

The Pink of Revolution

Joanna Frueh in conversation with Tanya Augsborg, Maria Elena Buszek and Jill O'Bryan

In the past few years Maria Buszek and I have discussed more than once our collaborating on a conversation for publication about feminism, art, and generations. I'm 54 and have called myself a feminist since 1970. Maria, another art historian and art critic, is a 30-year-old feminist who identifies herself with the Third Wave. Both the individual and large political relationships between feminist generations, from the beauty of intellectual and fleshly embraces to the disappointments of hostility and misunderstanding, have held our attention for a number of years. To broaden our discussion, I invited Tanya Augsborg, now 36, whom I'd met in October 2001 at a conference at Arizona State University where she teaches. Tanya then suggested Jill O'Bryan, a 45-year-old artist and independent scholar who lives in New York City and who has just completed a book-length manuscript on Orlan. Our conversation developed through email. We all responded to each other's contributions and continued more or less in this way for four rounds of responses. The similarities in our delights and concerns struck us and we excited one another in a process that was nurturing and fueling.

Joanna Frueh: Feminist revolution is the liberation of pink. Pink as in cunt, as in the fuchsia interiors of Betsey Johnson's boutiques, as in Hannah Wilke's *Pink Champagne* and Judy Chicago's Emily Dickinson plate in *The Dinner Party*. Pink as in Girlie feminism's sexy, ironic, parodic, straight or campy pleasure in the application of a heavenly rose-colored lipstick. Pink as in my little-girl and mid-life-lady embodiment of fairy princess, which is an ability to feel beautiful, to be a dreamer, and to know the loveliness and the lovableness of one's own skin and spirit.

Jill O'Bryan: Sometimes I make pink art. I once made an all pink painting and had to hide it away when I realized it referred too directly to Philip Guston's pink paintings. The

story goes that after several days of blockage and angst, Guston regurgitated a pink painting, ran over to the Cedar Bar to tell his fellow Abstract Expressionists, and they all had a good laugh about pink. Pink was liberating for him, loaded for me. When I made a pink painting I was trying to free myself from a comment made at my final MFA review: **'Congratulations, Jill, you finally learned to paint like a man.'**

Joanna Frueh: Wilke's wall sculpture, of petal-like latex pieces and metal snaps, monumentalizes labial imagery and ease of orgasm – *it's a snap!* Here pink is a tender but not a timid color, multiple petals suggest multiple orgasms, and large scale indicates large pleasures.

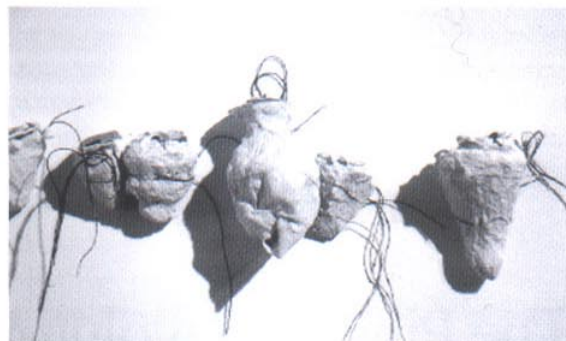
In the Contemporary Art course that I teach every autumn, I have repeatedly criticized Chicago's celebration of Dickinson as saccharinely sweet, as a misrepresentation of a bold poet. But I see more clearly, as I'm thinking now, so I know that pink itself is bold. I see that pink's conventionally overweening femininity, its bearing the burden of a symbolic overload, might sap a woman's courage to claim a place for pink in a feminist canon of revolutionary symbols. Chicago's frilly pink Dickinson now reveals to me my own bias – *oh, good! it's gone!* – against the possibility of pink's gravity.

I'm glad to say that my professorial wardrobe has not corresponded to the chromophobia of a feminist intellectual. I've been a lifelong lover of pink. Two hot pink sweaters got a lot of wear during my first tenure-track job, and I also discovered that delicate pink eye shadow looks good on me. I've enjoyed wearing bright pink anklets in my forties and now in my fifties, and the first day of class in Spring semester 2002 I sported a form-fitting pearlescent pink leather skirt with a ruffle at the hemline.

