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METHODOLOGICAL EMBODIMENTS:: PSYCHICAL CORPOREAL PERFORMANCES OF SUBJECTIVE SPECIFIC AUTO[EROTIC)-REPRESENTATIONS

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University of Plymouth

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METHODOLOGICAL EMBODIMENTS::

PSYCHICAL CORPOREAL PERFORMANCES OF SUBJECTIVE SPECIFIC
AUTO[EROTIC]-REPRESENTATIONS

By...through...on...and primarily for:

RyyA. Bread©

(Doctoral certificate awarded in the legal name of Ryya Aviva Sanders)

A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Research
Falmouth College of Arts



Fig.2 RyyA. Bread©: *Scholarly Exhibitionist*, 1997, b/w photograph, camera operated by Clare Hareford.

JULY 2001

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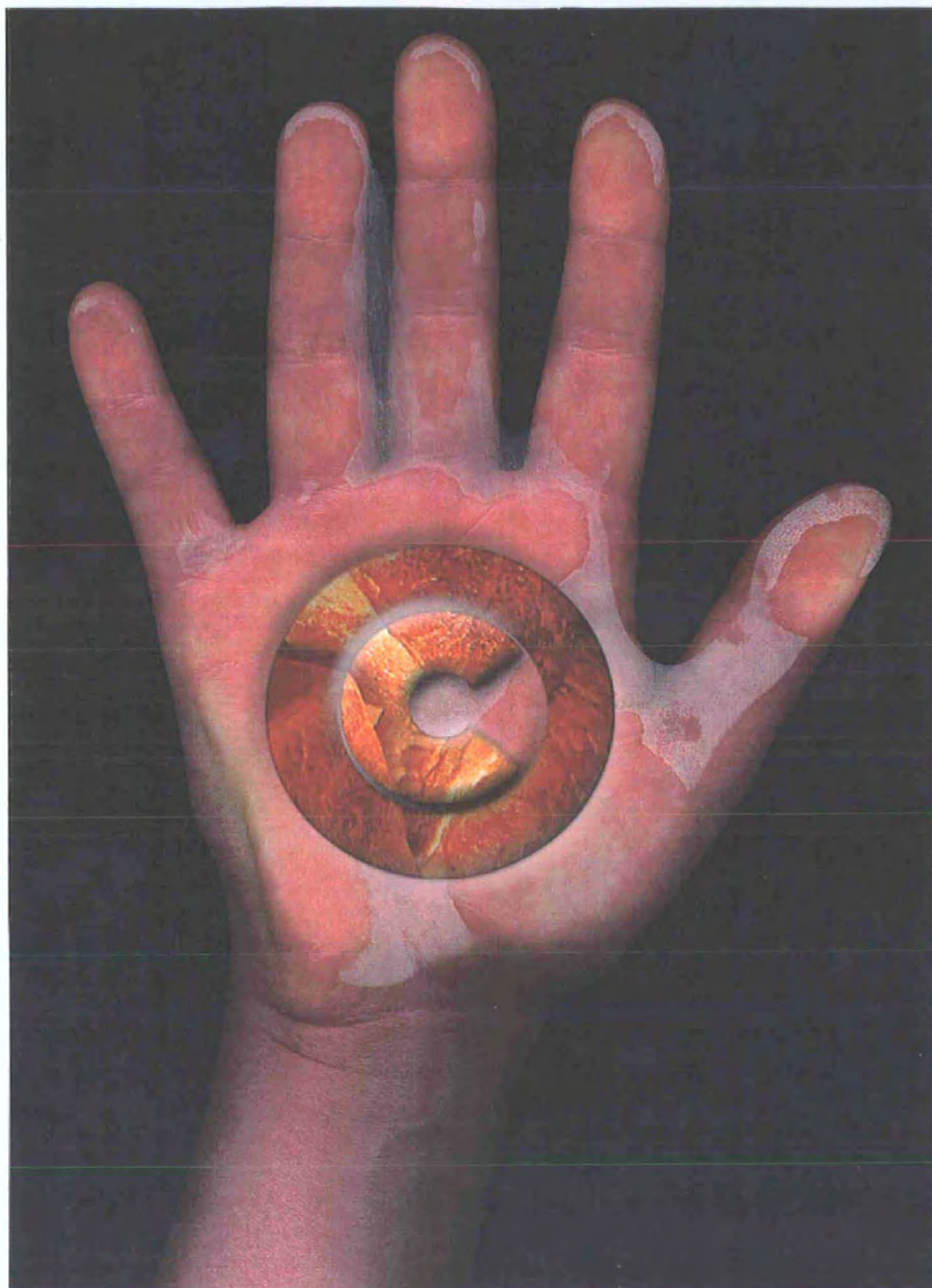


Fig.1 RyyA. Bread©: *Copywrite*, 2001, digital image assisted by David Sanders.

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FINAL SUBMISSION

1 DISSERTATION: Submitted in advance of the examination process (Viva Voce).

3. PERFORMANCE: Performed on first day of two in the examination process.

2. INSTALLATION: Running in FCA Gallery during the examination process.

There are three (3) components to this doctoral submission of

**METHODOLOGICAL EMBODIMENTS:
PSYCHICAL CORPOREAL PERFORMANCES OF
SUBJECTIVE SPECIFIC
AUTO|EROTIC|-REPRESENTATION(S)**

- 1) A (visual)-script-based dissertation bearing the thesis title (above), of which this preface is included, is here submitted as required in advance of the Viva Voce examination.
- 2) An exhibited installation entitled, *I::Matter*, is to be hung in the FCA gallery and open for evaluation by the examining body during the scheduled two-day Viva Voce examination process.
- 3) A live performance with the title, *I::Do*, will take place in the Main Lecture Theatre of FCA on the first evening of the Viva Voce examination process.

Note: The formal Viva Voce examination is due to be conducted on the second day of the two-day examination process after both the exhibition and live performance have been attended by the examining body.

Both the exhibition and the live performance have been devised specifically for submission purposes.

I::DO is a visual-material live performance component of the doctoral research project - METHODOLOGICAL EMBODIMENTS: Psychical Corporeal Performances of Subjective Specific Auto[Erotic] - Representation(s) by RyyA. Bread© (1997-2001).

Over the research period the subject, known as RyyA. Bread©, has been 'engaged' with/to her own identified positions as The Professional Student, A/The Woman, A/The Artist and The Scholarly Exhibitionist. This engagement has transpired through an affair with the transient characters Process and ARTiculation. It has been facilitated by the presence of Imaginary Other(s), perceived as both The Phantom Lover and The Imaginary m/Other.

I::DO is staged to wed RyyA. Bread© in academic matrimony with these multiple subject positions.

*You are cordially invited to witness this polygamous
union which will take place in the*

Main Lecture Theatre at Falmouth College of Arts

MONDAY 23rd JULY: 9:00pm PROMPT.

DRESS: FESTIVE

I::MATTER is a visual-material installation-component of the doctoral research project –
METHODOLOGICAL EMBODIMENTS: Psychical Corporeal Performances of
Subjective Specific Auto[Erotic] – Representation(s) by RyyÅ. Bread© (1997-2001).

Your presence is requested to attend an exclusive
private viewing of this exhibition in the

The Gallery at Falmouth College of Arts

MONDAY 23rd JULY
11am until 5:00pm.

title of thesis:

Methodological Embodiments ::

Psychical Corporeal Performances of Subjective Specific Auto[erotic]-Representation(s)

candidates name:

RyyA. Bread©

(Doctoral certificate awarded in the legal name of Ryya Aviva Sanders)

abstract:

A great deal of critical attention has been paid over the last twenty years at least to the relation of 'self' and 'Other'. But *what happens when the external 'other' is displaced to the periphery of the concerns of textual production?*

In order to explore this question *Methodological Embodiments* employs an interdisciplinary praxis that is not limited to the classic model of written theory. At the same time, it does not negate this form that has historical and ideological precedence within an academic context. The aim of this thesis is to juxtapose written theory with artistic practices in order to initiate, develop and represent a dialogue between subjectivity and methods of theoretical engagement. The performative negotiation between the embodied experience of the practitioner and the investigative forms constitute a tripartite relation that implicates 'performance' as a third term in the methodological formulation. The final submission includes 1) a written dissertation, *Methodological Embodiments :: Psychical Corporeal Performances of Subjective Specific Auto[erotic]-Representations*; 2) an exhibition, *I::Matter*; and 3) the live performance, *I::Do*.

My thesis argues for, and enacts, a positive framing of individual embodied experience within a dialogue between linguistic and artistic practices. Academia has traditionally privileged the written word in the definition of 'theory'. This has limited the understanding of how meaning is made and how the subject as scholar is implicated within the production of knowledge. At the same time, within classic psychoanalysis, subjectivity has also come to be understood through, and in relation to, language. While language clearly has a significant part to play in the making of both theory and a/the subject, it must be situated in relation to individual embodiment. Classic psychoanalysis falls short of this insofar as it fails to take into account the implications of sexual difference. This neglect has resulted in the construction of phallogocentric frameworks that not only misrepresent women as a 'model' of disease and lack, but problematically foreclose the possibility of symbolic agency for a/the woman.

The relation between *materiality* and *image* as regards *representation* is significant to these discourses of subjectivity, language and art, respectively and at the points in which they overlap. Throughout the thesis many specific terms and concepts have been either coined or reappropriated in order to situate and accurately define the concerns of my work. Two important examples are cited here. First, my recourse to the psychoanalytic term *psychical corporeality*, which suggests that embodiment simultaneously informs and inscribes the psychical perceptions of the subject in relation to surrounding environments and a sense of self. Secondly, in place of the psychoanalytic use of *Narcissism* is my use of *auto-eroticism* that seeks to re-define the literary genre of *autobiography* and the traditional understanding of *self-portraiture* in the visual arts, to what I have called *auto[erotic] - representation(s)* within my own textual production.

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Fig.3. *Supper of Support*, 1997, 35mm colour slide

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award.

This study was financed with the aid of a studentship from Falmouth College of Arts. It was further funded with the aid of my Grandmother, who has been my 'patron' (saint) to/for my work.

A programme of advanced study was undertaken. This included regular seminars at a local and regional level, at which work was often presented; tutorials with Director of Studies, supervisors and visiting practitioners; and information technology/multi-media training.

Relevant conferences, exhibitions and performances were attended; external institutions were visited for consultation purposes and several texts (papers, performances and exhibitions) were prepared for publication and/or presentation.

Exhibitions/Presentations/Publications of RyyA. Bread©:

- *Suspending Sentences: A Pretence Exhibit* (installation/solo event) (January 19th-23rd, 1998). The Garden Studio, Falmouth College of Arts.
- 'Offending Capitols' (installation), *Balancing The Scales Exhibition* (March 21st- April 23rd, 1998) with New Women's Artworks at The Old Crown Court, Bristol.
- 'A[d]Dress Rehearsal: The Embodiment & Spectacle of Praxis' (a performed 'paper') (September 10th & 11th, 1998) *Practice, History & Theory conference on 'the relationship of making to writing'* at University of Plymouth in Exeter.
- 'A[d]Dress Rehearsal: The Embodiment & Spectacle of Praxis' (performance text) in *POINT art and Design Research Journal* no.7 Spring/Summer 1999:32-39.
- *Identity Texts* (exhibition) (September 10th & 11th, 1998). The Look Gallery, Queen Street, Exeter with myself and Deborah Robinson.
- 'Tongue Tied' (installation), *Come Hell or High Water: An Artworx P.Z.* / Falmouth College of Arts Postgraduate Exhibition. (Feb.28th – 20th March 1999) The Former Cornishman Offices, Penzance, Cornwall.
- 'Act of ALIENation' (performed 'paper') (May 13th 1999) *THEORAMA Regional Research Seminar*. Falmouth College of Arts.
- 'Methodological Embodiments' (paper) (July 9th 2000) *History of Art and Visual Culture Summer School* organised by Association of Art Historians. University of Reading.
- 'Methodological Embodiments' (paper) *Intensities: Praxis and the Body. A symposium on Practice-Based Research*. (Sept. 30th 2000) Department of Contemporary Arts, Manchester Metropolitan University.
- 'Artists Statement' in Florence and Foster (eds.) (2000). *Differential Aesthetics: Art practices, philosophy and feminist understandings*. Aldershot, Burlington USA, Singapore and Sydney: Ashgate: 30.

Abbreviated list of additional conferences, exhibitions and performances attended:

- 'Virtue & Vulgarity' *Feminist Art Historians Conference* (September 18th - 21st, 1997) Reading University.
- *At The Millennium: Interrogating Gender Conference* (January 9th & 10th, 1998) University of London.
- *Going Australian Feminist Philosophy Conference* (February 6th - 8th, 1998) University of Warwick.
- *The Pleasure of Influence* Nov.7th 1998, Hotbath Gallery, Bath. A Symposium in conjunction with an exhibition, Nov.4th -Dec.2nd 1998, works by Jane Chetwynd, Mary Oliver, et al.
- *The Turner Prize*, Tate Gallery, London 1998, 1999 and 2000.
- *Louise Bourgeois*, Nov.18th 1998- Jan.10th 1999, The Serpentine Gallery, London.
- *Average White Girl*. Presented by *The Wrong Size* productions. Devised and performed by Kirsty Little / Directed by Erica Whyman (January 9th 1998) Circus Space, London as part of The London International Mime Festival 1998.
- *Unspeakable Rooms*. Text by Aleric Sumner / Devised and Performed by Rory McDermott (Oct.14th 1998) Dartington Arts as part of British Festival of Visual Theatre.



Fig.4 Author's Declaration, 2001, digital image.

Signed *RyyA. Bread©*
Dated *Friday 13th July, 2001*



Fig. 5 RyyA. Bread©: *Introducing RyyA. Bread©* from 'Professional Student Site I-Play' series, 2000, 35mm colour slide, camera operated by Mary Anson.

Chapter One: Introducing RyyA. Bread©

Handing out rings to initiates is not to call by a name. Hence my proposition that the analyst hystorizes only from himself: a patent fact. Even if he is confirmed in doing so by a hierarchy. What hierarchy could confirm him as an analyst, give him the rubber stamp? A certificate tells me that I was born. I repudiate this certificate: I am not a poet, but a poem. A poem that is being written, even if it looks like a subject (Lacan [1976] 1998: xi).¹

It is the subject who is called – there can be only he, therefore, who can be chosen. There may be, as in the parable, many called and few chosen, but there will certainly not be any others except those who are called (Lacan 1998: 47).

I call myself RyyA. Bread©. Somebody has to...in [O]rder for the embodied experiences of this thesis to register meaning; in [O]rder for my embodied experiences to appear meaningful. RyyA. Bread© is the identity text that signifies and embodies the multiple, shifting and overlapping contexts in which my subjective specificity takes form. Within the context of this doctoral thesis, the forms that are represented are also multiple and overlapping and meanings shift according to the ways in which they materialise.

The research-practitioner produces meaning only from the experiences of (identity) text(ual) production where identification takes place. Hence my own proposition that the authorial 'I', here called RyyA. Bread© matters...and simultaneously introduces matter into signification. This assertion calls into question traditional assumptions, denoted (Freud) and connoted (Lacan) in classic psychoanalysis, of a subject that 'can be only *he*': Barthes's (1968) suggestion that the 'author is dead', predicated on the idea that there can be only *One*²; and feminist charges of essentialism where materiality is emphasised in the assertion that there is (or can be) a sex of difference - *she*³.

A subject, according to Lacan is 'determined by language and speech' (Lacan 1998: 198). Thus, RyyA. Bread© must (be) call(ed) out, if I am going to be considered one of the chosen ones (that is to be considered at all), or more precisely, if I am to be considered many of the chosen few. Contrary to Lacan's assertion, my subjectivity is posited within this thesis as both the 'poet' and the 'poem'. There are many subject positions that answer to the calling of RyyA. Bread©...but this does not mean that I will cum when you call. The pleasure (*jouissance*) of my (identity) texts is located in my own calling. It is my own voice that affects recognition of meaning and in effect renders RyyA.

Bread© meaningful. Thus it is my calling...to identify (with) RyyA. Bread©. And I call upon those here present to witness this reference to my-selves...this call of and to RyyA. Bread©. But as Lacan says, 'it is important to know *who* one is calling' (ibid: 47).

Calling on RyyA. Bread©:

In his response to Barthes, Foucault uses the example of the author's name as a departure point into the socio-political implications of the author-function, and the impossibility of 'authocide'. He distinguishes between the author's name and other proper names: rather than merely being a descriptive element of discourse, the author's [proper] name has a 'classifactory function' within narrative discourses. The author's name characterises modes, status and specificity of these discourses (Foucault [1969] 1988: 200-201).

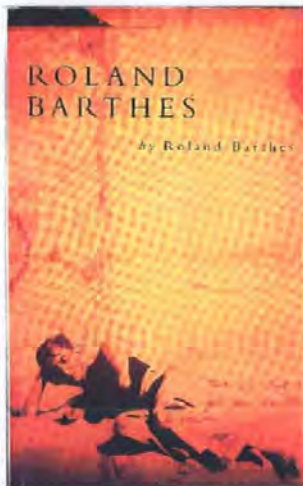


Fig. 6 Front book cover of Roland Barthes (Barthes [1977] 1995). Cover photograph by Rawlings, S.

[T]he [author's] name seems always to be present, marking off the edges of the text, revealing, or at least characterizing, its mode of being (Foucault [1969] 1988: 202).

The name of the author simultaneously embodies and problematises Humanistic constructions of agency, individuality, identity and representation within contemporary critical theory⁴.

The author is part of an economy of textual discourse that suggests a 'reader', and provides the author as 'critic' with a

function. This economy has to do with authority of knowledge, and the power to interpret and inscribe meaning. Thus the status

of the author is not only pertinent to literary criticism but has also been central to the production of discourse itself, both in terms of subjectivity and sexual difference, with its relevance to systems of power, the sign/signified/signifier equation, and dis/regard of the 'Human Person'.

The textual economy of the author, reader and critic, has been a primary site(s) in feminist attempts to define and inscribe female subjectivity. Women, however, enter the

discourse of authorship from a different position: it is not that women are dead, or need to 'assume the role of the dead man in the game of writing' (Foucault [1969] 1988: 98), but rather that the situation for women has been grave. How women are positioned within academia and art, and how women find linguistic access to the Symbolic in order to articulate and represent a different experience of sexed subjectivity is a departure from normative (phallogentric) practices and requires new strategies. As such, my praxis is located within a radical epistemology that seeks to re-define existing models of articulation so as to establish a space for a multiplicity of women's voices and a route to recognition of women's subjective specific embodiments. How to begin and how to determine progress within this epistemology are issues that go beyond my own praxis, and are significant to the emergence and understanding of feminist theories as a discourse in its own right.

Autobiography has been explicitly appropriated and interrogated by second-wave feminists within literary and textual discourses. In the 1970s, Kate Millett and other feminist theorists adopted 'confessional texts' in order to link daily life and personal experience with self-discovery, as a basis of individual identity politics and women's liberation, as a collective (identity) politic (Marcus 1994: 279-80). This strategy coincided with the pro-active phase of the Women's Movement at that time. Feminist attention to autobiography during the 1970s can be read as a direct response to (and perhaps residual cause of) Barthes' call for the 'death of the author'. Autobiography became an integral aspect of the Women's Studies agenda within academia. Thus autobiography was taken up as an educational tool both to learn about previous women's lives, and to initiate self-understanding through the daily recording and collective sharing, of personal diaries.

In the 1980s, reflecting the feminist shift from oppositional activism to mainstreaming infiltration and subversion, 'autobiography' was distinguished from what came to be understood as 'personal criticism'. Personal criticism is explicitly concerned with acknowledging and positioning subjectivity in the production of (critical) theory (see Marcus 1994: 282-288 and Miller, N.K. in Wright [ed.] 1992: 306-311). Personal

criticism is a critical employment of autobiographical material and the embodiment of theory. It not only situates the subjective position of the author within the production of a text, but the very act of this positioning is a discourse of making and becoming a sexually specific subject-presumed-to-know.

Although my work is distinct from the historic (literary) genre of autobiography and is not limited to the written word, my praxis is situated within the discourse of personal criticism. It explicitly addresses a set of concerns that surround autobiography; the transparency and male sex of the humanist 'subject'; the location of subjective experience and the form of narrative used in 'self'-representation. Marcus (1994), in the conclusion of her detailed historical examination of the definition and implications of autobiography asks, 'What is the status of this "I" which is "personal" and "situated" yet not "autobiographical"?' (ibid: 286):



Fig. 7 RyyA. Bread©: *Tongue Tied* 1999, mixed-media installation with I-frame, latex treated plaster coatings, textiles and newspaper:

One major link between the disparate forms of discourse I have examined would seem to be the concept of the performative. The shared focus on the performative suggests certain common tendencies in the cultural field: the valorisation of personal histories, a stress on the positional, a certain anti-theoreticism, a sense of the importance of 'speaking out' as a way authorising identity while at the same time identity is said to be performatively constituted rather than pre-discursive. Yet the performative is defined in a variety of ways: as experience/action opposed to theory; as de-authorising play and performance; as authenticating identity and positionality; as deceit, duplicity and self-referentiality; as an ethical discourse of commitment; as testimony. The radically different accounts of the performative invoked indicate the diversity, and perhaps incommensurability, of the conceptual approaches and intellectual or political contexts in which they arise. What counts (or should count) is not only that a story is being re-counted, nor even how it is told, but its varying contents, contexts and import (Marcus 1994: 287-288).

The autobiography and personal criticism that Marcus concerns herself with is contained within script-based modes of discourse. Even here, as the quote above demonstrates, many forms and methods are introduced, intersect and overlap in attempts to construct self-referential narrative. When the forms and methods extend, as within my

praxis, into visual-material representations such as with photography, the plastic and live arts; issues of self-referential narrative are compounded and multiply.

Yet, Lacan's Mirror Stage precisely locates the moment of subjectivity in the collision of the (infant's) body with (its) specular image in the mirror. This moment marks a simultaneous recognition of, and fundamental split within, the individual that introduces desire and in so doing initiates the infant into the linguistic structure of the Symbolic Order as a 'subject'. Thus it is this site of the narcissistic identification (primary narcissism) with one's own 'fictional' image that suggests the interplay between body, image and word (Lacan [1949] 1977: 1-7).⁵ It is from here that my thesis takes its cue to focus on the interplay between various practices (forms and methods) as they are performed and interpreted on and through the site of subjectivity. For the purposes of this praxis, 'subjectivity' is understood as (and through) the embodied experiences of the research-practitioner, who in this case is called RyyA. Bread©.



Fig. 8 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled from 'Scholarly Exhibitionist Site I-play' series, 2000, 35mm colour slide, camera operated by Mary Anson.

Lacan's significant revision of Freud moves the moment of individuation away from the Oedipus Complex and locates it in the Mirror Stage (ibid.). With this, the framework shifts from the signified to the signifier (Lacan 1998: 250). The subject is defined as a 'network of signifiers' (ibid: 42-53) that operate within a 'signifying chain' of desire for the other (first seen in the image reflected back from the mirror) (Lacan [1957] 1977: 153-154), where the 'unconscious is structured like a language' (Lacan 1998: 149). Here the subject registers meaning and is signified as meaningful through language and speech. While the Mirror Stage explicitly identifies the phallus as a signifier that is distinct

from the penis (a sign), Lacan nonetheless retains the Oedipus complex as the phase following the Mirror Stage in the development of the subject (secondary identification/narcissism) (Lacan [1948] 1977: 8-29).



Fig. 9 "My God...I've got an imaginary lack!" from a photo therapy session on the end of my anal phase.' Spence (1988: 12): *b/w in original*.

Within this formulation, woman (starting with the maternal figure) registers within the Symbolic Order as a signifier of a 'lack', based on what cannot be *seen* of her genitals. She represents *the* lack that constitutes the void as well as the excess (*jouissance*) of what cannot be contained or recognised within symbolic representation (Lacan 1998: 203-215). Woman is positioned as the necessary 'other', a substitute for the mirror, from which the (male) subject can acknowledge and confirm his own signification: 'He' is seen to *have* a signifying value

while 'she' can only *be*...the signifying value of nothing (and everything).

[W]hat is at stake [in definitions of the female body] is the activity and agency, the mobility and social space, accorded to women. Far from being an inert, passive, noncultural and ahistorical term, the body may be seen as the crucial term, the site of contestation, in a series of economic, political, sexual, and intellectual struggles. [...] Where one body (in the West, the white, youthful, able, male body) takes on the function of model or ideal, the human body, for all other types of body, its domination may be undermined through a defiant affirmation of a multiplicity, a field of differences, of other kinds of bodies and subjectivities (Grosz 1994: 19).

While visual-material representation operates within the linguistic realm of the Symbolic Order, image and materiality respectively have a specific position to each other and to the spoken (not to mention - written) word, in the formation of subjectivity. Therefore, the body, the image and the word each have a different signifying value with regard to representations of a subject. Self-portraiture in the visual-material arts has a parallel relation to the literary form of autobiography both in terms of its significance and history as a genre, and its narrative themes (Meskimon 1996: 64-95). However, this

visual-material form of representation cannot be read in the same way, nor can it occupy the same space in the psycho-symbolic register of the subject (as either artist or viewer).

Here, in terms of women's attempts to represent embodied experience through visual-material forms and methods, the distinction between autobiography and personal criticism is pertinent. The site/sight of the female body is related to the scopic drive of the (male) subject (Lacan 1998: 67-77). Female representation is connoted within the history of visual-material representation as a signifier of the other, an 'object' (often, but not necessarily, of beauty) for the (male) artist and viewer as subject(s).

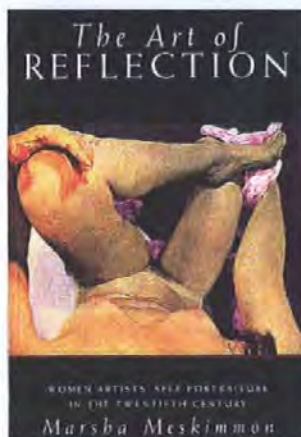


Fig.10 Front book cover of Meskimmon (1996). Cover painting: *Me Without Mirrors*, Joan Semmel. Cover design: Sandra Cowell.

For women artists to take up the representation of their own image is immediately to operate within a duplicitous tension; occupying both the position of object and subject simultaneously (Meskimmon 1996: 102-103). This is so in a way that does not apply to the male artist, nor does it function in the same way for the literary textual author whose image is constructed in words.

The narratives of visual-material female representation always already implicate a discursive positioning of gender, sex, pleasure and alienation (ibid.). In order for self-referential images of a woman artist to resist re-appropriation into normative readings of

the 'male gaze', the tools and implications of personal criticism must be appreciated and deployed.

