best reflected the structure of bourgeois society not its notion of beauty. In his article "American Painting During the Cold War" (Artsforum, May, 1973) Max Kozloff begins to expose this structure, he begins by constructing an excellent history of political and social trends of Abstract Expressionism and what emerges is a group of techni- cians defining themselves as an elite, devoid of overt political content, but for "political" reasons of sorts, desperately trying to secure, what, presumably, I will do again after: it runs out (unless I receive another), and since it was difficult doing carpentry and art at the same time, both suffering in the process, I was relieved to say that when I, unexpectedly, received the grant. But luckily I've had mixed feelings about this gift horse, a certain guilt perhaps and some misgust for all our institutions particularly our schools which encourage us to think of ourselves as only Technicians, so that even when we can't make money from our work we rarely invest any psycho-social energy in our roles as "carpenters" or "plumbers" or "window dressers" and professionalism remains to specialize with art, as well as labor. Now this says a lot about the issue of output of productivity, an issue I am approaching rather obliquely at the moment, because "art time" demands more than total economic commitment to making art making sure that one becomes dependent on the vagaries of the market. Most techni- cians affiliated with a gallery, and most of us are or would like to be though, I must admit, for reasons that I suppose will become clear I am not now and perhaps do not ever wish to be affiliated with a gallery, have at least one major show a year. Although there's nothing particularly wrong with this sort of face it, it's one way of getting work out, as is commonlly known a more or less unsym- written, and in some cases no disbelief about the artist's control requires Technicians to have shows once a year or so and while I, personally, would probably have the significant amount of new work in a year and I don't, as a general rule, object to "external" structures on my time, I can certainly imagine times when I might not have a great deal of new work and certainly wouldn't want to show old work or manufacture new work just for the show. But reputable Technicians need to be visible, the gallery schedule needs to be filled in work needs to be sold reviews of works need to be sold, the maninering of "art time"; this is too fast for those who are involved in large projects which aren't, unlike Huxley's proposal to photograph everyone in the world, conducive to yearly "progress reports". Whatever the case may be, we're doing our work, and that's always open to the question of whether we'll have the answer, not that there's only one answer anyway, the galleries and their friendly sidesticks the media are by and large interested in predictability, quagmire. So while I can't always answer the question of what I myself am doing in my work much less the question of what you yourself are doing it is an important question nevertheless, wouldn't you say? Since if produc-
tivity if output become such important requirements we have to question whether our art is much more than a mere commodity something to be exchanged for the security of a gallery. A contract a steady income. This is a difficult question through at the moment I'm really only interested in how galleries force us to think about our work in certain ways and as far as the galleries are concerned the content of shows is important, at least initially, though after a certain point after the technician's reputation has been established it isn't so much a question of what s/he did at this or that show that s/he did it. A reputation then is nothing more than a measure of the value of one's labor and 'creativity on demand' is nothing more than the ability to perform correctly that is frequently thereby inflating one's value on the open market and what are we left with but the general practice of pricing paintings for example not by way of their personal meaning to the technician, if s/he has any and once again I can't answer this question, or any similar criteria but according to size as a function of what the market can bear. And you know as well as I that however sooner or later a particular work by an obscure technician it is better sell for as much as any work by a more reputable one (which reminds me that NEA is not necessarily granting money on the basis of a particular project this year, it is an optional part of the application now. What does mean that they've eliminated or made optional the project because if they've done this if they've eliminated or made optional this, besides i the money, of course, might be personally interesting to the technicians and/or themselves, this questions the question of what they are granting money for. That is we're really interested in the money itself and not necessarily we're going to do something with the money or anyway it will provide money to live on so we can do something and no doubt some of us have more interesting ideas than others. Not that NEA or any organization necessarily grants you what you might consider the more interesting or innovative proposals, but what else have they got to base their decision on now except s/he's reputation as a kind of abstract assessment of one's labor value is what they have got to look at besides career summary sheets prizes honors etc., even if it's relative to age, I mean how much can five (5) slides tell you? And if this is the case and unfortunately it seems to be the case then NEA is edging more towards mediocrity, at least interesting aesthetic genius or maybe even critical support of those it has already granted money to for we're all dependent on galleries the media etc. in order to establish a reputation, and public recognition is always a matter of control and generally a matter of control by those with vested interests in the status quo. It is strange but in some sense galleries for example are more conservative than even NEA even though if I for example were wanted to join a gallery it is highly unlikely that I would be an attractive prospect if only because I don't have a large backlog of relatively consistent work demonstrating my productivity. Though as I admit proposals were doubtless chosen on grounds of bureaucratic stability for the most part it was possible, as in my case, for an individual proposal to outweigh one's reputation and even possible, as in my case, for that proposal to at least question the status quo, at least I think so because this article is part of that proposal, indicating perhaps that the "performance principle" (Morreale) was less in effect or, and this is certainly possible since NEA as a self-determining institution is likely to have somewhat different requirements from galleries as self-determining institutions. Just different, this in an important point I think, the strictures on performance in art, it means not only are we asked to concentrate on output on output on, productivity we are coerced by this requirement to limit or control our productivity to art, whether we want to or not though most of us do anyway, while by the same token other people are coerced into limiting, their output their productivity to what they have been trained for where their talent want to or not. So whether or not at least high art isn't something one does in one's spare time on the weekend, "dabbles" rarely surface in the New York art world because training is much more specialized and serious than that, isn't it? Then art becomes the domain of a relatively small group of producers, whereas art may occupy a privileged position on the altar of many peoples' lives in this country they generally have to confine their involvement to viewing art in a museum or gallery going to an occasional lecture reading about it in an art journal, they have to enjoy it in other words as a consumer not as a producer. Being a consumer means being dependent on access so that even this minimal involvement is largely at the mercy of the limitations of ownership that is the art of museums which museums, and art of museum are many of which are corporations. Being a corporation means preserving the corporation more or less intact and while museums in particular have a great deal of money in a museum they nevertheless have to sell their art sometimes in order to offset operating costs and of course museums without much money aren't likely to have many works. This is one way of limiting consumers though only one way and perhaps not the most important for whatever the financial situation of a museum of gallery consumers are just as dependent on the "aesthetic" policies which determine what the museum does buy and/or show. As long as the museum is in the museum gallery, they may or may not see what they are personally interested in, yet neither stringent financial or "aesthetic" policy is audacious or cynical and that is the problem they are the result of financial necessity or "enlightened" aesthetic policy or whatever, a matter of good faith towards the consumer never questioning consumers itself, I think as Technicians we are all aware of this problem in one form or another, wouldn't you say? Some of us go even so far as to remove our work from the confines both visual and social of museums galleries. Still with the rise of "mass culture" we Technicians, many of us as paradoxically self-proclaimed Culture Heroes, have left little or no need to justify our activity to anyone but ourselves the implications of this position being that the myriad connections between Culture and upward mobility social climbing begin to assert themselves. Consider the "rubies" from Ohio who are perhaps hostile to modernism who walks into the Museum of Modern Art in New York and says Who needs this anyway give me an isolated dazed or outraged or bored but comes to walk around somehow blaming him/herself for not understanding and remember that we as Culture Purveyors probably agree with this assignment of blame, go an education "rubie"? But what if there are valid reasons for this person to disagree modernism? What are the implications of having little or no resonance with his/her social experience except as one more example of cultural hegemony? 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forces its Cultural cultural hegemony by reducing Cultural models such as regionalism or primitivism in fact all other Cultural models to the level of a choice between a savior and a waiter, which means that if people accept this and many do then they begin to direct their antagonisms not towards the class that renders them inferior but towards the people in their own class or those just below them who challenge their cultural aspirations. But this is familiar ground very familiar ground, don't you think hardly occupied by the ruling class alone, since it seems to me that as we Technicians became the sole producers of art we eliminated in the process the need to justify changing the refined aspects of "Culture except on our own terms. We are the arrogant masters of the merchants of power the technicians of power and presumably it makes us feel better by passing people the chance, if only they would take it, to "raise themselves up" habibiah to Culture and under the circumstances this hardly seems an appropriate way of proceeding, does it? Like other things in people's lives art should be "special" not because it is separate from their life to day existence as museum hours force it to be, some consumed on the weekend a commodity over which they have little or no control but precisely because they do have a choice and are able to integrate it into their lives in a meaningful way. And that goes for our lives as well, as I can't think of any recent art from Abstract Expressionism through Art and Language to Conceptual Art that has instanced this consumer-producer relationship at some point if not all the time, nationally as well as internationally, though these more explicitly social issues are not of much concern to Realism which has not instanced this producer-consumer relationship at some point in the way that works of art are being made and sold much more. I am sure all of you have thought of some examples which at least potentially construe this combined social and "esthetic" consideration and at once I have a few favorites myself, people and works I think I have been interested in for reasons that are not, though as you might expect none of them pan out as real social or "esthetic". To begin with there's John Johs or as Kozloff said in "The beginning there was Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg but I want to forget about Rauschenberg for the moment and say that there is something in question about how we refer to objects for example or how we name colors, thereby introducing a kind of alienation from objects that is far from the strategy for questions like sociopolitical implications of object. But Johns also initialed what has come to be called "process art" and this is quite interesting because the notion of labor enters the picture and paintings can no longer be thought of as immediate conceptions, now that this was so easy to do any-
international art is a process of expanding consumption wherein new markets are created for New York ideas. It is financial success through the enlargement of a global market and we also have the satisfaction of stimulating artistic production via international shows, you know German Judds French Ollitskis etc., though Technicians in underdeveloped areas (see So in some developed areas) are really only Consumer artists in that their production of such work doesn’t affect their position in the art system so much as strengthen the art itself lend it international validity and whereas does that lead us in New York, do you think? With the rise of international art markets competition for Technicians, and while this contradicts the way competition works usually (for sellers (in situations other than that of health) it is certainly the case now in arts market due to Pollock’s Blue Poles sold for $2,000,000 to Australia Impressionism prices soared during the recent Japanese version the debate rages over selling American art as foreign investors. It’s clearly to our financial advantage to maintain the independence of a world market in which in addition looks New York as the world capital of that market, so that the socio-political ramifications of consumer international art are thus manifold as are the ramifications of technology in world culture international art and in the end this is a major problem with conceptual art. Since information technology TV video computers newspapers are not inherently capitalist socialists or whatever it seems to me that many information Technicians have assumed that the content as well as the structure of technology is thus politically arbitrary, some squeezing this assumption a little is reasonable and concluding that the mere use of technology itself, merely "plugging into it", constitutes a revolutionary praxis if (properly) understood in McLuhanesque terms. As Less Lewis was a computer terminal in every household and perhaps once a video in every family a ten minute spot on TV for everybody and I still find it hard to believe that technology can be so aggrandized and at the same time so easily dismissed, can it? So technology is amenable to all existing socio-economic systems we can’t deny that and I’m not trying to, though we’re nevertheless faced with the situation of it being used differently in each case and in the case of capitalism it is used to reinforce and extend producer-consumer relationships, bourgeois ideology in general, a computer terminal in every home more likely an extension of existing hierarchy is connected to it. Whatever its benefits the mythical manifestations of McLuhanism are formalistic, subjugating the context of presentation to the form of presentation is content considerate neither aspect from the point of view of social context, such that multiple TV sets in a gallery tuned to daytime programs and a show that exists simultaneously in several cities throughout the world and art and art in newspapers and various media events have all tended to homogenize cultural social structure through the intrusion of Culture and technology, and technology worshiped rather than used dialectically ironically to undermine homogenization. Under the circumstances the desire for art to be like everything else in the world the desire to take over art world exclusively art world response to the art world problems of artists art objects art in galleries etc., the creation of an illusion an obliteration of the extent to which are already is, in the context of our society, like everything else and perhaps more correctly stated was really a desire for everything else in the world to be like art. Unfortunately there are many things in our repertoire of recent decisions which don’t designate the credit of a "mixed review" even for the common practice of more or less reifying the notion of consistency and consistency is refined enough as it is, by constructing a series of closely related works (not to be confused with "artistic work" where a single work is conceived as a system progressing). Now consistency is so suspect, and I really can’t say this too often because I’ll never forget the long struggle to narrow down the creativity needed me —wth the need to develop a consistent personal style no doubt believing it to be the best way of manifesting my individuality and probably expressing at the same time a cultural preference for simplicity over complexity, now consistency is so suspect because it reinforces market expectations of greater productivity greater volume of sales by reducing the variation from work to work. This reduction in variety for a substantial body of work. Of course people want to buy 4 "Morriss" "Judds" almost any long as they look like a "Morriss" "Judds" and that’s one of the reasons I guess but it sniffs of objectification reification to me, I mean it is any different from "a Ford" and whatever called the Communist Manifesto say a "Ford". The specter of Frank Lloyd Wright living Rothko’s studio to score up large quantities of a product series is never far behind us and we are encouraged by the market to more or less repeat history, and remember the notion of a series is an "artistic" decision though not ours alone (e.g. Kandinsky, Picasso Gauguin), and unaccountably we begin to reify both ourselves as people and our work while reinforcing even accelerating the tendency for our labor itself to become an object to impart equal value to almost anything of equal size and scale we touch. I admit I’ve overstated the case as it is in many other cases, in this case somewhat obliquely perhaps in that any model is at best an imperfect fit and the gaps are probably more important than the fits anyway and as I said, I’m not trying to prove anything, though I wouldn’t dare to merely list my points either, an attenuated narrative, for it can’t be denied that some works are recognized as seminal still are there that and I don’t denigrate it. However it’s extremely difficult for the Technicians who did those works to actually sell them for tremendous amounts of money, more like Johns’ $1600 for the ale cans since recognition seminality is largely a function of the market system and you have to be able to sell work in the first place to qualify as a superstar in the second, which means that at far as Johns is concerned the sale of his ale cans for $9,000 means that the value of his labor his name’s value has then accordingly for all his new work and all the old work he’s still have whether it’s artistically significant or not. Since it’s the name that counts and that’s what’s in a name it’s not a long jump to those of us who find a "gimmick" exploit it as much as we can and rely on our reputations to financially carry us through, or those of us who manufacture work in our most lucrative style and cory bring it out of "I am an artist" New York ideology holds the reins of power that art schools departments have spurred us on and the prescribed idea thereby allowing it to create its own market, in other words, one has always had to the New York ideology because it is the dominant ideology it wasn’t the dominant ideology until it was taught that way. It is hardly surprising and no doubt this phrase is hardly surprising now either that the
liberal arts department in particular at least as presently constituted, merely instantiate the class struggle. The society in general is the hierarchy of the art world in general and not only is education a commodity, get an education rule, but the language of liberalism itself becomes the ideal means of generating differentiation at no expense to the status quo. For example when I once applied for a job at a liberal arts college I was told that they already had somebody who did my “kind of work” or so they thought you know the guy was interested in work past 1965 and in elaborating this decision, which I must admit that at the time I didn’t take lightly. It became clear that while the school did have a number of “different” alternatives for students they were all subsumed under the broad rubric of New York Ideology, not as an all emphasis on Abstract Expressionism and augmented in doubt though it’s only a guess by the usual quota of art history courses based on modernist interpretations you know Rembrandt as a formalist.

Women are never stronger than when they arm themselves with their weaknesses.—Madame de Deffand

Hereof this article has focused on various aspects of the market system, many of which exceed the mere presence of money. The ruling class not a commodity based on money alone but a commodity based on institutional control, which is subsequently used in an oppressive manner. With regard to this institutional control the “poor” are sometimes as much as blame as the “rich.” This really applies in the case of high art Technicians. Notwithstanding the fact that statistics of the appropriate sort are difficult to obtain, it seems a reasonable surmise that not all high art Technicians come from wealthy families. In fact, there are doubt coming from poor families. Moreover, not all such Technicians actually become rich. Consequently, in concentrating on the market system in art, particular attention has been devotes to 1) product-consumer relationships, 2) specialization of labor, 3) labor as an “abstract” value, similar to a salary in certain respects, and 4) the oppression inherent in all of the above. It must be noted, however, that discussions of a “market system” frequently confine themselves to assuming that this network of economic relationships is abstract, that is, anonymous. But for me, living in New York at least such analysis would be inappropriate. For example, while the labor of every Technician is assigned a specific value at any given point in time, how is this value arrived at? In addition, who is our abstract market? References to the market are made to questions in order to delineate the degree to which our personal relationships are inevitably bound up in our economic relationships and vice versa. And though it will not be pursued as a coherent position, it could be said that such relationships indicate vestiges of the patronage system; or perhaps they indicate that the patronage system has been transformed somewhat, facilitating the preservation of economic control over production.

In classical economics (Smith, Ricardo), the price of a commodity is determined pursuant to the interdependence of supply and demand: a surplus of supply relative to demand generating lower prices for the consumer, the reverse generating higher prices. But notwithstanding the rise of a more purely capitalist market system, experience indicates that the art world does not operate according to the models of Smith, Ricardo or Marx. The supply is obviously, limited in a fixed manner for dear Technicians, this isn’t the case with respect to living ones. More importantly, inasmuch as the production costs of art works must take cognizance of labor as well as materials it is difficult to determine these costs, as has been indicated above. In any case demand itself is not influenced in the usual manner, by the availability of the product in conjunction with its production costs. In view of these facts it is impossible to ignore the degree to which the supply and demand relationship in art is mediated by history and politics. For the reputations of Technicians, and thus the commensurate labor values ascribed to their works, are completely determined with regard to their position in the hierarchy of art history.

It has thus been characteristic of the present market to increase the number of middle-persons (e.g., Emirisses, the housewives, Entrepreneurs, etc.); the movement is away from the market to production and away from the market to production and away from the market to production and away from the market to production. Middle-persons belittle the official definitions of art world reputations and insofar as they do assess reputations primarily on the basis of art history they, in addition, obscure the extent to which art history itself must be assessed on the basis of political and economic differences. Being a middle-person clearly involves some degree of power and theoretically a proliferation of middle-persons could create a more diversified market. But it might be more appropriate to focus on this role as a sub-class than as a class. Within middle-persons mediate between the financial interests of buyers and the specialized training, aesthetics, required to produce and sell modern art. In view of this structure it seems reasonable to suggest that, in the final analysis, both artistic “diversification” and its cohort critical “objectivity” merely serve to obscure the degree to which ideology is centralised.

In any case, for Technicians living in New York the presence of middle-persons is an index of market familiarization, it is common knowledge that most high art Technicians address their work to each other; while Abstract Expressionism may have instilled this principle in the fullest possible extent it was not, as was mentioned above, atypical. But it is not difficult to ascertain that Technicians also address their work to middle-persons. This reveals an extremely important aspect of the socio-economic structure of the art world. For in view of the fact that other Technicians and middle-persons exist in the audience, Technicians do not have to endeavor to construct an abstract or ideal notion of “audience”. They do not have to predict who they are addressing their work to. Above and beyond the social distance inherent in this situation is the extent to which it expedites the avoidance of the one aspect of economic competition. Per insomar as Technicians know their audience personally they are able to have a certain degree of influence on the sale of their work, making them less dependent on the vagaries of an anonymous market. This is particularly true with regard to New York Technicians inasmuch as they address middle-persons, as well as the important institutions, necessary for an international reputation are headquartered in New York. In this context Emirisses and Entrepreneurs are revealed to be especially significant. Generally speaking these are the people who run as consultants to prospective buyers. They evaluate the “eye” of buyers, instruct them in the intricacies of recognizing good art, advise them as to the relative economic potential of this Technician or that Technician. Put this to an end it serve the interests of both the buyer and the Technician, as well as themselves, of course. For knowing the fact that the buyer may eventually realize a substantial profit from the purchase of work by an up-and-coming Technician the purchase itself inflates the reputation of that Technician, determining that most subsequent sales will be at higher prices. But ultimately, despite market familiarity, Technicians have not had that much economic or artistic power, except as mojors of ruling class culture. While Technicians, particularly New York Technicians, have been able to influence sales somewhat they have still been at the mercy of buyers, insomar as at present no work of art is a finished product until it is traded on the open market. This should make explicit the extent to which Technicians in developed regions are rendered almost completely powerless by international art. Their social context is not structured such that they could exert any economic or artistic influence—at least in the event that they accept international art as the preferred model of art—in view of the fact that they have little or no contact with those people and institutions which actually determine reputations, international standards. With respect to Los Angeles or Rome or Cologne this situation is less of a problem, but experience has indicated that it is just as oppressive in the long run, determining that solutions external to current notions of international art are necessary, whether one lives in a completely underdeveloped region or not.

Conversation is a game of cycles.— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Now what’ve I been saying? What I been saying is our very own market system integrates the art world. Now those are four-bit words, maybe even double meaning, (I mean I don’t want you friends, I’m gonna use em again—from a different vantage point) but I think it’s not a stretch (my meaning) I mean it’s just like blacks and whites being integrated, c’mon it’s institutions I’m talking about, The market system integrates institutions. But you ain’t gonna catch me sayin’ that just cause institutions are integrated they’re all the same. Sure money talks. Everybody loves the sweet smell of success. And art world institutions get the money, and they got the power. But they’re
not the same, naive. And it's the language of money that makes em different too. Why they're even fighting each other for money. Everybody wants their share of someone's apple pie. Course, they're probably different mostly so's they can make the system more efficient, you know, divide up the labor. Like I said they all get the same ideology. But they each get economic power in a different way. Just look around you. Why right here in New York, right here in the Big Apple, we got institutional diversity, you know I said institutional diversity. And I'm not gonna give you only one example. Why my dog Stay could give you one example. And I'm not gonna give you two examples either, because both know you wouldn't be getting your money's worth and I'm an honest man. I'm not even gonna give you three examples. No friends, I feel magnanimous today and I'm gonna give you four examples—and they're important examples, mind you, not your usual chicken-souped ones.

First off, we got the media. When I say the media I mean things like Arfmann, Art in America, Arts Magazine, Soho Weekly News—the stuff we read up on the news. Now the media is always tryin' to strike a balance between what's going on style and hang on to all kinds of trends. On the one hand, I said, the media gives us the news. Now the news comes and goes but to my mind, it's like a mind, they hang on to it like a dinner plate. They tell us what's the "news" in 1. I mean maybe I fainted ten times in a row at the Leo Castelli gallery last week. Now that's probably some sort of record, but you know and I know that ain't gonna make Arfmann no good in the stock market. But they got something in Arfmann and if you keep buying it instead of something else well I reckon you believe it's the "news." Course I can tell from looking at it that the market is in the tank, something that you know your name's in, and I reckon that's as good as an excuse as any. I ain't sayin' I'm any different. But that just means you like to be in the news. Course I can't deny some of you other folks just read Arfmann and Arfmann and Arfmann and Arfmann to find out what other folks are readin' about. But that ain't sayin' much bout news either. So Arfmann and all them other magazines get the market sewed up on news, that's what you might call institutional power. 'Cmon folks, bear it for institutional power. And it's bearin' it for financial security. Course, on the other hand, the

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is the market for art teachers. Now everybody knows where art teachers come from, and that's other art teachers. You gotta go to school to be an art teacher. It's one big family. And a lot of folks are going to teaching full time these days. Some of 'em just tryin' to make a little money extra, teachin' water for a while. But a lot of 'em just wanna teach. And to my mind there's a whole lotta assistant professors workin' with the associate professors and associate professors workin' with the professors—and every body's worried bout tenure—instead of worryin' bout showin' in galleries or museums.

Now I don't wanna try to worry you, there ain't nothin' necessarily wrong with this, it just ain't the many folks in the art world think about. It's like a separate world from the media for instance, and making it in New York, least ways as close as anythin' comes to a separate world. Course I can't deny that just cutting out there ain't much in between. And like I said before, we're all teachin' and learnin' and the same ideology.

Sprinkled in galleries, they're kinda interestin' too. Cause we all know the way galleries like to fence off their part of the market. I mean the O.K. Harris gallery's like Leo Castelli's, you get a different welcome at both of em. So if you wanna buy a O.K. Harris-like work you go there. And if you like what Leo Castelli's got on the front lawn you go here. Course this ain't sayin' much for the art, cause you start thinking one gallery's work's all the same even when it ain't. But at least everybody can tell everybody else where to go shoppin'.

Course that's all most folks kind words for Technicians, includin' myself. But I might as well get to the point as the beef in our teeth, and took our head, we mean we ain't takin' advantage of our position, that's all, commanding at the market. Course all the folks is learnin' bout some new art ideologies, they're gettin' to be like a friend you can chew the fat with every mornin'—different stories, same friend. Wouldn't be so bad if you didn't find out the friend was stealin' you blind at the alte-
be accused of Objectivity in this sense. But it is amazing how much we do subscribe to a complementary Myth of Subjectivity. This Myth seems to date from Romantičism, which was a politico-aesthetic reaction to the strictness of both neoclassicism and the prevailing social reality. During this period, Technicians developed a belief in the power of self, especially the emotions and imagination, to challenge (essentially, escape) this strictness, and as a result they created a gap between themselves and that society. But this position increasingly led to reification of 'society', rendering it an abstraction rather than a shifting set of relationships constituted by people such as Technicians. What Technicians gained in initial freedom and eventual self-importance, they lost in the development of a position which, by and large, excluded them from ever politically affecting the society they were opposed to. In this light, "art for art's sake" becomes our attempt to establish another society of sorts. Also, it's interesting that Dada, one radical attempt by artists to affect society directly, exposed what could be called the Romantic Ideal of emotional spontaneity. Of course, the contrast to both this scenario of Subjectivity and Dada is the radical tactics of Coubert and the Paris Commune, which were rooted in realism, in facing social issues head on, and it is interesting, I suppose, that the idea of the Commune has generally been overlooked by Technicians.

Given what had become an ingrained elitism, however, Technicians were still able to project themselves as highly "moral". This assessment still holds true today. While Technicians, the art world in general, may disregard more mass-cultural prejudices than most people (substituting others in their place), our inherent elitism means that, in a socio-political sense, this morality exists almost by fiat: be a Technician and you're automatically the most morally and socially responsible people around. This hermeticism has meant that we rarely question more basic moral considerations, that is, the connections that do exist between art and a socio-economic system of production which is based on oppression. Perhaps somewhat simplistically I would say that while we have been and are socially liberal or radical, we are economically rather conservative. (I'm willing to bet, for example, that for all the homosexuality and disregard for marriage in art, a majority of Technicians have been members of nuclear units where they were, or were trying to become, the breadwinner. Certainly most high art Technicians have been male. Now I don't deny the extent to which male Technicians, even gay male Technicians, have been supported by women—at least initially and usually out of necessity, but I also don't deny the extent to which most of us have endorsed the social division of labor common to society in general.) So the Myth of Subjectivity, like that of Objectivity, readily penetrates the ideology/structure of our society. And to a certain extent it does this, as I've already indicated, by paradoxically denying the subjectivity of the viewer (that is, consumption).

The ruble of this socio-political implosion, then, is composed of a particular kind of art. If Technicians presume themselves to be a privileged minority, a捧乏of Cultural Wisdom they will tend to construct art which is devoted to manifesting rather than, say, transforming themselves and their knowledge. And no doubt such "internal" strictures as e.g. consistency reflect this process. It goes without saying that the only one in need of transformation is the truly un-Ballinger—and she needs to be transformed only to our point of view. The point is, our social role becomes incredibly ossified in this process just as importantly, so does our knowledge. Our negation of society, by remaining unidialectical, can ultimately do no more than embrace that society.

So we do get back to the question of how to take advantage of our at least potential opportunities for change. To begin with, while I am clearly a Marxist sympathizer, certain assumptions of Marxists about art also need to be questioned. Marxism has been almost promiscuous sometimes in glossifying art and Technicians as reactions to the bourgeoisie. Doubtless this is substantially influenced by Marx's attempt to develop a revolutionary praxis corresponding to his intuitions about aesthetic praxis at the time. But due to a strong pretention for not being revolutionary Technicians. I'm not at all sure that this latter assumption will ever be realized; I'm not at all sure I want it to be. But perhaps, at this point in time, it would be appropriate to invert Marx's intuitions: rather than constructing a social criticism/praxis on the basis of art, we should construct art on the basis of a social criticism/praxis. As such, I am suggesting (possible) praxis which is in contrast to that of bourgeois art where we always assumed they were undermining the bourgeoisie, as well as in contrast to certain kinds of Marxist criticism which has assumed they never were.

As you might have already guessed, I think the most important aspect of this praxis is undermining producer-consumer relationships. (Notice I don't immediately leap to the leap of Socialist Realism.) Suggesting this inevitably involves me in a potential contradiction: this article itself could be seen as oppressive, by treating you as a consumer of my wonderful ideas. I have tried to avoid this. Just because you're reading an article I have written, it does not automatically mean I am a producer and you a consumer. My point of view as a writer, and as a person, has been to assume that we are all implicated in what I'm talking about, we've all contributed to it. Although it is I who have chosen to write this article, I think the most that can be argued is that I have become disconcerted enough with what I was doing to try and stop doing it and that this journal was available to share my discontents—neither of which is a situation peculiar to myself only. And to the extent that we do share these problems we are both subjects, not objects, in the world. One of the reasons this article has at least attempted to be so subjective is to create a dialogue with your subjectivity. It's an attempt to try and talk to you about the art world but to talk about myself in the art world. That includes my language as well as the ideas expressed by that language.

My point is that eliminating producer-consumer relations is the only possible way to give away from knowledge and education which has become rigid towards knowledge and communication which is based on transformation. Ideally, taking with something to do with ourselves and the person(s) we are talking with in the process of interaction: not only that, what we are saying should be regarded as shared, contingent upon the way we are discussing it. When we talk about "acquiring" knowledge I'm thinking of both ourselves and the person(s) we are talking with in the process of interaction; not only that, what we are saying should be regarded as shared, contingent upon the way we are discussing it. When we talk about "acquiring" knowledge I'm thinking of both ourselves and our knowledge as objects to be exchanged, neither of which is altered in the act of "acquisition". As far as this article
nurism. But I think that as we accepted the implications of working together we began to accept the ambiguities of trying to learn from and influence each other. Often eventually (and I mean eventually) carried over to our relationship to our audience. As a group those of us in New York began to develop a fairly intense form of socializing each other, a socialization which was/is/contradictory to the prevailing art world ideology. That is, we began moving away from producer-consumer interaction. Understandably, this was/is difficult. Without delving into the specifics of AKI in New York, it is clear that any group has to deal with the problems of authority. Authority comes in a number of forms: birth (male/female), status (reputation/no reputation), intelligence, wealth, time (self-supporting through art/not self-supporting, need other job as well), and to varying degrees they're all difficult to overcome. But we have to try because advocating different notions of collectivity means, or should mean, advocating different notions of individuality. Inter-subjectivity: A non-reified group is inconceivable without a corresponding development of non-reified individuals—not necessarily a priori, but dialectically, group and individual reinforcing each other. Now the intensity of this socialization is probably any small group's strongest and weakest point. It's good because relatively frequent, direct social contact means that your ideas as well as everyone else's are subject to a lot of stress: learning actually happens fairly often. Moreover, you generally (though not always, certainly) depend on how much authority has been exercised to begin to establish a context of mutual respect. On the other hand it's not so good because, in our case at least, I think it makes it easy to "special" enough to keep on maintaining our privileged position in relation to the rest of the art world. I suspect we may have become victims of our own collectivity, reifying our small, somewhat formal group, to the point that some friends you talk with periodically or a large community group where discussions are generally much less intense (in the way I'm using intense) as the only means of radical action. I personally would like to suggest it isn't the only way. As I've already stressed, while the art world is highly integrated for the most part, its various elements also strive for a certain autonomy. And I think that in the case of Technical...
A NOTE ON ART IN YUGOSLAVIA
ZORAN POPOVIĆ AND JASNA TIJARDOVIĆ

A lot of people in the West associate art in Yugoslavia with Social Realism. According to Western propaganda there is no free individual work in the "communist countries," and, since Social Realism is "official" in the USSR, it's assumed all communist artists apparently must follow this party line. In fact, in Yugoslavia, as well as in Eastern Europe, Social Realism is not an ideology of importance. Today, social realism is a thing of the past, something nobody—meaning museums as well as artists—thinks about.