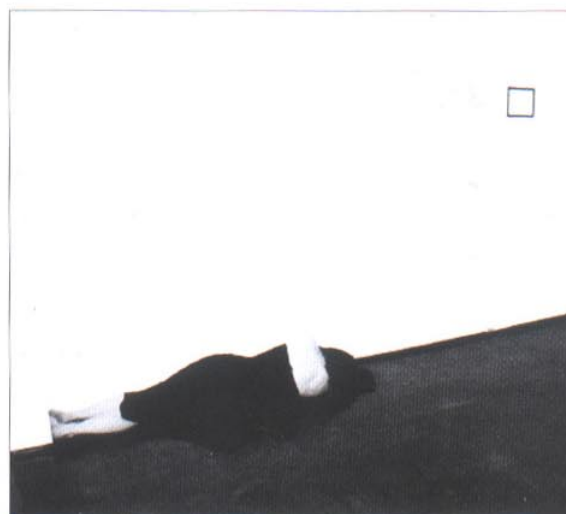
I understand why "*shocking*" describes pink and no other color.

Tanya Augsburg: Joanna Frueh writes of pink – and I find her pinks more hot than shocking. Her art criticism reflects the same utopian celebratory spirit of much 1970s feminist art, particularly the 1970s art of the two artists she cites, Judy Chicago and Hannah Wilke. I cannot seem to write with the same feelings of liberation and joy regarding either feminist practice or my own professorial body.

Maria Buszek: I'm always a bit embarrassed to talk about my position on the concept of "*revolution*". As a self-identified feminist, it might seem given that my identity and activism are revolutionary by nature; yet, as an historian, I have a long and rather tortured view of revolution that might appear anathema to my feminism. Coming from a working-class background, I think I also bring to this historical perspective an ingrained suspicion of what revolution has historically accomplished: what revolutions in history "*truly*" ever liberated or raised up the working class, the marginalized, the creative without being inevitably and swiftly replaced by forces looking very like the ones that those revolutions first sought to depose? With revolution, too, has historically come a kind of fascism and thought policing, instilled for "*the duration*", but whose influence often times seems to outlast and overtake the freedom such asceticism



Jill O'Bryan Above: detail of *Lachrymatorium* (2001) latex, pigment, thread, hair, and nails. 116 vessels, each c. 2 x 1 x 1 ins.
Below: Still from *Tumble #13* performance March, 1999 at Rosenberg Gallery, New York



was promised to usher in. I'm right in there with Emma Goldman, waiting on that revolution we can dance to.

Yet, I certainly understand both the righteous appeal and potential of revolution – especially since I have to admit that I still have the same energy and unabashed optimism I had as a teenager first feeling the gut-quaking tremors that de Beauvoir sent through me. I have yet to feel the jaded "*click*" I'd been warned throughout my adolescence was imminent; the one that, I have been told, will lead me to stop feeling that a tiny spoonful of human action can weigh a ton.

Jill O'Bryan: The invisibility of the historical political forces that precede us often makes it seem that what we have has always been. My first revolutionary act was to burn the Janson art history textbook I had purchased for Art History 101. It was not until the middle of the second semester that a feminist friend noted there were no women in the history

book. I started to ask questions . . . then I started to get angry . . . then a few followed and we staged a very small, but very meaningful to us, book-burning in front of the art department. The professor and the department remained unmoved, except to point out that if we wanted to pass our exams we would have to repurchase the very expensive Janson book. A revolutionary lesson learned? Now there are a few women artists in the Janson book.

Maria Buszek: I've seen more evidence, like your book burning, that creative feminist force can be revolutionary – whether it has been starting a band so that a woman could deconstruct and parody Led Zeppelin lyrics (while reveling in the taboo fierceness of the music), organizing graduate students to unionize and protest their working conditions, or convincing a student to find and project her feminist voice. All of these convince me that tiny revolutions happen every minute, every day, and are waiting to be harnessed and transformed into the giant tides of change that compose history itself.