Rather than the woman attempting to find a voice through her role as an artist, we can see these images as the artist addressing her role as a 'woman'. Yet again, it is a strategy which enables us to rethink both ideas about self-portraits as works of art and the nature of the woman artist as an author (Meskimmon 1996: 104).

Within the visual-material arts, the issues surrounding autobiography have not been as well developed as they have within literary and textual criticism. Either autobiographical narrative is employed in an uncritical way that carries all the Humanistic baggage of a transparent Self to be revealed through self-expression; or the issues of

female self-representation are addressed in terms of gender identity at the expense of other considerations. Within my interdisciplinary praxis one objective has been to establish a set of criteria regarding ‘significance’ that could be applied to the process of framing subjective experience, predicated on what I call *subject specificity*.

There is no self that is prior to the convergence or who maintains “integrity” prior to its entrance into this conflicted cultural field. There is only a taking up of tools where they lie, where the very “taking up” is enabled by the tool lying there (Butler 1990: 145).

The question of self-referential narrative corresponds with an understanding of subjectivity, of where ‘I’ begin and what the boundaries of my imaginary anatomy are in the context of scholarly research. My working definition of subjectivity is a departure from linear notions of progression such as, ‘beginnings’ and/or ‘endings’. Everything that I am, everything that I experience(ed) and embody, I carry into my praxis and, according to my own methodology, it is all a contributing factor to my thesis.



Fig.11 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled from sketchbook, 1997, felt pen and water-colour 22.8cm x 15.2 cm.

Therefore, rather than ‘begin’ representing and inscribing embodiment, I have sought strategies of intervention into the processes of performativity that are already in motion. This is not the same as saying that ‘I’ exist before my engagement with my praxis or that my thesis is merely a form of self-expression in the derogatory sense that this notion has come to be understood. It is rather that the process of intervention itself is a repetitive act of inscription and representation that performs my sense of embodiment at the same time that I seek to describe it.

My own interest in signification is focused not as with Butler, on gender politics *per se*, although they are explicitly accounted for within my methodology; but with how particular objects and specific ‘personal’ relationships come to have signifying value within a subjective economy of libidinal signification. My understanding of the term, ‘subjective specificity’, is bound up with an individual’s interpretation of their own

particular matrix of circumstances and material configurations. It is connected to the psychical corporeality of an individual, which both determines and is determined by the subject's psychical recognition of 'self' in relation to environments, mediated through ego-libidinal investments of the body (Grosz 1994). This is the basis for my term *auto[erotic]-representation(s)* that replaces both 'autobiography' and 'self-portraiture', but is nevertheless located within the discourse of personal criticism.

The clues for 'beginning' my investigation into embodied self-representation have been found in the slippage and excess of my subjectivity within and beyond the context of academic research. What events have led me to where I am at any particular moment? What activities am I performing at any given time? When I am not working on a specific research task, I am elsewhere engaged in some form of activity. What is the significance of this engagement to my subjectivity as it is defined within my praxis? In adopting this line of questioning as a way forward, the findings of my research have (always) already 'begun'; thus it becomes a project of identification and articulation

to incorporate embodied experiences into [O]rder. In the words of Anaïs Nin, of whom a great deal more will be said in due course:

Put yourself right in the present. This was my principle when I wrote the diary – to write the thing I felt most strongly about that day. Start there and that starts the whole thing unravelling, because it has roots in the past and it has branches into the future (Nin [1975] 1992: 154).

There are two distinct ways in which issues of personal criticism are implicated in my work and the distinction is predicated on the axis of 'temporal space'. In one instance the work relates to self-referential modes of discourse because of the direct 'recording' of



Fig.12 RyyA. Bread©: *Psychical Corporeality*, 2001, digital image comprised of paper, ink and cardboard collage (1997) and *nipple* from 'surface' series (1999) 35mm colour photograph, camera operated by David Sanders.

myself that takes place through the materials. This recording is located in the present moment and the narrative of embodied presence is inscribed and structured within the form of the final text.

The plaster coating exercise, one of the primary studio activities of my art practice, was established early on in the research (June 1997) and is especially relevant in this respect. The plaster coatings that this exercise refers to are constructed through a process of saturating muslin with wet plaster and covering sections of my body so that a thin plaster skin dries over my form and hardens into an object in its own right. My socio-historical inscriptions are encoded into my body and are thus imprinted into the sculptural forms through contact with my own materiality.



Fig.13 RyyA. Bread©:
Untitled, 1997, plaster
coating approx. 1m x
1.5m x 1cm.

The second way that self-referential concerns are implicated relates to the production process leading up to the manifestation of the plaster coatings, or other research tasks, and the narratives I construct around the notion of my own subjectivity. This is an assimilation of the past into the present through my personal history (auto-history) which is constantly being re-explored and re-written. The activities surrounding the photography aspect of my art practice focus on this theme in terms of visual-material representation. As well as photography these activities include such things as diagrams, three-dimensional sketches and the indexing and (dis)playing of/with objects (both made and acquired).⁶

These (photographic) activities approach the notion of embodiment and psychical corporeality very differently from the plaster coating exercise. The plaster coating exercise departs with an emphasis on ego-libidinal investment that is generated through the bodily encounter with the materials, as well as in the response to the self-representational forms that are produced through this process. One result of this exercise, which could at first be

seen to privilege the corporeal aspect of psychical corporeality, was the recognition of what I term the *Imaginary Other(s)*. This psychical presence (as the *Phantom Lover*) has been positioned as an extension of my own subjectivity and is understood in this context to function as a self-surveillance mechanism in the absence of another embodied individual to witness the private act of making.

The photographic exercises proceed with a notion of (an) imaginary other(s) already in place, and to this end enter the discourse of psychical corporeality with an emphasis on the psychical. In this context the *Imaginary Other(s)* are not usually experienced as an imposing gaze, but instead operate(s) as a motivating aid to accessing and orientating a sense of self in relation to inhabited surroundings. In this capacity the *Imaginary Other(s)* are understood as the *Imaginary m/Other*. Material objects used in this work correspond to associations with other embodied individuals and experiences, and they are deployed in the visual-material mapping of my embodied experience.



Fig.14 RyyA. Bread©: *Imaginary Other(s)* from 'I-play' series, 2000, 35mm colour slide, camera operated by Mary Anson.

Both exercises rely on an understanding of embodiment that is predicated on psychical corporeality, although the plaster coating exercise uses corporeality as a starting point while the photographic activities start with a psychical element of embodiment. In both instances the *Imaginary Other(s)* is a manifestation of libidinal investments that are projected outward onto other embodied individuals and then subsequently re-internalised (introjected). Both exercises focus on materiality and subject specific representation, and yet the location of these elements shifts depending on the embodied position of the practitioner in relation to the specific departure point of the respective exercises. Rather than upholding a binary relation between psychical and corporeal aspects of embodiment,

these two aspects of the artistic practice demonstrate the fluidity and simultaneity implicit in the notion of psychical corporeality.

What I have called *S[h]elf Portraits* have come out of the ‘playful’ photographic exercises and compliment the plaster coatings as (visual-)material objects of subjective specific representation. The *S[h]elf Portraits* as the structural form were influenced by the significance of the humble ‘shelf’ within my domestic, study and studio environments. Shelving is central my sense of [O]rder in terms of the way the shelf contains its contents. The shelf functions in my praxis as a micro-installation that displays objects arranged in particular psycho-symbolic configurations. To this end, the shelf is both an object of play and stage that sets the drama for constructing narratives of subjective specific auto-history with other objects.



Fig.15 RyyA. Bread©: *S[h]elf Portraits* group shot as installed in preparation for ‘*A/The Artist Site in I::Matter* (2001)’, 2000, digital camera image with wide angel lens. Site size 172cm square space, 240.4cm (h).



Fig.16 Louise Bourgeois: *Figure*, 1954, wood, metal, 119.3cm high, Robert Miller Gallery, New York Abb.S.82

Along with the horizontal surface that the ‘shelf’ provides for housing and (dis)playing objects, the *S[h]elf Portraits* also offer some resolution to my challenge of establishing verticality into my representations of embodiment. Embodied structure, it would seem, comes out of verticality. It is the general lack of this quality within the plaster coatings that leads me to this conclusion. The following quote from the artist Louise Bourgeois, who will be discussed in more detail later, supports this view:

[For this reason] the figures are placed in the ground the way people would place themselves in the street to talk to each other. And this is why they grow from a single point – a minimum base of immobility which suggests an always possible change (Bourgeois [1954] 1998: 66-67).

With the plaster coatings I did achieve a few freestanding pieces of my front body.

These, however, were always extremely fragile and prone to eventual leaning or destabilisation. The majority of the plaster coatings were fragments that required suspension in order to obtain any sense of being upright. Yet, in the case of these suspended pieces there is always an uneasy relation to gravity that negates the feeling that the embodied form has its feet 'planted firmly on the ground'. Without a vertical positioning the plaster coatings of my body are either floating beyond the laws of gravity or completely overtaken by them as they lie in heaps on the floor. Thus, the *S[h]elf Portraits* introduced

verticality into (a specific aspect of) my visual-material textual production through their upright wooden forms.

The *S[h]elf Portraits* have been assembled around the theme of significant embodied [O]thers within my auto-history who inform my understanding of 'self' even in their physical absence. My recognition of their significance came out of the photographic activities and the objects displayed in the shelf 'units' of the *S[h]elf Portraits* have a direct relationship to the earlier work. These portraits remain contained within the self-referential system that characterises my work, despite their inherent reference to other individuals. This representational strategy differs from the traditional reliance on the Muse, in that it posits this dependence as a psychical corporeal drama that remains within the



Fig.17 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled (studio shot), 1997, plaster and muslin (coatings).



Fig.18 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled (studio shot), 1997, plaster and muslin (coatings).

imaginary anatomy of the embodied artist rather than conflating its significance with an external Other.

There are seven *S[h]elf Portraits* in total.⁷ Two units have been made to signal the *Imaginary Other(s)* as the *Phantom Lover* and the *Imaginary m/Other*. These are the tallest units and are the most 'distilled' composite 'portraits' of embodied others.

Fig.19 RyyA. Bread©:
Phantom Lover Unit 'S[h]elf
Portraits' series, 2000 wood,
carpet, plaster coating head,
tiissue paper and assorted
objects. 172cm(h) x
30.05cm(w).



Fig.20 RyyA. Bread©:
Imaginary m/Other Unit
'S[h]elf Portraits' series,
2000 wood, carpet, plaster
coating head, tiissue paper and
assorted objects. 172cm(h) x
30.05cm(w).



There are also four *Parental Units*: *Paternal Units I&II*, which are both identical in scale and construction, and are tall and thin; and two *Maternal Units* that are also identical to each other, but are a foot shorter and a bit wider than the *Paternal Units*.

Fig.21 RyyA.
Bread©:
*Paternal Units I
& II Unit*
'S[h]elf
Portraits' series,
2000 wood,
carpet, plaster
coating head,
tiissue paper and
assorted objects.
150.3(h) x
30.05cm(w)
each.



Fig.22 RyyA.
Bread©:
*Maternal Units
I & II Unit*
'S[h]elf
Portraits' series,
2000 wood,
carpet, plaster
coating head,
tiissue paper and
assorted objects.
130.7cm (h) x
40.6cm(w)
each.



Finally, there is the *Matrimony Unit*. It is the shortest and the widest of all the units and stands out from the rest in this respect. As this title suggests, this unit refers to my experiences of marriage. While this unit is singular in contrast to the other units in the site that are coupled, it contains duplicity within its own definition. Indeed, my understanding of marriage is duplicitous, if not multiple. I, myself, have been married twice; both times to men who were not US citizens, so that the negotiation of a 'foreign body' that is carried within what I term the 'heterosexual challenge' (of marriage) is both a metaphorical and embodied construct.

My own understanding of marriage is a process of negotiation between my personal experiences, and the socially inscribed significations of this performative act of commitment.

The *Matrimony Unit* pertains specifically to my own marriages and the acknowledgment of my husband(s) as significant (embodied) others in my life and subject positioning. The piece uses rope in each of the four shelves, as a reference to the notion of 'tying the knot'.⁸

Of the seven *S[h]elf Portraits* the *Matrimony Unit* is the most abstracted. Upon reflection I would suggest that this is for two reasons, which both necessitate that a degree of distance be implemented into the treatment of this theme. First, because other individuals are implicated into the narrative in such a way that defies attempts at maintaining anonymity; and second because this theme of 'marriage' is a living thing within a present time and place, making it impossible to really 'step-out of'. The abstraction of this theme, and its easy to identify features, into the primary use of the rope, with minimal inclusion of other objects, makes this the most accessible narrative among the units.



Fig.23 RyyA. Bread©: *Marital Unit 'S[h]elf Portraits'* series, 2000 wood, carpet, plaster coating head, tissue paper and assorted objects. 120.2cm (h) x 60.1(w).



Fig.24 RyyA. Bread©: Close-up of *Marital Unit 'S[h]elf Portraits'* series, 2000.

Carolyn Steedman in her landmark book regarding auto/biographical personal criticism, *Landscape for a Good Woman* (1984); defines 'interpretation' as, 'the places where we rework what has already happened to give current events meaning' (Steedman 1984: 5). As well as identity texts, auto-histories are employed within my thesis to create a subjective specific 'symbolic order' that facilitates the contextualisation of embodied experiences within a matrix of personal significance. The predominating auto-historical narratives are organised around my affiliations with educational (and ideological) institutions; domicile spaces/places that I have occupied; and the mapping of inter-personal relationships both within the traditional family structure and beyond.

The construction of these narratives is not to espouse a 'true' biographical account of my personal history, nor is it a deliberate exercise in distorting personal historical fact. In so far as all signification is fictional these narratives are a fabrication of my identity. However, the aim of these narratives is to position my sense of selves within an interpretation of personal circumstances in order to make meaning of the psycho-symbolic significance of present experiences. As noted already, these auto-historical narratives have also been a structuring element in the visual-material mapping and representation of my identity text primarily through still-life constructions of objects and photography.

Therefore in order to introduce RyyA. Bread©; that is, in calling RyyA. Bread© to [O]rder, a brief auto-history is presented here that details an understanding of my arrival at the doctoral project. This particular narrative version begins with my undergraduate studies because in many ways my current praxis is a continuation of a process that began to



Fig.25 RyyA. Bread©: *High Mowing School 1986-1988*
'Institution Series I', 2000, 35mm colour slide.

be defined within this phase of my engagement with academia, visual-material production and feminist ideology. It was also during this period that my own subjective specificity began to surface as a predominant theme within my textual production.

I obtained a Liberal Arts Degree, equivalent to a BA(Hons) in the UK, at Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., which I attended from 1989-1992. Hampshire College is unique in that it is modelled on a doctoral programme. This meant that students were expected to design and defend their own course of study. The system was project, rather than test, based; each student had an advisor, most projects were evaluated by a committee of appropriate faculty, and the final thesis required an oral exam in order to obtain the degree. This graded as pass, fail or referral. In this respect, my undergraduate studies can be seen as a 'rehearsal' for the doctoral programme I now seek to pass through.



Fig.26 RyyA. Bread©: Hampshire College 1988-1992 'Institution Series I', 1997, 35mm colour slide.

In keeping with a 'Liberal Arts' degree, common in the States, studies were not exclusive to one subject. The side-by-side development of my artistic training (focused in sculpture but including other mediums such as drawing, painting, photography and art history); Women's Studies; psychology and 'peer education' offers a precursory insight into my current interdisciplinary praxis. My 'major' nonetheless was in Fine Art and the final thesis took the form of a solo exhibition in the large gallery space at the college that was accompanied by a written text.

The work made during this four and a half-year period was about representing my experience of embodiment and what later came to be understood as an 'imaginary anatomy'. At the time, the work was framed in terms of form and materials because of the difficulty identifying and verbalising the motivation that underlay my practice. I lacked a

framework within which to contextualise my ideas, although I was familiar with the writing of Lucy Lippard⁹, and drew on women sculptors such as Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse and Kiki Smith for inspiration.

These three examples of artists, whose works and identity texts must be appreciated within their respective contexts, can be mapped along a continuum of interest in the notion



Fig.27 Louise Bourgeois: *Avenza Revisited*, 1972, plastic, 58.4cm(h) x 104.1cm (w). Robert Miller Gallery, New York, Abb.S.131.

of psychical-corporeality. Bourgeois, moving from Paris and the influence of Surrealism and psychoanalysis to New York in the 1940s, took up issues of Abstract Expressionism and subjectivity that were related to psycho-symbolic significance. Her sculptural pieces that emphasised round, organic materiality and weighted mass were the images that

resonated with me at the time. The groupings and clusters of these forms related to the individual (unit) in relation to an inhabited environment (a multiplicity of units). They also depicted an interior landscape that could be read in terms of biological matter as well as psychical mapping. Her work is charged with a psychological perspective of the physicality and presence of the materials she worked with in relation to her own subjective embodiment.

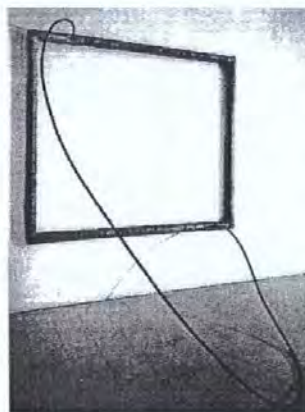


Fig.28 Eva Hesse: *Hang-up*, 1966, acrylic on cloth, wood and steel 72 x 84 x 78". Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Ganz, New York.

Hesse on the other hand, born in Germany in 1936 and moving to New York only three years later, studied at Cooper Union (1955-57) and Yale (1957-59), and was firmly rooted in the emerging discourses around form in drawing and painting of that time (Lippard 1976b: 218). The move into sculpture, and the use of synthetic materials and 'organic' forms was a direct

response to her negotiation of these themes and 'surface' practices.

Hesse spoke to the issue of structure and the 'absurd' within order (ibid: 5-6). She



Fig.29 Eva Hesse: *Repetition Nineteen III*, 1968, fibreglass, 19 units each 19-20¼" x 11-12¾" diameter. Collection of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Anita and Charles Blatt.

too deployed rounded forms and clusters, but these were framed within the notion of grids. Repetition of clusters and grouping was a primary theme that, as in Bourgeois, emphasised the 'specificity' of each unit within a multiplicity of repeated form. Mass was examined in juxtaposition to the 'line', a concern that emerged from her drawing and took the form of (often latex covered) string, rope and tubes in her sculptures.

Hesse did not explicitly address the theme of embodiment in her work, and resisted psychological interpretations and investment with it. However, like Bourgeois, the individual units in relation to surrounding similar-but not identical ones- speaks (to me) of

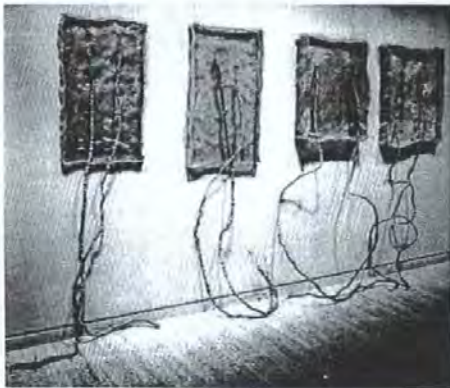


Fig.30 Eva Hesse: *Untitled*, 1970, fibreglass over wire mesh, latex over cloth over wire 4 units, each 34-42¾" x 23-34" x 2-6". Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Ganz, New York.

subjective embodiment as much as material relations between objects. Furthermore, Hesse's installations that brought the 'drawing' into the full space of the viewing environment implicate the body of the viewer in a dramatic way. While *Hang-Up* (1966) is the most often quoted example in this respect (see Betterton in Florence and Foster [eds.] 2000: 275-298), many other pieces such as 'Untitled, 1970' also

address this theme. Hesse's own auto-historical intimacy with the materials she engaged with also highlights the embodied elements of her practice within her identity text as a practitioner.

A further striking difference between Bourgeois and Hesse, whose time in New York overlaps, was that while Hesse died at the age of thirty-four in 1970¹⁰, Bourgeois's career has spanned over sixty-years¹¹. It has continued to unfold up until the present day,

with Bourgeois acquiring an international artistic profile reflected most recently by the works positioned in the entrance to the new Tate Modern in London installed in the year 2000. While Hesse's career was short, she made a significant contribution to the contemporary art concerns of her time and had a public presence through exhibitions to testify to this. It was not until after her death, however, that Hesse was recognised through the Women's Movement (and Lippard) as a role model for other women artists. In her own life she was aware of the sexed bias of the art community she worked in and the language that it used, and she struggled to be seen on equal footing to such peers as her husband Tom Doyle, and other male artists such as Donald Judd, Sol Le Witt, Robert Ryman and Ad Reinhardt, to name a few. Ruth Vollmer, Nancy Graves and Ethelyn Honig were important among the women artists that Hesse associated with (ibid: 204-5).



Fig.31 Kiki Smith: Untitled, 1986, paper, life size. Collection of Eileen and Michael Cohen.

Kiki Smith began exhibiting in New York in the 1980s and I encountered some of her work first hand in the 1990s during my undergraduate studies¹². Her approach to embodiment emphasised the physicality of the body over psychological/psychical aspects that can be read in Bourgeois' work and found to be of dis/interest to Hesse as she tried to incorporate her subjective experience into an 'objective' aesthetic

language of Minimalism (as read by and through Lippard).

With the second wave of feminism to draw on, Smith's engagement with the question of sexual difference is more conscious and critical compared to that of Hesse or the earlier work of Bourgeois that I was looking at then. Smith's work explicitly speaks to the politics of embodiment. She frames her work in terms of Kristeva and Irigaray, who although different in theoretical orientation, both attend to the significance of the maternal body on the female sex and language (Stoops 1992). Thus, Smith's concern with the

discourse of fluids and anatomy is a visual-material response to a feminist discourse of female embodiment:

To me it's much more scary to be a girl in public than to talk about the digestive system. They both have as much meaning in your life, but I've been punished more for being a girl than I've been punished for having a digestive system (Smith *in* Stoops 1992: 35).

These three women artists were of particular significance for me in terms of their respective aesthetic vocabularies that all make space for a subjective presence in one form or another. They offered something that resonated with my own understanding of embodied experience (the acknowledgement that it was there through identification in the first instance) that was not to be found in the predominating interests in 'machine' or modern (male-dominated) aesthetics of clean lines, mass-production, pure geometric form and Minimalism.

Framed within the context of these influences, the work that I produced sought to speak in formal but 'organic' terms from the inside out: making shape of physicality not as it is observed by sight but by how it is sensed by experience. In my current praxis the emphasis has shifted slightly, as has my relationship to these artists. While Hesse and Smith have faded into the background as prominent influences, Bourgeois continues to inform my work as I become more familiar with her own writing and critical reception of past work, and as new work continues to materialise. My attention on her has also moved away from the sculptural pieces of the 1950s-70s. It is located now on her installations; her references to cells, clothing, couples and auto-history, and the emphasis she places on the role of the father and the mother as signifying structures of subjectivity for a daughter/woman.



Fig.32 RyyA. Bread©:
Untitled, 1992,
cardboard tube,
textiles, nylon
stockings, dirt,
bandages, fish net
172cm (h) x 30.5-
60.1 cm (d).

Having said this, traces of all three of these artists' initial influences can still be found in my current practices. In terms of a continuum along the notion of psychical corporeality, the range of practices that comprise my praxis takes up various locations that correlate with themes from these respective examples. My own aesthetic vocabulary, the one that these artists initially inspired, has altered within the context of research as practice. The work that I have made here has been an interrogation of specific issues that has dictated the approach to materials and visual-material mediums. While my own work has deviated in form, the aesthetic imagery of clusters, repetition and rounded forms continues to resonate strongly in my response to visual-material work.

My shift in form(al) language corresponds to a shift in my understanding of psychical corporeality and my objectives in engaging with and through visual-material representation. Rather than attempting to materialise interpretations of experience from the 'inside out', I have set about to challenge the binary of 'inside/outside' through experience in order



Fig.33 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled, 1997, plaster and muslin (coating), lifesize.

to interpret it. Thus, to some extent I have worked backward along this continuum, retracing the path that led me to my point of departure in the MA and onward to the doctoral research.

Like Smith's, my artistic practices are a visual-material response to a critical discourse of embodiment, informed by feminist theorists who take up the physicality of the female body as a site of negotiations for subjective specificity and signification. However, these practices are also situated within a broader interdisciplinary praxis. Just as Hesse translated the issues of drawing into sculptural form and the implications of this radically upset the terms of formalism, my work also seeks to translate mediums in order to explore the interplay between them and their specificity.

While Hesse articulated absurdity within the structures of the grid and repetition within a Minimalist language of aesthetics, my own pronunciations of absurdity are located within the structures of academia and the limited (minimal) languages of classic psychoanalysis. The issues of auto-history and the practitioner's intimate relationship with materials that Lippard discusses in terms of Hesse are also central to my own critical framing of my current work. In this sense I must occupy the role of a feminist art critic with regard to contextualising my own practices, not to define a 'feminist aesthetic' but to address the question of subjective specific auto-erotic representation(s) in relation to traditional definitions of a/the Artist (and his Muse) and Art.

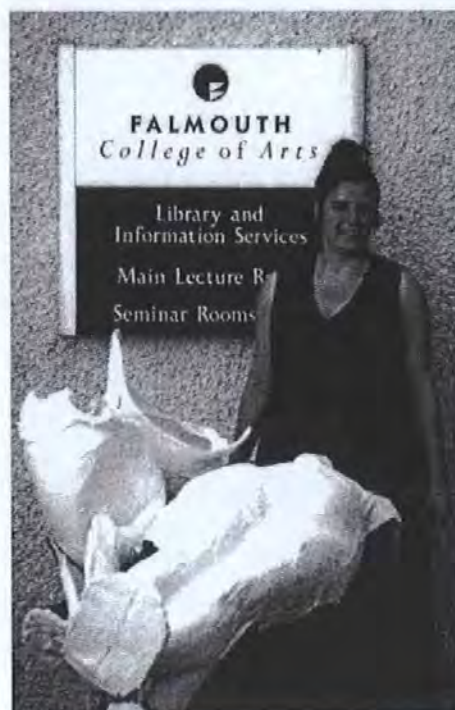


Fig. 34 RyyA. Bread©: *Barrel of Laughs*, 1998, 35mm colour photograph. Camera operated by anonymous passerby.

The intimate engagement that Hesse had with the materials she worked with is under direct investigation within my plaster coating exercise and the photography work respectively. The installations bring the issue of narratives, structure and embodied surroundings to the forefront. In the written practice the theme of auto-historical narrative is again confronted in terms of autobiographical material, language as a signifying structure of subjectivity and critical academic expectations of a doctoral thesis.