The victory of the revolution, the formation of a new state, and the close relationship with the USSR, contributed towards Social Realism's development during the immediate post-war years. According to Governmental and party apparatus, art was supposed to be "proletarian in content and national in form" and to glorify the revolution and social development. Social Realism in Yugoslavia did not improve in any theoretical, philosophical, and aesthetic sense since it was content with the direct acceptance of the already elaborated Soviet thesis. In 1948, after the resolution of the Informburo (a very famous period when Yugoslavia opposed Russian domination) new social and political processes were slowly opened. In 1950, this brought about the first confrontations with Social Realism. This confrontation was resolved at the Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in January 1950, where the necessity of the democratization of the social and cultural structure as a freedom for artistic creation was considered to be of importance. This liberation from dogmatism was encouraging for the artists so very soon, at the Second Congress of Artists, another resolution was formed which criticized the previous praxis and theory: "it is necessary to resist the ineradicable naturalism which the artists of the USSR intend to impose on the whole world as Social Realism." Lack of caution in this direction enabled the spreading of unthinking mimicry, neglecting of form and cheap populism.

The Russian avantgarde (the Constructivists, Tatlin, El Litzitsky, Rodchenko and others) represent the first and only attempt at a real integration of art activities into the society. There was a deliberate attempt to integrate a Western influenced high culture (futurism, cubism) into the society, an attempt to do this on a theoretically sophisticated basis. The society (not just a few isolated artists) wanted this, everybody was included in society and this was a very remarkable time.

Just after the second world war, the Western Countries couldn't tolerate the thought that any Communist country could produce good art. It can be said there would still be no appreciation of this period in the West except that years later, similar objects were produced here (during the early Sixties, for example).

In Yugoslavia this Russian art was always appreciated (albeit often for more mystical than formal reasons). But now was Western art rejected. Many Yugoslavian artists lived in Paris and only during the past few years has anything locally promising begun to develop. During recent years artists like Beays and Buren have visited Belgrade. The visits proved negatively catalytic for many of us, mainly because of the amount of money associated with each artist. We couldn't understand what made them—and they were allegedly Marxists—so powerful and important. A lot of Yugoslavian artists did similar work but received no money, no accolades. So we thought, given the notion of the Yugoslavian self-management system, that
we could make something of our own, which really belongs within our society and our culture.

Most Yugoslav musicians and cultural institutions regard as the Official Art any kind of painting or sculpture. For the last few years, however, some museums and galleries have organized a number of exhibitions of so-called "new art." This includes Land Art, Process Art, Conceptual Art, and so on. So the institutions, or certain of them, do acknowledge recent art directions after, say, 1965. There have been amongst some international artists-Soto, Hockney, Yves Klein, Pop Art, New Chinese Art, Maykovsky, Vasarely, the Zero Group, Computer Art, Design and Anti-Design Conceptual Art, etc.

There have been a few groups or individuals in Yugoslavia, working primarily since 1966 in relation to Conceptual Art. They are the OHO group, (K KO), and several of the artists collaborating with the gallery of the Student Cultural Centre in Belgrade. Also to be mentioned are those gathered about the Student Centre Gallery in Zagreb.

The OHO group developed a method which could be called a collective choice of subjects that were developed into individual works by each member of the group. The group was founded in 1966. Its methodology was based on the Fluxus doctrine popular at the time. This propagated an objectivist, extremely "concrete" viewpoint. The work was similar to what critics call Land Art or Process Art. From 1969-70 the OHO group worked on strictly linguistic and diagrammatic compositions which were shown at the OMA information show in 1970. In 1971, the group stopped its activities and went to live in a commune in Sempas, Yugoslavia, only to dissolve a short time afterwards.

The K KO group, founded in 1976 in Novi Sad, is similar to the OHO group. They work in the direction of a linguistic type of Conceptualism. At the end of 1979 this group edited the magazine 'ga', No. 35 which was entirely devoted to Conceptual Art, containing texts by Victor Burgin, Robert Barry, Sol LeWitt, Joseph Kosuth, Ian Burn, Mel Ramsden and others from the Art & Language group. In 1972 (K KO), exhibited at the Bialoweza Museum in Paris. Here they were confronted with "conceptual" works priced in the range of $10,000. This disillusioned and

in order to qualify for an artist's union, you have to prove you are an "active" artist, you have to prove you have had exhibitions, you have to show catalogues, biographies, etc. Since most people do not think that the "new" art just mentioned qualifies as art, this of course creates problems in qualifying as a member in the Union. Therefore, many artists are forced to manufacture paintings and prints-more conventional work with which to qualify. But the Unions do a lot to help the young artists. They organize competitions, scholarships abroad, publish books, provide materials and so on. There is even a law in Belgrade that every new apartment building must have artists' studios. Also, almost every artist is provided with a cheap studio and apartment.

In order to live, that is in order to buy food, travel, and so on, the artist depends on his sales. In the Western sense, there is no art market in Yugoslavia. There is no investment or speculation in art. Work is principally bought by the Purchasing Commission. This work usually ends up decorating bureaucrats' offices. Only the Commission can buy works for the cultural institutions. Museums must ask the Commission to buy the works they want. The Modern Art Centre in Belgrade has asked certain works from the artists of the Student Cultural Centre - so there is some pressure from the museums on the Purchasing Commission to change its statutes, i.e., its purchasing policies, in order to include films, videos, etc. Most works go into government offices and a few into museums. What goes where depends on similar curatorial decisions as those which take place in the West. While some work remains the property of museums, the majority are locked up in government basement vaults and are sold at auctions which are an annual event. The sale of "art" exhibitions which, according to the administrators, might not even be "exhibitions"-but this is beginning to change. If the Commission buys the work of some artist, it rarely happens more than once a year. So that is practically the artist's annual salary.

There are of course a few commercial galleries existing outside of what the government purchases. But these usually specialize in popular middle-class art, more or less what you were there in Washington Square. Some artists get quite rich from this type of work.

Collectors (mainly "professionals" e.g., doctors, university professors) do exist, but they buy works for their own pleasure. They do not trade in art works, though there are no legal restrictions against trading anyway, it almost never happens. This could mean that, despite the purchasing commission, there is some kind of potential usefulness of art itself.

Western art being closely scrutinized by certain Yugoslav artists. It is being seen however, as we hope the above remarks prove, in a completely different context of practical as well as historical/social problems.

II

These and other aspects of recent Yugoslav art must be set against the backdrop of the financial and social status of the artist.

The working people in Yugoslavia are, every month, compulsorily taxed by 30% to 40%. This amount provides everybody with social security, health insurance, free education, etc. The Unions of the Republics (the six republics of Yugoslavia are administratively equivalent to states here) are financially supported by the Republics' fund for culture. An artist who is a member of a Union has a right to social security, health insurance, and at age 65 gets a pension.
At the Projekt '74 exhibition in Cologne, instead of art-as-art we got art-as-politik. But, when the museum declined to accept the latter, it was shown at the Paul Maxx Gallery. This is part of the quantification of quality. Reducing every "quality" to "quantity," the bourgeois society economizes on intellectual activity. It understands "reality" at the lowest cost. It considers all aesthetic factors permeated with immaterial essence. The "magnificence" and "richness of expression and form" of the artwork exhibited at 420 West Broadway are represented as an essence (of culture, of history, of art) which no other language can depict. Any deeper consideration is simply proclaimed pedantry; everything that seems so "natural" to the situation is only a factor of good-show-business.

During our stay in New York, we tried to talk with as many artists and students as we could. We talked about what we saw and what we know of the galleries as well as our experiences in Yugoslavia. That meant we spoke somehow differently and perhaps sometimes more fundamentally. We have the feeling that this sort of "deeper" talk was thought to be inappropriate or strange, or looked on as a reflection of something having its sources in the socio-political system that we come from—-as if we were expressing not our opinion but merely the Official opinion of our State. It seemed to be considered that what we thought or did was not of ourselves but somebody else, that we were mere products, finally, of a Communist ideology—and it is well known what that means. It is equated, for one thing, with Social Realism and that means 'poverty' in art. In New York, it seems that everybody believes they are thinking freely, democratically, as if this thinking has no connection with the society they live in.

New York, New York—Belgrade, Yugoslavia

How should prices of works of art be determined?

Before trying to answer that, we need some sort of an answer to how prices of works of art are currently determined. Clearly, a price can only be fixed relative to a particular market structure. It's widely assumed (and I assume it too) that the sort of market we have is not a decreed market but one subject to so-called openmarket forces—that is, while it might be manipulated, it's not planned or managed. In this sort of market, the price of a particular work of art finds its 'own level' according to what advantages or privileges it accrues in relation to a particular market structure. For example, the established fame of the artist, the current popularity of the style which the work relates to, the scarcity of similar works, the exchange value of the materials or medium used, the newness or oddness of the work, and so on.

'Viewed from the standpoint of the objective relations of capitalist society, the greatest work of art is equal to a certain quantity of manure.' (Marx)

The price of a particular work of art will go up or down according to the number and power of such privileges it secures or loses (not all privileges being equal). A particular work can alter its price by being moved from one part of the market to another (to a different marketing category), where what were once its 'commonplace' features become 'unusual' and the work becomes subject to different marketing modes. This has been especially true of much so-called Conceptual Art where more 'common' commodities (essays, photographs, postcards, etc.), morphologically part of a market with unequal prices, took advantage of the unique commodity market to achieve exceptionally high prices.

What is it we are selling when we sell something as a work of art? This is a crucial point. We're selling certain sorts of rights to a particular property. Setting a price then becomes a way of setting a standard (criterion) for the allocation of those certain rights to what (those rights state) is the work of art.

This has an immediate effect of dividing up the 'arts' according to their modes of marketing. How is this? Because works of fine art (e.g. painting, sculpture, etc.) are the only part of the arts which are directly susceptible to the private property system.

Historical first editions, original manuscripts, scores, etc., are also susceptible, though tending to fall more into 'historically-secure commodities' rather than straightforward 'art commodities.' However, in strict terms of the market, historical memorabilia do function the same as works of art and are valued similarly by the owner. This is largely the result of the autonomous function of 'history' in relation to art production—so that old art is valued for its 'secured-history' and new art is valued for its 'potential-history.' So there is a difference between art and memorabilia—but from the market you'd never know.

But, returning to the point, the market-defined split has overwhelming repercussions on the various 'class' of artists in the various fields of the arts: it determines how we get our incomes, which inversely has re-defined our concepts and methods of production. You don't sell property rights to novels, poems, music, and so on, at least not in anything like the way you sell property rights to a painting. Poems (etc.) are subject to a different form of ownership, 'that laid out in copyright laws.' There's a lot of talk currently about the fact that works of fine art are also subject to copyright
laws—but since copyright is a restriction only on publication (i.e., reproduction); the application of the law seems more related to 19th c. market conditions, since it was common then to sell the copyright independently of the painting in order that commercially popular prints (e.g. chromolithographs) could be issued. In the 20th c. it has become more economically advantageous to allow 'free' reproduction of works, since this is capitalizable in the price of future sales.

To make the point further. When we sell the property rights (to say) a painting, we are transferring those rights. That is, we are transferring property rights we take for granted we own in the first place and that are ours to sell. I know that sounds perfectly normal, I just wanted to underline the extent to which we all presuppose a private property system is 'correct' or 'natural' to the fine arts, and that we ought to allocate our products via that market.

As I said, this market-sustained split in the arts has immense ramifications. Suppose we look at some. It's not insignificant that the work of fine art is embedded in our art as a (more or less) unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original'.) But isn't it a bit curious that we talk so commonly of a painting as unique, but not a poem? What then is so special about uniqueness? Here is the point: uniqueness is the most highly treasured and privileged characteristic in the exchange market. Thus what may once have related to genuinely personal expression has been transformed into an impersonal commodity of 'more' or 'less' unique commodity. (We sometimes use the word 'original').
of diversity.” Samir Anik, *Monthly Review*, Sept. 1974). You would have to be pretty naïve to assume, if the price of your work increased ten-fold in so many years, that its use value had increased 1000% during that time.

Something else pointed out is that, in pre-modern-capital, man didn’t differentiate between the time he spent working and the time he devoted to other social occupations—this would seem to add another argument to a point I’ve made elsewhere, that the economic principles adhered to by modern artists are “out of phase” with the economic world we have been born into, and reflect an earlier, more atomistic stage of competitive market capitalism.

That is, the production market we work in is atomistic and competitive, while the exchange market is monopolistic— speculation in the exchange market makes the situation so fluid there is not able to be a stable estimate of the production value of a work of art. This means we don’t have any stable, much less bargaining power, in the art economics.

Artists’ refusal to put a price on what they produce seems to reflect a fact that artists’ labor has never been commoditized. In this light, the occasional suggestions in places like the *Art Workers News* that the way out of the current market devaluation of art is to set per-hourly rates on artists’ time may represent a state of one of the trying-pain-and-take-the-tide. That notion seems to be all about getting into the wage system, from which there is no exit. Composers’ idea that “the way out of the wage system is through higher wages” is particularly American in its carrot-like solution and has surely proven not to work. So, any attempts to make our economics move “up-to-date” or “realistic” have to be looked at closely to see what we mean by ‘up-to-date”—is there any point hereby are being paid by us, the artists, if a person invests privately in the art market and fails, that’s held as a personal speculation and is just bad luck for him; but if a publicly-owned museum invests in certain artists or styles which then fail to live up to their market promise, the public considers it has a right to be indignant and protest such “waste” of public monies. Clearly there is no strong pressure on museum officials to see that their investments don’t fail and to use the institutional power of the museum to hedge their bets. So questions of what gets hung and what doesn’t, for how long, with what other works, etc. are far from incidental concerns.

Moreover, frequently a sale to a public institution is regarded in itself as “non-commercial” goods which substitute for part of the price (since such a sale counts as a privilege which can be monetized in future sales of other works by that artist). So, often, museums do buy it (and bargain for) vastly reduced prices, even though the work is often less visible (how many works does a museum buy which never get hung?) than if it’s bought by a private collector.

The other sort of “public property” is that which is purchased by a museum which is also a private corporation controlled by persons owning large private collections themselves (e.g. the MOMA and apparently most other museums involved in showing contemporary art in this country). It’s hard to imagine psychological pressure not being felt by the museum officials to see that the private investments of the Trustees are guaranteed by the “public” investment policies of the museum.

*Every two years—formerly it was every year—the Government regulates the public with a great exhibition of painting, statuary, &c. Industry never had such frequent exhibitions, and she has not had them nearly so long. In fact, it is an artist’s fate—putting their products for sale, and waiting anxiously for buyers. For these exceptional solemnities the Government appoints a jury to verify the works sent, and name the best. On the recommendation of this jury the Government gives medals of gold and silver, decorations, honorable mentions, money rewards, pensions. There are, for distinguished artists, according to their recognized talents and their age, places as Rome, in the Academy, in the Senate. All these existences are preferable, like those of the army and the country road. Nevertheless, it is probable that no one, either on the jury, or in the Academy, or in the Senate, or at Rome, would in a condition to justify this part of the budget by an intelligible definition of art and its function, either private or public. Why can’t we leave artists to their own business, and not trouble ourselves about them more than we do about the indefinable? Perhaps it would be the best way to find out exactly what they are worth.* (Proudhon, *Of the Principles of Art and its Social Purpose*, 1865)

At this point, with our whole culture infected by market principles, it’s hard to believe that any sort of market could be as effective or trustworthy standard for sorting out some works as ‘better’ than others, for how much more money, and so on. The market has its own self-interests above all else—that’s to say, it is interested in selling art only insofar as it represents money, and doesn’t go beyond that. So we have to acknowledge, whether it’s the government or state enterprise in the arts, or the ‘semi-public’ private investment, or just private investment, it’s finally all equally hazardous for the producers. It seems beyond the right now to know whether a free market is the best model for an efficient and equitable allocation of goods and free consumer choice—perhaps it is, I don’t know—but it’s a long time since we had anything like that anymore. Perhaps, at some earlier stage of capitalism, the consumer was king, but today the commodity has become king and the consumer is left wondering what use he is other than a function of maximizing the consumer ethic.
Anyway, it's rather tedious to talk about more virtuous methods of allocating goods when we are unsure about how what we are talking about qualifies as 'goods' in the first place. This is seen to raise a fundamental question about whether any sort of property system should apply to fine art. The initial question about how prices should be determined becomes a question of whether prices should be determined. That is, if we rule out the system of private property in the fine arts, there's no longer any issue of price. This would have a momentous effect, disrupting the entire superstructure of Modern Art with its dependence (for inspiration) on an internalized marketing structure.

But of course, that leaves wide open the issue of the artist's alternate means of income—about which I'm as confused as anyone else. To make an example of this difficulty: what would happen if artists were treated similarly to a protected public utility? So that excess of a particular kind of income was not retained by the artist but was either returned to the buyers or distributed for the benefit of other artists or gaining the expected income. Such 'primitive democracy' would certainly alienate the present nature of opportunism towards the market—perhaps even 'externalizing' it, reversing the process we've all been subjected to. This would eradicate all wealth-maximizing behaviour, though the spectre of a perhaps more giganteous bureaucratic leviathan is somewhat terrifying. And further, this says nothing of the questions of criteria (examinations, licenses) for qualifying for such a scheme, nothing about how the alternate methods of allocation of property in art, nothing about whether you would want to fix standard (decreed) prices for works according to size, materials, styles, the number for sale, the needs or age of the artist, or whatever, or not fix any prices, and so on.

It's been argued, and I don't know how applicable it is, that private property is the source of all alienation. It's easy to see that private property creates a conspiracy of property rights, following hereditary lines; it's also apparent how this has been formalized as a 'social system.' And it's certainly true that private property is exploitative through maintaining the economic conditions whereby surplus value can be extracted from the producer through the exchange process. In socialist theory, once private property is socialized, the surplus belongs to the people and the material basis for exploitation disappears. However, in the socialist experiments so far, this hasn't seemed to be the case. So, while I tend to agree that 'the main reason that art suffers in a capitalist society is that it is difficult, if not impossible, to secure in the prevailing circumstances the necessary conditions for the mode of consumption adequate to the true nature of art' (Maximilien Marx's Theory of Alienation, 1970), it doesn't help me. Moreover, there is no 'true nature' of art—no art is independent of specific forms of society, and our contemporary art is probably a good reflection of this society in most of its more impersonal and dehumanizing states: one state of which is an art which no longer has the capacity to change itself or do anything else but reflect the fragmentation of this society.

Our art has lost its capacity to dream.

The big question is the whole property system in fine art and the sheer force of cold cash. Money is without doubt the most imperial form of value, the most widely regarded as neutral. But, in this society, it's the most direct source of power of one individual over another. It would be naively idealistic to think (as Soviet economists were planning as late as 1921) one could simply abolish money, but perhaps we have to make certain areas of our lives immune to monetary exchange. It is a serious question about the determinants of the relation between fine art and money, and what would be the effect of eliminating the modern economic dynamic of art—what would be the effect of establishing art as a non-investment area? Could it even be done? It might be the only way of re-integrating art as a viable social activity and the role of artist as an integrated social and individual role, the only way of having art not wholly determined by the economic world we have been born into, and which has not only the possibility but also the impetus to change itself. There is some urgency in these considerations. There are ever-mounting forces rendering any change like this impossible. Daniel Bell in his book The Coming of Post-Industrial Society (1973) is more optimistic, suggesting that individual private property is losing its social purpose and that the autonomy of the economic order (and the power of those who run it) is coming to an end. He asserts we are witnessing a change from market to non-market political decision-making—the move away from governance by political economy to governance by political philosophy and that means "a turn to non-capitalist modes of social thought." Maybe he's right... but meanwhile the art market seems to be coming even more capitalistic than ever.

The most significant change in the art market in the past decade is the shift in patronage from private to corporate or government sources. Individual patronage has been percentage-wise virtually squeezed out of the market. As a result, decisions of 'taste' have to be justified institutionally or publicly, and so are no longer the prerogative of personal preference: the bureaucrat or corporate manager must not afford but appease his shareholders, workers, customers, etc. The effect of impersonal taste on art is measurable but, in my eyes, our galleries and museums are overflowing with mutations floundering in corporate or bureaucratic standards. In the U.S., the Business Committee for the Arts, a private, tax-exempt, national organization, was set up in 1967 specifically to advise business and industry in greater corporate support of the arts. Has anyone yet bothered to ask what effect this might have on the arts? Is it all really a matter of the more money the better the art? Another recent development, an even more perturbing one, is the so-called 'art investment funds,' corporate-like organizations whose sole aims are to buy art, hold it for appreciation, then sell it at a profit. For example, "if I buy a $100,000 painting today, in 3 to 9 months I want to sell it for a minimum of $150,000. The dealer gets 10% of the selling price, or $15,000, leaving Modarco with $35,000, or a 35% profit."
I want to consider a certain class of answers to the question, 'What do you do?' The class of answers I have in mind interest me because it reveals different conceptions of what it means to be committed to art, and thus different conceptions of what art activity consists in. Secondly, it may also suggest different solutions to the problem of what it might be like to succeed in making one's commitment even nominally intelligible to some interlocutor outside the art context.

Within the art context, another class of answers, which I will not discuss in detail here, would be appropriate. Samples might include: 'Video', or 'Holography', or 'Performances', or some similar sheethand tag. Note that these answers could not be an appropriate response to the query when issued from a viewpoint outside the art context, since they do not by themselves convey the particular use of media that seems to distinguish the art context from, say, television, advertising, or vaudeville.

The attempt here will be to distinguish more carefully some of the differences between members of the former class. These differences are largely obscured by their colloquial character, and by the purpose they serve in common, which is to deflect the question and change the subject. I will proceed by first calling attention to some of their grammatical and semantical implications, both through analysis and through comparison with grammatically similar responses with different subject matter. This discussion will serve the basis for a brief sketch of the logical interrelationships that seem to hold between these answers. Finally I will propose and argue for the addition of a new member to this class of answers on the grounds that it has certain merits which some of the others lack.

i. 'I am an artist.'

Superficially, this is grammatically analogous to 'I am an architect', 'I am a cook', or 'I am a biologist'. But this answer, perhaps more than any other of the class under scrutiny, reveals the problem of identifying one's commitment. While it appears to distinguish being an artist from being an architect, cook, or biologist, it does not in fact, because it is not incompatible with any of the latter. It may be construed as revealing a certain conception, i.e., an aesthetic conception: of how one sees oneself, together with whatever one's vocation actually is. Here the impatient rejoinder, 'Yes, but what do you do?' or 'Yes, but what kind of artist? (A building artist? A culinary artist?)' is not out of place. The scope of this answer is so broad that it is not sufficient to specify one's vocation at all; it indicates only what we may call the aesthetic attitude towards oneself and one's work. In order to determine what in particular the aesthetic attitude is directed, we need more information than this answer alone will yield.

ii. 'I make art.'

In certain respects, this answer resembles 'I make hammersocks', or 'I breed eelies', but is significantly different in others. It is similar in that it identifies the purpose, intentional, telological character of the activity which forms the focus of the commitment. It tells us that, regardless of how this activity may look, it is intended by the agent to fall under the aegis of 'art', rather than, say, 'cooking' or 'biology'. To this extent it provides a partial solution to the difficulty encountered in, for making art is, presumably, not the same as making five-course dinners or small models of buildings.

Clearly, this distinction is highly tentative and open to qualification. But it is at least prima facie workable for the further purpose of identifying different types of the matter. The analogy for 'I make art' in another field might be something like 'I design buildings', or 'I make meals', while the analogy in art for 'I make five-course dinners' or 'I make scale models of buildings' would be something like 'I make videotapes' or 'I do lithographs'. The first analogy offers an intentional identification of one's vocation; it situates our activity within the context in which we wish it to be understood. The second analogy tells us more directly what that activity consists in, and presupposes the first. If one is unclear about the purpose of my, say, constructing small plexiglass cubes, I can clarify that purpose by saying, 'I am making art' or 'I am designing furniture. But if one wants to know more specifically what my activity consists in, 'I make videotapes', 'I make five-course dinners' specifies this.

However, 'I make art' is different from 'I make hammersocks' or 'I breed eelies' in the important respect that to truly to make hammersocks, I have to have successfully made, i.e., completed, at least one hammersock; to claim that I breed eelies I must have actually bred at least one. There are fairly standard criteria which I must meet here, and I may well have tried and failed at either or both of these endeavors. But I can truly say that I make art given only that I indulge in intentional, art-product-directed activity. There is nothing, it seems, that counts as a failure on my part to make art, if that's what I intend by my action, and if that's what I have, in my own estimation, accomplished. I may, of course, make bad, trivial, or unpleasant art. But I can't mistakenly think I am making art but in fact be making something else.

This is not to deny that, to do art, I may be doing something else, like satisfying my ego, giving vent to my anxieties, changing the world, or passing the time of day. But my activity under these descriptions constitute some part of an explanation of my activity as making art; they do not undermine my contention that I am making art. It seems that nothing, properly speaking, can undermine that contention, for any attempt of the form, 'That's not art' only reveals an unsatisfiable discrepancy between the artist's and the audience's conception of art.

So, it exposes some of the teleological kinks in the character of a commitment to art, for failing in one's act means not failing to make art, but failing to fulfill a positive critical response, failing to gain support or approval, and the like. iii. 'I do (am doing) art.'

This actually covers two distinct responses, which deserve separate treatment.

a. 'I am doing art.'

Whereas ii. signifies a purposive, goal-directed activity, i.e., 'does not'. If I am doing art as opposed to making art, I am engaging in a continuous process in which the goal is, so to speak, achieved at each step. There is nothing over and above the activity itself that identifies it as art. In making art I may be interrupted or sidetracked, but my purpose, i.e., the giving about of the state or object that I take to be the art, may be deflected. In this material sense, I may fail to make art not because I was actually making something else, but because my intended goal was not achieved. But in illa. there is no goal, separable from the doing, to achieve. So this answer suggests a different brand of incoercibility: I cannot fail to do it that I intend to do art, unless I fail to act at all; for my doing art occurs at all times in the process. Compare 'I am doing art', with 'I am ice skating.' Failure in the latter activity, thus disconfirmation of the claim, might be demonstrated by my falling flat on my face every time I try to take a step on the ice. But what kind of condition would disconfirm the former claim? What kind of activity would I have to be doing for it to be false that I was doing art? The continuous character of doing art has the apparent effect of mitigating the purposive character of doing art as a vocation, in the sense that doing art can be seen as a purposeless activity the very taking a walk is purposeless. This is not to say that it is random, or unstructured. But we don't necessarily do art or take a walk for the sake of my purposes or goal beyond the execution of the process itself. But if we needn't be able to say why we are doing art, i.e., what we are doing it for, in the sense in which doing art is intentional, or deliberate, requires further scrutiny. For if there is no point or purpose to the activity, it may well fail of rational explanation altogether. Then we would have to have recourse to a casual explanation in just the
I. 

Now I want to comment briefly on certain relationships that seem to obtain between these four responses. If it is true that I am an artist, then it must be true that I am into art. Being an artist presupposes an involvement in art, although the converse does not hold. So we can say that being into art (iv.) is a necessary condition for being an artist (i.). Similarly, if it is true that I am doing art, it must at least be the case that I make art, since the art is produced coextensively with the doing of it. So making art (iii.) is a necessary condition for doing art (ii.), although making art does not imply doing art. And if I in general can be said to do art, it must be true that I make art, since it is true that my vocation, so described, must be instantiated at some point. Further, making art presupposes being an artist; for it makes no sense to describe one's activity as art activity and at the same time refuse to identify oneself in the relevant sense as its agent. (Compare: 'I am not an artist, but I make art with': 'I'm not an artist, but I just diddle around'.)

These relationships can be systematized in the following way, reading . . . = 'implies'; . . . . = 'is a sufficient condition for'; . . . . . = 'is a necessary condition for':

(A) iii. . . iv. . . i. . . ii.;

This says that my doing art presupposes that I am making art, my making art presupposes that I am an artist; and my being an artist presupposes that I am into (involved in) art. These relationships are also transitive: I can be doing art only if I am an artist, and I can be doing art only if I am into (involved in) art. For we can think of i., ii., and iv. as each providing a necessary condition for saying that one is doing art (iii.). Now to say that i., ii., and iv. jointly provide a sufficient condition as well would be to define doing art as the conjunction of:

i. Being an artist;
ii. Making art;
iii. Being into art.

But this conjunction fails to provide a sufficient condition for saying that I do art. For it says merely that if I am an artist, if I bring the aesthetic attitude to my work, and if I make art, i.e. if I engage in art product-generating activity, and if I am involved in art, i.e. have a participatory interest in art from some unspecified point of view, then I do art, and therefore am doing art. This is clearly false, for nothing in this set of conditions suggests the voluntary continuity of the activity (as a process) as itself an intentional and self-conscious feature of my commitment. Nothing, that is, suggests that the art is generated by virtue of my actions, rather than consequentially upon them. This is just to say that the conjunction fails because ii., which is logically prior to i. and iv., fails as a sufficient condition, as demonstrated in (A). If making art fails to provide a sufficient condition for doing art, then being an artist and being into art must fail equally, for the two latter are contingent on the former. It may be true that one cannot do art without satisfying these three necessary conditions. But there is another essential feature of doing art which is lacking in the attempt to define it so far.

II.

Above it was argued that doing art had rather odd odd intentional character. It was suggested that one reason for this is the apparent aloneness of the activity; that the intention to produce art is realized at each point in the process, rather than as an independent result of the process. In doing art, there is nothing over and above the doing that constitutes the art.

Now it might seem that this concept of art activity has rather limited scope. It may seem, at first glance, to characterize a highly rarified and fairly undesirable attitude toward the vocation, viz. the 'everything-I-do-lay-art' attitude. It appears to preclude the sweaty, seamy, anesthetic process of working out a new idea, struggling with materials to make the thing appear the way one wishes, improving on abortive or inchoate beginnings in order to bring the work itself into existence. We may be (momentarily) pleased with the end product, but we might instinctively feel that we should have to have some prior bumbling revealed at all, much less revealed as art. It might be argued that even in the context of a performance, one brings certain preconceptions—well thought-out preconceptions—which are necessary in order to get the thing off the ground at all. And these, we want to say, are not art the way the performance or work itself is art, for we don't intend the former to be art.

III.

I think it is possible to admit the validity of this argument without impugning my claims about doing art, and without impugning the importance of iii. as a way of describing one's vocational commitment. For when we answer the question, 'What do you do by doing art?' we can say that the 'everything we do as artists is art' than 'I do philosophical philosophy' suggests that every word a philosopher utter art is philosophy. The answer indicates a certain attitude to what we do, i.e. what we conceive of as being art activity: we might call this the participatory attitude. To conceive of this vocation as doing art rather than making art is to conceive of art activity as a process in which the agent's involvement at all points is a significant feature of that process, rather than merely as activity directed towards the generation of a product. It is to conceive of art activity as a series of actions rather than as the production of an object. This means to think of one's vocation in terms of oneself as an agent of change, rather than as a medium of change. In the former, it is the artist who does; in the latter, it is, so to speak, the art product which does, while the artist merely intervenes as a condition.

What is in question is the scope of one's conception of this vocation, whether the field 'art' includes what an artist does, or just what an artist produces. Now it may be true that we need some way of capturing this conception of active participation with more accuracy than the notion of 'doing art' permits, for it would be desirable to eschew even the bare suggestion that such participation necessarily implies the continuous generation of art in the evaluative sense. That is, it would be attractive to be able to describe one's vocation as an ongoing activity—in that sense continuously generative of art, without that's having to mean that we continuously generate Art. But we must, for the moment, make do with what we have.

These reflections may provide a key to the logical priority of iii., among the class of responses we have been looking at, for it has seemed that this response provided both the most precise and also the most inclusive answer to the original query: the most precise in the sense that it answered the original question directly, in the same terms in which the question was posed; the most inclusive in the sense that it implied each of the other three responses we considered. Responding in the manner of iii. would nullify the need for ascertaining the
further information supplied by i., ii., and iv. This is to suggest that if we want to properly interpret the question as asking how far we have committed ourselves as agents to our vocation; if we want to indicate the extent to which our personal identity is also our work identity as an artist, then we must answer with reference to what we actually do, i.e. how we art, rather than just what we produce or generate. If we can successfully answer the former, we need not worry about the latter at all.

IV.