Tanya Augsburg: Both Jill and Maria make excellent points about the links between feminism, revolution, politics and history. I think that it can be difficult to realize that a revolution is even taking place – particularly when you are in the midst of things, actively engaged in making change happen. Perhaps one has to reach some critical distance – whether it is physical, temporal or theoretical – to perceive and to appreciate what one has accomplished. I am pleased to note that both Jill and Maria recognize the feminist revolutions they each have helped to initiate as young feminists.

It might be helpful to consider other models of revolution, such as Thomas Kuhn's ideas about the structure of scientific revolution, when thinking about feminist revolution. For Kuhn, paradigms of prevailing thought are slow to shift, and when those shifts do occur, they tend to be initiated by those who can '**think outside the box**', i.e. those who do not necessarily adhere to well-accepted and established schools of thought. According to Kuhn, paradigm shifters – let's call them revolutionaries – tend to be young and/or not yet established within their disciplines.

A good example of a paradigm shift within contemporary feminist art history and criticism is the case of Orlan's critical reception in the US. Before her surgical performances Orlan was not well known in the US, even though she had built a

considerable reputation in France since the 1970s. By 1994 she was more widely known, yet the jury was still out about whether or not Orlan was a feminist artist. At that time I was a graduate student who was writing a dissertation chapter on the artist. I convinced Philip Auslander to co-organize a panel with me for the First Annual Performance Studies Conference at New York University in March 1995, which included Orlan as a participant. Orlan's wildcard appearance at that conference, while briefly mired in controversy, became almost immediately afterwards legendary in academia. I met Jill at that conference, and subsequently she has written a book on Orlan. Currently, Orlan is included in every feminist art history book – suffice it to say that Orlan's feminism is no longer questioned. While I was unable to realize it at the time, I can see now how Orlan's revolutionary presence at that conference and the critical debate that ensued expedited the transformation of her critical reception in the US.

Joanna Frueh: I can't help going back to Led Zeppelin. I loved them in my mid-twenties, and men's vibrant fierceness inspires me – the cock in creativity. Not phallic power, as in the abstruse theories that academics write for themselves, but rather the corporeal ardor coupled with aesthetic craft – a kind of being-fucked-well – that just plain people understand. In our bodies and beings, we just plain people understand that being-fucked-well – with grace and connectedness – is a heartening experience. And heartening experiences are the atoms of revolutionary blasts and evolutionary unpredictability.

Maria Buszek: As a young feminist, I embrace an "**evolutionary**" (perhaps more than a revolutionary) position and I find myself returning to an elegant defense of music's progression by jazz saxophonist Ornette Coleman. He helps me articulate where I feel women my age stand in relation to the much larger feminist movement: I believe I am part of a generation that is "**aspiring to something beyond what we inherited**". NOT rejecting that inheritance – by spending the fortune with no respect for the toil through which it was acquired or by leaving the estate at the curb for scavengers while we shop for heirlooms with brand-new associations.

Tanya Augsburg: Joanna Frueh's position is completely devoid of any sense of personal conflict or ambivalence, and I detect these in varying degrees in Maria's, Jill's and my own thinking. Are we facing a generational divide? Yes and no.

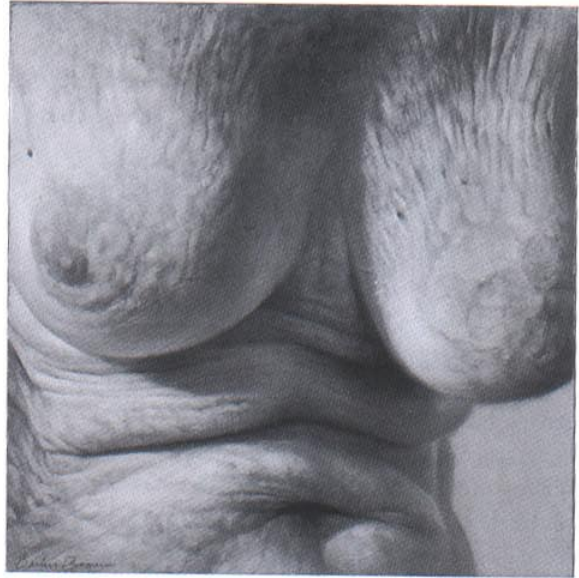
Maria Buszek: You and I may see ourselves as feminist heirs who understand that the inheritance will only survive so long as it continues to have meaning for – because it bears the mark of – subsequent generations.