Because the actual physicality of the materials and objects that I engage with are invested with psycho-symbolic significance, this significance, as in Bourgeois, shifts in accordance with my own position within the various processes of making that each practice demands. The landscape of psychical corporeality that is represented in the plaster coatings has a different terrain than that of the still-life photographic (self-) portraiture; which is different again from the installations, or indeed, live performance. Rather than

the work being framed in terms of form and materials as it was before my doctoral studies, form and materials are now framed in terms of my motivation for production. This is deliberately situated within an academic discourse of scholarly research.

Throughout the undergraduate studies, my advisor put on pressure to take more Art History classes to help establish a context for my practice. I had a strong resistance to this because my experience of Art History was that it did not speak to or for the artist, and was not about the making process. Instead it was for some 'other' audience far removed from the practical and experiential concerns of making. My aversion lead me to specialised, if not marginalised, areas of such as Asian, African and Feminist perspectives, while bypassing the standard Modernist versions of art history.

Thus I found it is somewhat ironic when, in 1993, I was enrolled in an MA degree course on The History of Modern Art & Design here in the UK. The irony, however, was short-lived because it was in doing this course that I began to appreciate and articulate my previous practice, despite the fact that my suspicions about the field were also confirmed. The MA course was 'theory' based as there was no formal artistic practice integral to this three-year phase of work. Here, examples from my undergraduate art practice were juxtaposed with photographs of myself (as opposed to still-life constructed self-portraits primarily used in the doctoral research) from various stages of life, to consider my own identity text as an embodied subject.

Thus the MA thesis, *The Ship That Launched 1,000 Faces: Masquerade & The Body* (1996), posited a positive use of one's own subjectivity in the creation of an academic text, implying but not yet creating an identity text of and for myself. The



Fig.35 RyyA. Bread©: MA at FCA 1993-1996 'Institution Series I', 1997, 35mm colour slide.

complex relation between image and materiality that is implicit in the notion of masquerade was explored through the sculptural and photographic examples from my auto-history used in the dissertation. This was related to the embodiment and representation of my own subjectivity as a woman with regard to agency and Symbolic existence, a position denied to women within classic formulations of psychoanalysis.

The doctoral research was an opportunity to take much further the methodology explored during the MA, crucially enacting theory and practice simultaneously and explicitly. This is what I now call an 'auto-erotic' strategy of representations. Once again, the term auto-erotic is employed here as distinct from 'narcissism' that has highly determined implications within psychoanalysis; 'autobiography', which is specifically a literary genre; and 'self-portraiture' that also has its own criteria set out through art history. While my understanding of an auto-erotic strategy is connected to these other terms, it is necessary to uphold the distinctions from them.

Having created a situation whereby a simultaneous development could occur between theoretical frameworks and art practice, rather than the theoretical reflection emerging post-production, I went a stage further than what Schön, in *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (1987), refers to as 'reflection *on* action' to a 'reflection-in (/through)-action'. My interest was in the dialogue between 'theory' and 'practice' or what I have come to call *the interplay between linguistic and artistic practices*, where 'theory' is not assumed to be the domain of language.



Fig.36 RyyA. Bread©: Close-up of *Phantom Lover* Unit S[h]elf Portraits series, 2000.

This shift in terminology is significant because the terms 'theory' and 'practice' are problematically clumsy. They are not precise enough to accurately describe the processes involved in textual production. On one hand, the terms 'theory' and 'practice' perpetuate a

false distinction between thought and embodied action. On another hand, these terms blur the specificity of various practices, mediums and methodological approaches. Thus, despite the risk of academic ‘jargon’ (which I have embraced through irony), the precision of terms is necessary to establish a working understanding of what and where ‘theory’ is and how it relates to elements of textual production.¹³

Evidence of my own self-conscious use of jargon can be found in the unwieldy full title of my thesis, *Methodological Embodiments :: Psychological Corporeal Performances of Subjective Specific Auto[erotic]-Representations*. I will write it again because it is considerable; *Methodological Embodiments :: Psychological Corporeal Performances of Subjective Specific Auto[erotic]-Representations*. And once more, this time you are invited to speak it out loud to fully experience the/my pleasure of the text; *Methodological Embodiments :: Psychological Corporeal Performances of Subjective Specific Auto[erotic]-Representations*. Now you have begun to embody it/me.

At the end of the first chapter of *Volatile Bodies* (1994), Grosz rhetorically asks, ‘What criteria and goals should govern a feminist theoretical approach to concepts of the body?’ She then goes on to outline six points that she deems necessary. Within this

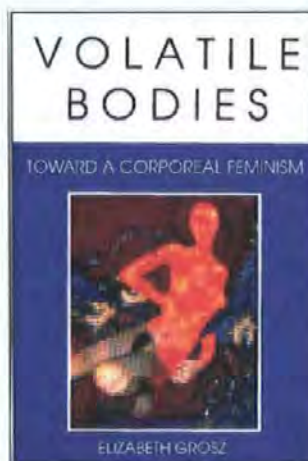


Fig.37 Front book cover of Grosz (1994). Cover illustration: original image by L. Dement.

excerpt she states that, ‘some kind of understanding of *embodied subjectivity*, of *psychical corporeality*, needs to be developed’ to ‘avoid the impasse posed by dichotomous accounts of the person which divide the subject into mutually exclusive categories of mind and body’. She goes on later to declare that, ‘What is needed are metaphors and models that implicate the subject in the object, that render mastery and exteriority undesirable’. When reading this during the MA I imagined, or assumed, these models to be located within discourses of visual-material representation

and took Grosz’s words as a challenge that demanded my considered response in the further development of my doctoral research (Grosz 1994: 21-24).

Thus the thesis question that presides over my current praxis is the following: *If the external Other is moved to the periphery of the concerns of textual production what then is the basis of motivation, stimulation and interpretation within the making process?* The aim of my doctoral project was to initiate and maintain an interplay between linguistic and artistic practices through embodied experience: framing myself as the subject, object and author of investigation. In this way I am ‘implicating the subject in the object’ and revealing the fluid relations between mind/body and practice/theory through subjective embodiment.

The thesis is structured around the identity text, RyyA. Bread©. Through the process of defining this embodied identity text, a colour-coded schema has evolved. The colour designations have been determined through the praxis by a process of interaction with objects and clothing associated with particular activities, people and events. The code corresponds with the particular subject positions identified as relevant within the research context of my particular praxis as follows:

- 'White' signifies the material *process* of embodied engagement within the praxis.



Fig.38 RyyA. Bread©: *White – Process*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

- 'Orange' signifies entrance into language through the *articulation* of the process.



Fig.39 RyyA. Bread©: *Orange – ARTiculation*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

- 'Blue' signifies the daily negotiations between embodied experiences and pre-existing social constructions of *A/The Woman*, with respect to both sexual difference and subjective specificity.

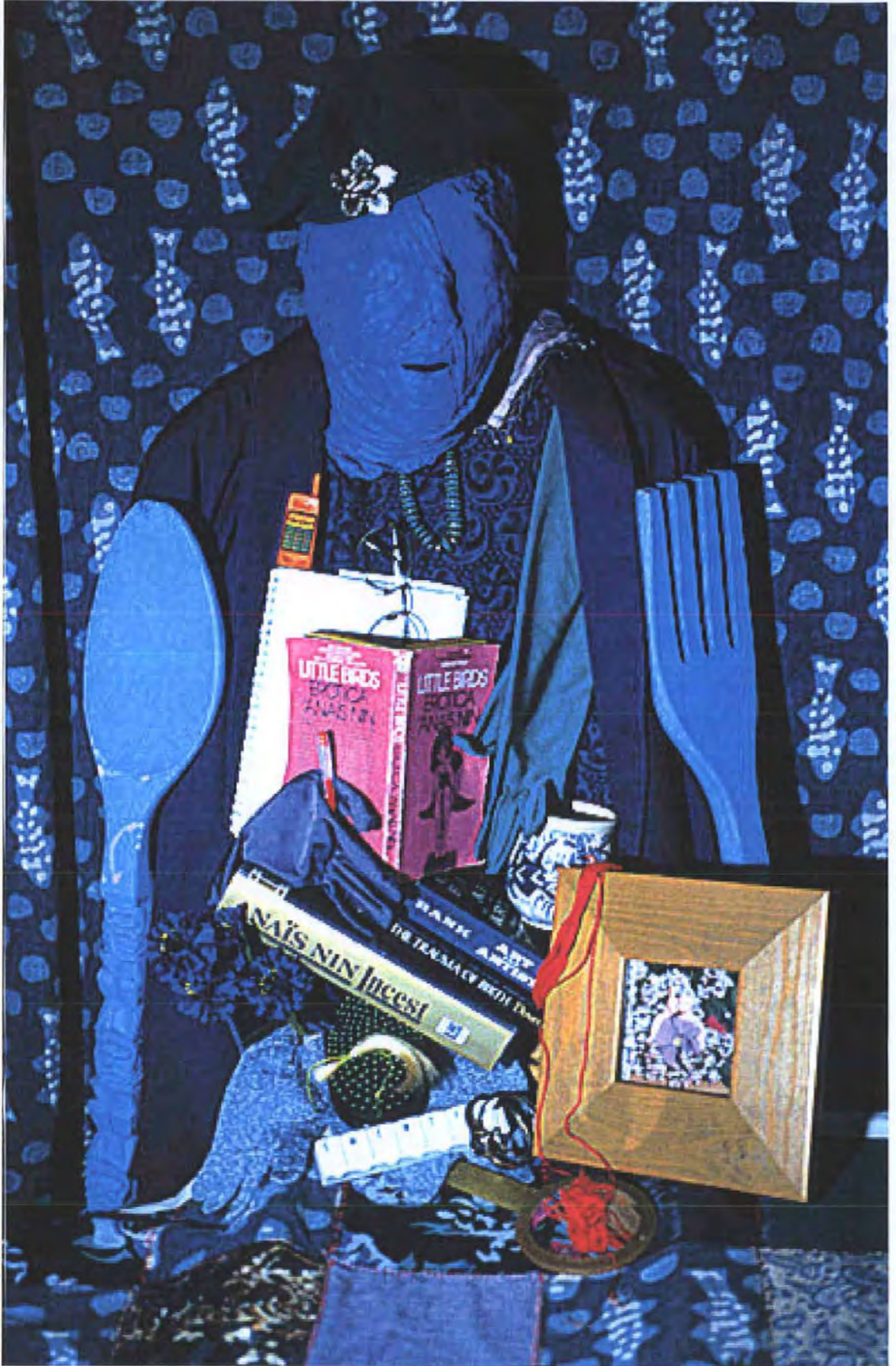


Fig.40 RyyA. Bread©: *Blue – A/The Woman*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

- '(Lime) Green' signifies my occupation as what I call the *Professional Student*; this refers to both the protocol and academic context of the project as a doctoral thesis.



Fig.50 RyyA. Bread©: *Lime Green – The Professional Student*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

- 'Purple' signifies the artistic practices of the praxis with respect to the embodiment of the traditional notion of *A/The Artist* through a process of interrogation and re-definition.



Fig.51 RyyA. Bread©: *Purple – A/The Artist*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

- 'Magenta' signifies the *Scholarly Exhibitionist*. This is the position I posit to supersede the 'Artist' and more accurately reflect my locations within the praxis.



Fig.52 RyyA. Bread©: *Magenta – The Scholarly Exhibitionist*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

'(Jade) Green' and '(dark) purple' signify two distinct personas within my construct of the *Imaginary Other(s)*: the *Phantom Lover* and the *Imaginary m/Other* respectively.



Fig.53 RyyA. Bread©: *Jade Green – The Phantom Lover*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.



Fig.54 RyyA. Bread©: *Dark Purple – Imaginary m/Other*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

The boundaries of positions are not fixed, as there are overlaps and shifting markers. However, through the calling out of RyyA. Bread© in this way, subjective specificity materialises and becomes visible. This approach demonstrates how the Symbolic Order is entered through senses and sensibilities that are informed by image and materiality and cannot be directly translated into or represented exclusively by verbal (or script-based) discourse. The subject positions become representative and representatives of an embodied methodology.

In [O]rder to validate the non-verbal aspects of embodied experience in terms of both subjectivity and research, it still remains necessary to verbalise the significance of these sensibilities. Such a performance mutually affects and is effected by the other work simultaneously under investigation and thus makes the first step towards initiating the interplay between linguistic and artistic practices.

While the linguistic practices foreground context and signification, the artistic practices confront the materiality of embodiment through direct engagement with materials and tools. (Psychical corporeal) 'live performance(s)' have a two-fold function within my praxis; as a (private) *tool in textual production* and a *form of presentation*. Together, and respectively, these two modes of performance play out the question of situating both *Imaginary Other(s)* and *embodied [O]thers* within the auto-erotic methodology of my praxis.



Fig.55 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled from 'A[d]Dress Rehearsal' ('undressed' rehearsal shot), 1998, Main Lecture Theatre, Falmouth College of Arts.

The departure point for my engagement with performance has been the concept of 'performativity', in relation to signification and subjectivity, rather than performance as a genre of textual production. As a form of presentation, 'performance' was not established within my methodology until about half way through the doctoral research project.

A[d]Dress Rehearsal: the embodiment & spectacle of praxis, was devised for a conference entitled 'the relationship between making and writing (*sic*)' at the University of Plymouth at Exeter (September 1998) and marks a pivotal shift in my work into using formal performances. *A[d]Dress Rehearsal* was a performed academic 'paper' that positioned the plaster making exercise within the discourse of practice as research. Representation and presentation were played out with regard to academia through various displays of female embodiment including costume, nudity and the act of dressing; in juxtaposition with finished plaster coatings, some of the materials used in making and a projected slide image.

Exhibitions alone had proved to be a problematic format of presentation within the context of doctoral research because the objects that went on display, even in an installation environment, did not reveal their inherent significance with regard to my thesis. A similar limitation applied to script-based texts that restricted the representation of the visual-material practices and the articulation of non-verbal concerns within the work. The use of performance that emerged through *A[d]Dress Rehearsal* provided a vehicle to represent the interplay *between* practices which is more the primary concern, thus providing a platform to represent material, temporal and linguistic elements of the praxis in an integrated text.

At the outset of my project, artistic (visual-material) practices referred specifically to the plastic arts, photography and multi-media installation. These, along with linguistic practices, can be understood as textual and practical 'parents' to my use of live performance as a form of presentation. Performance texts have emerged out of private psychical corporeal performances, as a further means of presenting the praxis interplay to an (academic) audience. However, it has been crucial that my use of this genre remain

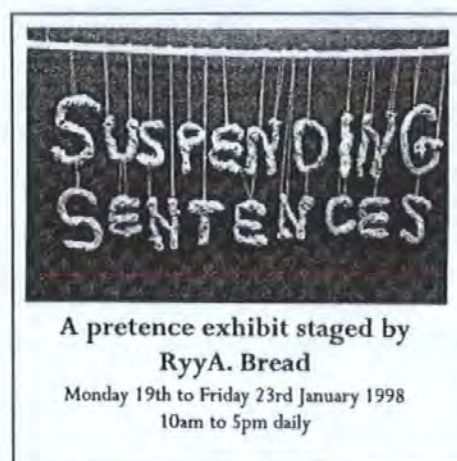


Fig.56 RyyA. Bread©: invitation from *Suspending Sentences: A Pretence Exhibit* (installation/solo event) (January 19th-23rd, 1998). The Garden Studio, Falmouth College of Arts. Designed by RyyA. Bread©.

relatively untouched (virginal) in/by academic terms, in part to allow for a period of *artful* insemination. But also and importantly, because the performances enacted during the research have provided an important procreative space in which to generate *jouissance* and uninhibitedly play with my embodied methodology. As such, live performance is framed as an 'outcum' of the praxis interplay, while the focus of this thesis remains within the initial parameters of the project.

The explicit use of embodiment in live performance demonstrates how psychical corporeality relates to the visual-material texts that I make. For example, *A[d]Dress Rehearsal* isolated a moment in the private act of constructing the plaster coatings to use as the basis for an elaboration into the psycho-symbolic significance of fantasy within the making process. The deliberate exclusion of an embodied witness, or participants, to the production process was framed within my attempt to situate myself as my own Muse and remove the 'Other' from my auto-erotic methodology. Paradoxically, this isolated situation evoked the presence of the *Imaginary Other(s)*. Subsequently, through acknowledging and playing with these 'presences', embodied others came to be considered and situated in relation to the work.

Superimposing the address to the actual audience over an instance in the making where the *Imaginary Other(s)* appear(s) on the scene enacted the ambiguities of the idea of audience within the self-referential methodology of my praxis. Thus performance, as a form of presentation, enabled me to bring together the theoretical and practical concerns of my work through the embodiment that is continuous with their production: my own.



Fig.57 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled from 'A[d]Dress Rehearsal' ('undressed' rehearsal shot), 1998, Main Lecture Theatre, Falmouth College of Arts.

At the same time, however, it was important to retain the distinctness of the discourses that informed this third form. The tripartite submission was proposed to allow

each textual practice respective acknowledgement. Each practice emphasises a different aspect of a shared set of concerns pertaining to image, materiality and representation. The overlapping of themes is an essential aspect of the interplay, how themes overlap and simultaneously remain distinct to a respective medium is part of the inquiry. Subjective specificity thus refers to both the embodied subject *and* subjects of study, within corresponding frameworks of multiplicity.

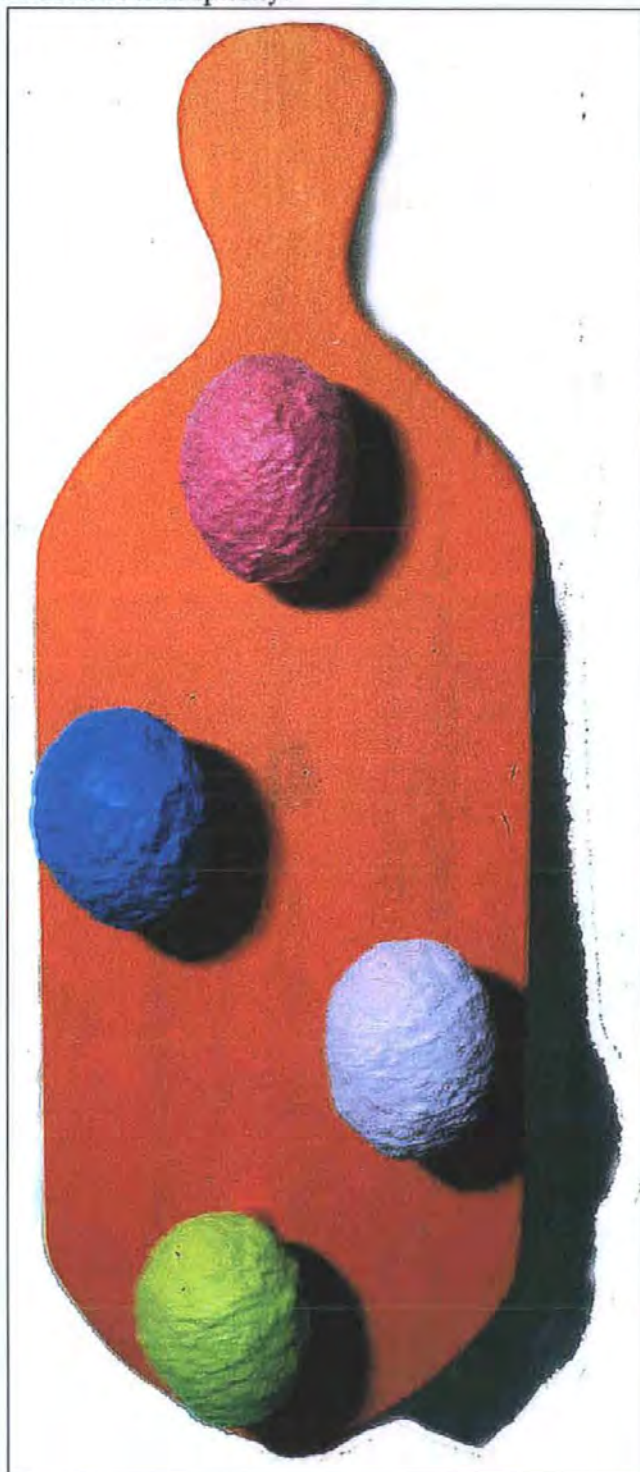


Fig.58 RyyA. Bread©: *Prop I* 'Methodological Embodiments' series, 2000, wood, paper mâché, dowl and Dulux house paint. 45cm (h) x 14cm (w).



Fig.59 RyyA. Bread©: *A/The Woman* close-up of screen with head used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster, wood, textiles and Dulux house paint screen size 130.7cm (h)120.2cm (w)

I. Methodological Embodiments

My goal is not to answer the question, 'Who am I?' but to identify a framework in which this question could make sense (RyyA. Bread©: Research Studentship proposal 1997).

The shift from an *epistemological* account of identity to one which locates the problematic within practices of *signification* permits an analysis that takes the epistemological mode itself as one possible and contingent signifying practice. Further, the question of *agency* is reformulated as a question of how signification and resignification work (Butler 1990: 144, *italics in original*).

'RyyA. Bread©' is the pivotal frame from and upon which the thesis is constructed.

To this end, the title of chapter one ('Introducing RyyA. Bread©') suggests a direct relation between the dissertation and the identity text of its author. With an emphasis on linguistic signification, the dissertation explores in practical terms how this approach can offer a constructive method for [re]presenting a contribution to systems of knowledge, while simultaneously signifying subjective specific embodiment. The codes of practice implicit in writing and the contexts in which such practices are deployed are confronted with the aim of locating and positioning identit(ies) within (visual-)script-based narratives. The relations between (linguistic) denotation, signification and [mis]representation are read *through* the act of defining subjectivity, which is also understood here to be a linguistically constructed text.



Fig. 60 RyyA. Bread©: *Tools of the Trade*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

Appearing to conform to the pre-existing structure of an academic text requires an incorporation of the other embodied experiences of the thesis into this specific linguistic structure. This 'submission' is especially important with respect to claiming agency within the Symbolic Order. The dissertation, with the linguistic practices that it both denotes and connotes, situates the interdisciplinary praxis within the scholarly context of academic research. In articulating the thesis through this classic textual form in conjunction with

artistic practices the work is positioned within existing frames of reference, and the research adheres to the traditional requirements of doctoral scholarship. This is essential if it is to expand the understandings of what could be defined as such.

In the dissertation, this chapter 'Linguistica' (chapter two) constructs a map relevant to linguistic and literary aspects of my theoretical framework, while 'Artistica' (chapter three) situates artistic (visual-material) practices within this construct. In the fourth and final chapter, 'A Subject Specific Interplay', the methodology of my thesis is contextualised with regard to contemporary strategies of interdisciplinary praxis that are concerned with both the aesthetics of difference and the difference of aesthetics in distinct modes of theoretical textual production.

The self-referential methodology of this thesis renders the question of how other references are incorporated into scholarly texts of extreme importance. In order to define my own embodied experience as a woman it has been necessary to engage in a theoretical investigation of subjectivity in relation to representation. Thus in writing up the findings of this investigation it is important to retain, and indeed to emphasise, the subjective specific significance, which has been the underlying motivation and form through which the research has developed. This can be seen as a feminist and political concern related to the notion of personal criticism discussed earlier. The affects and effects of such a strategy are academically, as well as personally, pertinent with regard to establishing a basis for embodied methodology. The working definition deployed here to describe this process is 'auto-authorisation':



Fig.61 RyyA. Bread©:
Untitled from
'Professional Student
Site I-Play' series,
2000, 35mm colour
slide, camera operated
by Mary Anson.

For feminist theory, the development of a language that fully or adequately represents women has seemed necessary to foster the political visibility of women. This has seemed obviously important considering the pervasive cultural condition in which women's lives were either misrepresented or not represented at all (Butler 1990: 1).

Psychoanalysis is a theoretical and ideological discourse that is (historically) predicated on clinical treatment of patients. Yet the professional standing of the analyst has been dependent as much on published contributions as it has on clinical performance. In this way it can be seen as a praxis comprising (at least) treatment, training and publication.¹⁴ While psychoanalysis is distinct from scholarly doctoral research, it is in part an academic practice and can be read with respect to its aim of contributing to existing knowledge through (visual-)scripted textual production.

Arguably the greatest contribution that psychoanalysis has made is the elaboration of the 'unconscious', which has contributed to undermining the Humanist assumption of transparency in an understanding of the individual. Furthermore, it is invested in defining and describing subjectivity in terms of psychical corporeality (Freud) and language (Lacan) which potentially moves away from theories of biological determinism. These contributions have had an overwhelming impact on critical thinking beyond the psychological and medical contexts from which they emerged.



Fig.62 Jo Spence, 'Revisualization' from *Remodeling Photo History* in collaboration with Terry Dennett (1982) Spence (1988: 130): b/w in original.

Feminist theory in particular has referred to psychoanalysis (as a discourse to be urgently rethought,) both as a framework to approach questions of subjectivity and because of the refusal in classic psychoanalytic formulations to acknowledge sexual difference. In accordance with this line of thinking, my argument is not situated directly within classic psychoanalysis despite its relevance to the concerns of this thesis and the numerous references made to it. More precisely it is the work of particular psychoanalysts and feminist revisionists who have

challenged and/or redefined the terms traditionally put forward under this framework that have been the focus of the research.

Words, Freud once remarked, were originally magic. If not magical in their impact, the emergence of the two terms 'heterosexuality' and 'homosexuality' mark a crucial stage in the modern definition of sexuality, which in turn provide an essential backcloth to Freud's own endeavours (Weeks, J. in Wright [ed.] 1992: 152).

Freud posited hysteria as a psychical disease that displayed corporeal symptoms.¹⁵

Despite contradictions to this, the cause was traced to disturbances pertaining to *biological* 'homosexuality' in women (Wright [ed.] 1992: 163). Thus, hysteria was framed as a disorder that conflated the terms sexuality, gender and identity even as it attempted to define them. The 'talking cure' that psychoanalysis developed to remedy hysteria was founded on the belief that through verbalising and identifying underlying traumas, the

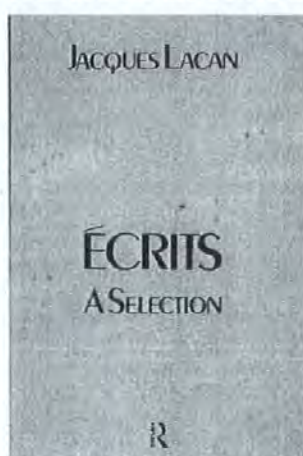


Fig.63 Front book cover of Lacan (1977).

psychosomatic symptoms would be alleviated. In this way, language was directly implicated in the discourse of hysteria and consequently into the general fabric of psychoanalysis. It is from here, as well as Structuralist formulations of language in anthropology, that Lacan was later able shift the focus away from the site of the body and on to the structure of language, arguing that '*the signifier signifies not for another subject, but for another signifier*' (Lacan 1998: 198, *italics in original*).