Now we are closer to specifying the condition that seemed to be missing in our recent attempt to define 'doing art' in II. What we lacked was a way of directly conveying the participatory attitude, the importance of the active involvement of the artist as agent in the art process. What we lacked, quite simply, was the active verb construction. So proposing the regular intransitive verb to art for the purpose of filling this requirement, I am thereby altering slightly the ranking order of the four responses we considered in the following way:

"Art" bears the same grammatical relationship to 'doing art' that 'working' bears to 'doing work':

a. I do work
   a'. I do art
b. I am doing work
   b'. I am doing art
c. I am working
c'. I am arting

If work (under some suitable interpretation) is my vocation in the active sense just discussed (i.e. such that "I do work" (a.) is an appropriate response to the question, "What do you do?"); then b. must be true of me at some point. And if b. is true, c. must similarly be true. a. implies b., and b. implies c.

This relation is transitive: if I do work, then I am, at some time, working.

Above it was suggested that the 'doing con-

struction implied continuous production of that which was done. If I am doing philosophy, then philosophy is being done, or produced, at each point during which I am doing philosophy, but I can surely philosophize without doing philosophy ('That's life', he philosophized). Similarly, I can work, and work hard, without, as it were, getting any work done. Working (c.) does not strictly imply doing work (b.), for doing work implies that I can, theoretically, get the work done, successfully complete or terminate the process, while working does not. "Doing work" can be thought of in terms of Klyf's concept of an "achievements verb", while 'working' need not. So c. does not imply b. if it does not imply b., then it cannot imply a., for we saw that the truth of a. depended upon the occa-
sional truth of b. And c. does not imply that b. is ever true (although of course it seems likely that it might be), it cannot imply that a. is true.

Now to apply the same line of reasoning to a'. If it is true that I do art (a'), then it must be at some point true that I am doing art (b'). If I am doing art, I must be arting (c'). Hence if I do art, then at least occasionally I am arting:

a'. I do art
b'. I am doing art
c'. I am arting

But just because I am arting, this doesn't mean I am doing art, for it doesn't mean that I am continuously producing art, nor that at some point I will presumably get the art done. I may well never get the art done. Here we find independent confirmation for the analogy. For the objection raised in III. was essentially that even if we art, we don't always or necessarily do art in the sense of continuously producing Art. The notion of arting thus provides a way of thinking of our vocation as an ongoing participatory activity, without thereby committing us to the implication that we thereby get art done (i.e. get Art done). So if we think of

a'. I do art
b'. I am doing art
c'. I am arting

This as a fifth possible response to the original question, we can summarize the logical relationships that hold between these five responses, as follows:

(D) iii. → v. (i.e. a', and b', above → c').
(A) iii. → ii. and ii. → i. and i. → iv. (from II).
(E) [ii. → i. and i. → iv. ] → i'. (substituting (A) for "ii." in (D)).
(F) [iii. and ii. and i. and iv. ] → v. (from (E)).

(F) says that the conjunction of i. iv. constitutes a sufficient condition for arting. Now that iii. is redundant in stating the fact that being into art, being an artist, and making art are jointly sufficient to imply art activity of the kind we call 'arting'; they constitute the participatory involve-

ment (iv.), the aesthetic attitude towards the vocation (ii.), and the vocational commitment to the generation of art products (i.), which characterize that activity. It becomes clear that iii. was simply a rather clumsy way of signifying that activity, with the added inconvenience that it suggested the "everything-and-their-degrees" premise, which we agreed was undesirable. So we can revise (F) to read

This says that if one makes art, is an artist, and is into art, then one are, the former three are jointly sufficient for the latter. We can formulate this conjunction as a single sufficient condition: If I am committed to an active, participatory involve-

ment in the process of generating art, then I art.

That this conjunction is necessary as well as sufficient follows from the character of arting as we have defined it: one cannot art without being an artist, being into art, and making art; for we want to be able to say that, even if the art is never finally made, this activity is what the process of making it consists in. We also want to leave open the question of whether the art is an independent consequence of or coextensive with the process of making it. This was another difficulty with iii., to which v. provides a solution. So (H) (v. and iv.)

That is, I art only if I have a commitment to art of the kind just described, and not otherwise. (G) and (H) jointly provide a definition for the concept of arting:

(G) [ii. and i. and iv.] → v.

The art of an artist is any art which is artistically conceived (by himself and others).

As defined, the response v. tells us in essence that the speaker conceives of his/her commitment to art as entailing a certain self-consciousness about the process of producing art, independently of the actual or final work. It suggests that, in the speaker's estimation, this process is as important as the work itself; and that therefore, the artist conceives him/ herself to be responsible for the particular character of this process as he/she is for its end product. v. invites the further question, "In what does your

arting consist?" and unlike the analogous query for ii., this is not a request for further specification of the art media or product alone, but also for further specification of the actual activity in which the artist engages.

Now it may be that in the description of some particular instance of arting at a vocation, there is nothing about the process which one would wish to leave unspoken. It may happen, that is, that the sum total of this process is little more than thinking, acquiring, and manipulating the materials, refining the work, and getting one's friends or associates to give some form of critical feedback on it. But this is improbable. It is more realistic to suppose that for most of us, the process of arting includes not only these features, but certain morally undesir-
able ones as well, like making certain personal or political commitments in order to make the work accessible to the right audience, undertaking certain undesirable transactions in order to acquire financial support for the work, alienating or promoting alliances with certain people for the sake of advancing one's position, etc. To conceive of oneself as arting rather than just making art is to throw the focus on the totality of the process. It is to imply that we can be held accountable for all facets of this process, and not just for the finished work itself. It is to imply that in being an artist, we have more to think about than simply getting the work done by any means whatever; and that the ethics of the process bear as much scrutiny as the aesthetics of the product.
There is a consensus on the part of the editors that two or three of us ought deal with some of the ramifications of the hydra-headed art-bureaucracy. So, I'm going to begin by propagandizing (i.e., adopting a heuristic) — one which brings me perilously close to the foolishness of economic determinism. Consider the following: that the administrators, dealers, critics, pundits, etc., whose time we are now neutralizing — art, are now, especially in New York, becoming its masters. Has adventurist New York art of the Seventies (perhaps inaccurately) become a function of the market-system? Isn't the market a vector of human relations now a massive controlling factor in the way we now vector human relations? A simplified and possibly even misleading account of how the above has come about might sound something like this: there is a prevalent in the New York art-world a ludicrous model of the individual in society (I say the New York art-world but it does hold, I am sure, for other places too, no matter how far flung. This is because most art "centers" and arts-schools etc.) fall for modernistic hegemonies — this can be known as "the New York connection." This model may be generated and partially characterized as the ideological separation of private from political/social life. Such a separation has led to the celebration of individual "freedom." This appears to the editors as two alarming results. Adventurist art of the Seventies has become an insular and boring spectacle of fads, intoxications, diversions, infatuations, and even the odd pseudo-evolution, all under the platitudinous guise of massive evidence of "creativity" and "artistic freedom." (This "freedom" will always persist in citing as evidence that in this society the artist suffers no overt governmental controls and hence may still be "a rebel"; a freedom which, on the other hand, others see as fundamental to "bourgeois ideology" and its "illusion of freedom".) Tied intimately to all this, as a formal part of the same "form of life," is the astonishing increase in art-world "assessors: entrepreneurs, critics, curators, gallery staff, etc., in other words, bureaucrats." These bureaucrats administrate as we have manifested them as a kind of gloss for the mode of existence of middle-life market-relations. This is a mode of existence in which we become prices on the media-market, in which we become commodities, a mode of existence in which what counts is the demand for what the market defines as your talents, in which all relationships have their monetary value, and it is their monetary value that matters. It is a mode of existence in which we become slaves to the "blind urge" to production-consumption and are thus assessed and administered by the bureaucrats only because the latter are closer to the sources of control (as are higher in the hierarchy). The above may be a bit vulgar but under these conditions I still think our activities become (except insofar as they perpetuate-stabilize the market) largely arbitrary. The reason is that the bureaucrats are able to subsume anything, even the rare cranky-iconoclastic work. The products may change, modifications occur all the time (to endless spectacle), but the form of life remains the same. The art-world market provides the standard of intelligibility. One question to raise about this standard of intelligibility is whether the market-relations are really separate from what we do? That is to say, just how far has market-standing been internalized? I know, for example, that tabid ambition and careerism — almost the New York art-world's raison d'etre are present in myself, even though I'm perfectly aware of their presence. This would lead me to believe, assuming there are others like me, and I know there are, that the market isn't just contingently there, that we don't just create it, but only afterwards get bulldozed by the market. That is now practice with the market in mind (and I'm not loftily excepting my own writing here). So, you can't pretend the market doesn't exist if it has been internalized. This means we have vastly more complex and paradoxical vectors than those portrayed as good and evil. But do they exist? Remember, I'm talking about Angiographic New York adventurism. If you learn about art in an ar-achievement school, this is what you "learn" about. I'm not talking about small town community arts-clubs or even feminist art-workshops, though I do agree with Andrew Mcardel that these may offer some sort of alternative to bureaucratic practice. But what the latter really lack is power, and that's what we're really talking about, isn't it? Isn't this power which en manoeuvres us with what we can call Official Culture? Official Culture seems to be a number of us involved with this magazine to be inauthentic at least today, imperialistic, and sometimes actually strikes us as positively mad. So I want to try and talk about what can be done about this. The hope I have you've got some way into these notes it will be apparent that I think the only real road to change-against opposes means looking anew at our social practice. But so stated that perhaps sounds a little too off-hand. Part of what I mean is this: in order to facilitate some hope of "authenticity" we might have to try and presuppose a tradition (community) which does not embody a commodity mode of existence. The possibility of such an "oppositional alternative" (or numerous such alternatives), if it is possible, can only arise within communities whose sociality (language... grammar...) is its own. There is a sense in which exchange value now represents our standard of sociality. I think we must try and provide a context outside of this aggressive to this apparatus. In other words, look for another standard of sociality. I think this can only be done by self-consciously developing a small community practice. (Not so incidentally, such a concept has, I suppose, always guided Art & Language. However, I myself first became really self-conscious of its potential after I got involved in the work Michael Baldwin did on the Art & Language Documenta Index in 1972. See also some of his and others' stuff on "logical implosion".) One thing I am sure of — it can't be done, not present anywhere, by any means and more adventuristic-revolutionary products (unless these are be embodied). In an "alternate history," whatever that is. These only end up perpetuating and diversifying the market.
structure on which it rests. Now most artists sub-
scribe to a modernist model, including
myself, have a problem-world (to different
degrees) embodies such a compromise. However,
what usually happens is that such compromise is
blurred or glossed over. This is a poor
show; it would however be interesting if the com-
promise were fully integrated into the work.)
Some people also adopt a position of snobbish
indignation toward the walled-in institutions of
Modern Art and I don’t think this is much good
either. Hence we get crate-pot museum-wallless
schemes involving shipping examples of
Picasso and Brafque’s Analytic Cubism out so
the people on Flatbush Avenue can see it—good
grief! "Taking art out into the streets" is to me a
more ramrant form of consumerism than even museums
represent. At least if the work’s hidden away
people have the option of ignoring it, even if it is
"good for them." Finally though, most current
debates for change seem to lead to a "then" swapping
their "professionalism for "ours" and this is
simply to utilize the very same them/us sociology
that has screwed-up the rest of the world. But any-
way, there is at present (as if we didn’t know it), a
stepped-up political debate in the art media.
No doubt (it is becoming obvious to more and
more people that Seventies Modernism isn’t just
goddamn anarchistic but, as a contribution to our
practices, learning, and improvement of mind
and society, actually borders on the scandalous.
It seems to me however that such a debate lacks
theoretical self-consciousness as well as, for that
matter, practical/social awareness. Hence it is
seriously flawed. Perhaps this is due to it being
mostly so far an undertaking for art-critics. Because
of their function, critics are notoriously serious
about words but usually totally lacking in commit-
mment. Or, their commitment is suspect, which
is to say: they are too often afraid to make a
debate that actually causes a stir. Anyway, "art and
politics" becomes one more thing subsumed as part
of Modern Art’s internal complexity. One of the
best ways to maintain a system’s internal self-preser-
vation is to continually try and increase its internal
complexity, hence its steering capacity, while
decreasing the complexity of its environment.
Look for example at Jean Toche’s thrust to kidnap
Metropolitan Museum personnel which was dis-
affectioned by numerous New York aesthetes, who by
this time ought to know better, as "just art" and
therefore "off the record." Also, why does Joseph Beuys’
"society as sculpture" for some reason just strike me as ineffectual aesthetics?
Or, the implications of manipulation seem to be
quite sinister. Now in Beuys’ case his art-world
histories turn what might be some conceptually
useful contributions to the debate into statements
of truly unsurpassed vacuity—cf. "Social sculpture
with ideas." The contributions of Beuys and Toche,
like the contributions of a lot of others, seem to
drift indistinctly about in the kunststuck glamour-
careerist-empty-media until they lack any trenchancy.
And this seems to be what I’m trying to get at
the "media" (etc.) coaxes and severs the ties with
practice. Though this isn’t to say it’s just the middle-
world-asessors-in-the-media’s fault. I think that the
point is more that the art-world takes the edge off
everything—what actually Beuys’ work is strategically
awful—though, from what I hear, I’m probably still
giving him much too much credit. Anyway, the vested
interests are enormous since a trip with money linked
with glamorous narcissism can coerce most of us. If
the French made art domestic, the Americans have
made it into a business—the art-market is reputedly
the tenth largest industry in New York.

3. Seventies Modernism, the embodiment of
undialectical idealism, relegates all market relations
(e.g.) to "incidental" background problems (note
the similarities to the academic philosophy still
reigning in Western countries). That such seeming
"background problems" should come to the fore
can be seen as the result of two things (actually
there are several historical reasons): losing to have to do with the internal collapse of Modernism
itself, but this is beside the point at the moment: first, the enormous growth and
increased power and control of this market over the past fifteen years, corresponding to course of the
thrust of late-capitalism, is staggering. "Late-
Capitalism" refers to the increased degree of
capitalist centralization, concentration, multinational corporate/international automobiles
and an ever more controlled and manipulated market). This means that the stage for what
amounts to relentless art-imperialism is now
simply impossible to overlook. The second reason
these market relations have to be addressed is a
consequence of playing the materialist. Actually,
that is, share, and sharing involves a commitment now to others on the level of their material problems—I don’t just want people to become acquainted with kunstreiche middle-life. All of which means that making something public is propagandizing of sorts. But it doesn’t involve me either snoopishly ignoring people or ramming stuff down their throats. It involves me in strategies which inconspicuously compromise—or could I call it existence? I don’t want to go into this here but instead you should read David Gross’ article “Writing Cultural Criticism” in Telos, Summer 1973. He goes into Kierkegaard and Brecht’s concern with the ideological and moral consequences of modes of presentation. Me talking to you doesn’t involve anything parlorizing like “translating” my “elite” language into awful Artformesque or more publicly unentrenched language. (It happens that some speech, some forms of language can’t be “easily” translated, and that certainly includes a certain amount of Art & Language). Commitment to teach and learn is a commitment first to dialogue, to commonality not point of view or authority. Teaching is constituted through a particular person’s praxis. This is what we’re after. (Otherwise materialist tenets like “existence determines consciousness” don’t make sense?).

5. What does an apparent buzz-word like “bureaucracy” mean? Briefly, by bureaucracy, I do not allude to a massive centralized organization but to the fact that major cultural decisions (which for example determine fundamental things like the way we learn, the practical relations between people) lie out of our control and are now all politically directed through the operation of market organization institutions (e.g., commercial galleries) and private administrative conglom (e.g., here Artrium, the MOMA, etc.). Those who are obedient or unconscious functions of such bureaucratic and chiefl:y bureaucratic. This isn’t intended as a definition at all, but it’s all we need for now. The hope for oppositional alternatives to this has tended to be dealt with as something of a black hole and white hole. That is, the trouble with T. S. Kuhn’s “paradigm change” literature is it seems to imply we “rationally” move from one institution to another. Again, we exchange “chic,” professionalism for “ours” thus allowing me for an alternate bureaucracy. A couple of years ago it was said that we had no paradigm shift to make: a paradigm shift from. However, the logics of Kuhn’s paradigm shifts are still too binary at this stage. I’m not going to end by swapping one monolith for another, it’s much more indebted on the new than on the old. In fact, rather than seeing so-called alternatives in terms of Kuhn’s academic reclassifications, consider even the spirit of Bakunin’s oppositional crankiness in this (1868) edict: “I shall continue to be an impossible person so long as those who are now possible remain possible.”

6. Could a critique of adventurist New York art involve me in acting like an art critic? It seems to me that art-criticism provides us with a paradigm case of what art-world bureaucracy really is. Even when it is carried out by those who are not just participating in careerist self-interest, it’s still close to totally untenable since it treats the most art as rationalistically there and as neutral spectacle. This means a lot of it is bourgeois critique simply, just a celebration of the world as diverse bare neutral spectacle. But critique, when you get right down to it, is basically stuck with some unproblematically and doctrinarily of grading derives its sense from both the commodity treatment of persons as well as from the unreflective, unproblematic and entrenched commodity use of language. The link between this mode of treating “things” and our way of relating to each other (the market form of life) isn’t accidental. The critic matches market force—the voice of things. Contrary to seeking some sort of uncovering of ideology, the critic reifies it. The role of criticism in our situation is not to act as some kind of police-force. Unlike radical theory, its task is to keep order by singling out individuals (creating hierarchies) and judging the worthiness of things. But it has no positive strategy of its own, and makes no demands of principles and commitments—indeed, to do so would be to destroy its precious “neutrality.” It thus appears, since it makes no of its premises explicit but relies on being a bureaucratic functionary, as unreflective. It has authoritarian significance, dearly. For instance, it is assumed as “rational,” a right God given, that the critic “appraise” art-work. But suppose the aristocrats who own the critics? If so, it is mostly written off as sour gra...
in a trade journal so you do select. Most of these selections are done on the basis of "progress" though it appears as if they are just data-collections. Again, there's not a lot wrong with this except that it's a bit superficial. But what's queer is again you've got all this funny middle-ground of ascensors and entrepreneurs (including us artists and our own entrepreneurs) has a tremendous amount of power. The Pollock doesn't compete, it's canonized. That's the whole idea, it enters "history." (Don't you think, reader, that my own grammatical enculturation enforces the subjectivity of the status-quo? Just re-read the above). I seem to be getting a long way from my point. So to restate, the bull-dozing of the individual in this society may be a bit misleading thus described. As I mentioned before, this society is not merely forced upon us by physical coercion, as some societies may be, but there is an internalization of capitalist rule within the very concept of the self. People do equate happiness with the ethic of consumption. The hold is secure enough that even though I have a certain amount of massochistic glee over the current economic crash I'm not at all certain whether I would like to see this society succeed. But it appears that even even the most of this society and its institutions). It seems there is today a gelling of political, economic and administrative processes within a massive overarching apparatus of control over all aspects of everyday life— which might begin to give us some idea of the kind of thing we're up against. Unless it's here already, we seem to be approaching a moment of ultimate totalitarianism. This is not a totalitarianism of human dictators, but one where instead of the self-sacrificing individual, the individual is being subordinated to a host of collectives. However, notwithstanding all this, I still have some kind of hope. Perhaps paradoxically, there may now be opportunity for oppositional alternatives. How might we speak of such? For myself, one may be to acknowledge that the capitalist apparatus has been internalized and that "dis integrating its relations means disintegrating myself." Thus any sort of oppositional or "subversive" critical activity must not and does not mean to be petty, uncoordinated and feeble. Quite the reverse: if I accept the problems of this society, as not just something going on contingently in the background, but as my own problems, then reflect in literature in terms of actions both externally (socially) as well as individually therapeutic. Or, it may be effectively socially subversive to the extent that it is individually therapeutic, or vice-versa—so long as you can connect it all up dialectically. (This kind of conundrum is closely related to the way the capitalist brings workers together in order to exploit them but also creates the conditions for unification.) All this implies an acknowledgment that my concept of myself, my role (practice) is the biggest problem of all. This is, I believe, much more effective than snotty pronouncements from some lofty throne of ideological superiority. Involving an oppositional activity means the gradual deconstruction of many of our own internalized assumptions, we seem to be left as present with two choices: either accept the arbitrariness of compartmentalization under capitalist rule or, on the other hand, we quite self-consciously, in a state of upsurge. That is, "confusion" is the reflection of irrational society, rather than the product of stupidity.

8. But suppose I consider a typical example of art under capitalist rule: formalism, especially in literary criticism for instance, was early on in the U.S. developed by those enthroned in universities and intellectual institutions or academic audience for their influence. It is rooted in University Academia. It is also not an uncommon thesis to consider formalism as rooted in Capitalism. Nor is it uncommon nowadays to dwell on it as a stalking horse. It may be useful here however in providing a common point of reference for further discussion of that even more deadly presence: bureaucracy. Generally speaking, formalism has become a standard in itself for its own interest, often is worthy of interest, that it's autonomous, that cultural and social connections are split from the "result." Under formalism I include all recent "technical" work which is routine and stylistic, dependent on the apparatus. It's a rigidly defined in the juxtaposition and manipulation of spectacles. Arguments as to what's wrong with formalism ought to be fairly standard by now (e.g., it assumes the cultural supports are uncontroversial and only "the product" is subject to change and development). Thus it never questions productivity as such. This restricts art—just as I think Ad Reinhardt clearly saw in the late fifties—to endless spectacle. (This has led to the things that most in my view, even wholly demented and pompous, the celebration of specialization, the real dynamic of avant-garde art in New York today.) Formalism (just like positivism) and our entire ideology of an urbanized (fragmented and specialized) lay capitalist society of hand-in-hand. Usually under capitalist rule the worker is alienated from her or his product (the seller of labour power like the seller of any other commodity realizes its exchange value and parts with its use value—is Capital, Volume I). I suppose that, in an integrated society workers, as skilled craftspeople, control their activities and hence the attributes of their products. Hence the worker's attachment to his or her product results not only from pride in the object of their labor but also I think, crucially, in their personal regard for the community it serves. Now just contrast this to our lives in New York City—under reigning Capitalism (the worker's hope, community goals if indeed there are any), cultural life (if indeed there is any), need not be, and usually are not, compatible with the products of their labor. We reach a state where our work becomes totally alienated from our psyche, and finally our community—and to such an extent that we may eventually be incapable of helping ourselves. Now this may be true of you, or you constitute a viciously narrow Marxist whipping post. I think it's very rare, nonetheless. What I'm trying to get at is this is just the effect of Formalism (and, I think even more relentlessly, of bureaucratic behavior) it alienates the product from community. Allegedly, the only "real" worth of our community becomes something "transcendent," that is, "beyond" the community. You take on an alienated mentality in order to further diversify the history of Modern Art—beneath you service "big" capitalism. You are isolated and they become very effective as a system of work, you work for career. Is argued that the way you neatly package and sell yourself—e.g., through commercial galleries, Artforum, Art International, and, finally, we are enthroned in the most of blue-blooded bureaucracy. The MOMA. These have an implicit structure all of their own which also works towards further reifying and keeping products external to community. Most artists find it increasingly so clear of our "real" community, seemingly "worthless." But even most, in its primary importance, is independent of, even aggressive to, the socio-political base. It wasn't partly because their ideological strategies were romantic, illusion and unable to understand the real power of U.S. foreign policy at that time. In the mid-seventies we were still eating our way to the tawdry baggage of all this. Adventurism is a transfrontiers of a function of the prevailing political climate. It's always theoretical and practically conservative, and it will continue to be so long as that ideology/practice remains un
examine—what it will continue to be so long as the work remains formalistic, etc. (Saying it's a function of the prevailing political climate means that it is conservative. It doesn't mean of course that it is reducible to it.) Formalism is also a con-
venience for bureaucrats of all sorts since our work is subject to administrative assessment much better when it's dependent in the first place on passive consumer production, on alienating prag-
mas, intentions, community, etc. Just think, it's much easier to flog to corporations, and if it has no intentional problematicality (other than to eagerly be part of the "history of art"), then it's easier to pretend it's "international." In this sense, formalism is a muzzled wolfskullbang, maintain-
ing itself by tenaciously regarding 90% of its nexus as unproblematic.

10. I have seen in the U.S., as well as in art-schools in England, students whose work resembles (say) Jackson Pollock's or Frank Stella's but who have actually never heard of either. According to my own observations as well as what Ian Burn and others say, this is fairly jast. So who is the real 
responsible for such a scandal? History, community, intentions, problems of context and society all 
become incidental—just let the students get on with their products: "objects," "things," then no matter what their intentionalinity, their indexical context-
bound nature, you can "train" students to be motivated by external rewards, bureaucratic status. I'm saying that if students' productivity is separable from their intentions (and I think students do have conscious intentions which don't just add up to "I want to join art-historical") then you can gratuitously subject them to market require-
ments. That is, you can get comparisons, I.e., that whole "freedom-for-all" but the goal itself of that "fre-
for-all" is external to its intentional value (in most 
cases that is—when students are not all hip enough 
to become bureaucrats straight away). The goal is gr-
ded by which "freedom-loving" art-educators confer Official-market-status on students' work. (I don't mean to suggest there are no art-teachers aware of this problem, there are a lot.) All of 
which adds up to a set of restraints which are 
viscous, to say the least (I wouldn't mind quite 
so much if the grading were explicit, but I can't 
see a bunch of liberals agreeing on an academic, 
with overt instead of covert rules). In art-education, 
almost more than in art-criticism, we can go 
obscenely if unwittingly perpetuating the bureau-
cratic straight-line. Under the guise of "freedom" 
we get instead an even more insidious power. Com-
parisons are dispensed from the view of various 
texts about "composition," "form," "color," "sp" 
and a mish-mash of misinformation about art-
history as an object of consumption one-goal-
object-after-another. All this readers "learning" 
totally useless in terms of a contribution to under-
standing and community. It becomes completely 
alienated from and is entered into as a con-
tracural relation with "big" corporate society.

11. According to Lawrence Alloway's book revival in 
Art in America (September-October, 1974), 
present opinion in New York often resembles a 
kind of impulsive or accidental Marxism. "Art is alienated when it falls under the general law of 
capitalist production, that is, when the work of art 
regarded as merchandise." Here we are at 
the threshold of recent complaint and dissect 
that a represent a politicization of art undreamed of a 
few years ago. I myself am not of course com-
pletely familiar with "present opinion in New York 
so I've yet to really see the outward signs of this "politicization"—so-called. On the contrary, I 
really don't know what Alloway means. Could it be 
that a Nirvana gradually simply insidious such as 
Jean Toche's kick-up threat or even the related 
"inartistic" scrubbings of Tony Shafrazi? You 
couldn't exactly call thus paradigm of arts of politic-
ization of art a year and a half. Notwithstanding 
this, Alloway does attempt to deal with the prob-
lem of context which I assume is part of his 
"politicization." (Incidently, I'm not unduly 
obessed in Alloway. I wrote a lot of this on holidays in Marykind, and the A in A was all I had 
with me.) As I've been saying, if art isn't just an 
autonomous object, then it is embedded in the 
rest of our social experience. Hence it is a loss 
of a "art" and more a question of "culture" 
this is probably a bit vulgar). Alloway seems 
to recognize this. He furthermore attempts to illus-
trate how for instance Alloway's attempt fell 
which my (and others) manic animosity toward 
formalism? He quotes me (and I know an example of 
form systems analysis): "a number in flight is part of a system that includes electronic factories 
(where parts of the plane are manufactured), the 
training of pilots (the outcome of debate about 
various methods), gas storage, intelligence 
agencies (concerning the targets), meteorological 
sources (weather en route and over the target), and 
so on." He continues: "a system therefore is 
not a system merely composed of related units. If 
we put a work of art in the place of a plane we 
may be in a better position to see it in relation to 
the support-system (previous art-history, age of 
the artist, patronage) nad to the goal." Now this em-
body a kind of anthropological descriptivity. To 
update enquire into "culture" Alloway starts off 
by treating it as an object of contemplation. This 
portion of reality which has "keep-off" signs 
all over it is not in fact a portion of reality 
all-at-it's-part of our practice. It is not nature, 
the form of life is subject to controversy, for 
example, as to whether we ought to have bombeers 
at all. But the above makes it apparent that way 
and a fact subtly abolishes the status quo because that's 
what quasi-descriptive" the way they speak 
about problems without including the speaker with 
us. Thus we are left with a kind of middle-
class, which isn't what "culture" implies. It does 
apply practice and learning, saying we ought to do 
this and not that. Regarding the "product" as a 
down and then "the system" following determined 
"naturally" is of course ideological too. This is the 
ology of "observations." It treats the problems 
of formalisms, of culture, as a critic's problem, 
and that can be resolved by writing the right 
interpretation. It is the domain of the middle-man; 
there is no practice. We remonstrate the possibility 
of himself having to act, to decide, there are only 
scriptions, there are no commitments, there is 
only the midground of unreal half-baked 
deprives, veiled under suspicion of "natural." This 
just an ironic argument for existence. Perhaps 
this couldn't? Perhaps Alloway is not unaware of this? 
However, it isn't just the absence of the speaker 
and his commitments which is troublesome but 
if Terry Smith has remarked and contingent 
to (tendency) ending up with a simplistic model 
the art-world "system" as akin to a natural 
organism which, supposedly, you can do anything 
about. This is another way the status quo, almost 
automatically, really boaters immense just the 
model goes something like this: (1) the artist is the prime mover; 
(2) the art-work the life-blood; (3) the critic the 
catalyst; (4) the dealer and museum the distributor; 
(5) the audience the lapping-it-all-up fodder. Notice 
here how everything begins, everything "from the artist's 
"creativity." To me this is idealistic (and even the 
separate question as to whether the above ought to 
be the case is also idealistic; in fact it's silly since 
it's supposed to transcend practice). The entrench-
ment of such a model acts as an extremely effective 
ideological device preventing us from seeing where 
the real power 
relations lie. So, the vectoring etween art and society can't without furthering 
the hegemony of "neutrality" be dealt with 
descriptively. There is a bureaucratic "rational" 
necessity to leave yourself out of the picture. 
Finally, such vectors must be removed from the 
grey middle-men and regarded as practice. Art and 
Society are subject to material transformation—something which entails that it is "political," 
and perhaps political in all sorts of ways. The vectors 
"art" and "society" are not just hanging about 
waiting for us to fall over them (more grey). No, 
they are causally constituted by the practice, which 
means they "exist" when we get moral, that is, 
consider the possibility of practice.

12. Webster defines "culture" as "the enlighten-
ment and refinement of taste acquired by intellec-
tual and aesthetic training." Does this mean it is 
contingent upon the separation of our practice 
from our social problems? (consider the ultimate 
product of "art" or "design," "aesthetics" or "culture" then the "political" or "more recent, more palatable democratic equivalent") 
The power of such culture just turns the majority 
of people into spectators (consumers or tourists). 
It promotes passivity and we all imagine all we can 
do is watch while this wonderful pageant of culture 
marches by. Here "culture" belongs to people who 
are "just doing their jobs," to "professionals," to 
"experts." If you think about the concept of 
culture in this society, the fact that it is specialized 
is hardly surprising. However this specialization 
is allied with tremendous power. In other words it is 
allied with mass-communication. The whole perif-
dious theory of mass communciation today depends, 
essentially, on a minority in some way exploiting a 
majority. True "communication" implies not
only reception but an opportunity to reply, to answer back, socially, not commercialize. But commercialization, as an effective narrative, is not necessarily a given thing. You consume it because you like it and it's "good for you." If you don't like Modern Art then—well goodness me—you must be an ignoramus because it's inconceivable anybody could know about it and still dislike it. This means, I've learned, about it by assessing it (or most of it since you may dislike details). Hence Modern Art has essentially a form of unproblematic consumerism. Now how does such consumerism determine something, say, like Aesthetics? Most Aestheticians, including Marxist Aestheticians, go on about all that crap about whether art ought or ought not be allied with the working class, treat art only as something we appreciate, rarely as something we do. Aesthetics is to my mind a gratuitous corpus of literature concerned with interpretation, as if that's the only way art can get "philosophical." That is the real straight jacket worn by aesthetician-another philosophical discipline born from occupying, ideas, themiddle-ground. But anyway, this whole notion of high culture can be called Official Culture. It is alienating but this alienation is disguised as "universal," which is another way a privileged class disguises the particularity of its language. It leads to compartmentalization, and so, like this mechanism preserves, your problems are likely to be technical. It seems to me that "art" within such a culture is largely a question of either maintaining or pseudo-problematically messsng about with a bit with subject-marginality. Given this, whether something is art or not doesn't seem to be a question of very much interest, having more to do with enforcing grammatical coalescence. However, it may be interesting as a question if the consideration of such a question can be kept embedded in the relativated "dialectic" of the different commodity/society which are not from this embedding to be judged by some half-baked external standard of "civilized" excellence. This kind of "culture," cannot be separated from our language, our dialogue, our "communicating" and transformed into something which amasses power over others. It doesn't exist apart from our talking together or our consideration, our specific social learning needs. Perhaps I can show you what I mean by making a question of "what is art?" may be modified in becoming)

have this concept of art, how does my concept match yours? Thus the question becomes socially specific, dialogical, not come with attaching an a priori standard of excellence or, rather, not merely "historical." Now, the point is given to two or more, given perhaps a day or two to talk to each other, we might generate enough points of reflection that I'm not sure about the extent to which I've got it. Learn, that is, meaning understanding something of our own problem-world, not just assuming an existing body of knowledge. (Perhaps at this point I ought to remind you, reader, that this is what I am here in this article trying to suggest: that such an implied dialogical strategy, regarding "art" not as a definition of outside of conversation but as a "social" matter embedded in our conversation, may be such an effective opposition to the buidler of Official Culture as well as a way of affirming our own sociality outside of mere contractual role relations. I want to make it clear that I think unless we first change our sociality we won't do anything. In my view the small group commune, community must provide a methodology base—like the family a sheltered space—for our sociality outside of bureaucratic big culture. A somewhat more explicit hope must be consciously developed: culture though internalized becomes externally aggressive (i.e. political). In my view this is the only way left at present to do art in New York—or maybe any- where else is the West. That is, the only way to proceed is to develop a community, a base from which one can try to destroy the markets the mar- ket proys upon. (I want to emphasize also that such a belief underlies the critical dimensions of this article.)