Tanya Augsburg: Perhaps for any feminist generation, issues regarding the female body and its representation make up the battlefield on which feminist revolution continues to be fought.

Joanna Frueh: I couldn't agree more. In my 'Beauty and the Body' course Spring semester 2002 I learned about hatred of their own fat and too-big butts from many women who formed 7/8 of the class and were mostly in their twenties. They used humor and a sophisticated understanding of representation's coercions to tentatively come to terms with feelings about their own flesh and with flesh itself. The students, women and men, were poignant as hell, and most of them valiantly challenged, in mind and body, the quagmire of shame in which today's beauty ideals are smothering our monster/beauty. Monster/beauty is my way of naming our individual ability to radiantly articulate the simultaneously aesthetic and erotic passion that is only our own – scent, skin, voice, posture, movements. I believe in my students' revolutionary power and potential, and I encourage it.

Tanya Augsburg: Many contemporary feminist artists of my generation – artists such as Janine Antoni, Jenny Saville, Lisa Yuskavage and Vanessa Beecroft – have been underscoring since the 1990s women's conflicted and ambivalent attitudes regarding their bodies. For example, Saville exhibits in her 1993 painting, *Plan*, what has been rendered invisible by contemporary popular culture: the fleshy, imperfect female body. She also gives expression to the ineffable. The weariness of the painted subject's eyes, her arm covering her breasts as a gesture of embarrassment or shame, and the extensive black markings on her body – a surgeon's plan for liposuction – suggest a profound sense of unease with living with one's own body. Saville seems to capture the feelings of imperfection from which many women, including my students, are not immune.

Such work is extremely revolutionary in so far as it problematizes and challenges current cultural ideals. I am extremely grateful to contemporary feminist artists for providing me with appropriate contexts to discuss pertinent feminist issues with people who may be unfamiliar with, or



Baily Doogan *Breasts, Age 59* (2001) oil on linen 12 x 12 ins.

even hostile to, feminism. For instance, my students are much more willing to talk about Saville's paintings than about their own cosmetic surgeries.

Maria Buszek: And, perhaps that sort of work is a kind of "gateway" to addressing these real issues in their own lives. This, I think, is the most exciting part about what I do as an art historian. I've never understood colleagues – including many, many feminist colleagues – who look at teaching as this necessary evil: the thing that pays the bills while they work on their "real" contributions to the field.

Granted, I am a terrible Pollyanna when it comes to classroom engagement, but how can one look at a roomful of students and not feel earth-shaking excitement watching students grow and evolve as a result of the work one is introducing them to? Last week, for example, I was introducing my Modern survey class to women in the Constructivist and Dada movements. The work is tantalizingly playful, but *so* political, and as we went through the work of Natalia Goncharova, Varvara Stepanova and Hannah Hoch, the shift in perspectives on what feminism "is" and can achieve was absolutely palpable. I played them some Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht sung by Lotte Lenya, and they were blown away by how punk it sounded, and how all this work – now almost 100 years old – felt so pertinent today. After class both male and female students buzzing with excitement over all these discoveries swamped



Mayumi Lake *Poo-Chi (Little 'O' Porn)* (1999) C-print. 20 x 24 ins.

me. They were tapping into history in a way that so apparently will affect their lives now, to be inevitably translated into revolutionary acts once they walk outside of the classroom.