Stories beget stories in the name of authorship and *authorisation*. As the 'father' of psychoanalysis, Freud used existing literary sources such as the Greek myths of Oedipus and Narcissus as a point of departure from which to develop his own narrative formulas pertaining to the psycho-symbolic significance of sexuality and desire in the individual through stages of maturation. Although Freud's interpretations form the basis of classic psychoanalytic thought, other psychoanalysts such as Rank, Lacan and Irigaray returned to these literary references in order to challenge the predominant phallogentric framework with their own respective readings.

The creative act of auto-*authorisation* also involves the acknowledgement and (re-) site/cite-ing of existing fiction(s) and fabrications. This is my understanding of what is

meant in academic language by secondary and primary references. However, in classic academic citation, the sources quoted do not provide full reference because the stories that signify the scholar are implanted between the lines: [*I'm-planted...between the lines*].

Similarly, within the analytic situation the psychoanalyst is positioned as the subject-presumed-to-know and acts as Other for the analysand. The subjectivity of the analysand is interpreted and defined through and against the analyst by a process of transference and counter-transference. Psychoanalysis invests the analyst with the power to *authorise* the stories of patients' lives that surface during treatment, but the analysts' stories (counter-transference) remain embedded in the reading of the patient.

Like the psychoanalyst the (authorised) scholar is the subject-presumed-to-know. Yet unlike the analytic situation, it is the subject matter that is the Other for the scholar to define via research. In this particular research project the subject matter (that is the Other) is the embodiment of the scholar, thus the process of transference and counter-transference is staged within a closed circuit of a self-referential methodology. The act of auto-*authorisation* still necessitates placing confidences in and on others, as classic academic and psychoanalytic situations involve ...but as I aim to distinguish RyyA. Bread© through subjective specific authorship one *objective* is to make my '*I'm-plants*' more pronounced.

The scholarly practice of identifying (with) existing theorists is viewed as a web of theoretical 'personalities' spun within the dissertation that correspond to the praxis aim of mapping personal interrelations. The theoretical alignments are motivated by subjective specific identifications and the significance of these is traced through the process of elucidating the thesis rationale. In so doing, the fictions of others are inscribed on the site of authorial embodiment and are telling of the stories that already signify and are born out of my identity as the author.



Fig.64 RyyA. Bread©: shot from visual material auto-historical mapping session in studio, 1997.

For reasons inherent in *her* work, there is one writer whose function goes beyond



Fig.65 'Anaïs Nin in the mid 1930s' from Nin (1996: iv).

academic reference in my praxis. The identity text *Anaïs Nin* has been framed within the research as an interlocutor. In order to re-position the significance of the written word and locate authorial subjectivity within the context of embodiment and representation, my own interdisciplinary praxis has been deliberately juxtaposed with this literary practitioner.¹⁶ The term 'personal criticism' would not have been in circulation until close to the time of Nin's death

(1977). Nonetheless, her autobiographical *Diaries* for which she is most (critically) noted, as well as her

critical and fictional works, can best be understood with regard to this kind of project. The difficulties posed in interpreting her position within self-referential narratives across the literary styles she deployed calls into question both the function of the author and the genre of autobiography. Nin's own concerns with these issues are made explicit within her writing. As such, the (identity) text(s) of Nin relate directly to the term *auto-authorisation*.

Nin has specific signification within my psycho-symbolic matrix of subjectivity. My engagement with Nin in a scholarly context is predicated on an earlier auto-historical association connected to ego-libidinal arousal. My reading of Nin as a woman, writer, analysand, lay analyst, critical thinker and active member of the second-wave feminist movement of the 1970s sets out from this. Nin represents (for me) the image of a literary woman artist whose work is predicated on the 'personal' and the 'erotic', and she is also my personal icon for *femininity*. It is important that the distinction between 'femininity' and 'woman' is made in this respect. Nin is not my idea[l] of 'woman'; but rather of 'woman who is all female'. She is a character(isation) of conventional female beauty and seduction.

To this end, Nin can be described as a ‘heterovestite’: someone who derives pleasure from dressing up in the clothes attributed to their ascribed gender.¹⁷ She believed that femininity and the desire to be interesting and beautiful was ‘part of being a woman’. Referring to ‘intellectual’ women, particularly of the 1970s, she further asserted ‘that the emphasis on anti-aesthetics is a false solution, and that through it we’ll falsify a relationship to men’ (Nin 1975: 71). Throughout her life, Nin struggled to come to terms with the expectations placed on her as a woman, from her parents and from society at large. She did not simply refute cultural definitions of woman and/or femininity, but rather she attempted to reconcile the seemingly conflicting demands between being a feminine woman and having creative recourse to language.

Nin’s work is characterised by, and emphasises, a subjective framework inscribed through lived experience, personal connections and sensuality. As such, her approach to textual production has been useful in the process of defining my own embodied

methodology. My personal collection of Nin’s work is methodically altered to correspond with my own [auto-]erotic strategy of representation. The books are re-covered in blue paper to link Nin to the subject position of *A/The Woman* and are marked with the letter ‘I’ in a specific way. The form of the letter ‘I’ emerged within the art practice installations (the I-frames) to provide a framework for the plaster coatings. In the process of producing an ‘I’ template

for the studio practice in which I made large wooden frames in the shape of a capital ‘I’, the issue of fonts was raised. The realisation that the letter ‘I’ has no fixed form in representation but is subject to styles of

font led to the use of this as a metaphor for subjectivity. Thus the letter ‘I’ in various fonts



Fig.66 RyyA. Bread©: I-frame (example) as installed in preparation for *I::Matter* (2001), 2000, wood, tissue paper, plaster coating, carpet, artificial bread, textiles, string. 172cm(h) x 120.2cm (w).

has been deployed as a system of indexing for my visual-material mapping of interpersonal relations¹⁸ and within the organisation of the thesis.

In this schema, Nin has been assigned the symbol 'i' to correspond with the French orthography of the vowel in her first name. On the re-covered books by Nin, the symbol is handwritten and more rounded in the line. This symbol serves as a short-hand denotation of Nin for my own reference that does away with visual likeness and the complications of cover design in representing her work and her person.

Nin's primary material is difficult to cite because of the publication history of her work. I have addressed some of these concerns within the body of the text. However, I have had to leave out many issues pertaining to the printing. The most notable omission is Nin's own printing of her work at various periods in her life. While this is significant to her relationship to her work and has relevance to my own embodied methodology it has been too vast a topic to incorporate alongside my central concerns.

My engagement with Nin has not been with the aim of conducting a literary critique. Many literary critics have made significant contributions to the scholarship of Nin and are invested in Nin's work in this way, such as: Hinz (1971); Knapp (1978); Spencer (1981); Scholar (1984); and Bair (1995), to name just a few. I have focused my major references to Nin around links to psychoanalysis as it is from here that my interest in her departs from. Two of the most important secondary sources have been Jason, P. and Richard-Allerdyce. In several essays ranging from 1976 up to 1997 Jason focuses on locating Nin in relation to Rank and reading her through a Rankian framework. Richard-Allerdyce (1998) is one of the most recent critics of Nin and brings Nin into a Lacanian framework. Although she focuses on gender in Nin's narrative structure, she is aligning



Fig.67 RyyA. Bread©:
example of my covers
for books written by
Nin.

Nin to Lacan rather than exposing the weaknesses of Lacan that fail to include Nin within the Phallic Order.

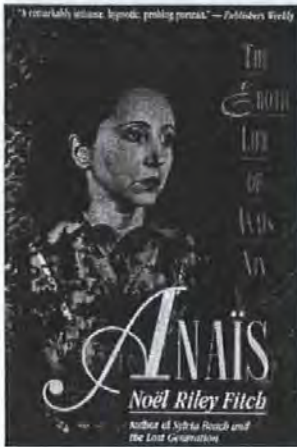


Fig.68 Front book cover of Fitch (1993). Cover design by Martha Kennedy. Cover photographs by Carl Van Vechten, New York Public Library. Courtesy of the Estate of Carl Van Vechten.

Fitch (1993) is not psychoanalytically orientated in her study of Nin. Moreover, she has been the least helpful in terms of academic research because of her persistent paraphrasing of Nin with no direct referencing. Her book is problematic in this way and I disagree with her underlying reading of Nin. However, she has been a useful source at times because she paraphrases Nin's life from beginning to end and thus fills in gaps from time to time in my overall framework of Nin's identity text.

For the most part I have focused on the period of the 1930s and 40s in Nin's work, in part because of her involvement with psychoanalysis during this time. While her relationships with

others are central to my reading of Nin, I have not attended to her connection with the writer Henry Miller to a great extent as this goes beyond the scope of what can be considered here. One important writer who needs to be situated in relation to Nin from the start, however, is D.H. Lawrence.

Nin's critical study of Lawrence publicly launched her career as a writer.¹⁹ When Nin titled her essay *D.H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study*, she was deliberately parodying Stephen Potter's *D.H. Lawrence: A First Study* (1930) which was published after Nin had begun work on her own critical manuscript (Market 1997: 225). What is more, by positioning herself outside of 'professional' literary practice, Nin's title situates her work in relation to dominant literary discourse. Nin did not work within an academic context, nor was she invested in its conventions. She engaged in critical analysis of Lawrence's writing because he 'opened her eyes to an array of human experiences and to possibilities of artistic expression.' (ibid.) Her life's work was to pursue such experiences in order to create.

Lawrence became a literary father figure for her after she read *Women in Love* in 1929 (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 21). In Lawrence, Nin found a model for expressing embodied experience through language: 'a language for feelings, instincts, emotions, intuitions [and] sensations' (Nin 1975: 78, 94). She referred to this as the 'texture' of Lawrence's writing (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 16). The influence that Lawrence had on Nin was profound in marking out the terrain of all her subsequent work: the relationship between writing and gender; literary style and psychological structure that led her to her engagement with psychoanalysis and the 'unconscious'; and the therapeutic process of writing (ibid: 22).

Most importantly, however, in light of what I call Nin's *erotic strategy* to her literary practice was the validation that Lawrence gave her with regard to embracing her sexuality. The 'contact with the reality of sexual passion' was at the 'heart' of Nin's interest in Lawrence and pivotal to her own literary motivations (Fitch 1993: 119). In her late critical piece, *A Novel of the Future* (1968) the presence of Lawrence as interlocutor is still strong demonstrating her continuing dialogue with the Lawrentian text and a sophisticated appropriation of his themes into her own practice of writing (Market 1997: 223-24).

Nin read from Lawrence that 'women would have to make their own patterns, that they were being created by man'. She believed he tried to understand women and must be appreciated for his contribution to a new language, despite what many perceived to be his 'chauvinistic' and 'dogmatic attitudes', which she understood as a condition of his socio-historical period (Nin 1975: 94). Feminist critics such as Seigal have branded Nin as an essentialist because of her equation of the Lawrentian inspired notion of 'writing the body' with a 'feminine' writing style (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 23). This dismissal is understandable in terms of the language of gender that Nin consistently deployed and her own embrace of 'femininity'. For example, the following quote from her husband's Columbia University professor, John Erskine, that was extracted by Nin from her personal

letters for the 1932 cover of her Lawrence study, may seem in today's terms 'sexist' and derogatory (Fitch 1993: 119-120). Yet the use of the word 'theoretically' here allows for a positive reading.

On the paper cover [of *D.H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study* (1932)] beneath her name, is testimony from a man with whom [Nin] had a most decidedly un-Lawrentian encounter: "I learned a great deal from it," wrote John Erskine. "I am amazed at the scholarly and critical reaches – which theoretically no woman should possess" (ibid.).

In the same way that Nin defended Lawrence, I would defend Nin; on the grounds that her socio-historical context imposed limitations on the language (and frameworks for reading gender) available to her. I agree with Richard-Allerdyce that although it is difficult to get beyond her terminology, Nin's overall project was invested in going beyond existing definitions of gender (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 24). She was especially committed to understanding what it meant to be a sexually-speaking/writing woman and in this way was breaking uncharted territory that the language of her time was ill-equipped to articulate. It is only now, with 'bodies' that have spoken and been written to stand as it were on Nin's textual shoulders, that such terms as 'essentialism' can be charged at her at all.

Nin's engagement with psychoanalysis manifests in her narratives through the probing of her relationship with her father and the psycho-symbolic bearing of this relationship on her subsequent relations with others. This primary relationship, as she represents it, is implicitly connected to her identity text as an artist/creative woman and pertains to establishing a definition of 'Artist' that takes into account sexual difference.

As Nin's analyst, mentor, muse and lover, Otto Rank is crucial to this. Rank explicitly concerned himself with the psychology of the Artist type in relation to subjectivity and consequently proved to be of great relevance to the concerns of this thesis. His text *Art & Artist: creative urge and personality development* (1932) speaks directly to and for the artist and the making process in the way the discipline of (Modern) Art History, prior to feminist intervention, has always disappointingly failed to do. Furthermore,

Rank's shifting relationship to Freud, first as protégé, and then as exiled 'heretic', situates Rank as a revisionist of classic psychoanalysis. His theories challenged the fundamental privileging of the Oedipus Complex, and in this way Rank is aligned with many of the other revisionist theories that inform my work. It would be going too far to suggest that Rank was a 'feminist', but his thinking nonetheless has potential for a feminist reading, especially when the influence that Nin had on him is taken into account.²⁰

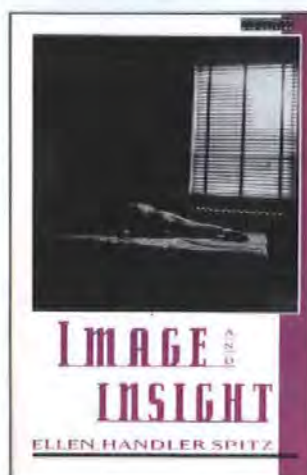


Fig. 69 Front book cover of Spitz (1991). Jacket illustration: Harry Callahan, Eleanor and Barbara, Chicago, 1954. Gelatin silver print. 17.6 x 17.2 cm. Courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Thus '(I'm-Proper) Names' the second section of chapter two ('Linguistica'), looks at the significance of the 'name' and cultural myths in the positioning of Freud and Rank both in relation to, and in respect of, each other. It is necessary to emphasise some details of Rank's work and demonstrate the 'literary significance' he attached to his own praxis. Alongside his primary texts, and Jason's critical literary contributions, Spitz (1991) has been the most significant secondary source. I have relied on her at times because her reading of Rank is situated within the broader concerns of her work that relate directly to my own:

In addition to flagging an anxious competitiveness in contemporary culture between words and images, I am concerned with the nonverbal, subliminal dialogues that observers and objects conduct over time with one another – and with the subtle shifting of their referents and boundaries. Above all, this text is dedicated to the problematic and strenuous paradox of gazing inward and outward at the same time. [...] *Image and Insight* [1991] seeks, in part, to reinstate, not unproblematically, the subjectivity [...] of criticism (Spitz 1991: x-xi).

In the second part, Nin is positioned in relation to her own use of names within her identity text and with regard to her relationship with Rank specifically, and psychoanalysis more generally. It is significant to note that there are no written records from Rank regarding his relationship with Nin (Lieberman 1985: 331). Thus, Nin's problematic representations of Rank in her writing are a one sided testimony of the significance of their relationship. Finally, the third part relates these influences to my embodied experience of the 'name'. Rather than referring to Greek mythology as psychoanalysis does, this piece

focuses on the *subjective specific stories* attached to my identity text. It is constructed through reflective *association* and in this way relates directly to my artistic practices. Here, the written word works like the material objects used to make still-life constructions for visual-material self-portraiture. The narrative reads as an auto-historical account of the psycho-symbolic significance of my own [I'm-]proper name(s). One of the primary aims is to address the relevance of using 'RyyA. Bread©' to de-note/ate my identity text within the research.

The approach is grounded in discursive precedence, albeit deriving from different contexts. First, Freud's psychoanalytic methods of interpreting the unconscious relied in part on associative techniques, as of course did Lacan's. His early contact with the Surrealists who also adopted associative techniques as central to their own artistic aims from the early 1900s on indicates its creative value. This piece is not primarily intended to be an act of 'self-analysis'. Rather it attempts to utilise associative and psychoanalytic techniques in terms of auto-*authorisation* to access specific 'unconscious' themes.

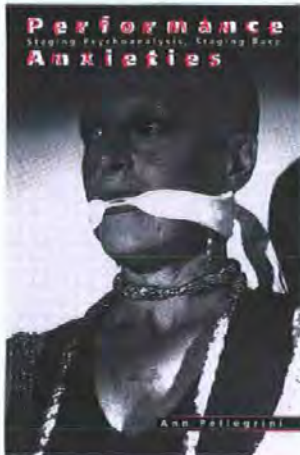


Fig. 70 Front book cover of Pellegrini (1997). Cover art: Rachel Rosenthal, from *Taboo Subjects: Performance in the Masochist Tradition* (1981); photo by Stuart Miller. Cover design: Charles B. Hames.

'(I'm-proper) Authorship' takes up the specificity of 'names' and the question of representing subjectivity with regard to confidentiality and codes of encryption. A main text used in this section is Pellegrini's, *Performance Anxieties: Staging Psychoanalysis, Staging Race* (1997). Pellegrini is a contemporary feminist theorist who is critically engaged in the discourse of psychoanalysis. She conducts her readings through an understanding of performativity that reflects a thorough appreciation of Butler's use of the term with regard to identity construction. In *Performance Anxieties*, Pellegrini considers the performative relation between psychoanalysis and Jewish, Black and gender identity.

In my assessment, Pellegrini cannot be situated alongside such theorists as Butler, Grosz or Irigaray whose work introduces new paradigms in the development of feminist theory. Furthermore, she relies heavily on the work of others for material. For example the work of Sander Gilman is often cited as a source on the vast connections between Jewish identity and psychoanalysis. Yet, what is particularly useful about Pellegrini is that she is able to integrate feminist and racial theories and apply them to a reading of psychoanalysis. While many theorists give lip service to the need to consider race as well as class and gender, Pellegrini is among the first to have convincingly demonstrated (to me) that by considering race, readings of the (identity) politics at play in psychoanalysis with regard to gender are deepened and re-framed.



Fig.71 Front book cover of Kleeblatt (1996). Cover design by Sue Koch. Cover illustration: Deborah Kass, *Triple Silver Yentl* (My Elvis), 1992; silkscreen on acrylic on canvas. Collection of William Ehrlich and Ruth Lloyds.

The sections on Jewish identity have been particularly insightful in considering the bearing of race within my own definition and matrix of subjective specificity. A blind spot had obscured the relevance of this within the theoretical investigation because of the predominant emphasis on sexual difference and a personal disassociation with race. The exhibition *too Jewish?*

Challenging traditional identities held at The Jewish Museum, New York, 10 March 1996 – 14 July 1996, and the corresponding catalogue edited by Kleeblatt (1996) have also been important sources for framing the concerns of (my) Jewish identity within my praxis. This concern is written into the chapter in such a way as to interrogate the blind spot and to demonstrate a new

appreciation for the way in which race influences readings of psychoanalysis and subjectivity; specifically that of RyyA. Bread©.

This approach highlights a further concern of the chapter that is to do with the subjective positioning of the author and/or analyst within practices of knowledge construction. The ethical concerns surrounding publication and private processes of

reflection are taken up here. Finally, the questions of disclosure surrounding Nin's work, which are introduced in the previous section, are revisited to explore in more detail in the tension between 'artistic licence' and anonymity. In 'I::Signify: Maternal-Feminine Embodiment', language is considered in terms of embodied signification. Here the question of where and how the mother is positioned within the paternal linguistic signifier is taken up through a framing of Irigaray in relation to Freud, Lacan and Rank. Irigaray's notion of the maternal-feminine is then read into the psycho-symbolic significance of Nin's mother as she is represented in Nin's narratives of auto-authorisation.

'I'm-properly a-MUSE-ed' takes up Nin's identity text as a female artist by following her references to Duchamp's painting of *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912). In this way, Nin is contextualised within the dominant art ideology of her time. The Surrealists' constructions of femininity and use of woman as Muse is juxtaposed with Rank's framing of the Muse in the psychology of the artist.

The sexual specificity of the Muse, which Rank discusses, is related to Irigaray's thesis on the primal homosexual relation between mother and daughters in the first instance and in subsequent same-sex relations. Thus, in 'Lesbian a-MUSE-ment?' the question of the female Muse's significance on a woman artist is considered through Nin's encounter with June Miller at a formative period in her life.

II. (I'm-Proper) Names

That which is dimly but unequivocally preordained for the hero by his birth, in the mythical account, he deliberately makes his own by embodying it in action and experience. This experience is a creative experience, for it serves to create the myth itself, and the sagas, poems, and tragedies based on it, whose various representations of the one theme are determined by the collective ideological outlook of the moment and the interpretation appropriate thereto (Rank [1932] 1989a: 383).

The Myth of the Birth of the Artist:

Freud changed his name from 'Sigismund' to 'Sigmund' in the year between 1869 and 1870 (Pellegrini 1997: 27). While the connotations of this gesture will be explored in more detail in the following section, for now it is enough to note that despite altering his appellation, the paternal name 'Freud' was preserved. This is significant in light of the sanctified position accorded to the 'father' in Freud's work. Drawing on a reading of the Oedipus myth, Freud emphasised the biological sign of the father's penis and the incest taboo as the motivating factor for the Oedipus Complex, predicated on the fear of castration.

Freud's first direct reference to the significance of the Oedipus myth was in a letter to Wilhelm Fliess in 1887. It was prompted by his interest in the theme of 'Oedipus Rex' as it was presented in one of Sophocles' plays. After personally identifying with the feelings of love towards his mother and jealousy towards his father that he read in the character of Oedipus, Freud concludes in the letter that this is a 'universal' stage in the development of the child. It took over thirty years, however, for this theory to take its place as the primary structural stage within Freud's psychoanalytic formulation of child development. The publication of *The Ego and the Id* (1923) marks the maturation of the Oedipus Complex into its full status (Stanton in Wright [ed.] 1992: 290-296).

More than thirty years later, following on from Freud and influenced by the developments of anthropological structuralism in the work of Lévi-Strauss; Lacan focused on the signifying power of the 'Name-of-the-Father' as marking the realm of the Symbolic Order (Lacan [1966] 1977: 199-225). The term was subsequently inflated into 'an imperious metaphysical force that could no longer be described simply in terms of family,

society and sexual conduct and that was not so much an observable feature of speech as the origin and ubiquitous condition of human language' (Bowie 1991: 13). Classic psychoanalysis has vigorously defended the primary role accorded to the father, his name, and what they signify in terms of the phallus. Those (psychoanalysts) who challenged this fell from Freud's grace and were often expelled from the Institute of Psycho-Analysis: a tradition that continued after Freud's own passing, thus giving some weight to Lacan's assertion that the Name-of-the-Father 'outlasts the death of the body' (Spitz 1991: 237). Otto Rank (1884-1939) was one such individual.



Fig. 72 'Dr. Otto Rank' from Nin (1993: un-numbered pages of photographs between 210-211)

Rank also changed his name (in mid-adolescence). However, in contrast to Freud's first name amendment, it was the surname 'Rosenfield' (Rank's father's name) that was changed, beyond recognition, to 'Rank' (Spitz 1991: 235). The differences between these respective name changes is significant in light of the theoretical positions Freud and Rank each held in their work:

To reject the name of the father is thus, according to Lacan, a profoundly significant act which, because of the *double entendre* of the French (nom/non), may be interpreted as a refusal of the symbolic order, a turning away from paternal law and prohibition altogether to an imaginary relation with the mother. Such a subversive or regressive move, it could be argued, is partially enacted in the case of Rank's own theoretical writing (Spitz 1991: 237).

While all proper names are implicated in the notion of the 'Name-of-the-Father', the surname denotes hereditary lineage predicated on paternity and in this way bears a greater significance in the socio-cultural positioning of individuals. Therefore, to an extent, the difference between the alteration of the first name and last is a difference of sexual privileging within the system of signification. In 'Conflict and Creativity' (Spitz 1991), in what she calls 'a brief digression' from her main points on Rank, Spitz considers the 'symbolic significance' of creating one's own name. She asserts that 'to deny one's

father is, on some level, to deny oneself', and asks 'what aspects of the self any creative individual leaves or attempts to leave behind in enacting similar disavowals and reengenderings?' (ibid: 236).²¹

Spitz deems her speculations on the symbolic significance of self-naming a 'digression'. Yet for my own work this approach has provided a useful departure point from which to consider Freud and Rank's differing theoretical positions, as well as subjective specific narrative constructions of auto-*authorisation*. Although Spitz identifies Rank as being 'born into a Viennese Jewish family [...]' (ibid: 235), she fails to note the implications of his name alteration in terms of the prevailing anti-Semitic climate in Vienna in the early 1900s. In the cases of both Rank and Freud, the concealment of Jewish identity is an obvious reason behind their respective name changes. More will be said of this with respect to Freud and my own identity text throughout this chapter.

At the same time, however, Spitz's reading of Rank's name change remains important for the theoretical investigation I aim to pursue. As such, my own consideration of anti-Semitism and Jewish identity are framed within this context. Spitz suggests that Rank's rejection of his father's name was a creative act of 'self-birth' that pre-empts and contributes to his later theories regarding an understanding of the artist as a second self-defined 'birth' of individuation. She argues that Rank compensated for the inadequacies of his father through 'imaginary encounters' with nineteenth-century literary 'heroes' such as Ibsen, Dostoevsky, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. These early relations that developed through literary sources 'set the stage for a lifelong fascination with the motif of the birth of heroes – both actual and symbolic – and with the extraordinary capacity of minds to originate and to conceive' (ibid: 237). Thus the 'artist' in the broadest sense and issues of creativity were framed in Rank's framework as an embodiment of the 'hero' in classic mythology (Rank [1929] 1993: 190).

In 1905 Rank wrote *The Artist*, a short psychological study that attempted to locate the creative personality between the 'dreamer' and the 'neurotic' (Nin [1968] in Rank

1989a: viii). This theme was to occupy his theoretical work for the remainder of his life, and was next sketched out in another of his earliest texts, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (1914). Rank understood this work to be a 'preliminary stud[y] in the field of mythology, which attempt[ed] to show that the human problem of birth stands actually at the centre of mythical as of infantile interest and determines conclusively the content of phantasy formations' (Rank [1929] 1993: 73). In *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, Rank engages with the 'realm of the aesthetic' through a psychological reading of the mythic narrative of Oedipus. Rather than emphasise the role of Oedipus as Freud did, Rank's reading attends to Laius and Jocasta's fantasies regarding the impending birth of their son and how this contributed to the fated tragedy of the myth. This is then equated with the artist's relationship to the manifestation of his work and his identity as an artist.