13. Bureaucracy is at work in the world is just like bureaucracy everywhere else. It is fundamentally a method of learning, in the sense of learning that the bureaucratic is resilient in the modern world because of the largeness of its organizations. Nor do I think bureaucracy can be characterized by, is just part of an inevitable historical process where bureaucratisation is just like pollution—the price we must all pay for advancing technology. Huge organizations as well as miniscule "advancements" as small, frightening changes are crucial. In a word, in a lot of recent writings of the Left, bureaucracy is often linked with alienation. Alienation, specifically in the U.S. however, is popularly located not in the pattern of power under capitalist rule, but merely as some sort of psychological problem solvable by individual means. The literature of reactionary thinkers pro- vides many of us with the illusion that the massive social conditioning which goes on today, is really the private problem of individuals. So, here I want to locate alienation at the roots, as a social, not individual psychological problem. To repeat what I said earlier, by bureaucracy I do not allude to a mass centralized organization. I allude or a middle-level mode of existence. In language is that of grading: in raison d'eure market intelligibility. Fundamental problems which the way we map on to each other (learn from each other) as humans lies out of the control of us, and in the control of "massive" market institutions (the ways in which mass-communciation moves us up). The key to the power of these institutions lies in the ease with which they perpetuate and control roles, an ability, which extends not only to the increased number of assessors, but also they exist as well. Since the cultural ac- cumber of the U.S., this special administrative world, half-bred but pervasive, has taken residence at its wildest (though it was of course present long before the post war U.S.-period). Anyway, the interests of market intelligibility, the commodity treatment of persons (largely apparent in the New York "massa- sel) are perpetuated by art-world/bureaucrats who- dain to be (but in fact not) "impartal adminis- trators" of culture. An important feature is that they hold market power by faxing the lines of power. They make decisions appear rational and universal when they are often whimsical, biased, and quite consistently insane. Here I am thinking of, for example, the commercial gallery establishment, performance, and the MOMA, which is also a bureaucracy in the most frequent sense, a ponderous impersonal organization. But as I said before, the first two may be an administered functionality. What does such a person's self-image is almost the same as the self-image of the majority of white-collar workers. Our idea becomes to sell ourselves on the market. Thus our success does not seem from our economic sense, apart from our soci-economic role, our function is the bureaucracy system. Our sense of value depends on our success. Our role: whatever you might call it becomes capital, and the task is to invest it favorably, to make a profit of oursleves. In other words, community exchange is seen as a commodity, turned into assets of the personality package could be interpolated, higher and higher prices on the personality market. Of course, I don't think there is a conscious plot about certain moguls of power to "control" culture. This isn't what I'm trying to get at. What I am trying to get at is that it's part of the aesthetic function of the administrative apparatus to further augment the grey-official alienation of culture. It's a bit like a ship without a captain. This is because the whole art-world bureaucracy is a smooth functioning part of imperialist-capitalism. One distinguishing feature of this capitalist society is it is probably the only society in human history in which neither tradition nor conscious direction supervises the total effort of the community, where the requirements of the future are largely left to an automatic system. Under such conditions, which are obscurly comprehensible now. In New York and the International-Diaspora-as-a-cassus, alienation becomes much more than another embarrassing leftist buzz-word: it is now an overhanging everyday feature of our lives.

14. A "search" "outside" the art bureaucracy magnifies certain difficulties in making our work "public." If you deny administrative outlets you may earn your own victory by denying access to a public. In this book, I refer to the problematic of "making work public" in the kind of concept of audience you have and, as I say, in the second half of this century "audience" has become more a question of a vague rational power construct than a question of mutual exchange or exchange. It becomes a power relation between a producer and a consumer for, from another angle, a power relation between various competing producers, rather than a dichotomy between two or more people with the potentiality for reformation and (re) socialization (learning) of that encounter. The need for a "mass" audience is not just re- stricted to the rating worries of TV executives—it is a need fundamental to the berg in the heart of our present public relations world. So, alternatively to the present system of distribution, if they are to challenge that system, cannot challenge this con-cept of mass audience, since such a concept means power and, at present, without this power one
can't be an "alternative." All of which is reminiscent of some Philosophy of Science controversies (Feyerabend and others). This further suggests that there are even more difficulties with the concept of "alternatives." If alternatives just mean the diversification of present power relations, we're stuck with a sort of mass-communicative hegemony—unless we can work out some "strategic" way of communicating something which isn't just "neutral" and "real" questions as to the relationship between mind, language and society. MOWA travelling ships get reduced to a genealogy of things (mastercultures, no doubt). However, just consider the (potential at least) least useful opportunity for a problematic learning nexus ("translating" work from one historical/social embedding to another) which is instead turned into a form of gross consumer tourism, a spreading of the producer-corpse of static-cultural goods. The reason art can be "international" (a rubric which, as lan Burn points out, is correctly a market not a cultural term. And while I think of it, lan did a certain amount of the gross work necessary to draw attention to art-imperialism, I know this also counts for some of the others) is not the result of any daft McLuhan-like grasp of a "global" village) but because of a global acquisition system, always needing to expand, automatically operating apart from, and systematically but dozing, any local practice.

15. Though it was implicit long before 1978, the emptiness of New York art and avant-gardism. Modernism since this time have been, for me, historically quite remarkable. They are not problems that are solvable by acting the snob. It isn't possible, as I said before, to stand outside of our society and, since we have actually internalized much of its implicit structure—only critics, bureaucrats and those who don't know any better can do that. Even alternatives in the Kuhnian sense can be seen as quite simple. We can (however well, as Lenin did, for legal reasons) commodity structure has sovereignty now (impinging on our very relations with other and finally ruling those relations) is a fact I think many of us are aware of that most artists' operation of their practice quite simply excludes them from dealing with this as a problem. We're stuck in a case with methodology without ideology, stuck with Andrew Menard's "technicians" brains perpetrating a relentless routine. This are reminders of bureaucracy and sociality and the possibility of us acting morally in the face of all that are dismissed as "Leftist" or "too philosophical" or, God forbid, "not art." Which reminds me of the present congealing of recession, inflation and depression, the word "capitalism" is never mentioned in the popular media. The pillar of our economic system, its frailty, is never mentioned.

All you get on the evening news is a string of numbers. This isn't just an isolated neglect; as Gerald Rosenberg remarked, notice how the Soviet Union is always part of the "Communist Bloc" whereas we are simply "the West." One characterization is ideological and the other geographical, it's almost as if the U.S. can't bear to contemplate that in societal relations might not be God-given and natural. Just mention "capitalism" and people get jolting-you at a shit-stirring "Leftist." But, of us react in exactly the same way to art's market-relations—a bit like those men who never tell their wives how much they earn—art is above that. There are a number of artists interested in market problems. This has led, to use the terminology of the revolving money-dubbing credit, to the label "political artist." Within the circle of adventurist modernism such a term is. Carl Andre, presumably because of a broad base, the most interested in the art as political. Nature, Daniel Buren is political and so is Hans Haacke. Though I sometimes think that the work of the other two, while it interests me to some degree, as political in that it is "about" politics, Buren is French which makes it difficult for a lot of us anyway and, although I think of some what he does to have with gaining advantages (bargaining) for himself, I suppose he is drawing attention to the banal power matrix. Haacke's very simple: he comes close to adulating to politics as a kind of alienated subject matter. That is, he always presents us with other people's politics (Reinhold Trutten.) But I have one more thing to say. If we all agree we ought to relentlessly assart art-impairment, then an such an assailing becomes largely a matter of tactics. Or, rather, our tactics should embody alterity (given my earlier reservations about alterity), this means "critical theory" must be informed by (a prospect of) "radical theory." Now make "art" from a critique of the present power-matrix without doing so from the point of view of an alternative seems to question oppositely and jolting to say the least. Anyway, it's basically impossible. However, usually the "alternative" practice is never apparent, and it ought to be if (it isn't just dandyism). All of which I suppose leads me into trying to say what I mean by "politics." I can't come up with a simple definition. Leaving aside the connotations of "political" which have to do with power and authority over others (though these are not simple but difficult and problematic aspects) as well as political in the sense of merely voting, I think it has to do with emphasis falling on elaborating and advocating what is right, moral and ethical. Now, to some this may imply going so far as to advocate alternatives and to others simple acceptance of the diversification of the status quo. But of course both are "political." To me, this makes the purdah's term "political artist" or "political art," superfluous. Unless it simply describes those who are contextually, historically and practically self-conscious—in which case it ought to describe all of us. (That it seemingly doesn't is some indication of what's going on today in the arts/curators.) Now this could go on indefinitely and I don't really want to get into it here. It's enormously complex and hard, in fact impossible to deal with in isolation. "Politics" constitutes a matrix with ideological-artistic relations, in different though overlapping ways, are embodiments of the ought (sometimes of telos). But there is another strange use of politicization, I mentioned it before. It refers to a bare avant-gardist style combined with the expounded of "radical" politics. This is a sort of politicization which is common but hardly serious. It is always safe, making that professional roles conduct—the real source of manie-acquisition hegemony—is quite secure. There was, for example, an interesting article in Liberation on the bombings in Cambodia and the Kent State shootings as there ought to have been, but barely a murmur over the closer to home krass anti-plundering. As William Blake said, "He who would do good to another must do it in Minute particulars." General Gordan is the plea of the soundbom, hypocrite and flatterer, For Art & Science cannot exist but in minutely organized particulars; And not in generalizing. Demonstrations of the Rational Power (Jerusalem.) This is a guide to practice. I don't think this means there ought to be no generalizing demonstrations, just that we better also look closer to home.
It wasn’t a very useful attempt: it simply removed from culture the possibility of practice. My point was you just can’t descriptively treat culture as an object of contemplation. It is something you and I do, not something we discover and then contemplate. I also went into the causes of what leads us to believe it is only up for contemplation—e.g., the assumption of estrangement. There were, however, other earlier attempts to deal with the hegemony of market-relations. Twice in New York in the late Sixties there was the possibility of examining market-political vexing. There was the formation of the Art Worker’s Coalition as well as the Leftist (albeit simple-mindedly so) aspirations of some of what has come to be known as Conceptual Art—this is, before Conceptual Art began to dance along with “narrative art,” “body art” and other move-ments.” Certainly I found Mao’s Ox Practice and Lenin’s Left wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder, especially helpful to me. But anyway, under liberalism, economic problems for example some of the economic consequences of Karl Marx’s plundering—are never seen as the consequences of an essentially exploitative consumer-acquisition-ethnic, but of political mismanagement. It is thought this can be cured by electing “progressives,” getting your own people in power, replacing the prevailing leaders with ones who have less vested interests. I don’t think this kind of liberalism is restricted to Americans by any means whatsoever, but it is often bitterly divided at the national level in a country where the only two political parties with a faintly realistic chance of being elected nationally as present stand for almost the same going-ho-capitalism, where all media-appalling and the institutions, not to mention the programs—for instance, perpetuate this ethic, who can blame people for thinking “politics” is simply a matter of changemakers in personnel? But the AVC gave me the distinct impression, everywhere I went in New York, that museum would be “just fine.” If only the institutions would behave. Thus in their proposal that museum boards of trustees ought to be made up from “one first artists, third patrons and one third museum staff” they confirm a fundamental liberal belief that the institutions are “all right” just so long as we can replace those in administrative power with “our people.” I think a similar attitude informs curvy galleries and the quest for economic advantage; gaining your “fair share” is the impetus behind most Artist’s Union. It certainly seems the aim of at least the National Art Worker’s Community to gain for their “dissatisfied” members an improve-ment of the opportunities to compete. (Trade unions have traditionally been first social and political movements and secondly economic forces, but a lot of people see Unionism as an aid to “merit” economic bargain-hunting which, in this country, for some reason tends to ally the Union with corporate business, and erode a political role—except the conservative role.) Don’t think I’m underestimating the reality of constant pressure to partially surrender our position in order to come to terms with everyday economic realities. Many Labor Unions, in Great Britain for example, find themselves in the paradoxical position of needing to improve their economic standing in “the system” while at the same time working for the eventual overthrow of that “system.” I heard Hugh Scanlon (president of the Amalgamated Engineers and Foundry Worker’s union, one of Britain’s largest unions) recognize such a paradox on Firing Line (speaking of paradox). I mention this since all of a sudden the “work” caught in a similar kind and, perhaps, so too was the AVC. That is, it may not have been merely liberal. But this notwithstanding and whatever the case really was, I think the key to the Coalition’s liberalism actually lies elsewhere. What perplexed me more than anything else when I attended the few Coalition meetings I did (and I certainly don’t want to leave the impression I was one of the luminaries—I wasn’t) was the formal refusal to discuss and debate “work.” I assume, under commodity-market-rule, that “work” is just what the commodity-market says is “work.” A principle way the hegemony of market institutions may be assailed is to make what is and what is not “work” controversial and to keep it contro-versial (though the institutions also have the capacity to totally disregard such a strategy). This really makes work (and I suppose I keep harping on this strategy, not effects (and in an odd way that sounds like Spinoza’s) stylistic. But according to the Coalition “the AVC has never offered any opinions on the content or form of art which we consider the concen of individual artists alone” or, as Lucy Lippard put it, “The Coalition is neutral, it has always been a non-aesthetic group involved in ethics rather than aesthetics.” (“The Art Worker’s Coalition” in Idea Art—another one of those anthologies edited by Gregory paradigms—opportunities—pundits—fatcat). This remarks sums up my real divergence from AVC, “politics.” Lucy confirms, I think, the fundamental competitive social relations through which the power structure maintains the strongest control on organized protest and so-called “spontaneity.” She typically assumes a separation of private from public life. They were all determined to remain “professional” (possessing a positive-technique-privileged concept of “work”) in the face of a system whose most impregnable defense is precisely that its attacks do want to stay professionals. Or, to put it another way: they would not move from the role-structures granted to them by that very same “system.” Without the antediluvian separation of “ethics from aesthetics,” the AVC would have been a much sharper tool. Pandemonium-problematic would have broken through. “Work” may have come from social-practice
instead of insular glamorous glittering caricature. This is because practice, that is the art itself, would no longer have been taken for granted. They chose to regard their role as artists as privileged and the institutions as petrifiedopolitical—a neutral background temporarily needing knocking into shape. It was perfectly acceptable manufacturing massive seances as well as bitterly complaining about the need for commercial galleries. Not that such complaints shouldn’t have been made, just that when they are made from the standpoint of a prior compartmentalized settled interests—purposes, they don’t really seem very serious—do they? Overlooking paradoxes rather than integrating them into work is part of the shallow logic, the “unprincipled peace” of liberalism. This, the impossibility of praxis, amounts in the long run to a surrender to the dead “logic” of bureaucracy. That is, by maintaining the maximum isolation of the individual, the individual finds freedom in “spectacle”—something which leaves the present controlling power roots undisturbed, an exceptionally effective wedge between ourselves and possible social action.

17. I remember finally coming to the conclusion that the impotence of the AWC lay in this refusal to deal with “work”—what we each do; that is, practice. It appeared sure that part-time politicking wasn’t enough, that we now must have a revision of the commodity status of the work itself—at least—what I thought at the time. More rubbish has been written about Conceptual Art than most other art “movements.” This is appropriate since much of it is rubbish. Most of it is usually about Art-history and formation anyway I say “rubbish” because I only really treat seriously, that is seriously qua “conceptual art,” that which I was aware of and the aspirations I was aware of around 1968-70. (Since I am against talking about art movements as manufactured historical niches, seeming to exist only as mainstream media middle-life, apart from what any particular artist does, keep in mind (e.g.) Joseph Kosuth’s work from this period. Actually it accounts for the moral of this story: who pride themselves on being historically minded became remarkably a-historical when it comes to this period—which is too bad in a way.) Anyway, at this time there were certain half-baked “leftist” aspirations which promised to give the work some access to social practice instead of the work simply manifesting the societal status quo—“taste,” “money,” “power,” “privilege”—it might now have access to, now in an ideological way, where we had presuppositions our work was going to reflect. However, these aspirations finally missed the point in a revealing way despite the radical connotations of the object-fraction work, the power structures of the art-world by this time operated totally independently of these. In fact with a “higher” logic all of its own. Suppose I try to go into this a little further, as the promotional cartoon would have it, during the Sixties, some work was made “questioning the nature of the artwork” as marketable commodity. Of course in actual fact and in most cases, the fact that this work could have excited market-spectators wasn’t conscious and given, of some of the work then and since, not even conscious. Most of it was pandemically empty-stylistics. This is perfectly understandable given the Modern Art tradition—most “history” of Dada and Surrealism—not to mention Courbet and the Early Russians—systematically ignored the material-practice problem, which I suppose is fortunate for art-historians since I suspect that if these people treated this work not merely having a whole load of historical niche but actually meaning something in local temporal-practical terms they would have to begin to do history differently or even not at all. Actually, art historians could do with a good deal of mauling-they constitute an army of drones equipped with “astounding” empirical “insights,” fodder which will never run out since there’s always something more and more and more to say about Corot or Courbet Anybody’s pastels. So it seems to me we have yet to invent an effective device for perceiving the middle-life of the status quo. As George Orwell said in Confessions of a Book Reviewer: the worst of the job was “constantly inventing reactions towards books which this has no spontaneous feeling whatsoever.” He didn’t like the job but there are plenty of people (with tenure and who are “well known”) who find it quite to their liking to prolong their own bureaucratic middle-life. But recurring yet another use of the term “in early Conceptual Art there was indeed some (potentially) strategic social-material meaning—never mind what’s happened since. (It should be said that “doing without the object” is not necessarily to question the status of the object. The latter would of course involve us...
HISTORICAL DISCOURSE
MICHAEL CORRIS

Isn’t it about time we stopped treating historical discourse as the “natural” product of “neutral” observation, the privileged “commodity” of historian-critics, and started questioning who’s the propagator of the cognitive monopoly of modernism? Some questions concerning the status of interpretations, as well as the status of the principles, are in order.

In the conventional scenario the critic-historian plays the role of mediator between the “uninformed” public and the “informing” artist. What emerges is the hierarchy of the “well-informed” granting the art-historical prophecy to the “ill-informed.” The historical grant of recognition is tantamount to a conference of status on the recipient (artist), while the appreciative grant of patronage confers status on the consumer.

According to some theories that have bearing on the historical development of the practice of criticism (the public sphere as outlined by Habermas), the current situation of the interpretative status of art-critics-historians is analogous to the triumphant entry of the forces of liberation to the forces of occupation. The bourgeois public space, which was once constituted by all the institutions as democratic checks on the power of the aristocracy, has been transformed into a bureaucratically managed archive, notions of “public opinion” originated in the public sphere. It was a point of departure for effective political action, had meaning for the emerging bourgeois class, and was predicated on the late 19th Century (then revolutionary) ideology of Liberalism. The almost total privatization of the public sphere, as a function of monopolistic capitalism, makes participation in that domain dependent on the economic-ideological resources of monopolistic capitalism.

Given the structural features of the economic activities of the art world, what sort of relationship-dialectic are we to posit for its media? He was lying not far from the door which opened on the hall; a deep keel wound had split his breast. A few hours later, in the same room, amid journalists, photographers and policemen, Inspector Treviranus and Lennart were calmly discussing the problem... One of the most questionable aspects of interpretative discourse is its assumption that it always addresses an “alien” object from the perspective of an omniscient subject. Art objects appear as objects within the flow of time: “time need not like the new. The ‘well-informed, well-served’ reader need only disagree intelligently.” Or, “(the critic) records rather than reformulates, discusses rather than disposes.”

“...no need to look for a three-legged cat here,” Treviranus was saying as he brandished an impetuous cigar. We all know that the Tetarch of Gallicia owns the finest sphinges in the world. Someone, intending to steal them, must have阴影ed in there by mistake. Yarmolinsky got up. The robber had to kill him. How does it sound to you?...”

Hermeneneutics—the formalized discourse of interpretation—is a rational enterprise (even though it appears to be the context of the development of the natural sciences as proceeding from a different methodological framework than the natural sciences). “Rational because Hermeneneutics does not question the basic presupposition of objectivity. The 19th Century founder of the cultural sciences was convinced that the object of their inquiries was the “comprehensive life-context.” They specified a different kind of object: domain rather than science, one that was constituted by allegiance and not subject to the monopolistic epistemological claims of positivism. (“knowledge” is identified with the result of an inquiry exemplified by physics). The interpretation towards that “object” did not differ fundamentally from the conception of the natural sciences, but rather quantitatively.

The terminal objective for the proponents of 19th Century Geisteswissenschaften was their inquiry to reconcile their belief in the virtues and possibility of a cultural science with their concept of understanding. “Nature we explain, psychic life we understand.” (Dilthey). What was to be understood was the symbolic structure of the expression of the “life-experience.” They were to go from the “space between projection and acting projected” which was “dark and void.” The theoretical model is one postulated on empathy, understanding as a subjective experience. The most valid reason for contact between critic and artist is that the critic becomes close enough to the art-making experience to understand and operate as well as admire the whole complex situation in which it was done. 2

The model for cultural creation is romantic: the representation of an inner state through sign-given in external experience. To correctly understand these signs, we must reconstruct them experientially as the “sensus et faciem convertent.”

One of the first conditions for the possibility of historical science is that I myself am a historical being who tells history.

Dilthey

“...you’ll reply that reality hasn’t the least obligation to be interesting. And I’ll answer you that reality may avoid that obligation but that it doesn’t have to. In the hypothesis that you propose, chance intervenes copiously. Here we have ideal rabbit. I would prefer a purely rubblish explanation, not the imaginary machineries of an imaginary robber.”

While Dilthey and other cultural scientists like him failed to deal with was the “theory lacedness” of observation, and the “impure” (from the point of view of scientific propaganda) observational account that followed. They recognize this in their attempt to justify a cultural science on methodological grounds.

In that context, “meaning” continues to have the status of a fact, an empirical given. That is, interpretation presumes certain necessary relationships in the domain of culture, while simultaneously eliminating all contingency. The possible inadequacy of this methodology is never hinted at; yet all problems of interpretation are framed by it.

Dilthey recognized that “interpretation would be impossible if the expressions of life were totally alien... unnecessary if there was nothing alien in them.” Initially there was no place for the “thing” alien that the art of understanding has to assimilate.

Dilthey also recognized that the dialogical commodity of a community was crucial in constituting the various aspects of their intersubjectivity (I am paraphrasing this in terms of the history of Art & Language discourse). Dilthey was too much the rationalist to admit the notion of contingency as an epistemological limit applied to his system. For him, the frayed of language was something of an obstacle to be overcome; ideally through hermeneutic. Oddly enough, Dilthey assumed authenticity as characteristic of the totality of relationships between individuals in a society and their cultural products. Conventionality is not mentioned, since Dilthey does not assume a hierarchical relationship between the interpreter and the object of interpretation; for, in his view, the contretemps is immanent in language. This notion exists currently as the doctrine that works of art are reducible to expressions of in a symbolic language. The critic merely breaks the code (Kocher, in The Shape of Time, reads it as a “possible partial decoding of a symbolic language” by stating “the structural forms (of things) can be sensed independently of meaning.”

Interpretive schemes cannot be as compelling as the myth of the scientific rationalist, since it frame themselves in their own language. As methodology is the key, professional interpreters are always looking optimistically towards the development of “evocative or” to the solution of their task, just as natural-scientific inquiry has evolved over new refinements of the experiment.

Awareness of contemporary attitude, mood, issues, must be backed up by a set of working criteria, constantly in the experimental stage, which emerge and change, though not radically, with each new work confronted.”
All those logical hairs of Dillthey are caught in a coruscating light. In deprecation, the contemplative mood of pure descriptivism is taken up—the radical empiricism of modernist criticism/history... "that indefinable faculty, a good eye.", 11

Historians and critics persist, because at virtuous specialists they are relevant to the rational administration of a far-flung art-market-system. When, "cultural objects" are further reduced to commodities it is not so much a question of rescuing interpretation, but a question of "rescuing" the consumer from the contemplative relationship to these objects. "Democratic access" to objects of contemplation is ludicrous: it simply exposes everyone to the same cultural hegemony. Art history/ Criticism, like all control systems, depends on maintaining a monopoly position. Risks? As William Burroughs puts it, the con cop's arm around your shoulder, his soft persuasive voice in your ear, are indeed sweet nothings without the tough cop's blackjack.

Sometimes I feel as if there is no escape from those sweet nothings. "Demateralised art is post-esthetic in its increasingly nonvisual emphases. The visual figure in the narrative is still an aesthetic, as implied in frequent statements by mathematicians and scientists about the beauty of an equation, formula, or solution." 12 Or, "...the artistic work appears to be endowed with a certain internal coherence and relative autonomy which thwart its reduction to a mere ideological phenomenon... (However) to characterize art according to this ideological content ignores a key historical fact: class ideologies come and go, but true art persists." 13 Further back, this saliency in the value of art and the importance of its nature as something wholly above history and society, rests upon the fact that in art we find above all a dialogue between man and nature. 14

Let's consider the transformation of our relationship, as critics and historians, discourse as technical into practical. From the point of view of its origination, historical discourse can be construed in at least two ways. These being (1) a body of discourse given to us by history, and (2) what we ourselves have to say about our history. This means a bit more than passing judgment on the manner in which we are "positioned" in conventional art history/criticism by historians/ critics.

If we consider our relationship to the discourse of historians and critics in a technical sense, we are talking about their organization of means (philosophical history...), the selection of their criteria, and our selection of alternatives within the parameters of that given methodological frame. It becomes a matter of how we can best deal with historical discourse in terms of our own interests. This is a bad situation. But for those who wish to make the best of a bad situation, there is feminist art history. A relatively persistent tendency on the part of certain feminist art historians (Cindy Nemser) has been the insertion of historical discourse referring to domestic artifacts or works of high art produced by women (i.e. their selection of alternatives) into an institutionalized framework of history (i.e. the given parameters of academic art history; a science of history). Their aim, the reconstruction of a history of art relative to the needs of women and/or the re-constitution of male-dominated art history with women's art, seems to have been programmatically reduced to either the construction of the constitutive subject matter of a given body of historical discourse, or the proliferation of pigeon-holes in a conventionalist's cataloguing of 'art'. In this sense, the work of a historian that speaks to one's own conditions has been reduced to a technical problem, since feminist art historians have already presupposed the usefulness of the historical perspective. But this is not to say that it is exclusively a technical problem: we ought to acknowledge the further ideological importance of acquiring a supportive history... and this is certainly problematic from the point of view of a male artist's critique of a woman's point of view of the art world.

Feminist Art Journal, A.I.R., etc., take notice: "A central problem of women determining strategy for the women's movement is how to relate to the male left (or, the male artist)....we do not want to take their studies operandi as ours, because we have seen them as a perpetuation of patriarchal, and latterly, capitalist values... What we definitely do not want is more structures and rules, providing us with easy answers, prefabricated alternatives, and no room in which to create our own way of life." 15

What Cathy Levine wants to avoid is the "tyranny of tyranny...", the invasion of Ms. magazine or the New York Times. The New Woman, middle-class, college educated, male-associated you can't have your share of the American Pie-values into a woman's cultural movement that finds pre-coded roles as a (Protestant) Jewish worker acceptable.

I have to agree with Lefebvre that "history is a process and history as a science do not coincide, though they converge..." To us who are yet to secure our own history, the de-institutionalization of art history hardly seems an appropriate concern. But I recognize that the Feminist Art Journal, Cindy Nemser, A.I.R., etc., neither represent the totality of feminist political ideological sympathies among women artists in New York, nor can they be expected to waive responsibility for the promotion of Ine, authoritative art history. I am perfectly willing to support my claim on their own premises (although it is nowhere near Johns Hopkins Hospital). To do otherwise, it would seem, would be to practice the worst sort of concession.

When I began to think about my relationship to an art history...historical discourse... I had some of these problems in mind. Reconstructing a history in resonance with my interests (collaboration) and needs could not be considered apart from my desire to align the authoritative thrust of art historical accounts. In that case, "reconstruct" is a poor choice of words.

I suppose that my primary motivation was to escape from the consumer role that the art world media imposes on all of us, where their preferred versions of history, preferred models of criticism are the products we are obliged to consume.

Of course, you get to the point where you can't bear to look at another art glossy. But after all, this sort of critical resignation serves the interests of the art world media as much as the play of carving out a bit of your own turf.

It was the classic dilemma of shit or get off the pot.

Delving into history wasn't just a question of satisfying my own curiosity. I am sure that a few anecdotes about Camber's drunkenness ("Did you hear what Gas, that devil, actually did at that Anarchists' convention?") or re-reading the Hayward Gallery's catalogue "Art in Revolution" would have done the trick, if that was the case. It seemed to me an impossible feat to divorce my concerns—copying with history, constituting history, feeling in a vital state of mind about some portion of art history— from my sociality (Art-Language, The Fox).

Several years of talking to, and working with, a group of people in an informal collaborative relationship could not, however, be ignored. Dealing with history had to be reconciled with my collective experience, importantly so.

I wondered why there were no comprehensive accounts of artists' collectives or a social history that incorporated, as a major perspective, the conscious use of the concept of community as an ideological tool by artists. But the further I was drawn into researching original source material (playing the artist-historian or, rather, reconstituting both the role of 'artist' and the role of historian)... 16 I scanned, for instance, various Constructivist manifestos, the somewhat arcane Proceedings of the American Artists' Congress (1936), and the program of the Federation des Artistes of the Paris Commune (1871) — the more apparent the complexity of the problem of reconciling what I had defined as my dual needs. For one thing, my interest in distinguishing documents of reference and socio-political-economic source material (in the case of the Constructivists, this took the form of a parallel history of the suppression of the various moves towards workers' self-management 1917-1922... was it possible to go at depth to the elided relationship of the Constructivists to the Bolshevik Revolution... to examples of objects of art — immediately precluded locating these materials in the usual art historical space, except for the Constructivists who were presented as a ready-made art-socio-political scenario by art historians and other entrepreneurs (curators), most of my material was to be found as listings in Leo Baeckelandt's Amtliche Produktion..."
laird's religiosity.

How could I avoid being captivated by this material? What is my subjective relationship to this body of discourse; indeed the only body of discourse that covers the notions of appropriation, the resources and modes of production, and distribution of art by artists in opposition to the capitalist value structure . . . and of course, collaboration ... ?

Such a relationship, perhaps heretofore best not to be discovered ready-made; however, there was a generalizable cultural problematic that was, in some sense, shared. But to ignore my own internal needs would be to historicize in the manner of those legions journaling the historian's critics. A journalist, you will recall, is someone who defines the terms of consciousness, in which historic movements are literally reflected, on the periphery of daily events. Cultural anthropologists ... not to be confused with the historical anthropologists.