Jill O'Bryan: Tanya, your mention of Vanessa Beecroft makes me think about how she provokes a new edginess about living inside one's body. In her last series of very large, lush color photographs, groups of similarly perfect stiletto heeled women pose for us. But here's the clincher – they seem to be passive or resistant to their own interchangeability. They eliminate all of the sexual punch. It's a boycott on gushing for the viewer – an expression of vapidness inside the skin. The emptiness of the image? Or the emptiness of the ideal? Of course Beecroft's work is also about skin itself. White, shades of pink, black and blacker.

Joanna Frueh: Implicitly you're saying that art helps the revolution. I think of Bailey Doogan, in her sixties, and Mayumi Lake, not yet thirty. In a series of paintings completed in 2001, Doogan intimately observes her own skin. She exaggerates surface and transparency, taking veins, moles, and uneven skin tones into a hyperreality that is as sensuous and absurd as the fictitiously perfect body of a high fashion model. Lake, a Japanese national with a recent MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, fantasizes little girls' labia in *Poo-Chi*, 1999-2000, her disarmingly hilarious photographic still lives of adult armpits and back-

of-the-knee crooks decorated with organdy confections, polka dot dresses, and other happy fabrics and cozy, cuddling materials. *Poo-Chi's* dressed-up "*labia*" invite us to understand how precious and special is girls' desire for their own pleasure and girls' love of that pleasure. Lake's work is playful, Doogan's is grave, yet both explore female erotic pleasure with the kind of fierceness that only an artist in control of her craft and aware of her passions can do. Female erotic pleasure too often exists in the cultural quagmire of shame that I mentioned above, so it is still taboo. Revolutionary – Doogan's and Lake's cocksure creativity, their taboo fierceness.

Tanya Augsburg: I find myself – my own cocksure creativity (?) – challenged every day. For instance, in February 2002 I heard the spokesman for the provisional Afghan government offer an interesting theory as to why Afghan women are still wearing *burqas*. In his view Afghan women are reluctant to take off the *burqa* because they still suffer psychologically from the Taliban. He thinks that since they have deeply internalized their fear, Afghan women will need some time to recover from the Taliban's effects on their psyches. The feminist in me wished that the voices of Afghan women could also have been heard to confirm his opinions. I am reluctant to accept his words as the singular voice of the oppressed, yet to me this idea that the lingering effects of oppression can be politicized through gesture and personal choice has a lot of potential for feminist practice.

Jill O'Bryan: Tanya, I also find myself violently wary of this spokesman's comments. The interior of this all-encompassing garment (that neither he nor I have inhabited) might offer a place to be. For example – and this is a Western projection as well, but I throw it in as a possibility – if I were a Pashtun living in Northern Afghanistan, where women are still being brutally raped and murdered, perhaps I would continue to wear a *burqa* to keep my body, my psyche, my fear as concealed as possible. Is it viable that the *burqa*, once perceived as a jail, could now act as a shield? Then again, maybe it can't. Perhaps now, to the rapist, it is package wrapping. I cannot know. However, I can fairly speculate that this garment, which traditionally functions as a physical barrier between genders, has such a powerful exterior that it must have a powerful interior as well. So how could this man possibly know why a woman is or is not wearing one?



Student work from a class, 'Introduction to Human Inquiry', Tanya Augsborg taught with Barbara Lindquist and David Thomas at Arizona State University, Spring 2002. Students created from found objects art projects that addressed self-identity.
Above: Kristin Roemke, Carol Maffuccio. Below: Clarissa Martinez and Summer Grant.



Tanya Augsborg: In answer to your question, sensitivity as well as knowledge are key. Much of my feminist engagement occurs in the classroom, where I face the dilemma of how one can both raise consciousness and facilitate social change while being sensitive to student concerns. For example, I had to bite my tongue when an obviously surgically augmented student balked at buying the required texts for my course because of their price. As a feminist educator I am deeply troubled by the possibility that breast implants can be regarded as a better investment than books. Yet I could not respond to the student's complaints by asking her how much she paid for her surgery. Instead, I asked her if she valued her education. The student shrugged her shoulders indifferently. Her tacit yet visible choice of breasts over books is one that I still struggle with from a critical feminist perspective that emphasizes education and female subjectivity.