By reading the myth in these terms, [...] Rank asks us, implicitly, to take account of the complex meanings that children have for their parents even before they come into the world as well as, certainly, thereafter. What does each child signify to his or her father and mother? What, by analogy, does each work of art signify to its creator? What is imagined for him/it? What hopes and fears are awakened by his or her birth/its completion? [...] In analogies with art-making, it is interesting to speculate on the complex meanings each project may carry - as gift, as threat, as dare, as entreaty - for and to its creator (Spitz 1991: 240-241).

Rank states that, 'Freud with his keen observation had recognized [*The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*] as the nucleus of the myth formation [...]' (Rank [1929] 1993: 106).

Perhaps because Freud would still have been in the process of locating the Oedipus myth into pride of place in his own theoretical framework, he was able to favourably receive Rank's early argument despite the different interpretations of the Sophocles play.

Subsequently, Rank held an esteemed position as Freud's protégé for many years and Freud served as a mentor and symbolic father for him.

When Freud published *The Ego and the Id* (1923), Rank completed *The Trauma of Birth* (1929), which was a continuation of his previous work on 'the myth of the birth of the hero'. *The Trauma of Birth* was dedicated and delivered to Freud on his birthday as a testimony of Rank's loyalty and theoretical indebtedness (Spitz 1991: 236). This was Rank's seminal piece of work and he himself believed it to be in keeping with Freud's

teachings, despite the originality of his argument. However, at the precise moment that Freud cemented the significance of the Oedipus Complex, Rank radically opposed his mentor by displacing the primary role of the father and the fear of castration in favour of the maternal significance:

The general validity of the experience that the child's every anxiety consists of the anxiety at birth (and the child's every pleasure aims at the re-establishing of the intrauterine primal pleasure) could be called in question in view of the so-called *castration anxiety*, which has recently been so strongly emphasised. Yet it seems to me quite intelligible that the childish primal anxiety, in the course of its development, should cling more especially to the genitals just on account of their vaguely imagined (or remembered) actual biological relation to birth (and procreation). It is conceivable, even obvious, that precisely the female genitals, being the place of the birth trauma, should soon again become the chief object of the anxiety-affect originally arising there. Thus the importance of the castration fear is based, as Stärcke thinks, on the primal castration at birth, that is, on the separation of the child from the mother. But it does not seem quite appropriate to speak of "castration" where, as yet, there is no clearer relation of anxiety to the genitals, than is given by the fact of birth from the (female) genitals. This conception finds a strong heuristic support in that it solves the riddle of the ubiquity of the "castration complex" in a natural way by deriving it from the indisputable universality of the act of birth. This is a point of view which proves to be of greatest importance for the complete understanding and also for the real foundation of other primal phantasies (Rank [1929] 1993: 20 *italics in original*).

Thus, Rank threatened the position of the phallus as a male prerogative by attributing the act of birth and the separation from the mother as *the* primary source of anxiety connected with individuation. While Rank 'anticipate[d] from the psychoanalytic side an objection,' he 'hope[d] easily to dispose of' it on the strength of the argument above (ibid.). Nonetheless when Freud, belatedly, realised the implications of Rank's thesis he was forced to reject his surrogate son and revoke Rank's prestigious place in psychoanalysis (Spitz 1991: 238). In this way, Rank's early renunciation of his father and his paternal name was re-enacted in his theoretical work, which unconsciously sabotaged his relationship with Freud.

Along with emphasising the significance of the maternal body and the birth trauma in child development, *The Trauma of Birth* further outlined the distinction between the 'average' child's relation to anxiety and that of the 'neurotic'. Furthermore, it elaborated on the significance of the identity of the artist as the mythic 'hero'. The average child resolves the primal trauma through 'normal' sexual development and gratification and 'has only to perceive *again* and make use of [ready-made forms of gratification] out of his own

primal experience (symbolism)' (Rank [1929] 1993: 191). The neurotic, however, fails to find compensation in this process and remains 'infantile' in the desire to completely return to the maternal body and the intrauterine state (ibid: 47-48). The neurotic and the artist share the compulsion to overcome the primal anxiety. Yet, the neurotic 'is compelled again and again to *produce it in a similar way only on his own body*,' (ibid: 212); while the artist 'is constantly *urged* forward' by his ego in an 'enormous task of adaptation' and the 'creation of a phantastic superstructure, created from the remains of primal libido unsatisfied in real creation' (ibid: 190).

According to Rank, a neurotic man who is 'cured' by psychoanalysis becomes an 'artist' by identifying with the 'mother' and creating a substitute method of reproduction through the engagement with cultural forms. The neurotic 'woman' on the other hand, by virtue of her biological capacity to *be* an actual mother herself, is cured in psychoanalytic terms when she can achieve primal gratification through sexual fulfillment. Thus Rank assumes that a 'true' and 'healthy' woman is complete in herself and has no need to produce beyond her biological capacities and that 'this explains the lesser part played by women in cultural development, from which, then, her social under-valuation follows as a secondary effect [...]' (Rank [1929] 1993: 189). In this sense, Rank conformed to the prevailing psychoanalytic attitude of sexual [in]difference and to Freud's working formulation of the shifting female erogenous zones. This positioning of the woman further confirms Lacan's later assertion that the man *has* the phallus, while the woman *is* the phallus and this is firmly evident in Rank's elaboration of the role of woman as 'Muse', to be discussed later. Nin's influence on Rank, however, was to challenge the one-way reading of this assertion.

Following his traumatic exile, Rank moved to Paris in the late 1920s and continued to develop his theme of the psychology of the artist. In 1932, he published his next major piece of work on the subject, *Art and Artist: Creative Urge and Personality Development*. In this lengthy (and what Spitz aptly describes as 'turgid' text) Rank conducts an extensive

survey of art-ideology through time and across cultures to establish the shifting position of the artist in relation to society and subjectivity. The splitting, or *Spaltung* to use Freud's term, that occurs in individuation is identified in Rank's framework as the conflict between art and artist, and is located in the negotiation of the 'individual experience' and the 'prevailing art-ideology' through the creative process.

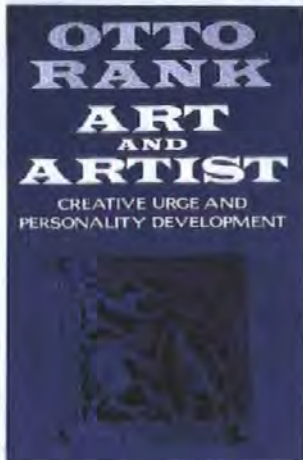


Fig. 73 Front book cover of Rank ([1932] 1989a). Cover design by Kingsley Parker.

The artist must use art in order to create, but at the same time there is always the desire to break out of what exists and create something new (Rank 1989a: 365). This task is more or less difficult depending on the dominant art-ideology at any given time (and place) with regard to the position of the individual subject. In Rank's view, the 'Modern' artist has a particularly arduous time in assimilating the pervading culture because it so heavily rests on the glorification of the individual. As such, the art-ideology provides the artist with little recourse into traditional or 'collective' art forms through and against which to define his own subjectivity (ibid: 426-27).

In *Art and Artist*, Rank states that conventional understandings and approaches to locate the significance of the artist in terms of biographical influences are misguided; not only on the part of biographers and the public but also by artist themselves. The creative personality, Rank argues, has a relation between life and art that is distinct from that of the 'average' person and therefore cannot be accurately understood by predominant cultural narratives alone. For the artist, life is 'material': it is experienced, and experiences are made by him, so as to create and live the art-ideology that he identifies and wrestles with. Moreover, the artist 'will in himself experience his own creation at the same time as in his work he will shape what he has experienced' (Rank 1989a: 383).²² Thus in order to appreciate the subjective specific significance of a particular artist it is necessary to take a

psychological approach to the relationship between 'art and artist' more generally and then apply it to individual cases.

The relationship between the artist and his ego is further explored in this way in Rank's study of the double²³; through an 'excursion into literary biography' (Jason 1978: 82) as well as 'ethnographic, folkloric, and mythological traditions' (Rank 1989b: 48). This study, in which the legend of Don Juan was incorporated in the 1932 French translation, is aimed at identifying the basic 'psychic structure' of those writers who shared typical traits in their representation of the double motif (ibid. p.33).²⁴ These provide the basis for a 'purely subjective meaning of the double' in Rank's reading. (ibid: 76)

According to Rank, the double manifests as a result of a split in the ego to absolve and resolve feelings of *guilt* that the 'hero' (read artist) experiences in regard to pursuing his ego-ideal through creative actions (Rank 1989b: 76-77). The hero's necessary over-investment in his own ego (as an initial stage in the identity of the artist), further renders impossible the successful attachment to other love-objects which is marked by 'either the direct inability to love or – leading to the same effect – an exorbitantly strained longing for love [...]' (ibid: 48).

Here Rank gives particular attention to the Narcissus myth (ibid: 69-86) in part because it addresses 'creation by self-reflection' in mythological traditions. More importantly however it is because of the 'literary treatments which cause the Narcissus theme to appear in the forefront along with the problem of death, be it directly or in pathological distortion' (ibid: 70). The double is thus a libidinal projection that serves to keep the ego from complete implosion as well as impeding a 'loss of self' in sexual



Fig.74 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled from 'I-play' series, 2000, 35mm colour slide, camera operated by Mary Anson

relations with others. In this way the double functions as a form of self-preservation even when it is associated with death (ibid: 85-86).

The Artist's Namesake:

'Do you know the meaning of your name? It's the unmated woman, the woman who cannot be truly married to any man, the one whom man can never possess altogether. Lilith, you remember, was born before Eve and was made of red clay, not human substance. She could seduce and ensorcell but she could not melt into man and become one with him. She was not made of the same substance' (The character of 'The Voice' in Nin 1939: 161).

The name is Anaïs. If you say Anna, it makes it easier, because there are two dots on the 'i', and you have to separate the 'a' and the 'i'. There was a fad in France about three hundred years ago, giving children Greek names. And so we have Thaïs of Flaubert and we have an Anaïs in Colette, and I think there's an Anaïs in Simenon. So the children were given those names generation after generation. I was lucky enough to be named Anaïs. And now you're going to have a few more Anaïses. So it is pronounced Anna-ees (Nin [1975] 1992: 247).

Anaïs, Ah-nah-ees. Her name has inspired numerous legends and literature and a perfume by the French house of Cacharel (Fitch 1993: 3).

Just as the alteration of Freud's first name and Rank's surname have been framed here in terms of differing readings of Sophocles' play on Oedipus and the bearing this had on their respective theoretical premises, so Nin's attachment to her first name is also located with regard to literary significance informed by antiquity. This is not Oedipus, however. Nin persistently retained her maiden surname to denote her authorial identity throughout her life. Given the profound influence Rank had on her development as a woman artist, it is curious that Nin continued to privilege the name-of-the/her-father in this way. This is especially notable considering the creativity she invested in embodying numerous personae both off and on the written page.

Nin experienced her subjectivity as a split between 'woman' and 'artist' (Jason 1986: 13). To be a 'proper' woman she was expected to be a loyal wife, contented in the daily social roles ascribed to her gender at the time. Yet, her creative impulse prompted her to explore her sexuality and interrelations with others. She constructed elaborate webs of deceit and artful manipulations to maintain her marriage with Hugh Guiler (that began in 1923, before they moved to Paris) while simultaneously becoming intimate with numerous others; cited here succinctly, if not exhaustively, by Richard-Allerdyce:

[...] with Miller, with her analysts René Allendy in 1933 and Otto Rank from 1933 until early 1935, with her own father in 1933, with the Communist activist Gonzolo Moré from 1936 through 1944, briefly with Edmund Wilson in 1945, and others, before she settled into a sort of double marriage she sustained with both Hugh Guiler and Rupert Pole for the last decades of her life. She would also have a number of relationships of an uncertain nature with homosexual men – most famously the surrealist Antonin Artaud in 1933 and Gore Vidal in 1946 – and with a string of young poets from 1945 through 1947 (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 21).

Nin's creative project was informed not only by those whom she consorted with, but also by her orchestration of these complex relations. The lies, subterfuge and games of seduction that she indulged in became the foundation of her self-reflective negotiation of herself that fed her diaries. In merely the first few pages of *FIRE: The Unpublished*

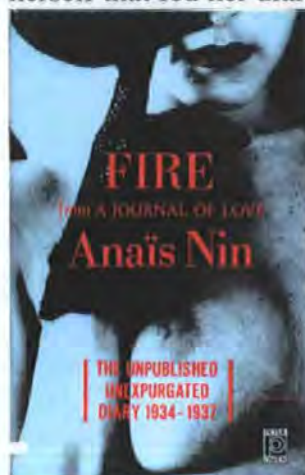


Fig.75 Front cover of Nin (1996) Jacket design by John Robinson. Photograph by Margaret Conte.

Unexpurgated Diary 1934-1937 (1996), Nin constructs a diversity of subjective positions in relation to other people through the names she assigns to her own identity text: When she is with Henry [Miller] she is 'Mrs. Miller' (1966: 22). On the stage as a Spanish dancer she assumes the stage name of 'Anita Aguilera' (ibid: 7); and she is 'Mrs. Gulier' with regard to her husband Hugo [Gulier] (ibid: 6).²⁵ With Rank, she is 'Puck' to his self-defined 'Huck', based on his own identification with the Mark Twain character, Huckleberry Finn (ibid: 11); or 'The

Secretary' in reference to her employment by him within his analytic practice (ibid: 4).²⁶

These multiple names attest to the fragmented understanding of subjectivity that Nin experienced. She used names to situate herself and to play with her situation(s) through an interplay between literary self-representation and actual enactment.

This role-playing can be seen as a deployment of signification and creative self-definition that relates to Rank's personal name alteration and his investment in the psychology of the artist. While Rank explored the theoretical connections between mythology and the creative type, Nin applied this approach to the construction of her own identity. For instance in the following example, she negotiates the mythology of her name across cultures. These variations on her name add poetic confirmation to her own mythologies about herself as a sexually virile, creative and empowered woman:

Annis: Celtic Moon Goddess. Goddess of Earth.

Anahita: Celtic mother goddess and her son Myhtra; Persian moon goddess.

Anatis: Egyptian moon goddess. Nana of Babylon.

Anu: In Southern France, known as the shining one, patron of fertility, fire, poetry, and medicine. Also known as the Black Anu, who in common folklore devoured men or turned them into lunatics.

Anaitis: goddess of sexual love, not chastity. Mazdian moon goddess (Nin 1996: 108).

Nin was also attentive to how she was addressed by others. Again, in *Fire*, she writes, 'Anis' when paraphrasing Henry Miller. On page thirteen there is the footnote, 'Henry Miller habitually mispronounced her name as "Anis".' The fact that she recorded this mis/pronunciation in her journal entries suggests that the specificity of her name was significant to her, a point that is verified by the earlier quote, which not only stresses the proper pronunciation of 'Anaïs' but also locates it within a (Western) cultural-historical and literary context.



Fig. 76 'Joaquín Nin, Anaïs Nin's father, approximately 1908 – a few years before he left his wife [Rosa], Anaïs, and his two young sons', from Nin (1993: un-numbered pages of photographs between 210-211).

To appreciate the significance of the continued use of the authorial name 'Nin' requires an understanding of the position accorded to 'Anaïs's' father, Joaquín J. Nin y Castellanos (1879-1949) within her subjective mapping. For both Rank and Nin, the father was a dominant figure in their psyche.

However, Nin's relationship to her father was distinct from Rank's. Their respective positions with regard to the 'father', and patriarchy, have different orientations that can be read in terms of sexual

difference and the historical cultural positioning of women outside the production of cultural knowledge:

The postmodernist decision that the Author is Dead and the subject along with him does not, I will argue, necessarily hold for women, and prematurely forecloses the question of agency for them. Because women have not had the same historical relation of identity to origin, institution, production that men have had, they have not, I think (collectively) felt burdened by *too much* self, ego, cognito, etc. Because the female subject has juridically been excluded from polis, hence decentered, 'disoriginated', deinstitutionalised, etc., her relation to integrity and textuality, desire and authority, displays structurally important differences from that universal position (Miller 1993: 23).

Rather than a rejection of the Symbolic as Rank demonstrated through his name change, Nin identified with the/her father as the key to the locked entrance into that Order. Joaquin J. Nin y Castellanos, of Spanish-Cuban descent, was a prominent pianist whose time when Nin was a child was often taken up with concert and academic engagements. The time he did spend with his family is known, through Nin's diaries and numerous biographies to have been turbulent and even abusive to his wife and his three children. Physical violence was enacted on them; but equally damaging for Nin was the harsh criticism he displayed towards her (especially with regard to her physical appearance), while simultaneously displaying scopophilic attention through his habit of taking nude photographs of Nin as a child²⁷. In 1913 he deserted his family in favour of the more glamorous life that his musical career offered him (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 17).

Nin was deeply attached to her father despite (and perhaps because of) his insidiously abusive behavior. She perceived him to be the archetypal 'artist' with whom she identified and whom she sought to emulate. The name-of-her-Father *is* the name of the 'Artist' in Nin's subjective specific equation and the defining feature of this identity is amorous infidelity; because she loved her father and he was unfaithful not only to the family but in his relationships with women in general.

For Rank it is the presence of his alcoholic father in childhood that motivates him to divorce himself from his family home and create a new identity in his mid-teens (Spitz 1991: 235). For Nin, it is the absences and traumatic loss of her biological father in early childhood that propelled her into creative engagement with her own identity through language. Nin began her practice of journal writing as a letter to her father at the age of eleven; on the boat leaving Europe (and her father) to take her, her mother and her two brothers to their new home in New York in 1914. For the remainder of Nin's life, the journal continued to be a negotiation of her father's psycho-symbolic significance for her as it fused with her own identity as an artist (Fitch 1993: 11).

The 1930s marked a particularly intense period for Nin with regard to her identity as a creative woman. Having moved from New York to France in 1925 with her husband, mother and brothers, by 1931 Nin had already begun her passionate affair with Henry Miller and been awakened to her sexuality in ways her husband had failed to inspire. In 1932 she not only published her book on Lawrence and had several other writing projects underway. Familiar with the work of Freud and psychoanalysis, she also entered analysis with Dr Allendy. She went to him to reconcile her sense of fragmentation and the strong feelings of abandonment and longing attached to her father. During the course of her analysis, Nin met her father for only the second time since her childhood separation from him.²⁸ The emotional intensity of their reunion was intensified because she was directly confronting his impact on her at that she time through analysis and writing.



Fig.77 'Dr.René Allendy' from Nin (1993: un-numbered pages of photographs between 210-211).

Allendy provided Nin with an analytic situation in which to explore her relationship with her father. However, the sexual exchange that transpired between analyst and analysand both diminished Nin's respect for Allendy as an 'objective' figure and threatened to strip her sexual identification with creativity into something both 'neurotic' and 'banal' (Nin 1993: 66-7). In the end, Nin rejected Allendy for his inability to appreciate the motivations behind her creative pursuits in writing and in love, and the significance of her own

identification as an 'artist' (ibid: 293).

Nin sought out Rank because she seemed to herself to be an incarnation of Rank's thinking: it was as if he had written about her. Rank, I believe, came to share the same notion. In this vital young artist, his concepts seemed to have taken on flesh. For the rest of her life, Nin would testify to the enormous impact that Rank had upon her thinking, her writing, her very living. It was as if he was always with her. In terms of physical proximity and interaction, however, the relationship was relatively brief (Jason 1986: 14).

What does it mean for a woman to be an artist...to engage in the act of auto-authorisation and self-definition? This was the question that was negotiated between Nin

and Rank within their complex relationship. While each respectively is relevant to the concerns of this thesis, it is the dynamics between them that is of greatest interest. Their relationship is especially poignant because of the *mutual* influence that they had on each other.

There is little doubt that Rank was seduced by Nin; both sexually and with regard to his shifting attitude towards the capacity for women to occupy the position as 'artist'. Nin came to "exemplify the self-cured neurotic of Rank's theory," through her own identification as an artist; and her application of her writing to resolve her psychical disturbances and record her embodied experiences. Rank offered Nin a positive theoretical framework to make meaning of the events of her life and enabled her to be freed of feelings of "subservience and guilt" with regard to her abandonment into sensuality and passion in the name of Art. In return, Nin provided Rank with an opportunity to embrace his own emotional and passionate impulses. Thus, implicating him within his own theories, beyond the distanced practice of 'theoretical' analysis. In so doing, she challenged the personal and professional implications of Rank's 'praxis' (Jason 1986: 15-18).

After reading *Art and Artist*, and Rank's study on 'Don Juan and the double', Nin approached Rank for analysis in 1933 (Jason 1978: 81). She was drawn to him because unlike classic Freudian analysts such as Allendy, Rank held a positive view of ego-identification and recognised its importance to the creative process (Nin [1975] 1992: 115).



Fig. 78 Front book cover of Nin ([1939/45] 1979). No cover design or photograph credits cited on book.

Philip Jason, one of the most insightful critics of Nin in relation to Rank and psychoanalysis, has noted that before reading Rank's theories Nin had already completed drafting and revising her fictional work, *House of Incest* (1936), whose theme of the 'prison of self-love' reflected a similar set of concerns. She was also well into constructing her novella, *Winter of Artifice* (1939), which was 'a more realistic narrative focusing on the father-daughter relationship.' Thus Jason asserts that 'Rank's coupling of the double motif, narcissism, and incest came to Nin as an authoritative confirmation of the direction in which her own poetic

instincts were leading her.' He goes on to speculate that Rank's emphasis on literary biography would have been of especial relevance to her, given her own relationship to writing (Jason 1978: 82-3).

He understood the *more*: (sic) There is *more* in my relation to my Father than the desire of victory over my Mother. There is *more* in my relation to Henry than masochistic sacrifices or a need of victory over other women. There is – beyond sexuality, beyond lesbianism, beyond narcissism – creation, *creation*. [...] Immediately he grasped the *core* of me; he said the stories I wrote as a child about being an orphan were not explained merely as criminal desires to do away with Mother out of jealousy, and Father out of inordinate love. I wanted to create myself. I did not want to be born from human parents (Nin 1993: 292 *italics in original*).

From the very beginning of their analysis, Rank validated Nin's identification as an 'artist' and took her creative aspirations seriously. Through the course of their relationship he helped her to put her embodied experiences into a constructive framework that enabled her to harness the creative impulse for actual textual production. During this process the Don Juan/doubles theme was explicitly discussed in analysis in terms of her relation with her father and her diary (ibid: 297-8). In 'Doubles/ Don Juans: Anaïs Nin and Otto Rank' (1978), Jason asserts that specifically the *Winter of Artifice*, 'rather than being susceptible to Rankian interpretation, is a Rankian interpretation of Nin's relationship with her father transmuted and distilled into key scenes, images, and pointed dialogue.' He goes on to show that her work in general must be appreciated in this way and offers various interpretations of Nin's position within the Don Juan/double motif (Jason 1978: 84).²⁹

One theory that Jason suggests is plausible is predicated on 'revenge'. Nin's father is positioned as the archetypal Don Juan, as well as the Artist, who abandons her and her mother (as well as her brothers) for his role as eternal lover rather than mortal married man. Nin is thus framed as an 'avenging woman' who identifies with the daughter in the Don Juan legend and seeks revenge on her father for both herself and her mother through incest and subsequent rejection. Rank's role (represented as 'The Voice' and the 'lie detector' in *Winter of Artifice* and *A Spy* respectively³⁰) is to encourage and support Nin in her vengeful wounding of the symbolic father (ibid: 90).³¹ This reading frames Nin within a classic psychoanalytic formulation that mirrors Riviere's discussion on masquerade in terms of retribution and compensation (Riviere [1929] 1986).

In her biography, *The Erotic Life of Anaïs Nin* (1993), Fitch is determined to position Nin in the role of victim. In her introduction, where a footnote is made to the lack

of critical material on Nin with regard to child abuse (Fitch 1993: 421n.9), Fitch asserts that 'even without verbal clues' Nin 'exhibited both of the extreme responses to abuse'; hiding from it and then acting it out (ibid: 4). She also describes Nin as 'a complex and *neurotic* artist, in part because she was so long alienated from her own anger and pain' (ibid: 6, *my emphasis*).

However, readings such as Jason's revenge theory on its own, which he would not advocate (Jason 1978: 92); or biographies such as the one Fitch offers, recuperate Nin into a signifier for a lack and foreclose the possibility of women occupying the position of artist. To read Nin's work merely as a testimony of an abused girl acting out in adulthood, is to negate the extent to which Nin was successful in achieving auto-*authorisation* through the articulation of her interpretations of experience. This kind of reading, moreover, leaves misrecognised the fundamental project behind both Nin *and* Rank's work, and the impact their relationship had on each other.

Another interpretation, which Jason favourably posits, is more in keeping with Rank's views. This theory is one of 'mimetic love': identification and introjection through 'twinsip' with her father. Here, Nin's father holds the same psycho-symbolic significance, yet Nin's position is dramatically altered. Rather than a daughter seeking retribution, Jason suggests that Nin identified with her father as an artist and assumed the role of 'Dona Juana', both the father and the daughter of the legend, to subvert authoritative figures (her father, Rank, Allendy, her Husband, etcetera).

Don Juan and Dona Juana seduce each other because they find in each other their own image and wish to worship a part of themselves. Yet in Rankian terms, this unattainable quest for cohesion is ultimately the conflict between art and artist and the desire to 'immortalise the soul' through 'imperishable art' (Jason 1978: 83-85). Nin's embodiment of Dona Juana is read here as 'research' for the production of life experiences for her writing. This is subsequently depicted in the character of 'Sabina' in *The Spy in the*

House of Love: where the Dona Juana motif serves as an extension of the theme of a fragmented self and the longing to be whole (ibid: 90).

The theme of incest is dealt with directly in Nin's fictional work, especially in *House of Incest* and *Winter of Artifice*. Literary critics have been divided on whether to interpret Nin's references to incest with her father, when they were reunited in adulthood, as biographical fact or figurative speech. This is partly due to the very late, posthumous publication of Nin's unexpurgated diaries in the 1990s, which sheds new light on the previous secondary material regarding her and her work (including Jason's 1978 and 1986 essays). The early version of her *Diaries*³² obscures the relationship between Nin, her writing and her relationships with others by omitting, amongst other things, all sexual references to anyone and any mention of Nin's husband(s) (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 160).

In *Winter of Artifice*, the incestuous scene between her father and herself is



Fig. 79 Front book cover of Nin (1993). Jacket design by Iain Stuart.

translated out of the diary into a 'fictional' text. The contrast between *Winter of Artifice* and her unexpurgated diary *Incest: From A Journal of Love – The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin 1932-1934* (1993) is considerable. In *Winter of Artifice* metaphors of music, orchestras and rhythms are employed to describe the event, leaving open the possibilities of interpretation (Nin [1939/45] 1979: 83-87). In *Incest*, however, her language is explicit,

for example: 'Again I lay over him and felt the hardness of his penis. He uncovered himself. I caressed him with my hand. I saw him quiver with desire' (Nin 1993: 209).