I was not interested in writing more boring art history, even if it was a history of collectives, or more socialist history of art. Social historians of art still rely on material presuppositions about the nature of history, but only as an expository theory ... What if ... ? As all art historians their ultimate point of departure is the art object. The possibility of a differing methods can be realized up to a point ... beyond that, we fall into science. As historians, their allegiances are basically professional. We should look elsewhere ... Yet while these documents certainly had some relevance to my "project" of history of art (Brecht's "history as project," Brecht's rejection of the Hegelian view of history in Lukacs aesthetics led him to believe in history as a project, mediated by given social realities, but proceeding from the concrete transforming process of human beings ...), in opposition to the "official," authoritative, alienating body of modernist historical/critical discourse, they seemed marginally connected to the vicarious consciousness of concrete praxis. I could hardly consider seriously exposing any of those aspects of praxis as revealed through my writings into Constructivism, or the Communist of 1871. In turn, I could hardly consider them as representing practical points of reference at all. I do not want to abandon this project. So much of this material takes on the character of suppressed information, due to the hegemony ... cognitive metaphysics ... of the modernists: it is valuable in its own right as counterpoint to the "sources" of inspiration for formally-theoretical historical/critical expertise of the art market.

I am in favor of anything that contributes to the development of the myopic modernist machine (MM).

Speaking of the MMM's media, I am not impressed with Airmore's politicized version of "putting on the Ritz" (cf. Feb. 1975 issue). MMM's sweet nothing is certainly not widespread; it's really scandalous that an Art History major to whom I showed my material on the Paris Commune was amazed, having never heard of the Federation des Artistes (which was organized by Counihan and Marcuse). If "We are a group of Brodovsky-inspired collectives" the mutual benefit of all Parisian artists ... no distinctions were drawn between "high" and "low" art for the purpose of membership. This union, by the way, advanced the "control of the realm of art by artists." Nor am I really impressed by Linda Nochlin's treatment of this event in the context of her above-average treatment of realism: she doesn't even mention it. The little work is spared this ignominious only because the human residue of its brutal suppression happened to provide M. Nanet with some "realist" subject matter. (Certainly, given the glorification of the Commune by Anarchists and Marxists alike, you may contest my sentiment here; yet it is unlikely that the Federation would have emerged otherwise.)

The social historian is obliged to consider the poetics of the art object as an embodiment of the social realities of the society, rather than as an attempt to transcend its cultural context. The art object thus transcended becomes the ide-o-ject.

The reader may ask, "this complaint is clearly in the context of historical criticism. What is the point I put to Nochlin in my letter to the editor?" It is, indeed, an aspect of the current problem of art history. We have to re-consider the art historians' claim that their discourse ought to be considered simply in terms of its content. You have to resist the fragmentation and look at art historical discourse and the complementary media in a dialectical way, MMM.

There is really no separation that can be justified we can't "examine" "communication" in terms of "message," "channel," "noise" because these positivistic fragmentations are methodological principles of the first order, as the entire interpretative framework has developed in conjunction with the larger public sphere. Perhaps we can begin to explore some questions concerning the intentional dimensions of MMM's sweet nothing. Or should I say "dimensionless," related to the historians' bastardization of the ide-o-ject. Again, the presence of the producer of historical/critical discourse that the resultant of the practical vectors of "making" cultural objects can be resolved unproblematically by direct reference to those "objects." That is, the accommodation of the various dimensions of praxis, as seen by a community of practitioners of the "science" of history whose content-matter is categorically fixed as "art," is only possible through the total objectification of that content. The image of the history of which was provided in the first several pages, consist of a range of cohesively evolving methodologies, always expressible in terms of a rigid body of art historical discourse. This body of discourse, in turn, is dependent upon the objectification of praxis, reducing its "subject" to a docile "object," capable of classification, etc. The conventional distribution of praxis along the lines as in the different art-historical periods, is a product of praxis and so forth, it holds on to us the extent that we conceive of ourselves, our praxis, as typifications of these categories. What existed originally as a short-cut or simplification of the immensely difficult task of establishing a cultural science, proceeds to become a naturalistic model for the future production of objects (that is all it can be) and the basis for this historical plan: "Let us suppose that the idea of an art can be expanded to embrace the whole range of man-made things, including all tools and writing in addition to the useless, beautiful, and poetic things of the world. By this view the universe of man-made things simply coincides with the object of praxis itself, and hence becomes an urgent requirement to devise better ways of considering everything man has made." Why a cultural "science" at all?

The various competing methodologies of MMM may baffle us back to this primal objectification. Using the model of the ethnographer, MMM's historian critic talks the subject for instance, a biographical-cultural aside enters into his discourse as he develops his conventional obligation to give details about this informant.
For instance, Lipard monitors the "Conceptual Art" through the filter of "decenterization," in conjunction with the "stimulating dialogue" of artist-critic; the entry of the 'historical event' coincides with the beginning of the 'biographical event'.

For whose attention do these methodologies compete?

The academic skirmishes fought out in mock-intellectual battles in the pages of 'intellectual' journals like Artefacts are utterly faint. (One illustration: the 'Problemen' of the 'Probleme, Kritik' series, I remember, entailed Steinberg's transformation of Greengard's 'Flat picture-plane' into the 'flatbed.') Are there alternatives within the discipline itself questioning the formulation of objectification: the historical "face" is ontologically privileged in its linguistic expression. "Transcending" the current discipline-bound presuppositions on the production of historical discourse amounts to abandoning history as it is currently practiced. For one thing, this extreme form of incommunicability, directed at Art History, is born out of a personal dissatisfaction with the rationalisation of "knowledge" in terms of the "face" with the public, the internal history is more interesting because it has to do with the interface between each of us... is there any way to get out of the public-relations kind of history coming out of all this ("official history")?

Art History, as a sub-species of the 'Science of Art', emerged in the mid-19th century. In its first practitioners, Theophile Thoré, founded it as a scientific enterprise. Stirred up Comtean positivism, it was to be an imprint of the social history... freed from preconceived theories, ideals and all world views. As a scientific enterprise, it was closer to Geography or Astronomy than Physics, that is, its methodological and epistemological basis is a radical empiricism.

Thoreau was more to the simplicity. It is that the meaning of the entire body of science. It's been pointed out by Habermas that "the social" first appears in the form of a new philosophy of history. This "social philosophy" was pursued by Comte, who attempted, however, for the positivist, knowledge is scientific, scientific belief in themselves by constructing the "social" of the species as the history of the realization of the positive spirit. "If it is clear that the impact of man on nature depends mainly on the knowledge it has acquired according to the real laws of inorganic phenomena. (Comte)

Comte's philosophy provides the middle-ground between the end of classical epistemology and the emergence of the philosophy of science as the model for knowledge. This is what Hesse has put up about in some of his writings. At this point, I suggest having an invalid test of the Shape of Time (Kuhler), (2) the translation of Art (Lipard... the 1968 book). The former conceives of history of things capable of a directed graph as a series of formal definitions taken/abandoned, the latter's story is heavily imbued with scientific jargon of the trendy stuff of the late-60's, whereas many of us were immune to that, and profound questions by Nobel Laureates on the beauty of "the order of nature.

What about the occurrence of the concept of "art" as a historical discourse within the MRM? The swarm of epiphenomena of positivistic historicism are the logical heirs of the Comtean positivism.

The MRM doesn't really start rolling until the mid-late 19th century is the founding of positivist history (in terms of the emergence of art history and especially art criticism in the mid-19th century we might have to look at the collapse of the state-patrician system and the entry of the artist into the rapidly growing marketplace).

The real legacy of Comte is objectivism: limited access to the world through the objectification of the world. Comte's "positive spirit" is the final stage of evolution of individual species, having gone through a "scientific" and a "metaphysical" stage. "Positivism" is constantly contrasted with the "imperious imaginary" (treti-chimerique), as much must be, as an evolutionary trend, being formalistically "readable" through objects the metaphorization at the bottom of the Shape of Time is predicated in terms of early-middle-late reproductions of "prime objects" (for the free arts, art objects). Kundera tenaciously holding to his objectivity, refusing all mention of as subjectively-loaded term as "progress".

"If you expand your history to include, for example, your reading, the fact that you lived in New York, or Le Jura, the pole is that you don't in fact give up that history, you embed it. But if you take all this in art world terms, then all you've got are the objects. And the gallery-goer has a standard contemplative relation to them. We've given up on that past about this "the trouble with art history is that's it's history of objects"? The continuing tyranny of art history is that it should remain a history of object... It seems to me that I would prefer to divorce 'content' or 'subject matter' of art history from its context in practice, rather than face-up to the implications of their relationship to a group of specialists whose discourse reduces them to objects against the backdrop of a "cultural" landscape, naturally-determined, and in a law-like relationship to their products. It is impossible to avoid the ideological dimensions of art history as being the force pastished, given in the past and maintained by the official standard-bearer, of art's progress, in the art world media, "is one work Conceptual Art?" remains the paradigm of the interrogative potential of MRM. Another one is "What do you do?"

For the historian/artist, "work" is only that which can be advanced, by historical/critical discourse, analogous to the way in which a distributor of art works defines his product: tautologically, by "context," not as the meaning, not as the meaning of the meaning which fits the historian's semantic model of discourse... this is like being a dead horse.

How well have we internalized the values of MRM? We all have art, however, without the meaning. A commodity isn't a collection of vague potentials, but a collection of empirically-salable items. Exhibitions, Publications, Teaching positions. Bibliography, the institutionalized response of each community of experts... cohorts. The problem of contextual possibility is never raised.

Historical discourse is really resistant to that sort of problem, it's limited to a narrowly-defined domain. Fine arts, art objects, and much array of exemplars all in a row, as an array of
example implies which presuppose a definite poetics. The art student, in the course of his education, is continually struggling to break away from the given history of art as a usable catalogue of resources. What is retained is the sense of a continuity of praxis. Historicism tries to convince us, among other things, that the history of art has a logic of its own. The impersonal inevitability of the historical process itself appears to be "one huge, dead, immeasurable steam engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference to grind me limn from limn."

The history of art makes it very clear to me, and other people I'm sure, what sort of behavior is to be considered influential. Clearly, if you are doing that sort of work, in some sense you are responding to the great tradition of art as it is institutionalized in the market relationships fostered by the galleries, etc. Now I don't mean to say that this work... the sort of criticism... is the only sort of authentic activity... I am saying that you ought to consider the dimensions of art activity to include those other than the vectors of object-making. The history of art in that sense is generally unidimensional. Materialist history tries to take into account some of the ideological and economic dimensions of the productive relationships that are the heart of object-making.

A sweeping rejection of (art) history might be totally insane; however, it would be more convenient to forget Art History (as a model and otherwise). Except that those ideas-objects are forever with us (remember, our relation to them is not simply historical...) Futurism, aventure? But I do mean that the objectification of everything is insane. Yet is it supported by the role of the historian/critic and the progressive politics of history and criticism. Now I realize that to some extent objectification is unavoidable; it's the price you have to pay to get your self into the world. "making the public..." shows, retrospectives... all these exert a positive pressure in favor of the rationalization/objectification of praxis. But let's assume that it has to be accepted across the board.

You can probably guess that the technical problems of coping with our own history can get complex, involving a lot of obscure instrumentalties... maps. One of the things I have learned, however, is that trying to constitute points of reference... indices... that refer back strictly to our dialogical context, in the context of public displays, is the wrong tack. Why not take the context of public access as the point of departure for "history" here? I am not certain whether could with our own history is either a technical problem or a practical problem; it's probably a bit of both. Maybe all I am saying is we have to see our relations(d) to it... d湎ically, not as static global perspectives to be tilted in even tially, but as shifting points of view. Practical questions, in the sense of "practical" used here, are posed with the acceptance or rejection of norms... not as norms of public access... their behavior... against ours. I am sick of being so "well-informed" that no one will talk with me... who you talk to... lots about your conception of yourself as an authority... as well your conception of learning, which I suppose is part of being an authority. Like those inhabitants of a prussian time-zone, we have histories; we are in medias res, art-wise.

It is no joke that art historical discourse supports a mode of production that restricts me: as insofar as it fails to acknowledge my praxis, or that artists produce works in response to it. It isn't funny because it is sheer exploitation. For example, all of the fragmented domains of productive activity like Feminist Art, Black Art, Conceptual Art, etc. They serve the diversity of the market, and that serves the myth of individualism, and that serves the hegemony of the current productive modes... not to mention the art historical aught-of-hand needed to "re-discover" women, etc. Progress and 'marginal' cultural objects... marginal cultures... the identification of history with anthropology... the historian takes as a reference point the cultural history. "Western civilization as the most advanced expression of human evolution"... Kubler speaks the language of imperialism in a most sophisticated way. "Aesthetic neglect, conquest is the other great occasion for progress is supported by the belief that knowledge..." (Kubler's euphece for cultural dead-ends), when the victim overthrows native institutions and replaces them with extensions of his own. If the victim has alluring benefits to offer, like Alexander of Cortez, he makes the continuation of many traditions both unnecessary (!) and impossible. The locus classicus for incorporation is the case of sixteenth century America, where an active initiative quickly ceased under the blows of...
historian, artist, layman (though there are overlaps). For the art historian, there is the "job" of the reconstruction of history in the context of the specialist: this is basically the academic side of art history. The art historian who positions himself in the art community does well to slide between the roles of historian and critic-in-residence. For example: Max Kozloff, Lucy Lippard, Rosalind Krauss, Jack Burnham, et al. In fact, art historical credentials are essential for entry into the high echelons of art criticism in the media.

The point of art criticism when it emerged as the cultural champion of the bourgeoisie was to provide a buffer against the cultural hegemony of the ruling class... artists were sick of being ignored by the official critics of the Salon. But while the liberalized public sector broke up the monopoly of culture of the ruling class, it was also utilizable as a tool to sustain the newly found leverage of the bourgeoisie. In time, the public sphere became an institutionalized vector of the power of the middle-class. It's a favorite quip of Marx to point out that the bourgeoisie would prefer an alliance with the aristocracy rather than form a coalition with the working class.

The art world media is not the idealized realm of free access at all. Editorial policies constantly aim at creating a liberal balance of opinions within the journalistic framework of responsibility to one's readership... which is to say, most realistically, "no one ever went broke understimating the intelligence of his audience."

Kubler takes care of the learning-conditions "surrounding" the emergence of cultural objects by reducing those conditions to a member of the set comprised by the tokens (objects) of the tradition (genius of objects; prime object) of formal-problem solutions: anything that is still in a viable system works. All series start with a "prime object" and finish with something less than a "quality" object.

You might think that criticism is going to slip out the back door, particularly if you see critical discourse in opposition to, or separate from, the context of learning—making cultural objects. You might think that criticism merely sets down the conditions for learning vis a vis the hot-hand of journalism... or in shaping and reinforcing construct-producer roles. But criticism is as much interpretive history (current) as history is historical interpretation. At any rate, both criticism and history proceed from their closed sets of learning conditions/praxis (the discipline) outward, towards the objects of their scrutiny. For past history, retrieval from objectification is impossible. But it is pervasive for art in the present to capitalize upon that objectification. Responding positively to art history as it is presented is in some measure, a statement of assent to the methodological foundations of that historical discourse.

"What is interesting about the art-historical supports dropping out, is that from that point on there was an effort to no longer subscribe to the imperatives of Modern-art history: being able to survive in a situation where we don't subscribe to those things is of interest—it's as interesting as the notion of sociality—we would lose interest entirely in the rewards of the careerism of 'professional artists.' You may like it in many ways; but the question is about the meaning of the work... We want to look at the conditions of the production of cultural objects... and how that mediates the relationships amongst people... we don't want to show what experts are... that would contravene the whole hope of changing the mode of organization amongst people... conditions for learning... You have this body of work which is potentially able to take us out of the tyranny of our institutions, the next thing you know, bits of it have got gold frames around it... people are offering us the keys to the gates of the kingdom of public institutions, i.e. money.

Historical discourse transformed can be conceived of as a critical process, embedding, not simply the "grammar" of successive tokens.

New York, New York

NOTES

2. Ibid., p. 25.
3. All quotations by O'Dwyer were found in part II of Knowledge and Human Constructs, by Jürgen Habermas.
4. Lippard, p. 23.
5. Jorge Luis Borges, "Death and the Compass.
6. George Kubler, The Shape of Time, p. 44.
It is worth recording the bankruptcy of art education as an infrastructural level. The few accounts which have been given by people working in the area up to now have concerned themselves exclusively with undergraduate art colleges, or else a generalized critique of art education. From our point of view however, the former accounts seem overly partial, the latter overly general. While it is difficult in a general critique not grounded in descriptive particularity to avoid idealizing, it has become apparent that the ideological desert extends beyond art colleges as sanctuaries of education (schools, post-graduate departments, teacher training colleges, etc.). It would be a false ecumenisation which held that the problem retained an identity throughout, but on the other hand the relations can be identified in fact; it is in sorting out the reinforcements of orthodoxy as spanning contexts (as well as noting the insidious nature of orthodoxy as a microscopical level) that theology could reside. Perhaps attempts to go beyond this would be pious or utopian.

Murray House College of Education in Scotland accepts all academically qualified applicants to its graduate art course. The need for an interview is possible not arisen because it is usually found that the majority of these have attended undergraduate courses which have offered little since the teaching staff attended them. Students that do not fit usually leave. Hierarchies in the college say they have a remit to train teachers to fit the specifications of existing school curricula, and a teaching qualification can be denied because a student fails to fulfil the ideals of that specification. Such remarks are aimed in the direction of students who fail the formal obligations of the course (jurisdictional, active, etc.), but remain critical of what they have to do and of the "definitions" of teaching that are embedded within the training programme. Habit-forming constraints have the pernicious effect of reinforcing half-baked preconceptions about what has to be given up as an aspiring teacher. This is manifest in the conservative set of allowances made toward any idea of doing work, a situation in which it is remarked that art staff are kept informed by the academic staff of the views adopted by students on tutorial topics such as de-schooling, discipline, corporal punishment. Criticism of the course leads to the student being labelled a political activist, and on those grounds a teaching qualification would be denied.

Non-critical teacher training is no method for developing a critical practice in education. Nellie and the new recruit on the shop floor—an effective operatorisation of which is necessitated, for its effectiveness, is not inquisitive. The training programme is not excusable by deficiency, but is a concerted attempt to sterilize whatever deinstitutionalised learning has occurred for the students before leaving school. Voicing concerns over the problem of education within the academic seminars and tutorials is of little value because these rapidly become a forum for providing student-teachers with defences against recalcitrant pupils. A sociologist at Murray House was approached by the Local Education Authority to investigate the tenure of a large number of its pupils who had been forced to stay at school for an extra year by the raising of the school leaving age. The brief for the sociologist was couched in the expectation that ways would be found to get these pupils back to school. Naturally the pupils were not in a position to employ a sociologist to provide reasons as to why they should not return to education.

Yet the continuing breakdown of a working relationship between a pupil and his school/teacher would suggest that these problems do need some critical consideration. What better place than in the institution that provides teachers for schools? The institution that is unable to cope with a diverse range of points of view seems to fly in the face of what generally might be called "education". The inflexible institution concerns itself with administrating an entrenchment of administrative formation.

Alongside that sort of institutionalism . . .

I had a deadline one of those days when I was at the school. The tutor sat through the lesson and the kids answered. There was an argument—I could see a problem with the number of rulers, they were fighting each other for the rulers. The dilemma was that I was standing talking to somebody about what they were doing. Should you step into the kid, and thereby suggest the noise was more important than what he had to say, or ignore the noise and continue? It wasn't desiring through the kids, just two kids tagging at a ruler—"Did you touch the ruler?" "Did you touch the ruler?" Without even thinking about it, I just ignored it. Then I heard the woman who had worked class in the college say "This is not the sort of thing we want in this classroom." It was anticipated that she should have suggested it was something we didn't want to take place. If it had been more prominent than when the kid was saying, then I suppose I'd have said "Stop shouting", "Step away from the ruler", "Step away from the rule
To assume that, educationally, there is anything worthwhile or advantageous in conventionalizing a teacher training institution upon at least the most formal aspects of a school is grossly de-

riorative of what the student has done since they themselves left school. Mary House does not

naturally enter into criticism as part of its learning

programme. Passage the relicarian buck up the

administrative ladder is approaching the problem

of dialogue with the view that wars should be

exercised, not seen as the result of an alluring

body. (A learning context in a critical context; that's how what is learned is embedded within

what has already been learned.)

Rather than being past graduate in its ap-

proach to learning— to do with our roles in society

and so on: the role of questioning, critique and re-

search; rather than having the teaching course map onto those erstwhile post graduate activities it is

mapped back onto its object level: the school.

Some elision has taken place—they have their i-

dentity, their functions, and their self-image affected by the institution that they penetrate at the level of labour. Those work places tend to be taken up, taken over, in the institutional self in the training

colleges. For all the vaunted liberality, the operat-

tive term is training, not learning: the con-

finements of the job specifications inhere in training; the performance of an individual in a

limited time with a tendency to measure that indi-

vidual's capacity in gross terms (products, be-

haviour etc.).

Setting this against a background of things

at Newport Art College in Wales... taking edu-

cation, the relationship of lecturers to pupils as

posed to the relationship of student teachers to

pupils... the problems seems to fit here too.

There is an analogy between what seems to be

the case in institutions like teacher training col-

leges, where there is a relatively defined goal, and
de the Diploma of Art and Design Colleges where a

more open-ended concept of work is carried on

(which lecturers strive to smeltingize, making

piecemeal adjustments to this notion of on-going

work). It may be unclear what the precise sense

goal is in teacher training colleges, but that
doesn't affect the similarity of the colleges' dilemma:

there is no mechanism, no arena for the stu-

dents to sort out some critical relation to their

work. There doesn't seem to be any institutio-

nized way of working out how students can arrive

critically at any sense of "ought" in what they do.

I went to a lecture at Newport Art College

on The Role Of The Critic. The problems of that

lecture surfaced on two levels of one: the middle-

ness, and it seems they are sufficiently ramifiable

to act as a nexus, or as a propaedeutic for a critique

of The College. The two levels are "theory" and

"practice." Practice: what happened (stand-

ardly enough) was that for an hour and a half my

role was that of consumer: a taxonomy of crimi-

nal modes. Followed by the lights going up,

followed by a request for queries, followed by

silence. In the face of an hour and a half monoto-

nologue you could expect half an hour's dialogue
to progress from shell shock to a more ordered

state. So I began to frame a few remarks, rather
discursively groping towards an adequate articula-

tion of, and expression of dissent from, what I

considered to be an invidious embedded epistem-

ology. Before getting that far it was revealed

that I had better get to the point as the lecturer

had got to get his train in a minute and there was

time for anything further... A lecture with

no time allotted for discussion, which was some-

thing that seemed to be taken for granted by

most people. Consequently I never got beyond a

quasi vigorous registration of dissent about the

content, and gesturing at all beyond ammendement

at the form—vis the belief states of those in-

volved in its organisation, and its implications:

for the structure of the College.

Quite apart from any general questions over

the forms-of reading from prepared notes etc.,

the objection is to the concept of learning

education/relation to information which lies

behind setting up a situation which is devoid of

any dialogue at all. It is a symptom of ideology

that this is worth dwelling on, as an

assumption that the concept of (a bit of) infor-

mation is a starter in human (Geisteswissenschaften

ten) context. This overlaps two assumptions: (i)

that it is possible to provide a descriptive pic-

ture of such contexts, which is in essentials un-

questionable, though admitting presumably of

relatively peripheral "adjustment" (ii) that those

in the audience are getting on with something suf-

ficiently trouble free to be able to "apply" this

"information" in accordance with some intuitive

semi-critical bridging notion of e.g. "interest".

That is to say the relation of individuals to infor-
mation is conceived as unproblematic—beyond quasi-

statistical and/or psychological difficulties. The

panorama of what goes before them is treated as

naturally reliable and as equivalently unpro-

blematical as the society from which they are sup-

posed to interpret what goes on. There is no

countenancing that that relationship could be

problem-laden and not governed by simple

means-end ideology. It is not really thought a

bout at all beyond a natural expectation that

other people do other things, such that the rela-
tion to information is one of witnessing. No

social sense of relation, only a natural sense.

Given those terms, it is not consistent that self-

awareness can enter at all. That much seems de-

rivable simply from the structure. It is precisely

that consistency which is so objectionable, i.e.,

the professed theory of orthodoxy is a good mirror

of orthodox practice. It follows that a fair reaching

critique of ideology is required, since it is not

merely a particular theory, but the generalised pic-

ture of theory—its function, its relation to doing

something (practice), the (apparently) complete

absence of any entertainment of reflexivity—which

is as if it were the "object," One isn't going to get any-

where by pursuing expectations internal to the

model (playing the game) or by expecting ones

own expectations—embedded of necessity in a
different model—to be fulfilled (i.e., they won't

see the point). Without a balancing trick on the

interface of required generality and necessiated

particularity you might as well stay silent—which

is going in the direction of talk about "ways of

life", performative aspects, the function of

rhetoric, etc.

In post-graduate departments, the difficulty

is in some respects the exact opposite of that often

encountered in schools. There, the situation is

often, as it were, one of educational underprivilege.

It is not unusual for children with a stake in the

school art department to be there having been

shunted out as "inadequate" in some—usually in-

tellectual—way, by the incumbent education sys-

tem; whereas one encounters in a post-graduate

department, by definition, the institutionally suc-

cessful, a position no less tacitly adhered to and

reinforced than the results of more standardised

unfashioned career paths.

Any open ended-ness that some teachers
Which can be traced in a general sense to a per-
vantageous reinforced and rehearsed particular of posi-
tions concerning the nature of oneself as an individ-
al, as a point of reference, and one's relationship to
work.

In a slide lecture a comparison was made
between the work of some young children and a
Matissse drawing of a woman. Both drawings were
labelled "expressive." Clearly, only quite granni-
morphological comparisons can hold between
these drawings. In terms of the drawing opera-
tions (word) concern, the child's ability to make
marks was limited, while in Matisse the operation
ism proceeds from a conscious decision to limit
the available calligraphic vocabulary. However we
might treat "expressiveness," it is not about marks
in isolation but about the *modus operandi* of the
drawing the result. The history of the doing
was naturally different for both. The obvious
implies the futurity of judgement.

An implication of the above is that there is
a deliberate attempt to retard the child's "lan-
guage acquisition" in drawing, which seems to run
counter to the pressures put on the child in other
parts of the school curriculum. The term "creativity" is
being used in teacher training colleges such that
one function of art in schools is the controlled re-
lease of chaos ("excess energy"): an escape from
rationalism. Two ways to encourage the
naïveté to remain, don't deny it: (a) en-
courage curiosity into method and vocabulary so
that the child's activity can be historically aware.
It seems that "bad work" (i.e., work that is not
like Matisse, etc.) results from a fluidizing
attitude at resisting "smart" sense of doing against a back-
ground of doing subjects which more actively go
on, and are (possibly misleadingly) goal-directed.

Can we attempt to attack statements which
allege common sense, "be a two years experience,"
and "knowing what I am doing (will be moral incalculably,
tenuously related to the general idea of reminding
yourself from the picture...). Seeing yourself as en-
gaged in something which is in all essentials exter-

nal to you, so that you can order, form, claim it.

Like that lecture, it might be worth taking

that embedded epistemology as an exemplar. We
had adequate enough (?), though selective,

survey of criteria, mode, issuing in a tripartite
generalization of possibilities, viz. historicist-cont

textual, subjective Diderotianism. It doesn't matter
much about the historical accuracy or

whether it is important is the

abundance of the unifier from the picture, and

which is not always a sociologically inspired

direction towards description. This in turn implies

the lack of a picture of (the ideology of) the con

crete situation, such that one is not in the "com-

munity of causal and rational observers" but faced

by a group, the nature of whose being in the

world (as regards the nature of the activity they

are pursuing) is itself largely a function of the

ascendency of one of the critical modes distin-

guished. That's one instance of a kind of inconsis-
tency. Another is that you do not have a function of that

spurious objectivity or if it is just

bloody). By criticizing the critica of the

Armeny Show for not picking out as valuable the

items that confront them. for and not under-

standing the contemporary art, then failing to

understand remarks addressed to him, the lec-

turer exhibited utter partiality to the implicat-

ions of context. That seems to be the basic

issue behind these authoritarian pasturings we're
dragging up here: context. The point is that

quasi-descriptive quasi-historical models don't

map the concrete situation. The ideas described

are abstractions and not identifiable as the

objects of fiction of the audience, by the audience.

In a model ignoring commitments, ideological em-
hedding remains cardboard. Moreover, naivettes

aside, it begins to look like a straightforward

abrogation of responsibility, inter alia, the

responsibility to stand out in all of one's world-
picture (if that makes sense). Or the other hand,

that is expecting the fish to understand the

water. The point is, an account of such

relations (b Australian, New Zealand, to some informa-

tion, mediated by a notion of his "activity") isn't

accessible from epistemic positivistic bases which

is not an argument in favour of, but a dis-

sonant theory on the nature of such relations. (That's

why we can start talking about responsibility etc.).

The difficulty is getting the same theory

(in this case, orthodoxy) abrogates the possibility

of their seeing X to see X.

It's rarely entertained (career preservation?)

that sometimes "we" (lecturers/teachers) might

be the slates, and "they" (students/pupils) might

be capable of unrepentant manipulation. The

awareness entertains being non-dialectical,

must be didactically inclined. But the inconsist-

cences don't come as the mappings occur (or

a question of expediency and the inconsistencies

are there, but the more institutionalized you are

the less noticeable they become. (The limiting

case being, I suppose, the orthodoxy we're going

on about, where they are in the nature of the

case no such unnoticed as unnoticeable, liter-

ally out of reach of those who promote them).

Further, the education system is a reflection of

the society in which it is embedded. These

institutions are not shields of a dying epistemology.

The inconsistent institutions

with broader societal structures—particularly the

consumer ethic—has devalued any ideological and

axiological inquisitiveness, anchoring an on-

tological self-aggrandizement. Les Chemins de la

Liberte according to The Self-Images of The Age.

The hierarchy's utterances are at one with the in-

stitution because the hierarchies are the embodiment

of the institutional forms (an institutional taut-

ology?).

There is a psychological inducement, emotively

careerist, to judge heavily on values, and if the

values don't fit, to suffer them up to meet the

requirement of purification. The teacher training

context is an attempt to promote a shallow com-

monality of value-surface, a sense of self-importance

generated by the sense of being privileged or special-

ized. Strangely, all the moral/axiological stuff is not

positively covered: student teachers are expected to

make those jumps from the position of allegedly

knowing something. "Knowing" might boil down to

is a natural organisational ability, trivially

available to teachers and not pupils because they

have a sustainable control over the immediate

environment and its objects (the classroom and its

material, what we're asking is how come so few

have doubts about the transition to privilege, a

transition which disorders the problems of which

someone and is never overcome by applying

privilege benevolently. It's far from a context

offering scope for review. There are demands for

putting aside nation's like "self-doubt" for the

sale of gross educational captivates like

"keeping on top of them", a "one step ahead". For

bucks sake can't they see this is likely to promote

aliensation? It means you stop thinking about the

institutional values as though they were skills.

"To show up the sterility of the purely analy-

tical approach to naturalism we need only turn to

Sartre's treatment of the same phenomenon under

the rubric of "bad faith" through novels as well as

through theatrical works. Sartre shows in detail

how the premise "I must act according to my

(socially defined) nature" is the very foundation of

the bourgeois ethic, which since it serves interests

other than its own is obliged to be, in Sartre's own

words, "sham from beginning to end." "Ideology

and the Human Sciences: Some Comments on the

role of reification in psychology and psychiatry.

David Inglesby in Counter Course. Penguin Educa-

tional Specials.