Jill O'Bryan: On the news in March, there were images of girls returning to schools in Afghanistan. A revolutionary event. With Tanya's words, I cannot help but visualize the differences between the Afghan and American student bodies. Afghan girls and young women who are largely invisible, literally ghost-like in their burqas, and always perceived as property. American young women constructing their bodies to become more (sexually) visible. With respect to these two images, is the question of visibility a revolutionary one?

Maria Buszek: Absolutely. But it's also a loaded one. The question of visibility – particularly as it pertains to women's visibility as sexual subjects (vs. objects) – offers us no hard and safe answers. At the end of this year's Women's History Month activities at Santa Monica College, where I've been teaching for the past two years, my colleagues in Women's Studies organized a day-long 'Teach-

In and Speak-Out' for students to address women's issues on a plethora of topics. By far the most fascinating and diverse panel was organized by the College's Muslim women's group. The first speaker was a very charismatic young woman in full *burqa* – even her hands were covered with gloves – who spoke out on American expectations of women to present themselves as sexual objects. Her comments were very well received by the large feminist audience, but then she turned her critique toward women and called upon the *men* in the audience to demand of their workplaces disciplinary actions for women who dress provocatively, treating them as sexual harassers. Naturally, the crowd was far less receptive to this addendum, but it reminded me (and, hopefully, the entire audience) of the difficulty of the task at hand when it comes to feminist interpretations of sexual visibility. When is sexual expression liberating, and when is it oppressive? And can there be any one inherently "*feminist*" expression?

Tanya Augsburg: I agree with Maria that the question of visibility is a revolutionary one, especially when visibility is associated with cultural taboos and social norms. Just recently another student surprised me by informing the class that the pain from her hip replacement surgery was nothing compared to the pain from her breast augmentation. She casually added that both her mother and her grandmother have breast implants and encouraged her to get them as well. I thanked her for her frankness – and then moved on as if her comments were just like any other. As a feminist instructor I knew that it was absolutely crucial that I did not negatively comment on either her experience or her decision-making. Given the context, it was not my place to voice my personal biases regarding college students getting breast implants.

Afterwards, I realized that I should have thanked her for another reason. Her candid disclosure gave me an important insight: no longer can we just blame mass media, medicine and men for the "*disciplining*" of female bodies. It has infiltrated the family structure and women's collective psyches – not unlike the tradition of wearing the *burqa* among Afghan women. Perhaps by understanding better the long-term psychological effects of oppression we may desire less those things that seem so culturally imperative, whether they be *burqas*, breasts or books.

Joanna Frueh: Like Tanya and Maria, I, too, use the ever-revolutionary potential and potency of the classroom. In 'Beauty and the Body' we were dealing with Fairy Beauty,

a topic of my invention that I'm writing about. We watched *Velvet Goldmine* and we read my ode to it, 'Tarts, Stars, Jewels, and Fairies' and Philip Core's 'From Camp: The Lie That Tells the Truth' in Fabio Cleto's *Camp: Queer Aesthetics and the Performing Subject; A Reader*. The day that we viewed *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, one of the assignments was to come dressed camp and to describe or explain one's own campness. I'd said that camp attire could be anything from a tiny addition to their usual gear to full-on spectacle. I think that the students knew that if they didn't dress camp, it would be okay – that their comfort was more important than the assignment – but a little over half of the students sported camp costume. Fluorescent jewelry dolled-up Helen, pink bunny ears sprouted from Terina's head, a multi-colored boa floated around Bill, platform boots in fake animal print hid beneath Katy's pants, Matt flaunted a tiny top stolen from his girlfriend. None of the outfits were all-out wild or weird, but all of them were fun and thoughtful – all of them were exhibitions of pleasure.