Explicit language, however, does not guarantee historical accuracy or 'truth'. The greatest tension in the critical reception of Nin is to do with questions of authenticity. This is highlighted in the discrepancies between the initial publications of the *Diaries* and the later unexpurgated versions; especially with regard to her other non/fiction. Authenticity

has at least three overlapping implications for a reading of Nin: Nin's own relation to 'lies' and 'truth'; the interplay between her diaries and her fiction; and the question of how Nin is to be understood in relation to her work as it has been published. The first two of these will be examined here and move towards addressing the last point, which will be taken up again at the end of the next section with regard to encryption.

In her diary, Nin described her lies as 'costumes', whereby it could be concluded that she had a large wardrobe, fit for many occasions (Nin 1993: 308). The extent to which lies played a part in her life is evidenced by the category of 'lies' or 'on lying' that can be found in the index of both primary and secondary material on Nin. Fitch includes the index heading 'lying and deception'. She reads Nin's propensity for illusion as a completely negative personal trait; claiming that she 'does not possess the virtue of "truthfulness"' and even at the age of eleven had a 'vivid imagination'; escaping from reality by 'withdrawing and lying' (Fitch 1993: 20-21).



Fig. 80 Front book cover of Richard-Allerdyce (1998). Jacket design by Julia Fauci.

Richard-Allerdyce's study *Anais Nin and the Remaking of Self: Gender, Modernism and Narrative Identity* (1998) was written after the latest unexpurgated diaries were released and also has 'lying' in the index. This study further contains a footnote regarding the inability to cite all the numerous references Nin makes to lying, 'especially to her husbands and lovers'. Richard-Allerdyce suggests, however, that because Nin is explicitly 'self-questioning' in her writing, these lies do not 'undermine[s] the literary value of her work [...]' (Richard-

Allerdyce 1998: 197 n.23).

In *Incest*, Nin rhetorically asks with regard to the moral of the journal; 'What does the world need – the illusion I gave in life or the truth I gave in writing?' In Nin's view, the 'illusions' she offered in the form of lies and 'half-lies', were justified because they protected people she cared about from the pain of her actions. Telling the truth was

equated with the loss of love for Nin (ibid: 110). The 'truth', she concluded was 'coarse and unfructifying'. Whereas, her lies were 'creative', 'life giving' 'gifts', that allowed everyone to feel fortified; not least herself (Nin 1993: 232-35). 'The only person I do not lie to is my journal', Nin insisted (in her journal), yet she immediately qualified this by acknowledging that her omissions from her writing could constitute a form of lie.³³

Diary then originates in the need to cover a loss, to fill a vacancy. I call the diary, little by little, a personage; then I confuse it with the shadow, *mon ombre* (my Double!) whom I am going to marry... (Nin 1993: 298 *italics in original*).

According to Jason, Nin's use of the double theme extends beyond the Don Juan figure and produces a 'particularly intriguing adaptation of double theory [that] involves the interplay between the author and her writing' (Jason 1978: 84-85). This interplay takes place between Nin's embodied experiences; her daily journal entries that record that experience through negotiation with the written word; and the re-inscription and abstraction of these entries into fictional prose and expurgated versions of the *Diary*.

Nin's lifelong investment in the practice of diary/journal writing was a campaign to position the voice of herself, as a woman, within the Modernist (male-dominated) canon of literature that she saw embracing harsh, cold realism over the reality of the unconscious. Nin privileged psychological 'truth' over 'realism', yet her understanding of such truth acknowledged a dependency on language and culture (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 37). For Nin, the conflict between 'art' and 'artist' was played out between her dedication to her diary and the production of fiction. To be an 'artist', of a literary kind, Nin believed she must produce something beyond the personal reflections she recorded in her journals. However, the fluidity and fragmentation of the journals was more in keeping with Nin's own experiences, while the fiction posed a structural challenge and required another set of sensibilities that she made a conscious effort to cultivate.

When I have finished writing ten pages of the very human, simple, sincere novel, when I have written a few pages of corrosive, fantastic "Alruane," when I have done ten pages of the painstaking, detective-minute "Double" – I am not satisfied. I still have something to say. And what I have to say is really distinct from the artist and art: it is the woman who has to speak (Nin 1993: 298).

What is striking about Nin's use of the Don Juan/double motif, according to Jason, is her position as the (speaking) daughter as well as the conquistador (Jason 1978: 85). Nin was invested in creating a 'new' language that could accurately represent the experience of woman as 'fluid'. This fluidity consistently upsets the validity of a fixed 'truth' with regard to psychical corporeality and the production of (identity) texts. Richard-Allerdyce suggests that Nin's 'resistance to conventional modes of representation parallels her resistance to prefabricated roles that a woman, specifically a wounded daughter, must play' (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 9). Thus Nin worked with an equation whereby 'artifice' represented the dominant (art) ideology as opposed to an 'authentic self of one's own making'; what I have called auto-*authorisation*.

Richard-Allerdyce further argues that the question of whether Nin's work is fiction or non-fiction is a rhetorical one in terms of authenticity (ibid: 144). Nin's 'truths', such as her use of 'seduction as a tool against patriarchal power', are embedded in the early versions of *Diaries* and her fiction even if the sexual details are only revealed in the posthumous unexpurgated publications (ibid: 162). Richard-Allerdyce takes up the question of authenticity in terms of 'boundaries', which she posits as a dominant theme in Nin's work that cannot be clearly defined between her 'life' and her 'art' (ibid: 8). While Nin tried to establish such boundaries by juxtaposing the diaries (life) with fiction (art), she eventually 'embrace[d] diary writing as the only literary form capable of capturing life's essence' (ibid: 96).

The author must continue to realign herself *in terms of law* at the same time that she must resist, at times by enacting and working through it, a tendency to identify *with* the paternal signifier (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 79, *italics in original*).

Nin's position with regard to structure was one of persistent negotiation in order to define her subjective specificity through auto-*authorisation*. She was intent upon erasing the boundaries between the written word and her embodied experience, so as to establish her own self-defined [O]rder within her *Diaries*. To do this, she blurred the boundaries

between herself and others through identification, by breaking through 'taboo' barriers; especially with those that represented paternal authority. In the case of Dr Allendy, the sexual nature of their relationship was unsatisfying to Nin because she felt misrecognised. As a classic Freudian, Allendy viewed Nin as a neurotic woman who was victimised by her father's power. Within this framework, the subsequent transgression of the transference and counter-transference into sexual activity was an exploitation of the analytic situation on the part of Allendy.

With regard to the incestuous reunion with her father, the identification Nin sought through sexual union could only go so far because Nin realised the limitations of her father's desire. Unlike her father, Nin was not content to be ruled by her longing. Rather, she indulged her desire as a means of understanding it and transforming it into 'art' in order to move on. In this way, the woman's agency as artist is crucial in her sexual actions as a dynamic. This is fundamentally different from the universalized classical psychoanalytic position.

Nin's sexual relations with Rank appear on the surface to be a repeat performance of her former analysis. However, Allendy and Rank's disparaging theoretical orientations meant that the implications of their physical exchange with Nin were positioned in radically different ways. The relationship between Nin and Rank can be understood as a complex adaptation of the Don Juan/doubles theme. Nin acknowledged the artist and the 'man' in Rank, just as he recognised both the artist and the 'woman' in Nin. In this way the twinship and incestuous narcissistic self-love that characterises the double motif was enacted in the dynamics between them. The relationship was further 'doubled' in that it was superimposed over their analytic investigation into the psycho - symbolic significance Nin's father held for her in terms of her identification as an artist and Dona Juana.

Jason's reading of their relationship in his critical essays of 1978 and 1986 are limited by the lack of details offered in the later unexpurgated diaries. While he astutely grasps the basic dynamics, thereby giving weight to Richard-Allerdyce's earlier assertion

that Nin's 'truths' are evident prior to the unexpurgated material, he nonetheless misses the importance of their physical exchange. Jason locates Rank as a 'detached authority figure' that corresponds with the image of the double as a function of the 'tormenting conscience' (Jason 1978: 90). In his reading, the double motif is applied to the process of transference: 'The neutrality, the self-effacement of the analyst allows for a double-projection on the part of the patient' (ibid: 87). Nin's depiction of Rank in this capacity within her fiction takes the form of the 'analyst-patient relationship' and in 'such analogues as mentor-disciple, priest-sinner, and detective-fugitive' (ibid: 82). Jason thus frames Nin's position with regard to the father, the Law and the 'dogma of analysis' in terms of her relation to the ego-ideal as 'a projection of guilt'.

Paraphrasing Freud, Rank describes the ego-ideal as "a combination of those criticizing and censoring elements in mankind that normally carry out the repression of certain wishes and that ensure, through a function we call conscience, that these barriers are not broken through." But in a pathology such as Sabina's, or Don Juan's, the barriers are broken through, and thus the ego-ideal becomes a detached figure (Jason 1978: 93).

In *Winter of Artifice*, 'The Voice' is first described as a 'modern priest', thus commenting on the role of the psychoanalyst as a 'substitute for God, for the confessor of old' (Nin [1939] 1979: 120-21). Nin, however, proceeded to unmask the analyst and to portray the role of The Voice as she understood psychoanalysis through her relationship with Rank. Even the name accorded to this character subverts the classic position of the (Freudian) analyst who 'rarely if ever speaks'. Rank broke this boundary in his practice as a 'therapist' rather than an analyst. Thus, as Spencer has noted, The Voice, 'speaks at great length and in impressive detail, offering his patients the rich gifts of his clarifying insights and the tender support of his generous nature instead of an apparently disengaged presence.' However, the elimination of this 'protective' boundary in the analytic situation created a vulnerable tension in Rank's relation to his own identity by implicating his 'person' in his praxis, while simultaneously maintaining the role of objective 'professional'. As Spencer goes on to imply, 'the Voice has allowed himself to be trapped

by his persona or professional role, and he is forlorn and sad as a man' (Spencer 1997: 106).

Rank was personally invested in his theoretical framework. That Nin recognised him as an 'artist' validated his self-defined identity text as such. To the extent to which he facilitated Nin's ability to come to terms with her creative process, he gave 'birth' to Nin's artistic identity. Because Nin embodied Rank's theories to such an extent, Rank was compelled to confide in her with his own needs and frustrations. He let the professional persona drop and revealed to Nin the 'man', surprising her with the voracity of passion that was laying dormant beneath the 'sage'. Nin's description of Rank in her unexpurgated diary is two-fold: he is a 'philosopher and psychologist' and a 'human being', whose only quality in this province is the 'power to love' (Nin 1993: 359). Having been compromised by the development of his intellectual persona, his capacity for 'human' love was 'retarded'. Just as Nin had gained from his wisdom of analysis, Rank had much to learn from her about actually enacting his 'truths'.

The child that she awakened in him was like the child in those who had come to him for care, unsatisfied, lamenting, tearful, sickly. Neither her powers of illusion nor her dreams had worked the miracle. He remained nothing but A VOICE (Nin [1939] 1979: 168, *emphasis in original*).

As with other men, Nin's identification with Rank stopped short of complete submergence on her part; despite the physical and intellectual merging they experienced together. Where Allendy exploited Nin's illusions and her father sought to live in them, Rank's failure was in wanting to 'fix' (more as in 'locate' than in 'cure') and 'define' them. Psychoanalysis, like her fiction, provided Nin with a structure in which to frame her embodied experience. Yet, in the same way that Nin ultimately privileged her diary over fiction, she also gave precedence to her psychical corporeal experiences over the analytic discourse of ideas. To this end Rank was a victim of his own success. After freeing Nin from feelings of guilt attached to her 'illusive' practice, he was unable to follow her in the 'realities' she made for herself. She was more at home in the world of fluid boundaries than his own praxis could sustain. Although he desired embodied experience, his strength

lay in his position as therapist. Nin, on the other hand, used her therapy to build a solid foundation for pursuing her fluid desires.

Nomination:

The first stage in the growth of an artist is that which we have described as his 'nomination' [...] (Rank 1989a: 371).

After having received the proper name, one is subject to being named again. In this sense the vulnerability to being named constitutes a constant condition of the speaking subject. And what if one were to compile all the names that one has ever been called? Would they not present a quandary for identity? Would some of them cancel the effect of others? Would one find oneself fundamentally dependent upon a competing array of names to derive a sense of oneself? Would one find oneself alienated in language, finding oneself, as it were, in the names addressed from elsewhere? (Butler 1997: 30).

Although I call myself 'RyyA. Bread©', in fact my names are multiple. Thus, in calling myself to [O]rder, the multiplicity from whence I am called begs consideration. The nuclear family structure (in Western culture) is traditionally marked with the paternal surname. My own childhood family structure is splintered, reformulated and fragmented and in this respect, so is my embodied experience of the name. The first five years of my life followed the traditional format whereby mother-father-child all shared the same surname-of-the-father. When my parents divorced, my mother returned to the use of her 'maiden' surname-of-her-father and I retained mine. During that period our surnames were doubled but our father figures were distant from the nuclear family unit. When I was ten years old my mother joined in partnership with my 'step-father' but there was no legal union of marriage, thus there were three surnames in circulation in our home.

Although originally an only child, I acquired a step-brother four years my senior, a half-brother who is fifteen years younger than me, and his older 'half-sister' (six years my junior); who has no relation to me beyond mutually agreed 'sister' status. Although my father did not remain with my half-brother's mother, and despite the fact they too never legally married; she has also, again by mutual agreement, been positioned as my 'step-mother' and is considered part of my extensive 'family'.

A version of the 'double' theme can be read into my own understanding of parental figures. My own father figure was doubled and shared between a 'biological' and 'step'

father; while my mother was shadowed by the distant yet important presence of my step-mother. What is more, this doubling also extended to my 'siblings': My father served as a step-father for my half-sister for a time, yet my half-brother and she also have a new step-father; while my step-brother has a relation to both my mother and his own. With the exclusion of my half-brother, there is also a shared California/New York split between biological and 'step' parents amongst my extended siblings and me. Thus for every parental figure there is an (illegal) 'step' or a shadow that doubles their signification at the same time that it highlights a loss and an absence of the original biological relations.

For Freud, Rank and Nin the significance of the 'name' is bound up in hereditary and parental loyalties passed down through cultural myths and re-invested in literary form. These loyalties have theoretical and personal implications. Rank and Nin, especially and respectively, exemplify how self-defined names are symbolically significant in the creative act of becoming an artist. Rank's hero worship to negate his negative relation with his own father resulted in a theoretical bias for the maternal in framing the psychology of the artist and subjective individuation. Nin's hero worship of her father led to the embodiment of multiple identities within her process of auto-*authorisation*; and produced a 'literary mother' for many writers. I would hesitate to describe my attitude towards either Rank or Nin as 'hero worship', yet as 'artists' (of a theoretical and literary kind) they have undoubtedly influenced my current praxis.

In *Excitable Speech: a politics of the performative* (1997) Butler notes that the 'force' of the name is 'an effect of its historicity' that 'works in part through an encoded memory or trauma, one that lives in language and is carried in language' (Butler 1997: 36). Later she asserts that, '[T]he subject is constituted (interpellated) in language through a selective process in which the terms of legible and intelligible subjecthood are regulated. The subject is called a name, but 'who' the subject is depends as much on the names that he or she is never called: the possibilities for linguistic life are both inaugurated and foreclosed through the name' (ibid: 41).

'Ryya Aviva Jacobs' is my birth name. Rather than Greek tragedies, the myths attached to my name(s) originate from the event of my naming and the stories that are associated with that process. The family lore surrounding my naming is comprised of three significant 'myths' that my parents imparted to me at a young age. Based on these, what follows is a brief deliberation on the auto-historical fictions and signifying implications of my subjective specific appellations. The narrative that is constructed here focuses on the lost and mis-taken denotations of my identity and the reconciliation of this through the appropriation of the name 'RyyA. Bread©'. This narrative further serves to demonstrate how literary significance and linguistic inscription is positioned within my own auto-*authorisation* and locates the/my authorial 'voice' within an (auto-)historical and socio-cultural context.

'I was meant to be a maiden but turned out to be a hunk of bread instead!'
(RyyA. Bread©)

To be or not to be... 'Maia':

I was initially to be named 'Maia', after the star maiden in P.L. Travers' *Mary Poppins* (1934). Tragically, this name was usurped by a friend, born just months before me; whose mother incidentally shared the same first name as my mom. Thus, the first choice had to be dismissed for a new one...and I am not really who I am supposed to be. I am a shadow of my intended identity and she who bears my intended name haunts my embodiment. Not only was I displaced by the usurpation of 'my' name but I also went to school and played with Maia and so in (more than one) sense 'played with myself' as a young child.³⁴

Aside from physical likeness, Rank discusses the significance of the name within literary representations of the double motif, which he frames in terms of 'nomenphobia'³⁵ (Rank 1989b: 53). He specifically notes the short story by Edgar Allen Poe, *William Wilson* (1839), where the eponymous main character, encounters his double as a child in school. Although for the most part the double is tolerated, 'one circumstance - the mention of his name - irritated Wilson without exception.' Wilson is 'angry with him for bearing

the name and doubly disgusted with the name because a stranger bore it, who would be the cause its two-fold repetition [...]’ (ibid: 25).

Although my own relation to Maia was amicable, I was once caught stealing a toy of Santa Claus (*Father Christmas*) from her and my only excuse when caught, was that I wanted it. It is perhaps only coincidence that the chapter of *Mary Poppins* in which the star maiden appears is entitled ‘Christmas Shopping’ and takes place in a large toy store where Jane and Michael meet both Father Christmas and ‘Maia’, while buying toys with Mary Poppins (Travers 1934: 177-193).³⁶ Yet Santa Claus also figured in another family fable whereby my own father insisted that he used to have lunch with the character everyday while he was stationed in Greenland (the North Pole) during his time in the army. Despite both sides of my family being Jewish, Christmas was an annual holiday that we celebrated along with much of the country (USA).

The (dubious) family connections that I was led to believe I had with both with the holiday and Father Christmas himself (via my father) may have contributed to my desire for Maia’s toy. This theft could be interpreted as a daughter’s desire for the phallus of the father signified in the figure of Father Christmas and compounded by the personal association with my own father. It could also be read as a minority Jewish child’s desire to have a stake in the predominant Christian culture symbolised by the Christmas holiday. However, in light of the Maia’s significance as the person who embodied the name for which I was intended, I suggest that the theft be appreciated as a reclamation of that which I believed was stolen from me: the birthright that was my name.

‘Maia’ can be read as a part of my identity that was unattainable and forever just beyond reach. The friend (Maia) was older and therefore had rights and authority over me in childhood games; the name (Maia) was perceived as stolen; and the star maiden (Maia) does not even figure in the familiar Disney version of *Mary Poppins*. Who was this [star] maiden who should have been but was not me? This question has remained unanswered and hanging in the background of my experience as a woman. My relation to Maia can be

understood in terms of Rank's notion of the double; and my struggle with (this) identity can be framed within the conflict between 'art' and 'artist'. In this respect, the theft of her toy is both a gesture of name (re-)appropriation and a symbolic act of identification with the maternal body that the artist seeks in creative action.



Fig.81 RyyA. Bread©: *Jewish Star Maiden*, 1999, 35mm colour slide.

Turning to the paternal name, Pellegrini frames her introduction of 'race' into a reading of psychoanalysis as a 'retrieval' of the historical context in which psychoanalysis emerged (Pellegrini 1997: 19). In considering the psycho-symbolic implications of my own name, I have turned to my namesake in Genesis, Jacob, to retrieve information that was misplaced in my auto-history:

Genesis [...] leaves magnificently open the question of a place for deviance within history, of the fate, in time, of unauthorized desires and identities (Bersani 1990: 208).

Spitz describes Genesis as 'our most tenacious and ambivalently cherished creation myth', thus putting it within the frame of Rank's work on creation myths and the myth of the birth of the hero (Spitz 1991 p.252). Since I have never read the Bible before, my recourse to Genesis is a personal pilgrimage to the Jewish history spelled out in the Old

Testament. It is also an acknowledgment of the words cited in this most primal of primary references that until now I have refused to recognise.

The stories of Jacob are to do with birthrights, theft and blessings tied up in the name; as are many biblical passages. Yet the verses dedicated to Jacob are especially focused on his transformation of identity (Genesis 25-37).³⁷ Jacob finding himself in a subordinate position as a younger child does not renounce the need for status that a proper name infers; instead he acquires a 'proper' name through 'improper' means. Here, let it be pointed out that God rewards Jacob, portrayed as a trickster as well as a victim of circumstance, for his crafty ability to defy authority. In other words, Jacob is blessed, on more than one occasion, for taking the *Law* into his own hands. His rewards for deceptive acts of in/justice are many: the acquisition of birthrights; authority; agency; a new name (Israel); a nation; and the blessings of his biological and spiritual *Father(s)*. Thus, the stories of Jacob seem to suggest that there is much to be gained by heeding desires for a (proper) name and claiming a stake in one's birth-right.

The role of women in the stories of Jacob aid and mirror his actions. His mother, Rebekah instigates the second deception that allows Jacob to receive his father's blessing (Genesis 27.6-27.29). Here, it is the collusion between mother and child that undermines patriarchal tradition and authority. The right to give birth is a different kind of 'birthright' than the rights bestowed on the firstborn, which Jacob swindles from Esau (notably through a masquerade of 'flesh' symbolised by a goat's hide [Genesis 27.16]). While the former is viewed as a blessing from God that positions women within the society, the latter is to do with mortal privileges and ownership. Nonetheless, in Rankian terms both 'birthrights' are symbolic of the creative act of individuation, and in the stories of Jacob the woman's biological capacity to bear children is superimposed over Jacob's struggles to position himself with the Law.

Jacob's true love, Rachel is like him, a younger child. She must overcome the birthright(s) seemingly denied to her in both meanings of the phrase. By custom she

cannot marry before her older sister, Leah (Genesis 29.26). Thus, bound by tradition and swindled by his maternal uncle/father-in-law, Laban, Jacob marries both sisters in exchange for extorted and extended labour in Laban's kingdom (Genesis 29.27-8). When Leah has produced many children for Jacob and Rachel has none, the younger sister wrestles with Leah over the 'birthrights' that her older sister has with regard to bearing children (Genesis 30.8). This passage prefigures Jacob's wrestling match with the stranger (Angel of God) (Genesis 32.24-32.32). While Rachel wins children first from her handmaiden and then from her own womb, Jacob undergoes a new birth of identity out of his version of the conflict.

In *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, Rank argues that it is 'always *the youngest* who appears as the hero in preference to his brothers because having come last through the womb he is closest the intrauterine state (Rank [1929] 1993: 112-3 *italics in original*). The youngest therefore 'drives away' the preceding siblings from that privileged position: 'In this he is like the father, with whom he alone, and from the same motives, is able to identify himself.' Rank's framing of the position of the youngest child does not take sexual difference into account, a concern that I will take up in the final section of this chapter.

Yet, if the youngest child is 'superior' because 'physically he remains as it were permanently attached' to the mother, then it could be concluded that a younger, *female* child, like Rachel, has a double connection to the maternal since she also embodies the womb to which she seeks to return (ibid.). From here, Jacob's double marriage with two sisters can be read as a representation of the double relation the female child has to the mother. In this respect, the twinship of Maia and myself, as two young girls whose mothers' name is identical, can also be read in this way.

To be or not to be... 'Rayya':

'Ryya' (coincidentally?) rhymes with Maia, and also stems from a literary source. Second in the lore surrounding my birth name is that the name was found in a character

index of an old volume of *The Thousand and One Nights* and supposedly means ‘Giver of Light’ (although I have never verified this fact by returning to the cited source).

Apparently, it was spelled ‘R-a-y-y-a’ in the story and is inscribed as such on my birth certificate; and yet my parents (and I) have always spelled it ‘R-y-y-a’ (except for my private reflections on ‘Ria’ or ‘RiA’ as an alternative). The knowledge of the missing *a* in ‘Rayya’ repeats the loss incurred in knowing that I was originally to be named Maia. I lose myself all over the place and all over again.

The *a* is presented precisely, in the field of the mirage of the narcissistic function of desire, as the object cannot be swallowed, as it were, which remains stuck in the gullet of the signifier. It is at this point of lack that the subject has to recognize himself (Lacan [1973] 1998: 270).

In Lacan’s ‘algebra’ of signification the *objet petit a* represents the small case ‘other’, or *autre* in French. The *petit a* signifies the lost object of the subject’s desire. In the earlier quote by Nin where she is describing the proper pronunciation of her name she



Fig.82 Lacan’s symbol for an ‘S’ with a bar through it.

says, ‘there are two dots on the “i”, and you have to separate the “a” and the “i”’. Lacan is also compelled to separate the ‘a’ from the ‘i’ in his semiotic equation. His small *a*, the other, cannot be metonymically replaced by a small *i*, without a shift in the signification of ‘i’, for as Lacan argues: ‘There is an essential difference between the object defined as narcissistic, the *i(a)* and the function of the *a*’ (ibid: 272). Elsewhere in Lacan’s work the small ‘i’ is defined as the ‘specular image’ (Lacan [1966] 1977:

197); the ‘delusional ego that is substituted for the subject’ (ibid: 334). The ‘a’ and the ‘i’ are separated at the Mirror Stage, where the subject becomes thus, and is thereafter represented by Lacan as an S with a bar through it (S^3) (Lacan [1973] 1998: 141).

If you wish to see a star of the fifth or sixth size, do not look straight at it – this is known as the Argo phenomenon. You will be able to see it only if you fix your eye to one side (Lacan [1973] 1998: 102).

The *objet petit a* is included in Lacan's discussion of 'embodied light', which is worth noting *in light of* the purported meaning of 'R[a]yya'. Lacan introduces the relation between the subject and 'that which is strictly concerned with light' as being 'ambiguous'. This phrasing is deliberate, to emphasise what he proceeds to say: which is that the dialectic between 'appearance and being' cannot be comprehended in the straight line that light travels. Rather, it is in the 'refracted' and 'diffused' *points* of light that 'lure' the eye into activating 'a whole series of organs, mechanisms, defences' which is understood as the 'gaze' (Lacan [1973] 1998: 94). 'The gaze is the instrument through which light is embodied', (ibid. p.106) and it 'is always a play of light and opacity' (ibid: 94). It is 'that which eludes us [...] in the optical structuring of space' (ibid: 93). The subject's narcissistic desire is always implicated in the libidinal register of light³⁹: 'The *objet a* in the field of the visible is the gaze' (ibid: 105).