We suspect that the reasons for going to art

college are largely negative, which presumably aff-

ects the generally self-oriented crypto psychological

tensor of a lot of the so-called "work" that goes on,

and which militates against any hint of socio-

logical structuring. That's usually left, at best, as a

contingent ridge which, by Lewis's definition, may

be expected to "show itself, and that's just not

sufficient for even a mildly tractable/useful sense

of praxis. Such bents look on the transformation of
dissent into critique as at best adventitious. The

pressures towards career in the art college con-
text appear to be less well-formed than in other

areas. "Career" itself is not a neutral term, as it is

bound up as a function of a particular world view;

it is a value-term about how you are going to live

as well as what you are going to do (life posi-

tion); in fact, it is possible that the subject of any

sort of career concept, it is clumsy at the absence

of any structured sortings of "anti-career", it is

as much a fault of the art college in defining its

responsibility towards definatorialism as it is of

the teaching college in rearing roughshod over the

humanistic education at least potentially available

within a college of art. It's a fault of humanism

relying for the most part on laissez-faire individ-

ualism that frustrates any attempts at collective

responsibility. This is the liberalism which has

been "lost" through its appropriation by capitalist struc-

tures(s).
COUNTERFEIT INTERVIEW
PRESTON HELLER

"When the man who has authority to say it says, "Go!" and when he who has not authority says, "Go!"- are both equally valid, but the authority makes the difference."

Kierkegaard

Heller - Last year, I dropped into a painting studio at Lehman College here in New York, and listened to a conversation between a teacher and one of his students. They were talking about a painting the student was working on. The teacher, a painter, said the student was wasting time, but drawing because he was only using black and white paints. He claimed that too many students make a painting, you had to use color. The student vaguely appealed for his "freedom" as a student, but that didn't change Roberts' mind a bit. So as an appeal to something higher than the "authority" of the teacher/student relationship, I talked about Stella's work in the late fifties. Roberts wasn't buying that either; he insisted they were drawing too.

That was amazing, since Stella himself said he was trying to eliminate drawing completely. The thing went on for about a half hour and I left but Roberts hadn't given up any ground. I just found it strange - that Stella's work wasn't brought up by either side in the argument, but by an outsider.

What was the student supposed to "learn" from that argument except not much more than "Roberts is the teacher and I'm the student - he'll talk if I'm listening" from that argument?

Heller - I know I thought I had, and so did my friend. I didn't care much that my teacher didn't understand my impressions of Morris and Andre, I knew I was "on my way to becoming an artist."

What I was beginning to realize was that art galleries show or a show at the Modern or an article in Artforum - essentially the concept of being an art critic was just as authoritarian as most of my teachers' more so, I guess, since all my teachers, good or bad, were trying to teach me. I was beginning to doubt this.

Heller - Maybe it's the threat of a bad grade or, if they're in graduate school, of hurting their chances for a good job recommendation. But for most students I know, this is only a strategy: they're only interested in going along with the grading system, so they can get out of it. Actually, I think most students do outwit their school's bureaucratic structure in general - everyone knows which courses are easy, which teachers grade casually, which teachers have something to say (that is, they are able to distinguish among "authorities"), and so on. Certainly when I was in graduate school, and I don't think it's much different now, many of the students I know were just looking for the security of an MFA, which was supposed to lead to a good job. There was also the fact that graduate school was an extra two years in which you could work - usually without the responsibility of an outside job. In any case, we didn't associate ourselves so much with the school as with the art world at large, you know, galleries, Museums of Modern Art, Artforum. By doing this we had some success in escaping the authority inherent in the teacher/student relationship, grades, etc.

Heller - So are you saying that by outwitting the school bureaucracy, students pretty much escape authority?

Heller - I know I thought I had, and so did my friend. I didn't care much that my teacher didn't understand my impressions of Morris and Andre, I knew I was "on my way to becoming an artist."

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Heller - Maybe it's the threat of a bad grade or, if they're in graduate school, of hurting their chances for a good job recommendation. But for most students I know, this is only a strategy: they're only interested in going along with the grading system, so they can get out of it. Actually, I think most students do outwit their school's bureaucratic structure in general - everyone knows which students-trying-to-become-artists is likewise the result of co-operation. How could it be anything else under the circumstances? Art world success is hardly what you'd call a "natural" notion. It doesn't think it can exist without the tacit alliances existing between modernism and American imperialism in general or between modernism and capitalism. I mean, formalistic, abstract paintings are not without a doubt, safe decorative for American museums. 317 offices, Chase Manhattan banks and so on.

Heller - Right, right, I don't want to be misleading here. I think what we're dealing with is a "false subjectivity" - which is to say that to one degree or another we're all internalizing the attitudes which reflect institutional self-interest and self-perpetuation - rather than some notion of "authentic subjectivity" (whatever that may mean). Naturally, there's a very good reason for this institutionalization, internalization as our family, our socialization which comes down in the word to a chance to eat and survive - is to a great extent, often, in the hands of these institutions. And this is where the situation really becomes absurd. After all, institutions are made up of people, and presumably the reason for having social institutions is so they can serve art, instead we end up serving them. Sometimes I get the feeling that even if the Modern sold all its artworks, say, it would not be able to support the art system. And I think this is because the art world is so self-serving, so self-righteous about escaping the oppressiveness of schools and making it in the art world. What's even more important, perhaps, is that the work, the actual work of these

"the authority structure"?

Heller - Let me answer that question a bit indirectly. I think...
my last year I was given a course to teach as part of my fellowship requirement. I thought it would be a good chance to open things up at the school. Unfortunately it turned out to be pretty bad. I went in there with some idea of breaking down the students' teacher-gate, trying to show them that my problems and theirs overlapped a lot. Basically I tried to undermine my authority. Maybe I threw too much on them or expected too much, I don't know. In any case I only ended up undermining my credibility. It was a classic failure to communicate. When I didn't undermine my authority (as teacher for example), I ended up reinsituting the standard type teacher/student thing you know, an extreme passivity on their part. What was really screwed up about the whole thing was that they really preferred to have a guest speaker take up the whole time--with a little lecture or something--rather than act among themselves. I didn't expect the former and the latter kind of sociality just isn't encouraged. But shit, it's not only them. I think a lot of the problems came up because of my inability to relate to the course to the students. My inability to act, or my inability to act, was really depressing. It was a pretty painful way of learning, for all of us I suppose.

Stafford--I'm afraid that it seems as though the further up the educational ladder you go, the more rigid the students become.

Heller--That's true most of the time; I mean the desperate attempt to refine a "personal" style isn't much more than another form of psychological ossification in that it almost becomes an end in itself. And it's interesting that personal style is paradoxically represented by the art world as an expression of individuality rather than a repression of individuality, in the long run, anyway. But that is a course for the future, but "please don't show up any more in class." He clearly implied that he didn't want what he called "different" work "disrupting" the class. If I wanted to do plaster casting that was fine, then I'd be welcome to attend--otherwise budget it. In the second semester of the second year, the first professor I approached with my idea for that course happened to mention in passing that I didn't have to do "all that," and that if I never even showed up 80% of the class would be happy even if it held itself and of course there wouldn't be any problem with me getting my A. Damn, there are more examples. But this type of behavior was topped off when it came time for the person show. Now you'd expect that anyone who has received all A's in school wouldn't or couldn't have any problem getting practically an unanimous "yes" vote for the graduation show. You know, approval of the work for the show essentially amounts to graduating--if you don't have your show, you don't graduate, right. I passed the committee by one vote--if one faculty member had changed his mind--I wouldn't have graduated--very strange. When you get right down to it, teachers are willing to play the grade game too, in their case sacrificing one aspect of their own bureaucratic authority--in order to maintain the more important authority of teaching an entrenched ideology. The trouble is a lot of people might not work this way, they might not. These teachers, at least the two who asked me not to appear, were doing me a favor and other were favorable. teachers who really understood how "arbitrary" grades were. I suspect it's not uncommon for people to concentrate on symbolic targets, like grades or their status or a First City National Bank, while ignoring the real problems of bureaucracy and institutionalization.

Stafford--this amounts to the perpetuation of a system....

Heller--I don't know if I'd use the word system, necessarily.

Stafford--What I mean is there seems to be a tendency towards increased specialization as you move up the ladder of institutional success: you mentioned teachers and curricula being limited and I mentioned students being limited. It seems to me that this gets back to your notion of schools reproducing the means of production of the rest of the artworld--at least if I understand your argument, and I think I do. So what I'd like to do is base you talk about that some more and have you talk about the notion of students, artists and teachers as 'workers' which you mentioned yesterday.

Heller--Well, speaking of that phrase "reproducing the means of production." I'm sure I like it, in the way I use it. I mean, schools came off somehow separate from the rest of the artworld and what I'm trying to say is that all art institutions, seek to reproduce, to dominate, themselves as institutions. Reproducing the means of production often comes down to not much less than reproducing the structure of authority which gives production" meaning in the first place. In addition, this means reproducing the "skills" necessary for maintaining these institutions--so that artists have to be produced and teachers and administrators and students, and so on. That's where the notion of "workers" comes in, because in a sense the labor of students, artists and teachers is only a commodity. 'It's something to be traded for institutional security, that is, financial security. I mean, if you're dealing in institutionalized success or institutionalized ideologies, in international shows or formalism, you aren't doing much more than "putting in your time." Questions like "how was your season this year" (financial success) are hardly "economics" among artists. But I brought up the notion of "workers" also because I'm interested in the possibility of self-mediation, in undermining my own institutionalization, and there's a history of that in workers' movements. So in some sense I'm using it metaphorically, to suggest some historical connections. Of course, you don't have to recognize the circumstances for what they are for them to have an effect on you. Look, if someone were to talk to you about factory workers as examples of alienated labor you wouldn't give them much of an argument, right?

Stafford--Probably not.

Heller--But when you say that an art student or an artist does alienated labor, the most common reaction--especially among those in the artworld might be somewhat of what you say that Art is one of the few places left where a person can really express themselves, you know, artistic freedom. Just look at all the different things people do--that kind of crap.

Stafford--That sounds like a fairly standard reply....

Heller--But what are the possibilities? Do the conditions exist in which a student, for example, can make any "authentic" choices? It doesn't seem like it, at least if not all the alternatives are institutionally co-opted. We're only left in reified social relations of production, which constitute our activities as allegoriically separate from the processes of institutional production. Does that make sense? I don't know. It seems like you try to be aware of the 'authority'-you have a strange look on your face--you know I'm not saying that all authority is bad. But parts of the authority are a viable or workable construction for authority.
of classes, where the teacher didn't come over as an authority at all, at least not intentionally. But the upshot of that was that students were "freer" to discuss the parts of the entrenched ideology they sided with. There were a lot of arguments, for example, between the New Realists and the Conceptualists. In the end the major difference between this kind of class and a more authoritarian one is that you generally talked about more recent art history, in fact there were some field trips to the galleries in Soho, and we weren't being lectured to. Of course this was a step in the right direction, but hardly a large one, and even this didn't happen very much.

Stauffer—In a funny way, that relates to the fact that in art schools there isn't much dialogue about work... I mean there's very little dialogue about work in progress or about work which has already been done. I suppose that's expected and perhaps even necessary given the competitive atmosphere. It's important though, in that it reflects several problems. There are just too many student/student problems, there are student/student problems as well. It seems to me this lack of dialogue among students is just isolating them from one another. It certainly prompts any notion of groups (collectivization instead of unionization) from arising. In an odd way, the bureaucratic structure of classes forces students to see each other as little occasionally, instead of biding up in their studios all the time. It seems like there were a number of students whose work I only saw in crit sessions, and they said: I mean that was really the only time we could discuss it. It was as if it was too difficult to get together other than on these occasions.

Heller—are you talking about students organizing themselves, like in groups? Groups can be taken in several ways, you know. I mean, you don't automatically improve your educational situation just by forming a group. I guess you realized that when you mentioned collectivization instead of unionization...

Stauffer—and I don't mean the sort of group in which you have an exclusive membership either, where it's tightly knit. It has to do more, for me, with sociality, interaction, context—that's how I'm referring to it actually. But getting back to your discussion about students as laborers and the production relationship, and maybe I'm just putting it all in my own words... but this guy Slavtch talks about individualism a lot. He points out that the trend in the West has been away from a related notion of the people and an organic connection between nature and environment and against seeing yourself as part of a larger society or societal network. The emphasis has been rather on an individuality and narcissism, that is, seeing yourself as an unconnected and individual from everyone else. Technology has accentuated it, especially the division of labor. And I guess this is where his notion of individualism fits in with MacPherson's "possessive individualism." That is, in a capitalist market, the only resource most people base to sell is their labor. Consequently we all begin to treat our bodies as commodities, something to produce labor, which allows us to eat. Our body is, in a sense, an object—-to ourselves. But at the same time we feel our bodies—we might not own much else, but at least that. The trouble is, this leads to a premium on owning things, because it's seen to increase individual power. It also means, in effect, that we're always mediating our perceptions of ourselves on the basis of specific market requirements. Basically the collectivity of people in the feudal economic structure was replaced by individuals relating to each other as separate, competing units when capitalism arose.

Heller—... students no: talking to each other... they are competing for entrance into the same market. I guess it also explains why most artists, who are unionized, now are devoted to economic issues. That is artists band together to increase their financial security—they rarely question the nature of that security. It's like being manipulated by the bureaucracy (grades) to get your degree, ignoring how much that degree itself constitutes a kind of institutionalization. I mean, after all, a degree is hardly the road to "freedom," is it? Not if you accept.

Stauffer—Yeah... I mean, the market divides people up, as competing units, and people begin to feel that happiness merely means manipulating the system in order to get a bigger slice of the pie. Isn't that what bourgeois notions of power are all about? You know, except for marxists--and as you said, they aren't real contradictions—we have a cult of individualism today approaching the absurd. The requirement that students develop a "unique" style only perpetuates them and their labor as commodities (of course, there are other factors). So, the more all of us feel we have to be unique, the more removed we become from each other and the more disinterested we become. Did I misunderstand you? I am not looking for the end of individualism, that is a bit ridiculous and I admit what I've said is a bit simplified and certainly partial, but I think the whole notion of "possessive individualism" helps explain how the institutions prevent collective activity for social...

Heller—What about people who read Marx late at night, alone. Even separate people can form a lone union. It can come out "in work".

Stauffer—Without some sort of explicit sociality, I doubt it. I mean, even a "Marxist" working alone in the artworld, generally ends up being institutionalized—look at Daniel Buren. Part of the reason for a notion of "non-institutionalized sociality" is that you begin to develop a sympathetic, neo-alienated sense of audience. In other words, you can begin to talk to each other not through institutionalized channels like galleries and media—-which lead to make you a producer, while requiring, in a sense, that your audience be a consumer—-but directly. In a way, everyone becomes a producer of sorts, in a way, everyone can contribute. I mean, this isn't saying anything more than what you were trying to do with your class in graduate school. The problem with operating alone is that almost inevitably your audience ends up being your institutions, and not much else. You can take the idea of developing a network of group praxis as meaning you're trying to develop a cultural "pocket" of sorts, where you might be able to, in part, get around institutionalization. In a way, it comes down to being able to teach each other how to behave differently towards each other. Anything else would just be the imposition of a set of values, perhaps those of one or two people, on the rest of us. In other words, we would have a standard teaching (lecture) situation, a situation many Marxisms are proud to themselves—by the way. In any case, there probably aren't many art students or artists or teachers who do read Marx late at night, or any other time for that matter.

Heller—Well, actually, the Art Workers Coalition cooperated for something other than financial reasons.

Stauffer—Yeah, but you know what the problem there was: they never addressed each
crucially means you’ll stretch your canvas and you’ll prime it or you’ll do some figure drawings in that class of something like that. So I’m not negating things like ‘doing’ but supporting a different notion that the common idea of ‘doing’ in an art classroom.

**Stafford—** Alright...  
**Heller—**... there’s a distrust of critical theories in art schools. I was prepared for some of that. But it was very different being in the position of ‘authority’. I guess I realized a bit better to what extent both students and faculty aren’t supposed to make connections which might allow them to better understand things like the context of art. There’s no distrust of history, say, but few people follow through on the social context of that history.

**Stafford—** Like what the cotton growers’ interests are, or the multi million dollar art business—very much like raw materials alone every year. And don’t forget the ‘greatest investment opportunity of your lifetime’? I think the kind of connections you’re talking about might be something like the relationship between those and art schools’ stake in the status quo.

**Heller—** Right, conditions like that. In general there’s a lot of value put on ‘no casualities’. Like what’s right there in front of you, but separated from the rest of your life. You know, situations where people can’t talk about human relationships in the process of production—in other words, can’t develop a language for talking about it. It’s hard to communicate about the material conditions of society—the meaning of our production becomes repressed. And in the process, a notion that the work of making it and I guess in some sense they can distinguish the degree to which you are an ‘expert’ by the gallery you show with—you know, you’re in a bigger bracket with Castelli than you are with Benedek (about). So as a student you start off your relationship in a sense looking to that person, for example, in a certain way. And yes, it is certainly true that many students reject this notion of ‘expert’—in relation to say the instructor for the course, they even kick them out of their cubicle. A total rejection? Then they go ahead and make Robert Rymans or Man- 

gold’s and so on. I mean, in a way either you “learn” to “believe” or you “fail” in any case acceptance isn’t accidental.

**Heller—** What’s the alternative?

**Stafford—** Well, dropping out of school is one.

**Heller—** But that doesn’t necessarily do much to deal with the problems of institutionalization and authority (history). You see, I don’t only mean the alternatives that exist, but the ones that don’t exist. Part of institutional ‘opacity’ is the very fact that we just don’t have the “tools” to sort much out.

**Stafford—** So we’ve in an ‘institutionalization’ of power relations. Now, in their present consonances, then, educational institutions—in one more ‘institutionalization’ of power relations—coerce people by blocking what amounts to almost all forms of self-comprehension (consciousness).

**Heller—** You could say that. But what about the idea of it being a student/student problem?

**Stafford—** I think it’s been implied in the last twenty minutes or so. I was in a photography class once, where I convinced the teacher to let me do something with film instead of photographs. Now, I admit that I didn’t know exactly what I was doing. I mean, I had an idea for what I wanted to do physically and the work turned out fine, that is, technologically okay. But I made a bad mistake. I presented it to the class, and I was told I had no idea of what I was doing.

**Heller—** I couldn’t mount any kind of defense for my work, in terms of modernist/feminist criteria. In fact it was a Baldessari/Morris-type thing, though I didn’t know it at the time. I mean, at least I didn’t know I was self-conscious aware of any influence. But I made it worse by not admitting from the beginning that I just couldn’t formalize what I was doing—it was just ‘highly intensive’. What I’m saying is that if I was pushed down, which I ultimately was, I’d have to say that I just wasn’t sure of what I was doing.

**Heller—** In that situation, I was subjected to one of the most devastating attacks by other students I can remember. I mean, there was this incredible kind of kandooung kind of effect—like one or two people started, and when

I didn’t respond in the way I guess they expected it really turned into a mob. The group pressure got to be incredible, though once or two people actually talked about the work. After a while it was so bad I think the professor was embarrassed for letting it go on. For me it’s pretty sure I was, because after a week later he apologized for letting it go out of band, I just couldn’t understand why people reacted so strongly to someone admitting that they didn’t know exactly what they were doing.

**Heller—** You said one or two people concentrated on the work. Didn’t the others?

**Stafford—** No, they didn’t really deal with the work at all. They concentrated on me instead. It was as if I just had a lot of gall presenting something to them which I wasn’t sure of. I still wonder how they would’ve reacted if they would’ve seen it in a different context, say in a gallery, without the artist present. I suspect they would have accepted it from someone who had some “authority” in their eyes. At least the emphasis of their questioning might have changed. At the time I guess I thought school was one place where you didn’t have to know exactly what you were doing.

**Heller—** Well, there’s an ingrained positivism in the art world, especially in our language.

**Stafford—** Sure, it’s as if uncertainty is ruled out from the beginning. You can be pretty indecisive about what you actually do, but you have to be very positive about what you say about what you do. There’s a certain kind of market positivism, that is, to a certain, if you’re indeterminate about it, it doesn’t get marketed. Indeed, any attempt to question the basic assumptions of what you’re doing, the context of your actions, is met with a lot of resistance—and, as we’ve been saying, not only from other people, but from yourself as well.

That’s what I mean by saying we needed a non-alienated notion of groups. People can begin to support each others’ risks, instead of resisting them and blaming the person taking the risks for, perhaps, upsetting the apple cart.

**Heller—** So, whole aggregates of social and economic norms are removed from questioning in the art world at large.

**Stafford—** About by definition, we’re in a situation where there can’t be any natural production of art. It’s not much more than commodity production. And right now, the move is towards the "skills of the artist being "learned" more and more in the schools, and less "on the spot"—"on the street", or in the left—away from the institution...  

**Heller—** "Away" meaning: what outside production? away from formalism? How much is that a possibility? You seem to be returning back to positivist distinctions. Do you take your point though about the tyranny of schools when it comes to the question of where education goes on. But what do you mean by "natural" production of art?

**Stafford—** Well, I think it should be thought of as something we’re approaching in steps. It’s like actions without objectives,—and it doesn’t matter whether those objectives are right or wrong, or mythical or dehumanized or naive or critical, it isn’t praxis, though it might be orientation in the world. Right, and not being praxis, it’s action that’s ignorant of its own process and aim. You know, take the interrelation of the awareness of aim and process as the basis for planning action, that implies methods, objectives and value options, Christ, it’s not like we don’t know we’re subjected, directed, and affected...  

It seems pretty obvious, I mean, if we’re going to have a self-mediating human technology, where we’re continuously transforming ourselves, then it doesn’t seem like there could be any way of predetermining the forms and modalities, sort of a special form of "I can’t tell you why I’m doing it for you, but I can tell you something", that’s just not another form of laisse faire either.

**Heller—** It’s never fully realized.

**Stafford—** I think "realized" assumes a lot, at least now anyway. It might be a bit gratuitous to say it’s confusing to know where to begin, to start, you know, in terms of thinking about self-medication. But it is anyway...

**Heller—** Well, I can’t answer the question of whether or not we can really have an "authentic" culture much less tell you what it would mean to have one.

**Stafford—** You don’t mean something like we can just go out and get an "authentic culture"?

**Heller—** All I’m saying’s that the crucial question—the crucial thing about having an "authentic culture"—is the emphasis on use, which is what you yourself have stressed.

New York, New York
OPTIMISTIC HANDBOOK
LYNN LEMASTER

The dictionary follows the form of Katz’s and Fodor’s semantic theory, but it is important not to be overinvolved with the ins and outs of that theory in this fragment. Current linguistic theory, on a simplistic level, isn’t all that adequate to deal with fairly complex sentences, conceptions, etc. (may- way it doesn’t claim to), and even less with how we understand them.

My purposes here in constructing the dictionary fragments are pragmatic and heuristic rather than linguistic.,. how it draws a map. I am taking ideology to be accessible in the interface of "range of sufficiently expressive ideas" and "sources of expression." It could serve as a way of getting at an evaluative process ("simplicity measure") for trying to sort out a notion of learning in relation to a pragmatic approach to a possibility of ideology. It could be about interpretations of semantic information and/or the semantic information generated.

I am not going to bother with the formulation of a formalized pragmatic system, but rather to get a better view of a relation between the speaker of a text and the hearer of that text. The speaker is using a complicated function of groups of persons (and their histories) and of languages, the set of groups to which the person producing the sentences of the text belongs, the set of groups that are his reference groups, i.e., the groups whose norms are considered by the speaker as his own (regardless of any "knowledge" of those) and the functions this individual performs. Or, put another way—possibly more relevant to this context—the task which the individual and both his membership and reference groups are engaged in are involved. The functions that are the speaker and the addressee should be interdependent and dependent upon "communication" relations. This no doubt seems almost trivially obvious. However, there could be some sort of paired correspondence between the descriptions of these functions and a description of how we use "ideology" in the text.

You have to start with a set of reference points. These could be a number of things, but the specific isn’t all that easy to construct. You could regard the lexicon as a somewhat artificial reference point. You could also cite moments of time, whose lexicon it is, names of persons or locations in space, etc. They would be subsets of the set of reference points and they are needed to define a "task" concept. An agent in this case simply performs a task, performs a transformation in space and time. You also would have to introduce structured sets of agents (membership groups and reference groups) and their interactions, and say that a speaker is a function of the place of the agent in the global and local transformation process.

Although this doesn’t solve any problems it is a way of emphasizing an ideological context-dependence language (in which contexts are used but not necessarily explicitly expressed). The dictionary could be seen as a sort of pragmatic meta-language (showing features upon which the meaning of statements depends for one speaker). (Don’t anyone get over enthusiastic and start looking for the "ideology" in the lexis without a long list of instruments for the task. The relationship you have to your ideological language (or just plain language) may be expressed as a "knowledge" relationship, but not necessarily dependent on any "conscious" awareness. If you assumed awareness as a condition, you would also have to postulate a perfect or almost perfect correlation between grammatical and psychological complexity. The last has opened up the semantic aspect in a way that would undoubtedly seem odd a lot of linguistic philosophers. I’m not interested in satisfying linguistic philosophers. It just seems to fit with our way of going on in a context, which is generalized as ideological. It of course a propositional-attitude-view-of-the-world (but that shouldn’t sound that strange to someone with a conventional view of art and artists).

If you reject to consider a notion of belief or knowledge, Hintikka’s model of the attribution of knowledge or belief to a person involves a division of all the possible worlds into two classes: those possible worlds which are incompatible with it. So, it’s fairly obvious that a notion of understanding could be that understanding a sentence is being able to divide all possible worlds into two classes: those in which the sentence would be true and those in which it would be false. You understand what a sentence says insofar as you know what to expect of the world in case the sentence is true. That seems to fit better with an intuitive idea of competence or understanding, i.e., being able to consider implications, revise uses, reference, meanings for a set of statements (a theory) rather than just being able to articulate that set. The “understanding hit” might work (or provide an alternative to at least a Wittgensteinian notion). But you have to be careful of the possible actual worlds location—the somehow unhappy distinctions made about the world that happens to be actual or the world that happens to be false, but that there is only one possible world, that is an actual one. I’m afraid that just seems psychologically and ideologically naive—also linguistically naive (e.g., if you consider ambiguity). Hintikka makes the distinction between what someone believes and the ontological correlates of those beliefs—and he’s talking about correlations. It seems pretty licentious to admit modal logics at the outset and then fail to take the constructive and psychological consequences and perhaps sociological consequences of modal logic. Modal logics are the underpinnings of ideology; it just seems that basic. Whatever comes up out of the dictionary would, of course, have some reverberations about one’s ideas about depth (the syntax). But you can’t make too many assumptions about the depth of it because it’s involved in describing the depth (to some extent). (You could see it as a sort of picture theory of the depth structure represented.)

But it’s not as straight and narrow (and as “linguistic”) as that. It appears that inasmuch as the dictionary is constructed from some (not all) sentences of one pamphlet by Paul Cardan, this would cast aside historical connections with other articles and materials. What has to be dealt with then is the sheets of paper which, in a sense, no longer refer back to the ideology of Paul Cardan or the ideological models to which they might be appropriate. It becomes what is constructible into an ideology from these materials. What are the conditions of ideology? (a field of study.)

However, I think you have to treat it as more than an arbitrary selection out of Marxism. You no doubt have to admit that it is that—that there are social, cultural, historical or whatever parameters on encountering this kind of material (etc.). Presumably, there are ways of tracing the kind of decisions made, the kind of discoveries that might occur in (my) compiling (of) the dictionary. If that is about trying to show something, then what it shows is not entirely about reflecting what I know of that set, what I know as an "academic," or in a field-of-study sense of the situation. It has to reflect something else. I’m trying to reflect something else. If it doesn’t then it doesn’t have anything to do with ideology. It would just be to do with positive history (dialectic). The point is simply that ideology is about people being in a culture. Inasmuch as you can be in touch with the pieces of paper (and their various antecedent pieces of history) then that’s how it can be about ideology.

That means the "methodology" involved is trying to prevent myself or anyone else from even considering things like “a field of study that would allow you to have the same accessibility to information or area that Paul Cardan had.” The problem is really one of the interface or inter-subjectivity between Cardan and myself/someone else, and how if you might differ from Paul Cardan, given pragmatic considerations which build up the semantics of, or the meaning
of, that which is extracted. This should show something fairly real/natural about ideology as distinct from something contrived. That's what the problem is. And the confusion that appears to be generated with respect to the dictionary is a lot more "profound" than being able to make ad hoc methodological decisions. (As for the history of the text—inasmuch as the purposes are pragmatic then they are to do with extracting the maximum amount of information as can be extracted, from the set of parameters which one can consult in relation to Paul Cardan.)

So, what is being looked at is a (my) relationship to the semantics of a particular piece of syntax, rather than the given assumptions of what the semantics, the meaning, the interpretation of a piece of text is. The thing is to get rid of things like the dialectic, the arguments, assumptions, conclusions, etc. in the text per se as far as possible. What then is given, is myself (or yourself) as a fundamental point of reference.

There is no reason to expect this lexicon to reflect an OfD-order reality. Instead, you could argue that the "order" of reality was a very strong assertion about the vast amount of idiom that comes one's way (and passes between you and someone else). Presumably, your idioms (idiolects) are not entirely based on environmental features. There are conceptual features of your discourse which determine structure, the idiomatic parts of one's speech, i.e., "the bizarre" with respect to the set of functions which are not the set of functions associated with a group you might belong to. If you see the dictionary as a "first-person" dictionary in this sense you could ask what is a second person dictionary? or what is the possibility of a second person dictionary? in relation to the first person.

You can get a lot of long strings, and presumably a series of molecularly ordered first person dictionaries (that's what you would end up with, even in one pathway). The fact that it's molecularly ordered makes for there being something rather odd about it. It's unlikely, for instance, to be caught by set theory, because the universal quantificatory part is just going to be all over the place. I (the quantifier) wouldn't really have a place is the points of reference. The points of reference are more like the concatenation "and the next point is, and the next point is" and so on. And the "and the next" are both a natural feature and an unnatural one. The unnatural "and the next" are going back, overlapping. The thing is it's more like an experience than like a formality of set theory.

I can say a bit more about the methodology here, i.e., in the talk about experience. It is very much an anti-categorization stance. Categories are indeed generated in the strings, but you come across your categories as parts of your experience as distinct from a priori structures on your experience. It is very odd to think of, for example, the experience of waiting to come across a category, a son of wandering on and knowing that not so much if you wonder along for long enough, but quite simply that there is in something like a system sufficient to generate that which will function as a virtual category for a certain region of that experience. In other words, a certain sort of set of inter-world transformations, as opposed to intra-world transformations.

With this in mind, you could see a critique of the thing as a sort of questionnaire—to find out what "resources of expression" you have in common with somebody else. You would have to think about certain aspects of a piece of syntax, given the typology of whatever the context, semantic markers are. Given someone else's reading of the syntax, you could find out what was in common between his reading of it and your reading of it. Again, semantic markers (or whatever) is a reflection of the method, so how generalized are you or how ungeneralized or how generalized can you get? There is a point here about the actual profundity of the order of the semantic markers. It is quite simply a sort of sociological set of markers. You could speculate about what the order amounts to. I think that is pretty profound. It would be really unfortunate to get the idea that this has anything to do with sewing up the world neatly. For a start, I can't even consider anything like providing a "complete" dictionary of any kind (and I don't mean the time problems involved). Aside from which the thing is just too massive to catch hold of. You just have to think of some of the general possibilities inherent in
1. We should start by examining what has happened to the most concrete part of Marx's theory, namely its economic analysis of capitalism.

2. Far from being a contingent, accidental or empirical application of Marxist theory to a particular historical phenomenon, this economic analysis is the place where the whole substance of the theory is concentrated.

3. We know that for Marx capitalist economy was subject to insoluble contradictions which manifested themselves in both periodic crises of over-production and in long-term tendencies whose unfolding would increasingly shake the system to its very foundations.

4. It forces us, however, to reconsider Marx's economic theory in order to see if the contradictions between the theory and the facts is merely apparent and temporary.

5. It "neglects" the effect of the gradual self-organization of the capitalist class, precisely with the aim of dominating the "spontaneous" tendencies of the economy.

6. These shortcomings stem from the theory's fundamental premise: namely that in a capitalist economy, men (proletariats or capitalists) are actually and completely transformed into things ("reified") and that they are submitted to the action of economic laws that in no way differ from natural laws, except insofar as they use the "conscious" actions of men as the unconscious instruments of their own realization.

7. The fundamental contradiction of capitalism lies here and not in the quasi-technical incompatibilities that the economic gravitation of human molecules in the system is claimed to give rise to.

8. Firstly one can no longer maintain the central importance given by Marx (and the whole Marxist movement) to the economy as such.