Pleasure and revolution. Pleasure as a process of revolution. Pleasure as an outcome of revolution. In 'Beauty and the Body' my students' camp beauty moved me and made me laugh – and they knew it because I told them. We laughed together. They knew that they gave me pleasure. I do not want to present a utopian or Pollyanna-ish view of the classroom, where arguments and hostilities as well as laughter occur, but I am a believer in the power of pleasure to educate people and to change them – in the most radical ways.

Maria Buszek: From bright pink anklets to *burqas* – are we radical? I am thrilled, yet unsurprised, by the breadth of our views on revolution! I am also greatly relieved to find that I am not the only young feminist on board for whom the responsibilities and contradictions of this identity are *both* exciting and anxiety inducing. Perhaps it is because, situated between my younger students – who marvel at a funkythirtyishpunkrockprofessah who wields the term "*feminist*" as a good thing – and my older mentors – who marvel at a brashsquirtwhoactuallyknowstheirwork – I feel a great sense of burden to link these two communities I stand between, and for each of whom I represent a great anomaly: an older/younger feminist who seems to "*get*" their universe in a way that I'm not supposed to.

Jill O'Bryan: During my teens, female friends and I would sometimes imagine a very particular political

“*universe*” – ourselves in occupied France. Not being able to comprehend the confusion in Vietnam, it was for us an exploration of activist participation in a clear-cut good/evil scenario. Ultimately we ashamedly abandoned our imaginings, realizing the pretension and impossibility of being there, fully comprehending the horrors of living in the midst of genocide and fascism.

Now, living 13 blocks north of ground zero, I am, like most, completely horrified and confused. The violence of 9/11 carries with it haunting psychic pain – an accompaniment to being attacked. The optimistic hope is that, unafraid of complexity and as a nation founded by revolution, we will become actively involved in much more compassionate, sophisticated and peaceful problem-solving behaviors. Thus, as an artist, I have never before been so challenged by the chasm between social/political activism and art making. But here I lay out a few thoughts regarding this chasm. Derrida insists that deconstruction is not a system of critique but rather a double affirmation that acknowledges that within each structure exists its own resistance. So, within the self, exists the other; within dogma, the subversive struggle. And politics, struggle and identity are always already impure, and engaged in conflict within each other. Yet these observations regarding binary structures inherent in thought, language, politics are also extreme affirmations of both the individual (self) and recognition of the other.

Maria Buszek: I feel that Jill’s conjuring Derrida to articulate the chasm between two seemingly oppositional things applies to my strange place of straddling feminist generations as well as to my both absorbing and resisting the teachings of feminism. But how might I account for my inability to truly embrace the “*double affirmation*” of my personal deconstruction/activation of revolutionary thought? Perhaps this insecurity and cautiousness is a reflex developed in childhood: my femaleness in the context of my Spanish heritage naturally became a factor in my being given further responsibilities – brilliantly analyzed in Rosa Maria Gil’s recent anthology, *The Maria Paradox* – as a caregiver and communicator within the family. These combined factors were also relevant for early “*public life*”, in that I was the one who answered the mail and phone, attended younger siblings’ parent-teacher functions, and translated for my mother (who was left to run the household while my father worked) when errands took us away from home. To this day, my parents insist that it was this aspect of my childhood that

led me to want to write, to teach, to communicate. But I think that it also saddled me with an unhealthy side order of the Dutiful Daughter Syndrome.

Jill O’Bryan: Just as identity is constructed, perception – of the other, of the environment, of the situation, and perhaps as art – meaning, as creation – is constructed too. Thus my hoped-for expansion of perception – newly constructed due to the violence and loss on 9/11 – is revolutionary.

Joanna Frueh: I’m going to be a cornball. . .but geniuses – people who expand perception – have heart. They’re sentimental on a mythic scale. That’s why people respond to them. Terina, in ‘Beauty and the Body’, asked, ‘**Why does your heart die? What can you do?**’ She is whiplash smart, super hip, fuck-you cute with her dyed black hair in pigtails, and seductively butch in her T-shirts, jeans and sneakers. She often paints big, sweet bears and hearts upon hearts. She is an answer to her own question: and that’s what we all have to be.