If Maia is the star (maiden) that I have been estranged from and desire to return to, as R[a]yya the 'giver of light', I already embody her (as my shadow) when I gaze upon my own reflection. Yet, I cannot see this with my own eyes. Thus the word play that takes place in the private reflections noted above ('Ria' and 'RiA') can be appreciated as an unconscious attempt to find my identity by conflating 'Ryya' with 'Maia': to look for the straight line of light for answers. This tracing, however, appears to be too late since 'Ria/RiA' has never been adopted as a suitable reconciliation. Not only is the 'a' lost, but the 'i' is forever absent from the denotation of 'Ryya' and is replaced by two 'y's' or 'whys?'

Again, Nin answers her question with a question: [...] This question-answer represents Nin's attempt to formulate solutions concerning the "whys" of creativity without systematizing them in a rigid pattern of tightly held creeds. By leaving the question open, Nin leaves room for exploration, even while settling for a temporary answer. She entertains plurality while accepting a formulation that will enable her to retain a sufficiently unified "self" – a concept at the heart of her later idea of a synchronic moment in art⁴⁰ (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 130).

The ease with which letters were shed and lost in the spelling of 'Ryya' early on has influenced my later propensity for name alteration and play: the 'word', I was shown,

is not definitive. 'Aviva' means 'To Life!', for what that is worth after such absenteeism as 'I'; and yet the 'i' is re-instated nicely in the middle of a symmetrical assimilation of the letters 'A-v' and it's converse 'v-a'. 'Aviva' (or 'avIva' or better still, 'AvIvA') not only re-inscribes the missing 'i' from 'Maia', but also provides an excess of 'A's' to make up for the ones lost there, and in the transmutation from 'Rayya' to 'Ryya'. 'Aviva' supplies a link between 'Ryya' and 'Maia' that 'Ria/RiA' cannot, and perhaps goes some way to explaining my recent compulsion to capitalise the 'A' in 'Ryya' and mark it with a full stop (RyyA.). Not only is Aviva given acknowledgement through this gesture thus ensuring that no more names are lost, but the previous losses are also repaired to some extent.

'Ryya Aviva Jacobs':

My parents said that I was named 'Ryya Aviva' because both of them had very 'common' names and were often surrounded by others with the same signification. They wanted to celebrate my individuality in a way that their own names (and parents?... society?) had failed to do for them. This impulse and rationale can be read within the context of the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s in the United States to which my auto-history relates. This was a historical phenomenon in which, amongst other things, individualism was heralded against the loss of identity incurred in late mass capitalist society. As such, this cult of individuality goes beyond individual experience. Being born in Berkeley, California in 1970, I am undoubtedly a product of this movement. Living under the name 'Ryya Aviva' may be a specific example of difference that marks my identity, but this particular form of difference was shared by many of my generation who were given 'unique' names.⁴¹

And yet, there is a difference between assuming and signifying difference: the difference is between 'having' and 'being'...it is about dis/empowerment. The name 'Ryya Aviva' was a chosen, even glorified, emblem of individuality imparted onto me by

proud parents who would celebrate my specific entrance into the world. (This situation is notably distinct from Laius and Jocasta's fearful attitude toward the birth of Oedipus.)

However, names can also signify difference in less comfortable contexts...to say the very least:

Among the indicators of the body of Jews, no aspect can be more obvious or more simplistic than the distinctiveness of Jewish names which had, in Europe, been assigned precisely to mark Jews 'difference.' While rhinoplastic surgery was a painful procedure for removing ethnic physiological signs, a simple legal maneuver could convert Jewish-sounding appellations to ethnically neutral signifiers (Kleeblatt 1996: 14).

While I positively assumed 'Ryya Aviva' because of its distinctness, my 'maiden' name, 'Jacobs', has always been a source of discomfort. Although I was aware of a long history of Jewish people changing their names to conceal ethnic identity, the relevance of this for myself was never actually realised until I visited the exhibition, *too Jewish?*

Challenging traditional identities (sic) (The Jewish Museum, New York, 10 March 1996 – 14 July 1996). It was here that this discomfort with my own name was acknowledged and put into a cultural context within the history of North American (USA) Jewish culture. The concealment of Jewishness has been written into the very terms that define this identity.

My deployment of the name 'Bread' has a wider significance to my identity text than just disguising my ethnic origins, yet there is this element implicit in it. The name 'Bread' arose performatively through the repeated use by others of the linguistic pun that links 'Ryya Bread' with *rye bread*. I adopted 'Ryya Bread' as 'my own' in my early teens; using it especially to sign school and art work. Like 'Jacobs', 'Bread' is a *given* name. Yet, unlike the traditional passing *down* of the Father's name inherent in 'Jacobs', 'Bread' has been passed *over* to me in a collaborative citation of repeated re-inscription. 'Bread' is both given to me and assumed/consumed by me in a mutual act of recognition in the humour of the pun...or 'bun'.

In this way, the process of becoming 'RyyA. Bread©' is an example of *perlocutionary* speech act in practice. That is, a speech act that 'produce[s] certain effects

as their consequence'. At the same time, the act of calling myself 'RyyA. Bread©' can be read in terms of an *illocutionary* speech act, which 'is itself the deed that it effects' (Butler 1997: 3).⁴² My current and sophisticated orthography of this name is recent, being embellished since the doctoral research has been undertaken. Along with the capitalising of the letter 'A' and the full-stop, the copyright symbol was added at the end to imply authorship and exclusive rights to act under this endorsement...unlike 'Maia', *this* name shall not be stolen!

Rank has noted that 'bread' and 'baking' are a well-known symbol for birth (Rank 1989b: 110). In this way, the substitution emphasises the creative significance of the 'name' over the paternal authority inscribed in the name-of-the-father. This can be read as a gesture towards autonomy from the patriarchal structures of designation and inscription, and [dis]association with a religion that I am relatively ignorant of despite (and because of) my Jewish inheritance. Yet, self-definition can never fully eradicate such pre-existing affiliations.

Thus, to be an artist is to be locked in struggle, in veritable war, with casualties, wounds, and losses, between self-creation and self-negation. To abjure one's past is to forswear oneself – and yet, to be an artist is, somehow, to take hold continually of a new self, a new identity (Spitz 1991: 242).

The (Jewish? daughter? creative?) guilt I have experienced for replacing my maiden name sits in tension with a positive framing of self-definition. Since I have always associated rye bread with Jewish food, the shift from 'Jacobs' to 'Bread' unconsciously retained for me my Jewish roots, while at the same time making it a less obvious reference. What is more, the appropriation of 'RyyA. Bread©' as my authorial and artistic nomination has never been a legal eradication of the paternal surname. 'RyyA. Bread©' is not a denouncement of my father's name, but a translation of it into my own embodied

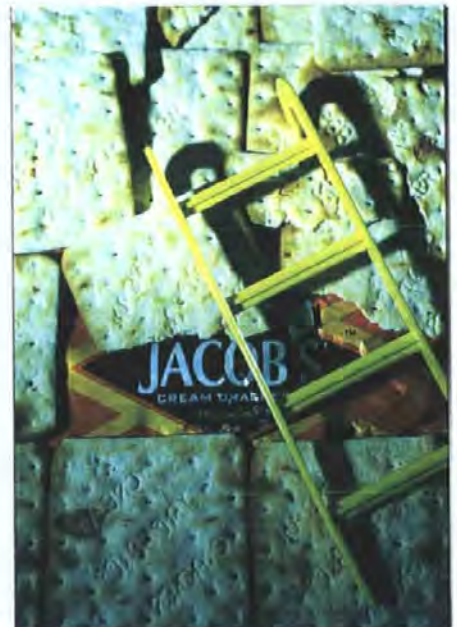


Fig.83 RyyA. Bread©: *Jacob's Ladder*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

language: a moving into (a re-arrangement of) myself within the inherited paternal signifier. The maternal significance of the name is not namelessness, or to assume the mother's name – since this is always already the name-of-a-father – but rather to be in creative negotiation with one's name as a site of self-definition and auto-*authorisation*.

The stories surrounding the event of my naming(s) have cultural and literary resonance, but it is the meaning that I have made of them that makes them significant. Such an assertion can be read in regard to Rank's framework. While myths *tell of* the hero or saviour's 'creative activity of doing (or suffering)', Rank distinguishes the creativity of the 'individual poet' as 'in the making of the story itself'. As such, the 'individual poet' deploys and 'transforms the ideological creative myth into [the] metaphor' (Rank 1989a: 207-8).

Situating the stories of *Mary Poppins*, *The Thousand and One Nights* and Genesis, and specifically the characters of Maia, Rayya and Jacob, has been problematic in the recounting of their significance to my name. Spitz notes that while *The Thousand and One Nights*, 'was not written for children, it is in our childhoods today that we encounter Aladdin and the others, Ali Baba, Sinbad the Sailor, and so on' (Spitz 1991: 224).⁴³ Yet, 'Rayya' is absent from the canon of children's renditions of these stories, just as Maia is omitted from the Disney depiction of *Mary Poppins*.

These are marginal characters that have not found representation in the dominant cultural dissemination of the original texts. And what am I to make of the 'fact(?)' that 'Rayya' was found in the index of *The Thousand and One Nights*, rather than within a specific story? I have no recollection of ever being read the story that would provide the context from which the name was taken. Thus, the story was subordinated to the name itself. Finally, as I have noted earlier, the Bible (and 'religion' in general) was missing from my own upbringing. While Genesis, and the stories of Jacob, may be familiar to many, until now my own knowledge of this scripture has only been through random remarks and references that circulate in social discourse.

Despite the significance of the literary sources attached to my names, I have never been inclined to return to them. Instead, my own embodied experience (like the name found in the index) has been privileged over the stories themselves. The contents of these books have remained others' stories that have merely been imagined while experiencing my own. That these stories have remained enshrouded in mystery has added mystique to my names by association. To return to the original sources would surely shatter these mysterious imaginings on which my self-identity has relied. Even in the name of scholarly pursuit, I have been reluctant to trespass on this. Having said this, my attempts to articulate the significance of my naming has included a process whereby these stories have each been approached to some extent.

According to Rank, the trauma of birth is so intense that the memory of it is repressed and substituted with the child's own fantasies of where children come from. These 'infantile birth theories' become culturally located in myths and fairy tales. Rank uses examples such as the 'fable of the stork' and *Little Red Riding Hood* to show that the repression of the birth trauma is marked by a 'denial of the female sex organ'. In stories this often manifests in references to the digestive process and the removal of the child by the cutting open of the mother's stomach. Infantile birth theories are important to the child because they 'leave open the illusion of a possible return' to the maternal body, which would be 'forfeited' if the child were to accept the adult explanations of where babies come from (Rank [1929] 1993: 31-2).

My own 'creation myth' is predicated on the idea that we are all really stars in the universe. To entertain ourselves in infinity we have made a game of life, whereby we lay out certain plots and events and then embody a chosen identity. When we enter earth we forget that we are stars and must live through the narrative we have mapped out, while all the other stars watch from above in amusement and place bets. The object of the 'game of life' is get through the plotted 'course' successfully in order to resume consciousness as a star. Those stars that excel at the game are able to remember on earth the nature of their

true identity, and use this to constructively work through the problems that are encountered in life. The losers of the game are those who are deviated from the original plan or end their ‘round’ prematurely having lost all sense of their ‘star’ reality. But the main point is that in any event, it is all merely a game – and it does not matter if you win or lose because either way you end up in the sky surrounded by eternal friends.

In the course of writing this section on ‘[I’m-]Proper] Names’, my mother sent me the original volume of P.L.Travers’ *Mary Poppins* upon request, whereby I learned of the relation between Maia and Father Christmas. Yet, the most striking discovery was the explicit emphasis in the chapter on Maia’s name and the spelling, which is included in a passage pertaining to recognition (Travers 1934: 183). What is more, Maia explains her ‘auto-history’ to Jane and Michael in a way that corresponds with Rank’s discussions of infant birth theories and perhaps shows the original inspiration for my own creation myth. The character of Maia is a star in the sky that has a mother and six sisters; but she enters earth (and the story) as a naïve child already unaccountably born (ibid.). As such, this leaves open the question of how exactly stars reproduce?



Fig. 84 Front book cover with no dust jacket of Travers (1934).

The ‘frame story’ of *The Thousand and One Nights*, from which R[a]jya was purported to have been taken, further supports Rank’s notes on infantile birth theories denying the female sex organ:

[...] the frame story of *The Thousand and One Nights*, [is] a plot of vengeful intrigue between the sexes. Two brother kings have each been deceived by their wives. One, King Shahryar, seeks revenge by beheading each new wife after passing one night with her. After precisely three years of this, he marries the apparently doomed but exquisitely artful and ultimately triumphant Scheherazade, whose younger sister, her accomplice, forms a parallel in the story to the King’s brother. Finally, there are *hidden children*! For Scheherazade climactically produces on her last night three sons to whom she has secretly given birth during her three years of story-telling. Here again, the bringing forth of art is linked (problematically and mysteriously) with bearing and birthing children – explicit male and female roles, wills, and knowledge all left unaccounted for. Family romance at its extravagant best! (Spitz 1991: 227-28, *italics in original*).

I could not bring myself to return to the index or find the story of Rayya. This particular name seems, of all my names, to be the one in most need of remaining undisturbed for the time being. Fortunately, Spitz also resorts to *The Thousand and One Nights* in her text and so I have used her work as a bridge by focusing on the frame story rather than the specific passages pertaining to Rayya. In this way, I have conflated Rayya with Scheherazade in my interpretation of the text.

According to Spitz, '[...] Scheherazade who, again and again, just as morning – that is, light – began to dawn, would discreetly fall silent' (Spitz 1991: 224). If Rayya indeed means 'giver of light' than in my conflation of these two characters into one figure, Rayya can be understood as the ego-ideal of conscience that regulates the creative output. With her light, she signifies both success of another day in life for Scheherazade and, paradoxically, a *shadow* of her articulation.

From Spitz's brief summary of the frame story of *The Thousand and One Nights* above, it is clear that a double theme functions within the narrative between the brother kings and their wives, as well as between Scheherazade and her sister. Like the earlier reading of Rachel and Leah in Genesis, Spitz also notes the link between natural childbirth and creative production. However, in Genesis the sisters' struggles with childbirth run parallel to Jacob's conflicts. It is Jacob's encounter with the stranger/Angel whom he subsequently wrestles and is blessed by that is particularly significant in this story, with regard to the transformation of identity signified through the changing of one's name.

35.10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.

35.11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;⁴⁴

The transformation into 'Israel' that transpires when Jacob wrestles with the Angel of God is *akin* to my own metamorphosis from 'Jacobs' to 'Bread'. In both instances the name is appointed and therefore confirmed by an external source. At the same time, in Rankian terms, the struggle that initiates the shift in identity is again the conflict between

‘art’ and ‘artist’. The fruitful multiplicity that Jacob is blessed with can be found within the multiple names and subject positions imbedded the name of RyyA. Bread©, which has served as a structure for my thesis. The ‘nation and company of nations’ can be understood in relation to my interdisciplinary praxis and as such, the ‘kings’ that ‘come out of my loins’ represent the articulated texts of my creative negotiation with subjectivity.

The “angels” that can be born out of transformative effect of delving into chilling memory through psychoanalytic and artistic processes are the narrator’s [Nin’s] emerging abilities to provide protection and comfort for herself through art. In addition to their role as message bearers, the angels [...] indicate the narrator’s movement through re-memory toward a reconstructed future (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 38).

In *The Thousand and One Nights*, Scheherazade is a female protagonist who, unlike the disembodied split between Jacob and the wives in the Genesis narrative, explicitly embodies both the capacity to bear children and creatively (re-)produce. ‘Scheherazade knows that to live she must continue to invent, produce, and above all please the king,’ argues Spitz. She identifies Scheherazade as, ‘a figure for the artist, whose continuing ability to produce successfully for *someone*, even a ‘phantom’ internalized as an aspect of his or her own ego ideal, is experienced in exactly the same dire terms: art is a matter of life or death’ (Spitz 1991: 228). In this respect, Scheherazade mirrors Nin, as I have represented her; both signifying the potential for a woman artist to have a voice. The thousand and one nights of Scheherazade’s story-telling are reminiscent of the ‘more than a thousand women’ that Don Juan has possessed and Nin seeks to encounter with men by becoming Dona Juana (Nin 1993: 211). In both cases it is a negotiation and seduction of male authority that propels the artist forward in her creative self-definition and preservation.

In calling myself RyyA. Bread©, I give a name to my conflict between art and artist; compensating for the losses signified in my identity while simultaneously opening up performative sites of multiple (re-)inscription and auto-*authorisation*. In using my name in this way, theory and myth come together within my own psycho-symbolic

framework of subjective specificity in a way that reiterates the significance of Nin's

literary practice:

Nin's work suggests that no self, after all, is a unity, and the fragile human ego can only provide a compensatory set of self-myths whose unity exists as metaphor, or substitutive cohesion. By thematizing issues and playing with them in ways that grant a narrative *jouissance* beyond phallic certainty, Nin's diaries provide performative if not narrative gratification (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 162).

My praxis takes that a step further...

III. (I'm-Proper) Authorship

What is in a name? Would a rose by any other name smell as sweet? If the name were to disappear would the smell be lost along with it? ...Would a cabbage smell more fragrant if it were called 'rose'? For whose nose does a rose smell more sweetly than a cabbage? Who would, when and where, confuse a cabbage with a rose? What exactly is a cabbage-rose?

This whole line of questioning stinks... yet it seems the issue of names is bound up in cabbages and kings. Who is the cabbage? Who is the King? Who is the rose? Who smells? And who smells whom? As the proverbial saying goes, 'He who smelt it dealt it!' Thus I will proceed with the assumption that I distinctly smell...as well as others.

My own name is quite aromatic, but is it 'proper'? I must confess from the onset, as I sit amidst pungent odors, that I am more concerned with impropriety at this very moment. What constitutes an *improper* name? The following continuation and exhalation on the significance of the name follows my nose on the scent of the importance of subjective specificity with regard to the (mis)representation of identity.

I have grown very attached to (my) names. Not only do I identify with the names that I operate under, but they also identify me. Would 'Ryya' by any other name signify the same identity? I think not. And this was my primary concern when, in 1991, a case study of my family was used in a publication (which shall remain nameless here) that deployed aliases to disguise our 'true' (specific) identity. When asked to review the text and make comments before going to print, I felt compelled to take issue with the name they used to represent me. How could 'Sally' stand in for 'Ryya'? It seemed that another distinct name should replace my own *in the name of* equivalent representation. I suggested they take up 'Tikka' instead (a name I thought was made-up)...and to their credit they did.

There was a brief stage when I was about four years old when I *wanted* to be called 'Sally' like the little girl down the street, but she was a novelty since most of my friends had names similar to my own...in that they were all very 'different'. My desire to be

'Sally' was, in a strange twist of values, an attraction to the Other of normalcy. In the same way I craved store-bought cake and clothes as opposed to those my mother (and most of my friends' mothers') made for me/us from scratch. Although store-bought cakes remain a delicacy to this day, the urge to assume the name 'Sally' was very short lived. Apart from this brief (and second) moment of adolescent name-envy, I have always taken 'Ryya' for granted. It has not been a conscious question of pride or embarrassment; it has merely been my name.

Yet, it has significantly been *my* name. I have never met another 'Ryya', although I have heard rumours that they/she may exist. I cannot imagine being in a room with one or more other individuals who answer to the same name. While there are many who have lived with this kind of name-share existence throughout their lives, my parents' being case and point, as for myself it is an inconceivable experience.

Given this unique perspective on subjective specific identity, how could I then allow myself to be represented as the distinct individual that I know myself to be, under the alias 'Sally'? Sally stands for that which I am not. The conventional status of that alias erases not only my specific experience of individuality, but the particular histor(ies) and ethos that underpins my naming.

Aliases are in/de-scriptive creative texts that mimic a name, yet their designation is predicated on alteration and concealment. The question that has haunted me since the amicable alias amendment from 'Sally' to 'Tikka' in the unnamed (but nevertheless said) publication above, pertains to the connotations implicit and attached to individual(s) denotations. *How can inherent associations and meanings inscribed on and in specific identities be preserved and represented, while at the same time implementing a code of confidentiality?* That is, what's in a name that cannot be duplicated by using a different one?

As it turns out, this is not an arbitrary concern. Freud too expressed interest in the associative significance of proper names. While his theories relate to my own previous

deliberation on names, he is more concerned with forgetting and misplacing them than preserving their specificity, as evidenced in the title of his essay, 'The Forgetting of Proper Names' (1901).⁴⁵

In the course of our efforts to recover the name that has dropped out [forgotten], other ones - *substitute names* - enter our consciousness; we recognize them at once, indeed, as incorrect, but they keep on returning and force themselves on us with great persistence. The process that should lead to the reproduction of the missing name has been so to speak *displaced* and has therefore led to an incorrect substitute. My hypothesis is that this displacement is not left to arbitrary psychical choice but follows paths which can be predicted and which confirm laws. In other words, I suspect that the name or names which are substituted are connected in a discoverable way with the missing name: and I hope, if I am successful in demonstrating this connection, to proceed to throw light on the circumstances in which names are forgotten (Freud [1901]: 1-2 *italics in original*).

'Dora' is another name. And, in the context of Freud's work, it functions as an alias in much the same way as 'Sally' was meant to. Indeed, 'Dora' is *the* misplaced name in Freud's own associative chain of signifiers that corresponds with all lost and forsaken names of identity (Pellegrini 1997 p.26). In *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901), in which 'The Forgetting of Proper Names' (1-7) is included, the alias 'Dora' is re-traced back to Freud's own childhood environment. Here his sister's nursemaid had her birth name 'Rosa W.' substituted for 'Dora' so as not to be confused with Freud's sister; also named 'Rosa' (Freud [1901]: 241). Thus, Freud conceals his patient's real name with the alias 'Dora' because, like aliases in general, it is analogous for him with lost identity.

In this particular case, or 'Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria' (1905a) to be precise, the embodied experience of the name is not Dora's own, nor is it the experience of the individual that 'Dora' disguises. Rather, and importantly, 'Dora' is Freud's creative text on his own embodied experience of the name (and body) that is placed onto and read through the figure of his female patient – actually named Ida Bauer in this case.

A split occurs within Freud's identity text as 'doctor', at the moment that he must produce an alias so as to publicly name his game. This convention reveals a tension between his loyalty to his patients on the one hand, and on the other his professional aspirations to contribute to medical knowledge. To this end, it could be said that Freud

himself gets lost, forgotten and forgetful in the fragmentation between private and published identities: that is, in the subject of proper names and improper aliases.

'We smell...a rat in the ros[a]':



Fig.85 (from left to right) 'The Corkscrew', 'The South Pole', 'The Soldier'. Photographs by Dan Smith, grooming by Anna Thompson at Time, from Daly, H [2000] 'Men: A users guide – which dick are you dating?', *Company Magazine*, Nov. 2000:118-119.

In the anti-Semitic climate that prevailed in Vienna in the early 1900s, where and when Freud was working, the Jewish male body was rhetorically and biologically associated with femininity as a means of subordinating Jews as an inferior race. Within medical discourse, Jewish men, along with women, were considered especially prone to hysteria. The Jewish custom of circumcision was even thought to result in symptoms that corresponded with female menstruation. Furthermore, the threat of castration perceived in the apparent 'lack' of female genitalia was also attributed to the 'lesser organ' of the defaced Jewish male penis (Pellegrini 1997: 22-29).

'All Jews are womanly, but no women are Jews' (ibid: 28). Within psychoanalysis, female masturbation is considered both 'masculine' and (therefore) 'improper'. The clitoris and the circumcised penis were overlaid in the linguistic reference to the clitoris as the *Jud*; Viennese slang for 'Jew' (ibid: 29).⁴⁶ When playing with my Jewish self, then, I am identifiably doubly Jewish and excessively improper...or am I?

By emphasizing the distinction between masculinity and femininity as the signal difference in the aetiology of hysteria, Freud effectively displaces the *mise-en-scène* of hysteria from race *and* gender wholly to gender. Ida Bauer's Jewish female body has faded into the figure of a "whitened" femininity. From this figure, femininity emerges as a form of racial passing. The Jewish woman poses for – is posed as – the feminine *tout court*, and Jewish men are thereby relocated on the side of the universal term: the masculine. (Pellegrini 1997: 28)

Like 'Jacobs', the name 'Ida Bauer' is also *too* Jewish. But it is not Ida who alters the signification and she is in no way herself when she is thus represented. Arguably, Freud dismissed his patient's real name because it was too private to insert in a published case study. Such an act would breach professional codes of conduct concerning anonymity by violating patient/doctor confidentiality. However, the decidedly 'Gent(il)ified' alias of 'Dora' erases the Jewish association of her real name, along with other connotations that 'Ida Bauer' might effect. This sleight of hand diverts attention away from the site of the Jewish male body, including and especially Freud himself, while negating the identity of a/the Jewish woman completely. In Freud's hand(s), gender is over played in order to forfeit race and save the face of the phallic penis.

When it comes to aliases, the game that Freud has trouble putting a name to, is indeed the 'confidence game' ...the oldest trick in the book. In light of this play and the following reference to Sandra Bernhard's play-film, *Without You I'm Nothing* (*sic*), the alias 'Sally' must be reconsidered, as not merely 'conventional' but *Gentile* in designation:

Finally, Bernhard, performing "Bernard," returns to the stage, where she attempts, unsuccessfully, to lead the audience in a round of Israeli folk songs. She talks about the joys of growing up in "a liberal, intellectual Jewish household," but also confesses to a Gentile family romance: "I'd fantasize that I had an older brother named Chip and a little sister named *Sally*, and my name would either be Happy or Buffy or Babe..." (Pellegrini 1997: 59-60, *my emphasis*).

The 'Other of convention' attributed to 'Sally' earlier is, among other things, Gentility viewed from an unrealised Jewish position. This position reverses precedent onto my own embodied experience. The rejection of 'Sally' as an alias is a further refusal to be posed in an alien Gentile identity. This cabbage knows she is no rose (as sweet as she may smell). Thus 'the name of equivalent representation' that I was looking for in 'Tikka' was not merely 'distinct' but specifically Jewish. Yet, 'Tikka', as far as I know, is not a Jewish

name. Instead it is of Indian origin and is used to describe meals with cut meat or poultry in a special spice sauce. It contains an 'i', like the one lost in 'Maia' and rediscovered in 'Aviva'; ends with the 'a', as 'Maia', 'Ryya' and 'Aviva' do; and also has a double 'k' that corresponds with the two 'y's in 'Ryya'. So the attraction to this name is traceable. But, in choosing 'Tikka' as an alias I have in this instance, like Freud, unwittingly hidden my Jewish identity behind another(s) specificity... Chicken Tikka and RyyA. Bread© may both be found in the kitchen, but we do not originate from the same menu nor have the same (sense of) smell.