9. The word economy is used here in the relatively precise sense given to it by the very contents of "Capital", i.e. the whole system of abstract and quantifiable relations, which starting from a given type of appropriation of productive resources (whether this be legally guaranteed or property, or derives simply from a "de facto" power of disposal) determines the creation, the exchange and the distribution of values.

10. These economic relations cannot be constructed into an autonomous system, whose functioning would be governed by its own laws, independently of other social relations.

11. Such a construction is impossible in the case of capitalism, and since it is precisely under capitalism that the economy tends to acquire the greatest "autonomy" as a sphere of social activity, one suspects that it would be even less possible to do so for previous societies.

12. Even under capitalism the economy remains fundamentally an abstraction: society has not been transformed into a series of economic relations to the point where all other social relations could be considered as secondary.

13. Making of the "development of the productive forces" the motive force of history implicitly presupposed a constant pattern of fundamental human motivations: roughly speaking the economic motivation.

14. One cannot make any generalizations about "economy determining ideology" or about "ideology determining economy" (or even about "economy and ideology mutually determining one another") for the very good reason that both economy and ideology (considered as separate areas that might or might not act on one another) are themselves transformed (or of a given phase (and a fairly recent one at that) of historical development.

15. One of the major obstacles which the penetration of capital met, and still meets, in the "backward" countries is precisely the lack of any capi
talist type of economic motivation and mentality.

16. If it is wrong to claim that the techniques-economic categories have always been the determinent ones, for during long periods of history they neither existed as materialized categories of social entities nor the economic functions.

17. In a sense, of course, technique and economy "have always been there," since every society has to produce in order to survive and to evolve a social organization of this production.

18. Conversely, the economy (for example with authority relations or with the relations of allegiance within feudal society) have no direct influence either on the nature of the economic relations of society in question or on the way these relations act upon one another.

19. For example there is no doubt that once capitalism is constituted the distribution of productive resources between the different social strata and among the capitalists themselves is essentially the outcome of the free play of the economy.

20. At another level we might accept the idea that under "laissez-faire" capitalism the administrative and political relations can be envisaged as a "superstructure" depending on the economy but having no influence over it.

21. Such an affirmation would be meaningless however in the case of a feudal (or an "asiatique") economy.

22. Can one pretend that the meanings, motivations and values created by each culture have no function or effect other than that of camouflaging an economic psychology, which somehow always existed?

23. All this is equivalent to the invention of another subconscious level of the subconscious, which unlike the first subconscious would be both "objective" (since totally independent of the past history of the individual and his actions) and "historical" (since constantly geared towards definable and even quantifiable objectives—namely economic objectives.)

24. The elaboration of a whole "economic" psychoanalysis would be required in order to reveal the "real" of hidden "economic" meaning of human action.

25. In such a system "economic surges" would replace the jalousies of the libido.

26. To be sure, hidden economic meanings can often be discovered in actions which on the surface don't appear to have any.

27. But this doesn't imply that these economic meanings are the only ones or even the primary ones.

28. It certainly does not mean that their content is always and everywhere the maximum of economic satisfaction in the Western capitalist sense.

29. For these "economic surges" (one might say the "pleasure principle" dowered to the ends of consumption and appropriation) take this or that form, whether they choose this or that objective, whether they maintain themselves in this or that pattern of behaviour, will depend on a totality of inter-related factors.

30. It will depend in particular on the relations between the "economic drive" and the sexual drive (and in particular on the manner in which the latter "specifies" itself in a given social)

31. Nothing except the postulate that the real nature of man is to be productive-economic-animal.

32. It is but one link in the chain of causal relations unambiguously determined at any given moment by the state of the technical-economic infrastructure.

33. A class is needed to keep a given socio-economic system working according to its own laws.

34. This would be tantamount to admitting that the history has not been exclusively determined by the remorseless functioning of predetermined economic laws but that the actions of social groups and classes have been able to modify the laws themselves depending on the conditions under which they operate.

35. This last example clearly shows that economic determinism and class struggle propose two mutually incompatible explanations.

36. Is it the development of technology and the effects of economic laws that govern the system?

37. More sophisticated marxists, referring if necessary to other texts of Marx, will refuse this unilateral view and will assert that the class struggle plays an important role in the history of the system, that it can modify the functioning of the economy, and that one should not forget that this struggle can only take place within a given framework which determines its limits and gives it its direction.

38. The economic laws formulated by Marx are simply meaningless outside the class struggle.

39. Between the capitalism of 'Capital' (where economic laws lead to a stagnation of wages, to increasing unemployment, to more and more violent crises and finally to the breakdown of the system to function) and real modern capitalism (where wages increase in the long run parallel with production and where the extension of the system continues without encountering any economically insoluble problem) there is not only the difference between the real and the imaginary.

40. Marx for example is a great economist (even when he is wrong) whereas Francis Ferroux is
1. But it is another thing to reduce production, work, and human activities mediated by instruments and objects to the level of 'productive forces' i.e. to the end of the level of technology.

2. And it would be just as wrong to grant to technology an evolution which in the last analysis would be autonomous.

3. One cannot evolve a system of social mechanics based on an eternal, and eternally constant opposition between a technology (or productive forces) endowed with an autonomous evolution and the remaining mass of social relations and human life (the 'superstructure') to which would just as arbitrarily be attributed both positivity and an in-built inertia.

4. In fact there is neither autonomy of technology nor any ingrained tendency of technology in the direction of such an autonomous development.

5. During 99.5% of its development (that is to say during the whole of its evolution except for the last 500 years) known or presumed history was based on what appears to us now to have been technological stagnation.

6. Similarly one cannot divorce the enormous technological development of modern times from radical changes in these attitudes, however gradually these may have appeared.

7. To convert scientific knowledge primarily into a means of technological development and to vest it with predominantly instrumental characteristics also corresponds to a new attitude.

8. It is only with the flowering of bourgeois society that one begins to witness what appears to be a sort of autonomous evolution of technology.

9. This technological evolution is a product of the philosophic and scientific development launched or accelerated by the Renaissance whose deep links with the whole of bourgeois culture and society are undeniable.

10. Finally, in the present stage of capitalism, technological research is planned, directed and explicitly oriented towards the objectives of the dominant strata of society.

11. Does it really make sense to speak of an 'autonomous' evolution of technology when the U.S. Government decides to spend a thousand million dollars on rocket fuel research—and only one million dollars on research into the causes of cancer?

12. During past periods of history, when men so to speak accidentally came across some new method or invention, and when the basis of production (as well as of war and of other social activities) was characterised by technological scarcity, the idea of a relative autonomy of the technique might have appeared to have some meaning—although even then it would have been false to claim that this technique was a 'determinant', in any exclusive sense, of the structure and evolution of society.

13. This is proved by the immense variety of cultures, both archaic and historical (Asiatic, for instance) built on the same technological bases.

14. In contemporary societies, on the other hand, the continual expansion of the range of what is technologically possible, and the permanent influence and action of society in relation to its methods of work, of communication, of war, etc., definitively refutes any idea of the 'autonomy' of the technical factor.

15. The 'Sermon on the Mount' and the 'Communist Manifesto' belong just as much to historical practice as any technological invention.

16. What is more ideological than isolating a single abstract factor (the evolution of technology)—which is moreover of the order of an idea—and building a whole theoretical edifice on this basis?

17. But instead of being religious, philosophical or political ideas, the ideas are technological.

18. Technological ideas remain then a kind of prime mover.

19. We either remain just there—and the whole allegedly 'scientific' edifice of historical materialism is seen to base all history on a mystery, the mystery of the autonomous and inexplicable evolution of a particular category of ideas (technological ideas).

20. Or we replunge technology into the bath of total social reality.

21. Either Engels was making a purely verbal concession in which we are left with a factor (technological ideas) which determines history without being determined by it.

22. The British motor car industry operates on the same technological basis as the French motor industry.

23. In fact to say that men have always sought the greatest possible development of the productive forces and the only obstacle encountered in this endeavour was the state of technology—or to claim that society has always 'objectively' been dominated by this tendency and shaped according to it—are impermissible extrapolations.

24. Is it the development of technology and the effects of economic laws that gives the system?

25. The system is continuously propelled as the result of the autonomous progress of technology.
1. They are as conditioned by the infrastructure as the superstructures are conditioned by them (if the term 'to condition' can be used to describe the mode of coexistence of various diverse aspects of social activity).

2. Engels' attempt to escape this dilemma by explaining that although superstructures may act on infrastructures, the latter remain determinant 'in the last analysis' hardly makes sense.

3. The really idealistic character of the 'materialist conception of history' appears at an even more fundamental level when one considers another aspect of the categories 'infrastructure' and 'superstructure' as used by Marx.

4. In Marx's vision not only has the infrastructure a determining weight but it alone has weight, for it alone is at the origin of the movement of history.

5. Unlike everything else, the infrastructure embodies truth.

6. But for Marxists this ambiguity, this deformed relationship to historical reality would apparently cease to exist when we start dealing with the superstructure.

7. It is but one link in the chain of causal relations unambiguously determined at any given moment by the state of the techno-economic infrastructure.

1. The great forces of production—that shock factor in historical development—were choked in those obsolete institutions of the superstructure (private property and the national State) in which they found themselves locked by all preceding development.

2. One cannot evolve a system of social mechanisms based on external, and eternally constant opposition between technology (or productive forces) endowed with an autonomous evolution and the remaining mass of social relations and human life (the superstructure) to which would just as arbitrarily be attributed both passivity and an inherent inertia.

3. Superstructures have never enjoyed the privilege of being passive.

4. These superstructures are only a web of social relations.

5. What Marx called the superstructure has no more been a passive and delayed reflection of an otherwise undefinable social 'materiality' than human perception and knowledge have been hazy and imprecise 'reflections' of an external world 'in itself' perfectly formed, col-
ored and endowed with odor.

6. Engels' attempt to escape this dilemma by explaining that although superstructures may act on infrastructures, the latter remain determinant 'in the last analysis' hardly makes sense.

7. The really idealistic character of the 'materialist conception of history' appears at an even more fundamental level when one considers another aspect of the categories infrastructure and superstructure as used by Marx.

8. Superstructures are always ambiguous: they both express and hide the 'real situation.'

9. At another level we might accept the idea that under "baiser-faire" capitalism, the state apparatus (and political relations) can be envisaged as a superstructure depending on the economy but having no influence over it.

**REIFICATION**

noun, verb (transitive)

(social)

(activity)

(ideological)

(actual)

[transformation of a person (human) into a thing]

(abstract)

(conceptual/mental)

(intentional)

(indicate: disposition (constituting experience))

[transformation of a person (human) into a thing]

(ideological)

(abstract)

(conceptual/mental)

(intentional)

1. These shortcomings stem from the theory's fundamental premise, namely that in a capitalistist economy, men (proletarians or capitalists) are actually and completely transformed into things (i.e., "reified") and that they are submitted to the action of economic laws that in no way differ from natural laws, except insofar as they use the 'conscious' actions of men as the unconscious instruments of their own realization.

2. Reification, although a fundamental tendency of capitalism, can never completely fulfill itself.

3. The struggle of people against reification is, just as much as the tendency to reification, an essential condition for the functioning of capitalism.

4. The system can only function if its fundamental tendency, which is indeed the tendency to reification, is not achieved.

5. Secondly, if reification as a category needs to be re-examined the whole philosophy of history which underlies the analysis of "Capital" must also be reconsidered.
LOOKING BACK, GOING ON

TERRY ATKINSON

I  INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Basically the development of the notion of 'fixed-grammar' is a result of questioning that notion of grammar holding that the significant grammatical structure of sentences is found in their surface form. 'Fixed-grammar' is (seen as) an attempt to explain what happens when language is treated as if it is a stimulus-response-bound system. How might we expand this point? We are saying that insofar as grammar provides a sound-meaning correlation for an infinite number of sentences thus providing an infinite set of structural descriptions, and each contains a surface-structure that determines phonetic form and a deep structure that determines semantic content, then is it possible, firstly, for this phonetic form to be controlled (by whatever systems of control in a given society that we wish to examine), and if it is, then can this control (conditioning) of an evaluated 'correct' phonetic form itself become a factor affecting the 'deep structure which determines the semantic content? Might it, for example, atomize the workings of the deeper semantic level in the sense of inhibiting the creative aspect of language-use? Such investigations may help us to understand, e.g., the relative between a particular condition of the language-use of a given society and the slangs it accepts or rejects. We are talking the possibilities of a language-use approaching the condition of automatism. The apparent standardized behaviour of vast modern societies in comparatively recent times, say the last hundred years, seems to warrant at least asking some of the questions above. So, to reiterate the second sentence of the previous paragraph, 'fixed-grammar' is a model attempting to explain not only what happens to the language, but to all those elements of experience that our language-use affects when the language is used as if the significance of the grammatical structure of that language is to be wholly discovered in the surface form of its sentences.

II

If one is to say that the First World War generated an institutionalized bedlam insofar as it was a catalytic head-on clash of (apparently) opposing fixed-grammars, then what is meant by fixed-grammars? First, grammar here is characterized as knowledge of language in the sense that a person who has acquired knowledge of language has internalized a system of rules that relate sound and meaning in a particular way. Thus we could then say that any linguist attempting to trace out this grammar is attempting to advance an hypothesis concerning this internalized system. There has been a school of thought, centering upon the area of stimulus-response psychology, that has treated as a serious object of inquiry, the seeming assumption that language is merely a 'habit structure' in the sense of being a network of associative connections, this then allows the phenomena of language to be explored as simply a matter of 'knowing how', a skill expressible in terms of a system of dispositions to respond. According to this hypothesis knowledge of language must develop slowly through repetition and training, thus generating the further thesis that the apparent complexity of language results from the proliferation of very simple elements rather than from some not easily (if at all) discernible deeper principles of mental organization. By 'deeper' and 'indiscernible' we suggest systems that are inaccessible to introspection just as are the mechanisms of respiration and digestion. Indeed, in modern societies may have based their propaganda and educational philosophies on such assumptions (and a number of these societies may pre-date stimulus-response psychology, at least in its comparatively 'sophisticated' modern form) that such assumptions by virtue of being 'accepted' in a largely unconscious way were a priori factors governing any debate on the character of language, then one would expect to see in their ideological-educational-inoculation programmes a heavy emphasis on repetition as a methodological principle furnishing an (assumed) logical succession of stages showing how the world was not puzzling. The vast majority of education in Victorian and Edwardian Britain was of this kind. And the variations in 'quality' of education (e.g. public school, church school, etc.) only serve to illustrate how in-phase the various components of the educational system were with each other. The education of pre-1914 Britain ensured the cross-class response to Kitchener's call insofar as its components were in-phase with each other. The capability of a society to ensure that the knowledge of language (the internalization of the rules of language) is not itself made an object of inquiry in that society is a measure of the uniformity and standardization of the members-of-the-society's picture of the world. More succinctly, we might say that it is a measure of how effective the society (institutionalization) is in internalizing its members within the confines of its initial internalization condition. But the picture of the world constructed by this measure of control is finally arbitrated by the empirical consequences of the picture. As long as the empirical consequences remain in-phase with the picture, that is, well-aligned with the expectations engendered by the grammar of the grammar, then it seems that the slangs of the society will tend to be regarded as effective, and the language-use will be ritualistic in the sense of having rigidly organized patterns serving mainly as mnemonic aids to stabilize and enhance established ideological positions. In other words, language will be primarily used as a conservative instrumentality. But should the empirical consequences of the world-picture become radically out-of-phase with that picture then the language-use will tend to push-out for new ideological patterns, that is, the language will be used more for purposes of ideological revision. How well-entrenched a given habituation of language-use is may be measured by how long it will endure a severe dislocation of it from its empirical consequences. All native speakers of a language have acquired a grammar on the basis of very restricted and degenerate evidence. That is, in internalizing the system of rules (in acquiring the knowledge) of our native language, the evidence for using the rules is picked up very unconsciously. It is a matter of simple logic that self-consciousness about what happens when we use language can only take place after we have acquired language, that is, acquired knowledge of the language. An interesting question about the relation between human psychology, language and learning, is to ask, whether it is possible for a person to become inquisitive about language-acquisition whilst that person is acquiring it? That is, is it logically possible to externalize the internalization whilst the internalization is happening? By 'fixed-grammar' I mean the condition where the internalization does not become an object of inquiry. In this sense language is treated as an obvious element of the world, explainable where an explanation may be required, by recourse to the device of positing an occult property. To state that 'x' is essential and inhere to 'Y' endows 'X' with an occult property, and the general assumption tells us nothing insofar as occult properties are treated as obvious elements of the world in the sense that their explanation requires only the statutory 'it is simply there' or 'it simply is the case.' For example there is no widespread approach to 'explaining' human intelligence in Victorian Britain, which began by postulating, on a priori grounds, certain specific mechanisms that it claimed must be those underlying the acquisition of knowledge and belief. Whatever this kind of stage is reached it becomes inconceivable that one might have to postulate revised or entirely new principles of functioning and organization outside the framework of what is the conventional 'common sense'. In the terminology of perhaps the best known school of thought in modern linguistics 'knowledge of language' is often called 'linguistic competence' - and it is often suggested that the degree of linguistic
tic competence can be measured by observing the mastery of grammatical processes. These processes can be broken down as follows: there are some general properties of grammars; a number of very simple rules expressing a few rudimentary grammatical functions; by assigning to these rules a specific property, one generates an infinite class of deep structures. Through iterative grammatical transformations will form a surface structure which may be remote from the underlying deep structure. So how are these general properties of grammars functioning (inside a fixed-grammar)? It will be useful here to preface the answer to this question with some general remarks concerning the differences between a society whose culture is transmitted orally and a society whose culture is transmitted disc through writing. It will be worth keeping in mind a distinction derived from traditional Cartesian observations on the character of language-use, namely, that between 'appropriation' of heuristics to situations and 'control of behaviour by stimuli.' By 'fixed-grammar' one is suggesting that the bearer of such a grammar tends to have his world-picture organized according to the latter, 'control of behaviour by stimuli.' In fact, the language-use of all of us tends to work like this, and especially where the language-use of a given society is primarily used as a mnemonic aid in the sense of aiding the memories of the members in respect of reenacting the established ideological picture. In such situations the processes of cultural transmission have an homostatic function. But the relation of difference in cultural transmission between an oral and literate society is a complex one. It seems that as long as the legendary and doctrinal aspects of the culture are mediated orally they are kept in relative (to a literate culture) harmony with each other and with the current needs (themselves partially governed by the phenomena of oral transmission) of the given society in two ways. Through the self-conscious operations of memory, and through the adjustment of the reciter's term and attitudes to those of the audience/situation before him. Oral transmission is a significant factor in the ideological homogeneity of many oral societies. In literate societies, as in oral societies, the phenomenon of interesting conversations takes place, but it is no longer the society's only means of dialogue; and insofar as writing provides an alternative source for the transmission of cultural orientations it (apparently) tends to favour awareness of inconsistencies in those orientations. An important aspect of this is the notion that the cultural inheritance is made up of basically two different kinds of material, on the one hand, fiction, error, and superstition, on the other, the statements of truth which can provide a basis for some more reliable and coherent explanation of gods, the human past, the physical world, etc. It seems then that writing establishes a different kind of relation between a word and its referent than that obtaining between words and their referents in oral transmission. The relation in literate transmission becomes more general and more abstract, and less closely connected with the particularities of place and time.

It is only in the days of the first widespread alphabetic cultures that the idea of an imitable and impersonal mode of discourse appears to have arisen. And the notion of objective reality seems electrically linked with the idea of formal logic (formalization) which is dependent upon literate transmission. But, although the idea of the intellectual and to some extent political universalism is historically linked with the growth of literate cultures, it brings with it other features which have quite different implications, and it is with these features, these other intrinsic effects, of comparatively widespread literacy that should be noted in respect of the notion of 'fixed-grammar'. From the earliest times that the main elements of a cultural tradition were written down it engendered an awareness of two things, the past as different from the present and the inherent inconstancy of the picture of life as it was inherited from the cultural tradition in its codified recorded form. These two effects of widespread alphabetic cultures have continued and manifested ever since, and a rapid quantitative and qualitative acceleration was achieved at the inception of printing techniques. As printing technology advanced the inconsistency of the totality of written expression became compounded by another, perhaps even more striking problem, the enormous bulk and vast historical depth of the totality of written expression. Both of these have seemed increasingly insuperable obstacles for those seeking to reconstruct society on a more unified and disciplined model. Thus literate society, simply by having no device of structural armamis in the way an oral society does, places severe limits on the cultural participation of any one individual. In every way the view of our choices and discoveries offered by so expensive a past can be viewed as a great source of stimulation and interest, but the social effects of such an orientation generate such a profoundly volatile and complex situation inevitably fostering the alienation that has seemingly characterized so many writers and philosophers in The West over the last century and a half. In practice the literate individual has so large a field of personal selection from the total cultural repertoire that the odds are heavily against him experiencing the cultural tradition as any sort of patterned whole. For the notion of 'fixed-grammar' this is critical, for it involves the relation between the fact that our knowledge of language is an internalized system of rules and the vast historical depth that literate transmission has provided us with the possibilities of semantic manipulation of one group by another, the former usually the larger group, and such manipulation usually carried out unconsciously. In front of this vast historical depth a fatigue threshold is reached comparatively quickly and institutionalized means of standardizing the interpretations of the past are engendered to avoid the possibility of anomic. Western literate societies are characterized by proliferating layers of cultural tradition, which incessantly expose their members to a more and more tortuous and opaque version of a kind of culture-conflict. This same phenomenon when projected to other literate societies has often produced local anomic. In literate societies theorectical sophistication may be the very stuff of alienation, both for the 'understanders' and the 'non-understanders' which will include the 'misunderstanders'.

Another important consequence of alphabetic writing relates to social stratification. In the proto-literate cultures with their relatively diffuse alphabetic systems of writing, there existed a strong barrier between the writers and the non-writers; but although the 'democratic' scripts made it possible to break down this particular barrier, widespread literacy itself led to a vast proliferation of more or less tangible distinctions based on what people had read. Achievement in handling the tools of reading and writing became one of the most important axes of social differentiation. But this differentiation extends on to more minute differences between professional literate specialists that members of the same socio-economic groups may hold little intelligible ground in common.

There seems then to be factors in the very nature of literate methods which make them ill-suited to give a continuity between even intra-social groups, and even more so between individuals, and yet the intrusiveness of literacy remains unequivocally the most powerful ideological tool we have. It is a powerful tool whether used for purposes of ideological entrenchment or ideological revision. But a debilitating fatigue that the consequences of literacy engenders has seemed to pose a paradox in relation to the observation that although alphabetic writing, printing, and (relatively) universal education have combined to make knowledge freely available to all, on a scale never previously approached, the literate mode of transmission is such that it does not impose itself as forcefully as is the case with purely oral transmission. In a literate society quite apart from the scale and complexity of the 'high' literate tradition, the fact that reading and writing are solitary activities means that for the dominant cultural tradition is a literate one, it is, compared to oral ones, relatively easy to avoid. And, even when the literate culture is not avoided, its effects may be relative (to an oral culture) shallow. Abstractness and categorizations of knowledge does not correspond well directly with the fluidity input/output of common experience and immediate personal context, and the compartmentalization of knowledge similarly restricts the kinds of connections which the individual can establish and ratiy within the natural and social world where it seems that habitation towards ideological stabilization becomes a mere reflex. In this kind of climate one can often see a nostalgic yearning for unanalytic spontaneity and for the 'simple cohesive life.' Writing literally objectifies and refines words and in so doing makes them and their meaning available for much more pro-
longed and intensive scrutiny than in oral cultures. In this sense it makes the word a physical object of contemplation, apparently inviting solitary study and encouraging private thoughts. From this act has come the main framework allowing the individual to hold on a notion of subjectivity by which he can objectively his experience thereby giving him some check upon the transmutations of his memory under the influence of subsequent events, and this in itself ensures a partial insulation from the assimilative process of oral transmission.

Bearing in mind then the foregoing remarks on literate and oral transmission of culture, we can return to the question, 'How do the general properties of grammar function in a fixed-grammar?' That taking the following definition of language—language is that which is described by a particular grammar as all the sentences it can generate: then by fixed-grammar the suggestion is of a state where socio-linguistic factors (and the tradition of language-use will play a major part in the formation of such factors) produce a condition (a linguistic climate in respect of the notions learning/understanding/knowledge) where the generative capability of the language is impeded. The idea of this control of language is anyway, in the long-term view, intrinsically, weak insofar as it ignores the fact that neither the active nor passive vocabulary of a native speaker is neither fixed nor static for even short periods of time. In one sense language-users subscribing to a fixed-grammar condition have an idealized model of what language is, insofar as they treat language as inherently an ideology-stabilizing device, whereas in fact the creative aspect of language-use will always tend to produce ideas of revision, no matter how small the amount of change and how long it takes for an accumulation of small changes to become significant. Subscribers to a fixed-grammar are involved in a contradictory relation with this subscription insofar as they are language-users and as such will be subject to the minimum amount of creative use of language. To fixed-grammar a 'brake' is put on the role of language-use in its ideologically revisory function. But it is only a 'brake', it cannot be a termination insofar as (as is suggested above) the creative aspect of language-use is intrinsic to the condition of language-use.

Language-use that predominantly relies on extant semantic patterns, developing standardized responses in the sense of control of behaviour by stimuli, may be characterized as having an asymptotic function insofar as it approaches the state of rendering the language-use (cultural participator) an automation. So describing an asymptotic function as a line which continually approaches a given curve, but does not meet it within a finite distance, then we can say that insofar as the language can be treated as a purely conditioning instrumentality then the 'line' of this language-use approaches the 'curve' of automatonism according to the effectiveness of the language-use in governing a user's knowledge of the language to the extent of only the ability to take dictation.

Language used in this direction expressly contradicts the old Cartesian premise that language is available for the free expression of thought in the sense that this premise holds that at least the creative aspect of language-use is undetermined by fixed association of utterances or physiological states. We can hold with this premise so long as we do not claim an absolute irreducible distinction between 'body' and 'mind', for to do so would be dogmatic in the face of the apparent capacity of the apparatus of the creative aspect of language-use. Thus, when the tendency of a (given) language-use is heavily weighted toward entrenchment of the world-picture constructed by that language-use, then that language-use is misconceived as characteristically human language-use, insofar as it approaches what can be termed the purely functional and stimulus-bound animal communication systems.1 Thus the individual, group, or society which is fixed-grammar-bound will be limited in the development of the creative aspect of its language-use, and should ever a society break the asymptotic function where the 'line' of the language-use as a conditioning instrumentality breaks into the 'curve' of automatonism then the aspect of creative language-use would, one imagines, suffer the most severe process of atrophy.2 But the externally-credible fixed-grammar-bound entity (individual, group, society) will find great difficulty in generating new expressions of thought (its active vocabulary), and probably even more difficulty in understanding and taking seriously new expressions of thought if and when they do take place (its passive vocabulary). A society which explicitly held that language-use is within the bounds of mechanical explanation is the fixed-grammar adherent par excellence. Such a society would hold language-use to be nothing more than control of behaviour by stimuli. Its means of cultural-transmission would be training in the sense of being totally committed towards a uniform, standard, and predictable cultural participant.

NOTES.

1. When one is talking of the notion of 'dissociation' one is not talking about the effects of such a dissociation upon the language-use, but the fact of one's being at the terminus of this. We refer the reader to the events on the day of the Battle of the Somme as experienced by the vast majority of the British army as a particularly clear and magic case of this. Some of the immediately familiar in tone 4 of appendix A (following) give examples of both the quality of the effects of the dissociation of that particular event, and also the same takes for the effects to form.

2. The writings of Salisbury, Balfour and Gladstone, for instance, furnish good examples of this.

1. J. L. Austin in his book 'Linguistics: Philosophy' (pp. 90-95) says: 'It is, in fact, part of this freedom' that makes human language so extraordinary and forms the base upon which the human ability to understand what a speaker means is based, because a speaker can attract the attention of the audience and engage them in the process of understanding his meaning, whereas a bird or a dog cannot. In this way the language is not only a means of communication, but also a tool for social interaction.

2. According to the writer, cultural transmission is often seen as a mechanism for the perpetuation of cultural norms and values. However, this process can be affected by various factors, such as the cognitive capacity of the individual, the quality of the language used, and the way the language is transmitted.
principles—nearer as the empirical mounted for the empiricists
thesis is not convincing, the transitive modes of the "inner
principles" must be determined in some way. Therefore, for
his two points worth remembering here: one, that embedding seems
to be a universal characteristic of language—two, that two,
that embedding forms in modern societies, where literacy can be used as a means of standardizing the
transmission of the messages that are being broadcast is the
most striking situation for a teacher wishing to push the self-consciousness of his pupils to a further point: I speak from experience, the
academic standardization of the message forms that are
becoming normative in the face of the close scrutiny of
the latter sixties. The whole range of pedagogical practices
teaching becomes an "image" (Don't talk paint, paint, etc.).
Zeitgeist translations of this, by then, well established structure of meaning as a normal practice and an
absorbed and standardised participation. A lot of the "formalist" painting soles at both the "professionalised"
level and in art schools seems to have its kind of slang;
branching and historical self-definition behind it. (For
more recent commentary on some of these problems
see "Art Teaching", Terry Adkins and Michael Baldwin,
Art-Language, Vol. 1, No. 6 (Nov. 1973.)

The character of 'Big Brother' invented by George
Orwell, and the effect of the way the 1984 narrative of the future
was modern bureaucratic structures generally control people,
insiders. In fact "Big Brother" is cynical in the way he
behelds in nothing, not even the apocalyptic Newspeak.
Big Brother just did it, as a kind of automaticism. the
character of the control society, and I do not know if
seem to be "missed on the message" engendered by the large
number of messages coming at them. "total" message, that
increasing proliferation. This seems to produce a fatigue in
the receivers of the message, in whose number are the
increasing numbers of power and a sense of a "context" in
the sense of imagining some of the many that
could be labelled as "being conditioned responses" in the sense of being unrealistic, but
rather, a sense of self-containment is presupposed in their face-to-face interactions in a kind of
systematic inevitability. People at what we might call the top of the bureaucratic pyramid, are
embraced in their being indifferent to what they are allo-
thing. The last thing one could call many of these
institutions. In a very broad sense, these are the very people that
might be labelled as "conditioned".

Appendix
THE NEW ARMY — 1914
Can we imagine a simple linguistic knowledge of respect
consideration being given to any relations of meanings
among words? We can, but the operation of embedding
and the embedding layering one word against another, and
therein we may speculate would be the start of phrase structure. This
layer is not necessarily an hypothesis, one is not suggesting that this is how
we come to phrase structure operation, the existence, such as it is, the
existence of these layers of the start of language acquisition is not at all convincing. The operation of phrase
structuring may already be "there" according to given ideas.
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.

NOTES.

1. These figures are taken from Martin Middlebrook's book "The Final Day On The Somme" (pp. 297 and 298 respectively).

2. For a picture of both the battle on the 30th and for background details to the battle in general, see Middlebrook's book which is an outstanding book.


4. For example: from Manchester, the 16th Manchester Infantry (7th Division), 19th Manchester (2nd Division), 28th Manchester (3rd Division), 18th Manchester (3rd Division), 19th Manchester (3rd Division), 20th Manchester (3rd Division), 21st Manchester (3rd Division), 22nd Manchester (3rd Division), 23rd Manchester (3rd Division), 24th Manchester (3rd Division), 25th Manchester (3rd Division), 26th Manchester (3rd Division), 27th Manchester (3rd Division), 28th Manchester (3rd Division), 29th Manchester (3rd Division), 30th Manchester (3rd Division), 31st Manchester (3rd Division), 32nd Manchester (3rd Division), 33rd Manchester (3rd Division), 34th Manchester (3rd Division).

5. From Sandwich, the 16th London Infantry (1st Division), 17th London Infantry (1st Division), 18th London Infantry (1st Division), 19th London Infantry (1st Division), 20th London Infantry (1st Division), 21st London Infantry (1st Division), 22nd London Infantry (1st Division), 23rd London Infantry (1st Division), 24th London Infantry (1st Division), 25th London Infantry (1st Division), 26th London Infantry (1st Division), 27th London Infantry (1st Division), 28th London Infantry (1st Division), 29th London Infantry (1st Division), 30th London Infantry (1st Division), 31st London Infantry (1st Division), 32nd London Infantry (1st Division), 33rd London Infantry (1st Division), 34th London Infantry (1st Division).