Maria Buszek: I long to flaunt my feminist sensibility like Joanna Frueh’s iridescent, pink leather skirt – taut, tough, but light and shimmering. I, too, want to shift tone and luminosity with the twist of a hip. I envy that wisdom and confidence, which so seems to have earned its breeziness and flexibility. Yet, the Dutiful Daughter knows deep down that these things are not earned but entitled, and I wonder when I will wake up as a grown-up/ thinker/ woman to feel entitled to embrace this joy – and, more importantly, to share this secret with (and defend its embrace by) women of my generation so frequently told they haven’t yet paid the price of admission.

Jill O’Bryan: I thank you for this sentiment, Maria. I must admit I have developed a profound desire to dance with Joanna Frueh’s pink!!

Joanna Frueh: I’m wondering how the lovely qualities that Maria sees in me seem earned, because, like her, I am sure that joy and pleasure are entitled. They flower in the paradise that human beings can build for ourselves. So, it is not that I am free of personal conflict, as Tanya implied earlier; rather, radiance is far more beckoning than dreariness, and if we want to make a revolution that we can dance to, radiance must be its eros.

Tanya Augsburg: Antoni, Saville, Yuskavage, Beecroft – their work refrains from suggesting any solutions to current problems of female embodiment other than being self-aware of our own participation in beauty culture. In contrast, Joanna Frueh's writing advances feminist thought as she retains 1970s feminist self-celebratory attitudes while addressing more contemporary feminist concerns. From Joanna Frueh I have learned that for women, embracing self-love and pleasure is a very difficult but very necessary step in the march towards overcoming oppression. From my students and my own experience I have realized that even a small step can require a great deal of courage, especially when it involves venturing onto new and hitherto unexplored terrain.

Jill O'Bryan: Art making, performance and critical thinking at their best contribute to dialogue and the questioning of perceptual bounds. Creativity maintains a place in revolution because it cultivates, pushes, destroys, challenges, describes, enacts perceptual choices that have the potential to bust apart normative and/or dogmatic thinking. Here lies the potential: creativity and revolutionary struggle, occurring with and within each other, expose issues of ethics, destruction, verification, and deception.

Tanya Augsburg is a performance scholar. She teaches in the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Program at Arizona State University. Her publications include 'Orlan's Performative Transformations of Subjectivity' in Peggy Phelan and Jill Lane (eds) *The End(s) of Performance* (1998). *Extreme Art*, the working title of the book that she is currently writing, indicates her interest in artists such as Eduardo Kac and Orlan.

Maria-Elena Buszek's research deals with the intersections of feminism, contemporary art and popular culture. She will receive her Ph.D. in art history from the University of Kansas this year and will be a lecturer in art history at the Kansas City Art Institute beginning Fall 2002. A chapter from her dissertation 'Pin-Up Grrrls: Fine Art, Feminism, and the Pin-Up Genre' appeared in *The Drama Review*, Winter 1999/2000. See also *n.paradoxa online* 'War Goddess: Varga Girls, WWII and Feminism' (issue 6, March 1998)

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Joanna Frueh is an art critic, art historian, and performance artist. Her most recent book is *Monster/Beauty: Building the Body of Love* (University of California, 2001) and she is currently writing a memoir titled *The Aesthetics of Orgasm*.

Jill O'Bryan is an artist and independent scholar. She is completing a book, *Orlan's Facing/Facing Medusa: Constructing Morphological (Eye)identities*, which is inspired by O'Bryan's obsession with the ontological experience of embodiment and its relationship to identity.

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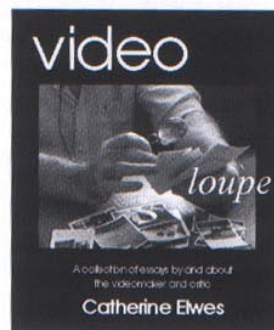
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