6. From Leeds, the 15th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 16th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 17th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 18th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 19th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 20th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 21st Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 22nd Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 23rd Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 24th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 25th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 26th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 27th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 28th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 29th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 30th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 31st Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 32nd Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 33rd Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division), 34th Yorkshire Infantry (3rd Division).
PERIMETERS OF PROTEST

Review of a panel discussion at Artists Space, 135 Wooster Street, New York City, February 18, 1975. The eight panelists were: Carl Baldwin (moderator), Carl Andre, Rudolf Baranik, Mel Edwards, Hans Haacke, Nancy Spero and May Stevens. Linda Nochlin was supposed to attend but she apparently had the flu—too bad.

I. Perimeters of Protest had a few problems. The title itself gives us some idea: it was all about the form and style of protest rather than what it is, i.e., in the content, the practice, what we might actually protest about. It was taken for granted that protest is something to be vaguely desired. None of the panel discussion was socially specific.

This ennui of metaphorical-generality was initially the result of the lack of practice of an art-historian, Carl Baldwin (though nobody else cared much better). The problem of "politics" existing as an alienated subject-matter was typified by Baldwin’s introductory ramble. Here he did an impression of an art-historian. Why are art-historians so often boring? Is it because they occupy a grey middleland, a halfway house of "information"—without ideology or practice? Baldwin acted as if his own academic-historical search fornicities was unproblematically "natural". And from the reaction of the audience, only his art-historical clunks really followed him.

Baldwin mentioned as part of the history of "protest art" (sic) Dada, The Raft of the Medusa, and Guernica. But the latter, it seems, is only "political" in that it is "about" politics—a response after the fact, not a praxiological response leading up to it. He didn’t mention Dada. Surely Dada and Surrealism both had political dimensions which, despite them being almost totally coopted by alienating art-institutions, were "political" in ways which Guernica was not. The latter illustrates a political subject, it doesn’t internalize the problem, it alienates it. This might give us some idea of the difference between political radicalism and a wet-sock notion like "protest art".

One point Baldwin may have been trying to make (it wasn’t clear) was: you had to have the social conditions in order for protest to be effective. Delacroix’s Liberty Guiding the People was effective in part since it embodied a sense of class conflict. The working people of Paris dominate the picture. It told the bourgeoisie something they didn’t want to hear. At that time however the Parisian workers did go to the Salon, not only the bourgeois. They saw the painting as a symbol of working class Paris. Similarly, Courbet conjured up images which undermined the bourgeois sense of what was art. He addressed himself to another public, the public that each year crammed the Salon Carre on their day off.

Consider this in the light of Walter Benjamin’s suggestion that for protest to be effective it ought to make co-workers not only out of our fellow producers, but also make co-workers out of the consumers, out of readers and spectators. Thus it is a function of such "protest" to make use of conditions where you can make co-workers out of your fellow producers and consumers. Now consider how so-called fine-art might do this today? Look at the material conditions. Look at the audience for fine-art today. Perhaps Lichtenstein had such an audience once, but Guernica didn’t. It’s rather a symbol-after-the-event, a classical painting, hardly a tough paradigm of protest.

One member of the audience who sounded as if he was going to say something more interesting than he did, made a point about Hans Haacke’s work being "too soon"—that is, out-of-phase vis-a-vis the public context today. The thing about Haacke’s "Cuguenheim Trustees" publication (listing the corporation and business connections of those trustees) is that—and Carl Andre made this same point—it tells us what we already know. Now, if we know the same people buy museums and control culture also control corporations and rule the rest of the USA, what real purpose is Haacke’s piece supposed to serve? Moreover, who is the information aimed at? It isn’t the working people or the
"minorities" of New York City since they don't often get uptown to the Stephenonty Gallery. So one assumes it must be the privilege of the members of the New York art-community? Haacke said he didn't see his work as protest art and pointed out that protest art belongs in the streets in the form of posters anyway. (It's normally assumed that Haacke's work has political content. It doesn't. It has political subject-matter. The content isn't really all that controversial. Here again politics isn't internalized, it's illustrated. This isn't merely caused by bad strategy, it's a reflection of all art is muzzled today.) In his introductory ramble Baldwin seemed to be saying something like we lack access to the kind of audience present 120 years ago in revolutionary France. The Lower East Side Puerto Ricans just don't visit the MOMA on Sundays, they watch TV. It might follow, if one wanted the effect of (e.g.) Courbet (in certain instances) that one ought to use mass-media. But even this presupposes the so-called masses are going to be responsive to such appeal. TV is potentially popular media but unfortunately it's controlled by corporations. It's, in the US's anyivity, a function of capitalism. TV as a medium is, unlike books and magazines and newspapers, just like Video. It is externally paced, rather than read at a pace chosen by the reader. It would seem to be that this has all sorts of implications with respect to learning. It also poses questions as to what kind of cultural power one wants? But all this is a bit of an academic point it seems. If one is going to begin to talk coherently rather than in an idealistic and utopian way about "protest", we have to look at what specific possibilities are open to us, given who we are. That is, we must try and make it socially specific. There has to be not only a functionality between one's work and specific injustices but a functionality between those injustices and our ability to deal with them. Instead, in the panel discussion, attention is drawn away from this and onto the cult of historical autonomy: Goya-Daumier-Delairecox-and-pre-Zoom-Pécorro. These historical niches vector "protest" as if it's part of the stylized continuum of art-history. It's depressing to see people take their work for granted, as if the work itself didn't already embody some of the political impulses. Except perhaps for Haacke and one is never pure of Andre, the others didn't seem to understand many of their problems resulted from their work itself and the paradigmatic weight given to the cult of individual art-personalities. Amongst the audience there was one guy who was just itching to ask Andre and Haacke why, in fact they wanted to protest the kind of institutionalization that we are stuck with; do they show at the John Weber Gallery? One gets the feeling Andre has been asked this time and time again and he's done a lot of rehearsing the answer. Actually his answer was a bit pat but of course its impossible to make it socially specific and hence begin to internalize or include yourself as part of the problem.

This panel was our first encounter with the label "protest art". Nancy Spero even spoke of herself as a protest artist. If there's one way imperialist art-promotion will ruthlessly subsume---i.e., render harmless what we do—it's by packaging yourself as a protest artist. Even better media-fodder is to package yourself as a woman protest artist. Her work's likely to function harmlessly despite her intentions (since there is in this society some lacunae between intention and function). This was aptly illustrated by May Stevens, one of her prints protesting Capitalism (or something or other) had been bought by the United States Information Service. All of which points to conventional sculpture, prints, as perfectly harmless. And they are not useless because they are old-fashioned or other ghastly stylistic criteria, but because they are at present accessible (which is why the.curator named Billi. Oh, the artist, this same person continued, might instead have Marx, Lenin or Che in mind. But, he continued, when the artist really gets down to work, these muses all vanish. He seemed to be making a psychological point about the nature of work into, apparently, a plea for total political innocence. It hardly seems the effect of losing oneself in one's work is just limited to art. It also seems true of other non- totalTime work—building a table for instance. But Banak seemed to imply that the modest of religions was innate from influence, was autonomous and, by the applause, many others present agreed. Art is thus supposed to be innately innocent. This is just wishful art-school "sensitivity" and an incredibly simple form of essentialism. It finally amounts to further evidence of the way the Modernist ill-educated continue to go about their thinking.

There was a lot of oohing and aahing about the relation between art and life. This kind of flabby grammatical habitualization prolongs petrified modernism and prevents us from dealing with the problem as a question of ideology. Contextually the former has a bit of injection into it but of course now doesn't all become too ashamed of ourselves (Mel Edwards, a black artist, seemed to imply artists cloistered in Soho don't know what problems are anyway). So, there was no dearth of platitudes. We might ask, who was to blame for them. It's a bit gross just to blame the panelists or even the audience. It might be closer if we consider the sea of generalities as a function of the organization of the panel itself, that is, the concept of the panel itself. If we have eight persons all intent on "protest" meaning something distinctly different, then public noise pushes out private message. The liberal ethic of homogenization is at the base of the problem: let's not deal—hands-person-but-let's-veg-a-survey-of-the-whole-spectrum. This is more than merely a problem of organization. The structural-methodological base restrains and distorts ideological-moral practice. So finally, "perimeters of protest" alienated practice in favor of kunstwelt media-life. So, "State of protest" had a few problems. Harold Rosenberg, sitting just behind us throughout, has been going on about a lot of these problems for a long time, but during the panel he dozed off—it didn't even keep him awake. MEL RAMSDEN
THINKING ABOUT TIM CLARK AND LINDA NOCHLIN

It shouldn’t be exotic to look to a pre-Modern era to try and catch glimpses of a different relation to art production—perhaps a more integrated, less alienated activity? The rise of Modern Art coincides with the rise of modern capitalism and, while their histories are far from independent, dependent relations are far from clear. Most attempts to elucidate those relations come over as superficial sloganizing or just plain nutty. The period in France, in particular, from 1848 to 1871, has left its stamp on us in one way or another. But it’s a confusing period. Realizing today how Modern Art has shaped our language and cultural world, realizing how we have been recruited as puppets for its cause, perhaps, anyone trying to deconstruct this ideology should look at that period for many of the sources of today’s empty-headed practice. It marked the beginning of the specialization which stops ordinary people doing it.

1848-51 was the time of the Second Republic in France, a time of great hope, a time when (in Clark’s mind) Courbet “for a moment...almost achieved the impossible,” because “if any artist came close to creating the conditions for a revolutionary art, it was Courbet in 1851.” The other end of the period is 1871 and the Paris Commune. This was a time when, as the Metropolitan Museum’s recent show ‘The Impressionist Epoch’ seemed to be trying to tell us, it was already ‘too late’ for those who had influenced the path of Modern Art, a time when a political art had already become impossible for the Impressionists in a way that it apparently hadn’t, earlier, for Courbet, Daumier, and others.

This epoch saw the rise of what Courbet called “the laisy goal of l’art pour l’art” and what Baudelaire mocked (once) as the “puerile utopia of l’art pour l’art.” Initially, l’art pour l’art was a protest against the vulgar utilitarianism of the day, the taste of the emerging middle-class, and a drive to create something independent and elite from that. In their disgust with contemporary reality, the artists began producing for a non-existent audience, essentially production for production’s sake. This was a far cry from the political intention that is so often associated with Realism in art. However, “the idea that only an artist—an anti-Philistine—best known as the avant-garde—self-chosen and self-perpetuating—could respond to the work of art on the basis of its art qualities alone, is a social response, not merely an aesthetic one, to the tremendous social and institutional pressures on the production and consumption of art that went along with the more general upheavals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In other words, the creation of the avant-garde was the mirror image, the precise response to the emergence of the mass Philistine audience.”

Oddly (perhaps), one of the strongest defenses of l’art pour l’art came from an expatriated American, Whistler, in his ‘Ten O’Clock Lecture’ (1885) asserted the artist has no relation whatsoever to the time in which he lives; the for-art’s-sake artist that Whistler proclaimed led two lives, one in the real world and the other in the ‘world of art.’ How entrenched this has become!

At the time this represented an upheaval in the system of values—the replacing of ‘humanist’ values by autonomous and formally-stressed values. This is well-crafted in the derision of the critic who exclaimed, of Manet’s ‘Chez le Père Lathuille’, that he couldn’t be expected to accept that the gentleman’s tie was as important as the complexion of the lady’s face. To paint the tie as important as the face was to ignore the content (in a social sense). Consider this as a sort of cultural counterpart of the Copernican Revolution when the Earth was no longer posited as the center of the universe. Here the tie is as important as the face—is man then to be no more important than the clothes he wears?—how can the painter assume such an impertinent relation to the people he is painting?—how can he treat them as ‘objects’ rather than ‘subjects’? This small incident catches some of the early impetus for modern formalism, where the artist no longer reflects a person of the social reality of his subjects but transvers that compulsion to the ‘art’ of his picture. It is the beginnings of the autonomy of the work of art—and the psychological alienation of the artist’s product from himself.

“...For Manet and the avant-garde, as opposed to the men of 1848, the relation of the artist to society was a phenomenological rather than a social fact...” (Manet’s works) seem more like embodiments of...a disdainful coolness toward immediate experience, and the widely held belief that an artist need only create ‘new’ art to have constituted an act of political radicalism. Clarke writes, ‘art’s effectiveness, in political terms, is limited to the realm of ideology. This is a real limitation, though occasionally the nature of politics means it is not a crippling one. In other words, the political struggle is always, partly, a struggle of ideologies and at times the clash of ideologies takes on a peculiar importance. If it is the form of politics, for a moment. In certain circumstances, works of art can attack, dislocate, even subvert an ideology. And sometimes, rarely, that dislocation has some political significance.”

The question Clarke is finally grappling with is: “how could there be an effective political art? Is not the whole thing...incompatible with the basic conditions of artistic production in the nineteenth century—easel painting, privacy, isolation, the art market, the ideology of individualism? Could there be any such thing as revolutionary art until the means existed... to change those basic conditions...?” He argues that the problem, then and perhaps also now, is how to use the conditions of artistic production specified by Marx.

Consider Marxian Fincher: “any ruling class which feels threatened tries to hide the contradiction of its class domination and to present its struggle to save an outdated form of society as a struggle for something ‘eternal,’ ‘unnatural,’ and common to all human values. Hence the defenders of the bourgeois world do not speak today of its capitalist content but of its democratic form...” (The Necessity of Art, 1959). Marxist or not, the problem remains. In attempting to develop a political consciousness in art-practice, all the resources of history are at our disposal. Is it possible to express through a social form contradictory to such a consciousness, and is it finally this form which is the public content of the work? That is the heritage of Manet and the avant-garde, and the up-to-date or radically-opposing subject matter is interposed.

Clarke’s books, suggestive of new modes of interpreting 19th c. art, scrutinize the relation between art and politics as a particular (and crucial) moment of history. His discussion of the split between public art and private innovation is something we can easily identify with, it’s embodied in today’s institutionalized divorce of an artist’s political commitments from his artistic expression, and the widely held belief that an artist need only create ‘new’ art to have constituted an act of political radicalism. Clarke writes, ‘art’s effectiveness, in political terms, is limited to the realm of ideology. This is a real limitation, though occasionally the nature of politics means it is not a crippling one. In other words, the political struggle is always, partly, a struggle of ideologies and at times the clash of ideologies takes on a peculiar importance. If it is the form of politics, for a moment. In certain circumstances, works of art can attack, dislocate, even subvert an ideology. And sometimes, rarely, that dislocation has some political significance.”

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A FORUM ON ARTFORUM

The meeting between the Editors of Artforum and the artists’ community, sponsored by Artists Space on October 15th, 1974, was quite revealing; many aspects, including the very notion of such a meeting itself, posed interesting questions. However, I wish to concentrate on one aspect: the Editors, through their unassailable indifference, brought to the proceedings an air charged with intimidation. They were unbendably arrogant in the self-sufficiency of their opinions (passive observations), led off by John Coplans’ statement that ‘Artforum goes where the action is.’

As long as critics deal with the form and rating of art, they are in a protected position. Critics maintain authority because they are not made answerable for their practice but rather are allowed to deal in opinions, all of which are adaptable (critics often survive the fall of art movements). During the course of the meeting you almost found yourself agreeing with the critics’ opinions, as they had the rhetorical force of their authoritarian language behind them; any challenge was weak for its lack of such language and was therefore easily dispensed with. However, the artists complied with their own role marvelously, asking, for the most part, such penetrating questions as ‘how are artists selected for review’ and ‘why don’t West-Coast artists get equal space’—to which the Editors replied with enthusiastic superiority. Neither the artists nor the Editors seemed concerned with their actual practice, but rather were interested in the demarcation of the authority within which they worked. Criticism (and this applies to both critics and artists) deals in opinion, which due to its arbitrary character, presents the illusion of freedom through its ‘unpredictability.’ This unpredictability is, however, little more than the application of fixed economic or social pressures, for which the critic serves as medium.

In a world where the preeminent order is that of authority, we now, forced by our inability to be authors of our own acts, seek security in the hope of gaining a greater effective share of the wealth and power of that system. As artists, we are forced to submit to the politics of the market place, bargaining for a position within the bureaucratic structure of the contemporary art world. It is not by accident that the art magazines, especially Artforum, have now developed an increasing interest in the politics of art. It was through the pages of this magazine that we recently witnessed the most sophisticated use of philosophical terminology in the most authoritarian way (Pincos-Witten et al.); it is, therefore, consistent that it develop the language of institutionalized art ‘politics.’

The articles in the February issue of Artforum on the breakdown of the Pasadena Museum, MOMA unionization, and various articles on MOMA’s policies, never question the social roles of these institutions, or the nature or their authority, let alone, as noted above, any critical analysis of the magazines’ own investments. They discuss, essentially, these institutions’ adjustment (or failure to adjust) to the latest heights of economic monopony. In John Coplans’ article on Pasadena, he does not even mention the possibility that the Norton Simon kind of takeover might be rooted in the very nature and purpose of these institutions themselves—his indignation is over the loss of power to his ‘class’ of bureaucrats. Coplans criticizes Norton Simon for not having the ‘ethical of public charity’ of the old style capitalists such as the Rockefellers. He neglects to mention that the nature of capitalism has changed since then, and that this also might have something to do with the Pasadena situation. In Lawrence Alloway’s article on MOMA unionization, there is never the consideration of the political ends unionization will achieve (if any), except to mention it should change something (left unspecified). Does unionization in this liberal sense achieve anything more than the fact that more people will be making one and the same decision?

But we cannot just blame patrons, curators, critics, etc.—artists are equally complicit. For any one or all of these groups to gain a greater share of the bureaucratic power would not alter its basic ideological form. Even when we are able to describe the general ideological structures that have put us in this position, we have no subjective basis for understanding them. Our experience, framed in the language of ‘objective’ rationalism and liberal ‘reform’, reifies that language, not our experience. The ‘objective’ status of art finally reduces itself to the proposition ‘anything can be art.’ Our language then becomes vacuous, as it can arbitrarily nominate any set of formal terms to justify a given situation. Thus the real justification of present art is clearly seen as its authoritarian but arbitrarily administered language. It is for this reason we are faced with the wholly unprecedented cleverness of artists in maintaining this status quo. Paradoxlessness of methodology has forced the very issue of ‘politics’ (which has been fervently denied by liberal ideology). The dilemma which is then occurs that we are now forced to deal with a politics (talk concerning the market), but have internalized the notion that any political content in art is impossible. The only thing we have left to talk about cannot be a part of our art. Realizing the politics of the market place to be absurd, we are unable, however, to formulate a radical political content into our activity and work. We are now blatantly confronted with our own impotence, our activity suspended in a dilemma which negates action.

As our individuality, or what illusion of it remains, is further submerged under monopoly capitalism, we are faced with forming collective enterprises and unions in order simply to survive. Thus collectivization, at this point, is not motivated so much by ‘good intentions’ as it is by a desperate attempt to survive in the face of a collapsing monolith of our own construction. Talking must form a beginning, but we lack the necessary authority over our own language. The concept of an ‘artworld’ is ludicrous yet the problem is contained in that very term we use. We unwittingly identify ourselves, not as artists in a larger community, but as members of a separate and self-sufficient ‘world.’ We talk about the problems of the artworld, but are unable to integrate them (except by dubious analogy) into a larger world. If we assume the supposed freedom of the individual, then by extension we must assume the freedom of the artworld. A ‘free community’ in an authoritarian world. Angels in hell, no wonder we have nothing to say. But we like it, don’t we; there are few such privileged sanctuaries where we can live out our fantasies of being radical heretics, and be paid to meditate for hours reciting the names of saints and geniuses who suffered for our privilege. However, the bottom’s falling out, and the growing awareness of our dependency on that larger world is actually making some of us think.

It is a sad commentary on our ‘freedom’ that the awareness of our compromise is forced on us by the impending collapse of the market system which supports it. We never questioned that position during the hysteria of the Sixties, when commodity values overwhelmed ideological possibilities (who needs to argue on a fat stomach). But now hysteria has calmed, we have to face the fact that we too exist in the world of everyday life, and that we must make clear our commitment to it. In spite of our (deavored) cynicism, that means being ‘political.’
We must pay, however, for our indulgence, and the price is being caught in the dilemma of not knowing what to do. Our talk begins by being all over the place.

Talking infers the interaction between people, as opposed to meditation, which is a solitary (if not anti-social) activity. Meditation signifies in that it presupposes the individual to have innate qualities that will allow him to comprehend the world, and this mystification forms the basis of our rationalization of our present art-activity. The ‘great’ artists and thinkers are always pictured alone, their ideas coming through a kind of revelation, usually triggered by one of those fortuitous accidents of fate or nature. By talking, we might be able to avoid the inevitable result of isolation that leads to over-formalization and abstraction, through the modifications of interaction we might be able to define a practice which has a social commitment. Thus we would be able to test our practice in a social context, rather than in the private domain of ‘mystic revelation.’

It has been argued that art can serve no radical political purpose; that is the aesthetic of decorative amorbility. We have authoritative art historians who can fanatically trace a whole history of pigmented forms, igniting any content as either socially quaint or philosophically irrelevant—art historians who preserve their academic ‘freedom’ by declaring the content of art to be harmless, at most an interesting record of social customs of a given time. We have been so brainwashed with the idea that our art cannot have content, it seems impossible to visualize any that could. God forbid that we go back to representing—after all those perestroika years of struggle to get away from it. What would we represent, anyway: the heroic worker, the fat capitalist, or our own backyard?

Even if you could develop an art object (be it a painting, a poem, a poster, etc.) that, hypothetically, had a radical content and form (!), would not this object become another commodity just in its necessity to reach a public? In fact, this hypothetical case still preserves the autonomy of art, acting as a separated entity. It assumes that the artist is giving something to society, rather than practicing within it. It is in this separateness that even ‘radical content’ is consumed. The artist is oppressed by his specialized ‘professionalism,’ which alienates him from his own work, as well as others people. It is only through an integration of activity and self on all levels that any radical theory can develop (in art or anywhere else).

In this sense, any idea of community, be it a community of specialists, e.g., an art community. Soho, which constitutes an unprecedented ghetto of artists, and would seem to function as a community, consists of the most socially alienated group of individuals one could ever hope to meet. We have become so accustomed to our fragmented life of selling ourselves and our work, teaching (the perpetration of our producer-consumer existence), and a relatively affluent lifestyle, that the idea of throwing it all in is to say the least, a bit disconcerting.

The problem of a community that is defined by a profession is that such a community develops its own language and becomes insular (much like national communities). They may be sufficient for those within it, but would fail to contribute outside their boundaries, ultimately replacing the alienated individual with the alienated community. You may be able to define a community by common professional interests, but the cohesion of the group eventually becomes elitist/dogmatic (patriotic?) in its failure to integrate with the larger world.

Despite the above reservations, a community still seems the only means by which we can overcome the extreme isolation of our vacant subjectivity, and begin to deal with the larger world. Such communities, based initially on professional groupings, could form the basis for the de-structuring of the present world, its institutions and authorities. More importantly, it can develop a dialogue in which we could begin to formulate a practice, and it is through practice that we are able to come to terms with the actuality of our experience. However, a community and its practice need also develop towards integration with other communities and individuals, giving up the sanctities of its specialization and language, eventually to form the basis for the definition of a radical community on which a broad revolution could be built.

KARL BEVERIDGE

BUYING CULTURAL DEPENDENCY: A NOTE ON THE CRAZED THINKING BEHIND SEVERAL AUSTRALIAN COLLECTIONS

Pure Art is no longer a black rectangle or an unpainted canvas. It is art sold for a price so huge it strikes one blind and thus makes the painting itself invisible. (Horald Rosenberg)

A writer on art, Terry Smith, is currently being sued by Max Hutchinson of the Max Hutchinson Gallery and Sculpture Now, Inc. (in New York) and Gallery A (in Sydney, Australia). In a fairly genteel review of the Australian National Gallery’s two million dollar Pollock purchase, Terry Smith wrote:

“Rumors fly about in New York: that the agent for the sale, Max Hutchinson, whose gallery in the SoHo area of Manhattan has hardly been a raging success, either artificially boosted the price so as to increase his commission or incompetently negotiated a price inflated by at least a half million. That the director of the National Gallery, Jim Mollison, did not consult his advisors Waldo Rasmussen and John Stringer of the International Council of the Museum of Modern Art. That Ms. Heller is deeply unhappy about her husband’s selling the painting and wants it back. That someone is now crazy enough to want to pay three million for the painting.” (Nation Review, 1/18/74)

My view is that this is pretty tame stuff. In Australia, the purchase caused a furor from a number of interests, questions were raised in Parliament, artists were outraged. That is, there were a lot harsher things said. So why is Terry Smith being sued?

I think the answer to this can be found by recognizing the opposed cultural interests represented by each party. On the one hand, you have someone who profits from culture having become a function of economic caprice and, on the other, someone who (on several occasions) has strongly assailed such debasement of art and who is now faced with a lawsuit by a community intimidating him and pushing him ‘out of business.’

Terry’s suit is the latest in a long line of ‘internationalism’ in art in an article published in Artforum (Sept. ’74).

Anyone who wants to know his position can read this article, so need not go into it here. However, his central point is that regional, local, and individual diversity is being systematically eroded by a concept of culture which is allied with market power. Such power—via media, education, etc—causes culture to be viewed as something external to what people do, something alien and outside of personal interest, something which has become the dominion of ‘experts’ and entrepreneurs... like Max Hutchinson.

According to Terry, “provincialism is not merely a submission to the power exerted by a geographically distant metropolitan art world. Rather, it is all that follows from seeing one’s options as an artist, critic, curator, dealer, audience, etc., within a framework whose two inclusive poles are joining in with the metropolitan center’s criteria for ‘significant art’ on the one hand, and burying oneself in peculiar localisms or idiocies on the other. In practice, compromise is the result in nearly every case.” That is to say, cultural dependency insinuates itself and determines all the permissible options, even the restrictive ones. Your artist, no matter what your intentions, becomes a function of that dependency. Thus, New York modernism serves as the can of the realm. But this is also a time when the New York tradition is faltering, when the economic impulse has consolidated every prospect for a real practice, even at the privileged pinnacle of this cultural hierarchy. You can’t hope to sustain non-economic values if the cultural privilege-system is governed by a Detroit-style society.

Despite the producers’ realization of this impasse in their cultural lives, the New York Bubble hasn’t burst yet—the marketeers and entrepreneurs are continuing business as-usual. It’s characteristic of these desperate people to want to maintain their aesthetic half-life. But, in so doing, they have disregarded the specific character and subjectivity of any one particular place and promote a notion of ‘universality’ which implies an end-to-diversity and a deathly conformity to New York dominated
values. These have to do in order to make money... because this is the market where the capital is concentrated. Thus, the marketers and all, through the very nature of their business, have vested interest in seeing as many places as possible fall into dependency within this marketing empire.

The U.S. art market has spectacularly inflated prices literally beyond sense (the Pollock, $6,000 in 1954; $2,000 in 1956; $2,000,000 in 1973). By inflating the prices of its own art, it has by historical-necessity inflated the prices for all prior Modern Art. That’s fine for the money-grubbers—but these inflated interests have devastated all current art production. For example, how can any Australian artist even hope to match a two million dollar painting? Because this is the situation which has been set up, the only one you pay that much for a painting, you can’t separate it from the price. Thus making a painting ‘as good as’ Pollock now means making a two million dollar painting. The money and nothing else becomes the psychological criterion for ‘matching’, the producing artist is downgraded and even further imprisoned in a dependent provincial role. It also insinuates itself throughout culturally-educated values, becoming the psychological ball-buster in every institutional context of learning.

If it was, say, a Rembrandt, not a Pollock, would it make a difference? In some ways, yes. Time-wise, the Pollock is competing against a local history of art, and devalues it, by having become so excessively valued in the context of the local history. There are a number of ways that, for New World countries, pre-Modern art doesn’t raise questions of competing histories, of selling out your own history to a more capitalized imperialist history, and so on. It’s less problematic, it just raises different questions.

Moreover, the current policies are seemingly irrelevant. The Australian Government isn’t likely to sell its collection, is it? Because showcases like the National Gallery are the status symbols of ‘emerging’ nations—and a two million dollar painting is a bigger status symbol than a one million dollar painting. God help us!

So the ramifications for current art production are dire. But what exactly are the criteria for ‘internationalized art’? There’s a remark from old-cold-war warrior Daniel Bell which throws some light on this. “One of the reasons why men can go to the moon but not create more habitable cities, is that plotting a trajectory into space is solely a technical problem, but planning a city means being subjected to the crossfire of conflicting interests and diverse values of different groups of men...” In similar terms, the high art of today has been transformed by the culturecrats, the whole traditional world of ‘international’ middlemen, into a specialized and technical problem, one able to be ruled over by ‘experts’, divorced from the frailties and uncertainties of socially specific contexts.

Now obviously, in any literate culture, some formalization is necessary. But recently such formalization has acquired the bureaucratic spirit: that is, it defines itself as logically separate from the ‘crossfire of conflicting interests and diverse values of different groups of men’. If you pay that much for a painting, you can’t separate it from the price. Thus making a painting ‘as good as’ Pollock now means making a two million dollar painting. The money and nothing else becomes the psychological criterion for ‘matching’, the producing artist is downgraded and even further imprisoned in a dependent provincial role. It also insinuates itself throughout culturally-educated values, becoming the psychological ball-buster in every institutional context of learning.

Finally, in what seemed an incidental and merely personal lawsuit there are signs of the growing schism in cultural attitudes. Hopefully, this schism will become more contested and the issues more explicit and hotly debated. I also hope it means the war against anti-imperialism will now be fought far more out on the open.  

IAN BURN

NOTES & REFERENCES

1. Of course, technically, the newspaper is being used.
2. For example, “Last year the Australian Government bought ‘White Pool’... by R. Longley. Dealers think the $552 million our Government paid for it was the wrong price. No, by愚蠢 and misguiding, they managed to swap up ‘Blue Pool’ for eight hundred thousand dollars by trickery. At least two people deserve a large part of the credit for securing this anti-bargain. One is Mr. James Mollison, the Director... Another is Mr. Max Hutchinson... Before Mr. Mollison was appointed to the Canberra Gallery, he worked for Gallery M. A. Hutchinson, the founder of Gallery A, was his boss. Edgar Mollin, ‘Cultural Imperialism’, Roundtable, Contemporary Art Society (South Australia), May 1976. Also, it was recently revealed to a Parliamentary Committee that, during 1977-79, 63% of the National Gallery’s purchases were through Max Hutchinson’s galleries.
3. I don’t want you to think this note has anything to do with spurious ‘objectivity’, Terry is a friend of mine and I feel...
tremendous solidarity with what he is doing. But at the same time I don't wish to paint him as any sort of white knight—he's made his share of mistakes too.


5. "The Australian art world is changing, March 10, 1989."


8. "It appears not only that the buyer for the Power Gallery, Evelyn Lynn, doesn't like Terry Smith either. He particularly doesn't like Terry's take on the postmodernist problem. In reply to "The Postmodernist Problem" (Dec '74), Lynn allegedly defends himself against charges of being a "formalist": however, the lack of the letters consortium's abilities to set itself aside from all that lies close to being self-promotion.

9. "I am an ideological desert, also because the Director behaves like an ideological empty-head. For example, he said in an interview" (National Times, Oct 2, 1972) that he buys works because he "likes them." Does this mean he "likes" the new generation Dollar Pollocks the same way he "likes" to buy chocolate chip cookies? The apparent confusion between personal preferences and the so-called "natural" and "deliberate" is typical of the Dichotomies of the world.

10. "Actually Millar has put together a reasonable collection of Australian artists, but who can see anything after being blunted by two million and one million dollar so-called "great" works?"

11. "The issue of the Pollock, while somewhatngoing as daring ("A change of pace," said Mr. Brad Halse), is actually full-blooded conservative, possibly inciting the reemergence of the status quo.

12. "Even when Millar admitted to the newspapers, after the Pollock purchase, that "If there have been few artists who have put together a single deal," he apparently didn't make any connections.

13. "My intention is not to promote nationalism. Internationally is just a market expedient and only that, so by attacking this it doesn't follow I'm defending nationalism: it's an apt definition of provincial mooring if someone who is able to think only within those two alternatives..."
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