While it was important that the 'distinctness' of my name be retained in my altered representation (however improper the consequences), Freud dismisses names with 'an especially peculiar sound' as an alias option altogether (Freud 1901: 240). Freud is implicated in and excluded from this criterion; since 'peculiar sounding' are names, Pellegrini suggests, that sound 'especially' Jewish. Along with Ida Bauer, Freud's own name 'Sigismund' was also peculiarly Jewish and consequently converted to 'Sigmund' to avoid racial stigmatization (Pellegrini 1997: 27). As well as being *lost in*, Freud is evidently also *hiding out* behind the name of the rose...as I was found trying to stem from a foreign cabbage patch. Cabbages and roses, however, are garden plots apart from one another.

In Freud's subjective specific mapping of associations, 'Dora' signifies lost identity similarly to how 'Maia' (and RyyA.) signifies my misplaced identity in childhood. Yet it is not exactly the same: Dora is not to Freud as Maia is to Ryya. Sigmund Freud was Sigismund, but he was never to be or not to be Rosa or Dora despite the fact that these names figure in his own auto-history and imaginary anatomy. Whether Freud was to be or not to be Ida is the question Pellegrini asks in her own investigations into the root of the alias 'Dora'.

Rosa W. to Rosa F. is in closer proximity to how Maia is to Ryya. But then, Rosa W. was actually named 'Rosa' at birth, whereas 'Maia' was always only ever an (ego-)

ideal *before* Ryya. Dora is to Ida as Sally would have been to Ryya. But neither Dora to Ida, nor Sally to Ryya is the same as Tikka to Ryya. Freud to Dora is to some degree in uncomfortable proximity with Ryya to Tikka, since in both cases one identity is mistaken for an/other. But this is the province of an alias. The difference is in our relationship to the other and to one another. Freud would not dream of being found in the kitchen where Tikka and Ryya might be brewing (in) respective pots and pans. The kitchen is no place for a man who smells in the way Freud does; and he is tormented by the exotic stench emanating from his own oven, which he seeks to cover over with floral perfume.⁴⁷

I would suggest that Freud's point blank refusal of peculiar sounding names for an alias says something about the position of subjectivity within his framing of professional discourse. The inclusion of 'distinct' (Ryya) or 'peculiar' (Freud) names draws attention to the specificity of individuals that would undermine the generalised and 'objective' findings Freud seeks to posit through publication. Subjective specificity (the Jewess identity of Ida Bauer) and subjective authorship (the Jewish male identity of Sigismund Freud) are both concealed under a rubric of prevailing, conventional aliases (the Gentrified signification of Dora).

However, the reference to Freud and his family is present despite himself; he (and they) cannot help but be implicated in the case of Dora, which is as much a case of 'counter transference' as it is one of 'the transference of aggression from patient to analyst'. Pellegrini, through anonymous 'feminist critics', notes the class and gender issues implicit in Freud's 'seemingly unintentional performances' of equating Ida Bauer with a governess (Rosa W. aka Dora), which place Freud in the role of Herr K. However, a reading of this case that privileges sex and class to the exclusion of racial considerations of identity, fails to identify the significance of Freud's counter transference and the politics implicit in his choice of alias (Pellegrini 1997: 26-7).

In Freud's subterranean geography of Jewishness, gender, and race, East is to West as phallic women are to angels in the house; as the young girl's childish masculinity is to the woman's mature and passive femininity; as a woman's fully achieved femininity is to a man's overachieving

masculinity. In Freud's own "case history," East was to West as his Galician mother, Amalie Nathanson Freud, was to his German wife, Martha Bernays Freud (Pellegrini 1997: 30).

This structural analogy grafts Freud's theory of the shifting erogenous zones that transform a 'masculine' girl into a 'proper' woman onto the shifting role of the woman in the household as Jews migrated from Eastern to Western Europe and on to the USA. In both instances the trajectory moves from an active, dominating role to a 'proper' one of passive subordination. Thus, when Freud does make explicit reference to a/the Jewish woman, it is an instructive citation of the dangers in degenerate femininity. In these moments, rather than conceal gendered race, Freud brandishes racialised gender, in the name of 'Judith', to the same effect.

The patriotic gesture of this widow 'of a goodly countenance' in the Apocrypha of the Old Testament is misrepresented in Hebbel's stageplay, *Judith und Holofernes*, as a vengeful act of *la belle juive*⁴⁸. In *Taboo of Virginity* (1918) the inherently hostile and mysterious qualities that Freud attributes to 'deflowered' women are exemplified through Hebbel's reading of Judith's decapitation of Holofernes (Freud [1918]: 207). Freud notes the liberties that both he and Hebbel take in sexualising the patriotic story, but rationalises this as 'the fine perception of a poet' (and analyst) to read the 'truth' between the lines:

It is clear that Hebbel has intentionally sexualised the patriotic narrative from the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, for there Judith is able to boast after her return that she has not been defiled, nor is there in the Biblical text any mention of her uncanny wedding night. But probably, with the fine perception of a poet, he sensed the ancient motive, which had been lost in the tendentious narrative, and has merely restored its earlier content to the material (ibid.).

As a 'poet' Hebbel is granted 'artistic license' in his representation of the Biblical story in a play that overtly contradicts the verses contained within the original source. Freud condones Hebbel's reading as a means of substantiating his own theory, thereby appointing himself with the same powers of 'divine' interpretation. Freud is positioned as the 'subject-presumed-to-know' within the analytic situation. And yet, Freud exploits this position in purporting to know the 'lost' meaning of the Biblical narrative of Judith as a means to 'objectively' discuss women's sexuality. That his methodology includes mythic

interpretation is one thing, but to assert that he and Hebbel know the 'real truth', when it explicitly ignores the sentiment expressed in the text, is problematic.

Pellegrini, herself, reads between Freud's lines through letters to his 'then-fiancée'. She traces his fixation on the alias 'Dora' for Ida Bauer, back to another Jewess: Sarah Bernhardt, a star under the limelight in Vienna, captured Freud's attention and imagination with her stage presence, which he was quick to conflate with her own female identity. Like the Judith of Hebbel's stageplay, Sarah Bernhardt embodied the double othering of the *belle juive*; signaling this image both on and off stage.

Bernhardt is joined with Ida Bauer in analysis by way of Freud's own associations with her stagenames as: 'Theodora', 'Dora', 'Feodora', 'Thermidora', 'Ecudora' and 'Torreadora' (Pellegrini 1997: 40). By attaching Ida Bauer to 'Dora', Freud weds hysteria with the seductive power of the excessive over-phallicised femininity of the Jewess; who 'performs' in order to decapitate and/or castrate men that fall victim to her charms. On Freud's psychoanalytic stage, however, such performers wear a 'white face':

The eroticized spectacle of Sarah Bernhardt anticipates another spectacle object: the hystericized female body, whose vocal cues (as in: the "talking cure") and surface signs (as in: "somatic compliance") are the privileged mechanisms and symptomatic center of psychoanalysis. The women (and men) who people Freud's case histories are, as it were, characters in search of an author/auteur. It is Freud who makes their inner life available to directed view. In all this, Bernhardt plays actress-heroine for the psychoanalyst turned dramaturge. And Jean-Martin Charcot is dramaturge *père*, demonstrating before the rapt gaze of his students –Freud included– not just the theatricality of hysteria, but the showmanship of clinical mastery (ibid.).

In a psychoanalytic context that differs from Pellegrini's investigation, Lacan challenges the lack of subjective accountability in Freud's methodology, rhetorically posing the question; '*what is the analyst's desire?*' It is interesting to note that Lacan refers to Genesis in order to answer this question, although he denies attaching any 'exceptional importance' to it. He describes this myth as being 'tinged to a greater or lesser degree with obscurantism'. 'But why', he asks, 'shouldn't we expect psychoanalysis to throw some light on it?' (Lacan [1973] 1998: 8-9).

The Biblical creation myth is used here, in part, to return to the 'birth' of psychoanalysis as a discipline: '[So] hysteria places us,' Lacan says, 'on the track of

original sin in analysis. There has to be one. The truth is perhaps simply one thing, namely the desire of Freud himself, the fact that something, in Freud, was never analysed.' In this way, Freud's privileging 'concern[ed] with desire as an object' is framed as problematic for Lacan because it does not account for the analyst's (specifically Freud's) 'entrance into the field of experience he designates as the unconscious'. It is this 'question of origin' that Lacan's contribution of the Names-of-the-Father is aimed at redirecting, emphasising the signifier rather than sign. And Lacan implies that it is for this particular challenge to Freud's 'clinical mastery' that he was 'excommunicated' from the International Psycho-Analytical Association (IPA) in 1964 (ibid: 8-13).

In order to distinguish his reading of praxis from conventional understandings of 'scientific research' and 'religion', Lacan quotes Picasso as saying, '*I do not seek, I find*' (ibid: 7, *italics in original*). In so doing he makes an alliance with the 'artist', although this is not followed through in the passage. Instead, Lacan initiates his first reference to Genesis by suggesting that like the tree of life, the 'tree of science' need not be limited to a 'single trunk'. In his view, 'the notion of experience, in the sense of the field of praxis' must be recognised in its implication. And yet, for all of Lacan's concern with the subjectivity of the analyst, his framework ultimately continues to register woman as a signifier for the lack of the phallus and an 'other' for the necessarily *male* subject.

Classic psychoanalysis fails to tell an accurate story of or for women, specifically Jewish ones, as Freud's portrayals of Ida Bauer and Judith demonstrate. Thus it is necessary for feminist theorists to engage with psychoanalysis to expose the limitations of the analytic situation for fabricating stories of women's embodied experience. Contrary to Lacan's claim, psychoanalysts *seek* to interpret, but cannot *find* a 'woman' to speak of or for. This is not because women are a void, as is suggested by both Freud and Lacan; but because classic psychoanalysis only recognises stories for and of men.

"Having" gender and "having" race are always to some degree marked out as the failure of "proper" identification' (Pellegrini 1997: 31). To this I would add that 'having'

subjective specific identity within a critical text is a failure of 'proper' authorship... when the aim is misplaced, displaced and improper. Freud's public identity works to lose himself and misplace proper names in order to displace issues pertaining to his own identity. Despite Lacan's challenge to Freud's 'hide and seek' game, he nonetheless fails to produce an adequate position for female subjectivity. Seeing as I am implicated in Freud's framework as a misplaced and improper female, my task is to find and re-define my identifications.

What is the nature of one's relationship to that other artist – those other Artists – who are also one's self? (Spitz 1991: 242).

Freud concluded that women are a 'dark continent' of mystery; yet at the same time 'no [wo]man is an island unto [her] self'. When 'a woman speaks'⁴⁹, such as Nin, the stories of womanliness that are told may be different from those constructed by men. Yet the act of exposing one's 'self' to definition implicates a multitude of identities, some of which are embodied by others. The boundaries that demarcate the signified are not easily fixed, as they extend beyond the physicality of the body through a psychical corporeal interaction with inhabited surroundings.

In her journal entries, Nin was vigilant in explicitly denoting the specific names and details of her encounters with embodied others. She expressed what she called a 'love of exact truth versus deformations' and believed that by being specific and immediate in her response, she could avoid her imagination distorting her perspective on events (Nin 1993: 299-300). This approach may appear paradoxical in light of her antithetical delight in creating illusions. However, it is precisely this tension that Nin endeavored to explore and record through her writing.

In this way, Nin's *Diaries* provide insights into the lives of numerous others, as well as that of the author herself. Many of these individuals were, or have become (often with the support of Nin) prominent figures in their own (birth)right. Her impressive

catalogue of connections gave rise to Nin's status as a cultural icon, even before her own writing became commercially popular in the late 1960s:

In addition to being such a seismograph in herself, Nin also commands attention by reason of the cultural milieu through which she moved. Few modern artists reveal the range of personal involvement with so many other artists and key figures in contemporary thought, for it is a range that is extensive both in terms of geographically spanning the world as well as in terms of historically encompassing much of the twentieth century (Hinz, et al. 1978: 1).

Nin's attention to details is relevant to my understanding of subjective specificity, which necessitates a detailed positioning of myself in relation to people, places and things that constitute my individual circumstances. Yet, Nin's dis/closure and un/published (identity) texts not only ask what it means to be a women artist, but also pose the question: what does such an artist's license confer?

Anonymity takes on a particular significance when identity is not hidden behind a name. A consequence of having the distinct name 'Ryya' is that I am acutely aware of leaving papers around with my name written on them. It is not as though these could pertain to anyone other than myself. Concealment was essential in maintaining the multitude of lies that Nin lived. Thus her own anonymity needed to be crafted artfully in relation to what her husband, and others, knew about her...and this information was hardly the same twice. This was particularly important in that Nin established intimacy with others by sharing sections of her diaries with them, especially passages that addressed her relation with them. Her writing was literally a tool of seduction; one that consistently kept her flirting with the threat of 'exposure'.

A green demon in me impelled me to work on copying right under Hugh's eyes – taking risks with a beating heart, terrorized when I had to go downstairs and leave my work, yet incapable of acting otherwise. I felt demonic elation: If he reads it, then let things happen. I await the catastrophe. I *desire* the catastrophe, and I dread it (Nin 1993: 267-8).

When Hugo finally did read the opened diary that contained explicit references to her adultery, and begged Nin for the 'truth' promising forgiveness, she 'began to lie, to lie eloquently'. In her lie, Nin claimed to have been working on her 'invented journal' comprised of literary fantasies that are 'all invention, to compensate for all I do not do

[...].’ She offers to share the ‘real’ diary with Hugo, but delays and distracts him until he is sufficiently reassured by her protests of innocence that she need not bother (ibid: 268-270).

Anonymity was a double concern for Nin. With the aim of publishing always in mind, Nin had not only her own anonymity and concealment to protect, but those of the people whom she implicated as well. Once a text is published it takes on a life of its own. It is no longer a personal dialogue with one’s own creative process, and the threat of ‘exposure’ and ‘disclosure’ has wider implications.

It is significant that the story of Judith’s decapitation of Holofernes is located in the Apocrypha (which means ‘secret or hidden books’) of the Bible. This was a story that was only to be shared with the ‘wise’ and the ‘worthy’ (II Esdras 14.1-48 of Apocrypha). Within the Apocrypha itself, the theme of publication is specifically addressed. Out of two hundred and four books of the Bible, the last seventy (The Apocrypha) were to remain unpublished and reserved only for the ‘wise among the people’ (II Esdras 14.46).

With regard to research, citation of sources becomes relevant here in order to establish the context of interpretation. Freud’s raid on the Apocrypha may go against the explicit sentiment of both the narrative of Judith’s decapitation of Holofernes and the text in which it is located as well. Yet scholarly investigations that use unpublished material, such as personal letters, also crosses the boundaries between private and public knowledge. Moreover, that we know the alias ‘Dora’ stands in for ‘Ida Bauer’ and the significance of the use of ‘Dora’ in relation to ‘Rosa W.’ and ‘Rosa F.’ shows the extent to which Freud did reveal the ‘method of *his* madness’ in his own (published) work.

In discussing the symbolic significance of my own name, I implicate ‘Maia’ and my family. The narratives of other people within my own identity texts are fabrications of perception and interpretation: just as ‘Dora’/Ida Bauer and Judith were for Freud; and Joaquin J. Nin y Castellanos, Otto Rank, Henry Miller, et al. were for Nin. Narratives of identity are not about the ‘real truth’ of anyone, including myself (the authors). It is

problematic to name others within narratives of subjectivity when they have no voice of their own in such representation. But in altering specificity, as the example of the alias illustrates, meanings go amiss. Thus, it matters whether my mother's name is Rosa, Ida, Judith, Sally, Anaïs, Beatrice, Pumpnickel or none of the above. And it is significant, with regard to encryption, that certain details remain confidential.

Nin's desire to make the whole story known after her death gives the lie to the notion that the *Diary* (sic) is a lie. Her request that her complete diaries be published eventually makes it possible to put her "lies" in the context of social constructs such as marriage and motherhood – whose definitions are themselves comprised historically, socially, and linguistically and are thus called into question by Nin's refusal to honor their encodings (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 163-64).

Nin's position in the establishment of the Women's Movement in the early 1970s, which was the peak of her living career, was influenced by the presentation of herself as a woman who struggled for emotional and material independence and successfully overcame her circumstances through writing. In terms of her career, this 'success' can be verified by the acclaim she received late in life, including an honorary doctorate from Philadelphia College of Art in 1974 and elected membership to the National Institute of Arts and Letters in 1977.

However, the early publications of the *Diaries* gave a particular slant to the reading of her identity text. Besides editing out the sexual aspect of her relationships with so many men (including her father), she omitted the circumstances of her marriage to a successful banker whose money she relied on; not to mention her bigamous marital situation, which began in the late 1950s when she married Rupert Pole. She further encrypted her abortion in 1934 into a narrative of 'stillbirth', which formed the basis for her novel *Under a Glass Bell* (1944). In so doing, her struggles with money, self-sufficiency and the role of women in culture and artistic production, lost a significant context in the published representation of the expurgated *Diaries*.

In her lectures of the 1970s, Nin insisted that these *Diaries* left nothing of importance out. This insistence, however, was based on a certain interpretation. For example, when asked if she went back later to 'rewrite' or 'polish' her journal entries, Nin

replied with a decisive 'no' (Nin [1975] 1992: 162). When explicitly asked, 'Did you ever go back over the diaries at all then?' Nin again gives the same answer (ibid: 163). Yet in this context, Nin is speaking of the spontaneity of the actual writing process and the need not to censor a train of thought. She is not addressing the question of editing for publication. When she does discuss this issue she is very clear, but the implications of her answer are obscured by the omissions themselves. The editing criteria for publication that Nin describes is two-fold, confidentiality and repetition were named as her primary concerns:

There are some ethical reasons for editing the diary – there are some people whose lives I am not at liberty to disclose – and there are repetitions in the diary that are very tiresome. The diary has to be edited, but edited only in leaving *out* certain things but not in *changing* anything. You have to leave out some things because certain people are still alive who would like their lives not to be disturbed (ibid: 169 *italics in original*).

She also asserts that '[C]ertain intimate aspects of one's life and that of others should be preserved. Scandal obscures rather than enhances the deeper meaning of experience' (ibid: 168). This particular reference corresponds with Richard-Allerdyce's suggestion, noted earlier, that the "'truth" of Nin's writing as published during her lifetime has been there all along' (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 163). Nevertheless, her status as a literary role model and pioneer was controversially shaken when the posthumous publications of the unexpurgated (less edited?) *Diaries* and her 'erotica' came to light.

The erotica, (*Delta of Venus* [1977] and *Little Birds* [1979]) is situated in Nin's production of work as both a side venture of the 1940s and a posthumous coda to her life's work (alongside the unexpurgated *Diaries*). Through her capacity as Henry Miller's 'agent', Nin was offered the opportunity to write erotica for a dollar a page for a private collector. She was provoked by the challenge that, 'no woman has ever written authentic erotica' and 'the suggestion that she could make a valuable contribution by telling what women really think about during sex' (Fitch 1993: 232).

Many people, including myself, became familiar with Nin for the first time through her erotica. Whereas previously she was known through her *Diaries* and fiction by a more

select literary circle, the erotica catapulted her into mainstream circulation.⁵⁰ While the erotica, as a specific genre, may have been a tangent from her 'real writing' that cannot be read in the same way as her other work, the politics of the erotic is a theme that is consistently implicit in her identity text as a woman and an author.

In the preface to *Delta of Venus*, Nin frames her experience of writing erotica in terms of establishing a language for the sexual experience of women by a woman. She goes into detail about the tension created by the collector's demands to 'leave out the poetry' and 'be specific', and about the compromises this necessitated in her own agenda. For Nin, the power of eroticism is located not in the explicit sexual activity, but in the '[I]ntellectual, imaginative, romantic, emotional' aspects, 'which are the fuel that ignites it'. She concludes by saying, '[I]f the unexpurgated *Diary* (*sic*) is ever published, this feminine point of view will be established more clearly. It will show that women (and I, in the *Diary*) have never separated sex from feeling, from love of the whole man' (Nin [1978] 1990: vii-xiv).

Nin's posthumous revelations received an ambivalent reception amongst personal friends, public fans and critics. Some, such as Alice Walker, believed the erotica was 'the missing piece of Nin's work', while other 'feminist readers' were angered by the earlier suppression of her sexual life (Ferrone 1986: 41). Still others argue that the erotica 'bolstered' Nin's 'role as pioneer in depicting women's sexuality' (Friedman 1991: 349).

Amongst those who knew Nin personally, there was mixed opinion as to whether Nin really wanted the omitted material made public after her death. Henry Miller and her husband Rupert Pole, who was left in charge of her estate, insist that she intended the posthumous publications. However, Fitch argues that 'others, remembering her abhorrence to vulgarity, which she considered the worst sin, find it ironic that her *Delta of Venus* (and later *Little Birds*) give her posthumous fame' (Fitch 1993: 408). '[...] for the mature and gracious woman they know seems threatened (Alden uses the word 'murdered') by the younger woman who would commit incest and write pornography' (ibid: 377).

The conflicting information about Nin's authorisation of her posthumous publications is telling of the multifaceted character of her own identity text, even as she was known among very close friends. Both interpretations (that she did, and did not, want the material exposed) are consistent with versions of Nin that she laid out for us in her work. That the publications were not what Nin wanted is in keeping with the emphasis she put into keeping secrets as a condition of masquerade, a prerequisite for feminine identity and the departure point to inventing a specifically female 'voice' in her writing. That Nin wanted all to be exposed after death is to shift the attention from the artifice of disguise to the woman behind the veil. To ultimately reveal the specifics behind Nin's masquerade provides a deeper insight into the game of concealment that characterises her subjective specific embodied experience of auto-*authorisation*.

IV. I::Signify – Maternal-Feminine Embodiment

The Blind 'I':

Another aspect of anonymity that is implicated within the process of auto-*authorisation* concerns that which is concealed from the subject at any given time (and space) with regard to one's own subjectivity. This is the significance of Lacan's algebraic denotation of subjectivity with a bar across it (\$). Subjectivity, and symbolic presence within the Order, is predicated on a fundamental *méconnaissance* (misrecognition) of identification with the specular mirror image (Lacan [1966] 1977: 1-7). In identifying (I) [with] the specular image (i) in the Mirror Stage, the infant [i(a)] takes note of his subjectivity for the first time [I(0), or as Lacan favours, \$]. This 'note taking' inscribes, is an inscription of, what Lacan calls a 'notch' or a 'stroke' onto the subject that marks his entrance into the Symbolic (Lacan [1973] 1998: 141-2).

In this way, the stroke marks the irreparable split between image and materiality that introduces desire in/onto the individual. The i(a) is severed and while the 'i' remains a visible mirage of (primary) narcissistic identification for the subject (\$), the 'a' becomes the lost object of desire. This 'a' is only to be recognised in the Other and can never be re-established on the site of the subject. For at the same time that the stroke marks the occasion of individuation, it resurrects a barrier (the 'bar' in the denotation of \$) between embodied experience and subjectivity as signifier (ibid.). This resur[e]ction is the phallus. The 'phallus' is, as Grosz puts it, 'heir to the role of *objet a*' (Grosz 1990: 133).

How is it that nobody has ever thought of connecting this [the gaze] with...the effect of an erection? Imagine a tattoo traced on the sexual organ *ad hoc* in the state of repose and assuming its, if I may say so, developed form in another state. How can we not see here, immanent in the geometrical dimension – a partial dimension in the field of the gaze, a dimension that has nothing to do with vision as such – something symbolic of the function of the lack, of the appearance of the phallic ghost? (Lacan [1973] 1998: 88).

The phallus is not the subject. The phallus is the desire for what is lost (the *objet petit a*) by the resur[e]ction of the bar, which marks the note taking of the infant's own image and the simultaneous transformation into subjective status. Although explicitly

framed as distinct from the penis in Lacan's framework, in the Castration Complex that follows the Mirror Stage, the phallus is nonetheless symbolised by the sign of the penis. The lack of the phallus, which is the essential condition of the subject, is represented by the lack of the penis on the site/sight of the woman's genitals. Phallic desire, the constitution of the subject, is explicitly defined in the negative in this way (Lacan [1973] 1998: 253).

The representational schema that the genitals symbolise, however, is secondary to the condition itself. This is why the Castration Complex is shifted in Lacan's re-reading of Freud so that it follows on from the Mirror Stage rather than being the significant moment of individuation. Primary narcissism is the relation that the subject has to its delusional specular image at the Mirror Stage, the 'i' or ego. This relation takes place within the Imaginary, but is nevertheless informed by a psychical corporeal mediation between the image in the mirror (the gaze) and the materiality of the body (the eye). Thus the subject's understanding of the parameters of bodily definition are understood through an 'imaginary anatomy', or mapping, of psychical corporeality. The surface of the body, both as the reflection from the mirror and as the site of sensation (especially around the rim of the orifices) acts as a mediation of psychical corporeality between the Imaginary and the Symbolic registers.

Secondary narcissism, which occurs at the Oedipal Stage of the Castration Complex, is a symbolic *representation* of primary narcissism that is superimposed over the initial inscribing and inscriptive moment of identification. It is at this stage that the imaginary relation the subject has with his own body is given psycho-symbolic 'reality'. Thus embodiment, void of signification (the *objet petit a* / the object of desire / the phallic gaze or ghost), is rendered un-definable and un-findable; it is relegated to the *other* side of the Symbolic Order...it is positioned outside that Order as the 'Real', and is characterised as a *lack*. That which you *are*, you cannot see and therefore cannot recognise, identify (with) or know. That which is 'I', is only the reflection that 'I' has in relation to the

embodiment of anOther. Thus the Other is the only reflection of subjectivity that 'I', as a subject, can *have*.

The Dead 'I':

If the figure of the dead father survives only by virtue of the fact that one does not tell him the truth of which he is unaware, what, then, is to be said of the *I*, on which this survival depends? He did not know...A little more and he'd have known. Oh! let's hope this never happens! Rather than have him know, *I* die. Yes, that's how *I* get there, there where it was: who knew, then, that *I* was dead? Being of non-being, that is how *I* as subject comes on the scene, conjugated with the double aporia of a true survival that is abolished by knowledge of itself, and by a discourse in which it is death that sustains existence (Lacan [1966] 1977: 300).

The 'I' (in English language) is a linguistic signifier that makes meaning register of and for the subject. In order for Lacan to have 'I' signify, the father – that is, the Name-of-the-Father cannot know that he is dead. The son must not acknowledge this fact – that the Name-of-the-Father is an empty signifier: a meaningless symbol. The fallacy of the 'I' of subjectivity is that it never signifies a subject, it only ever registers as an ideal (the ego ideal), as a signifier of what can never become. There always is, will always be, a gap between embodied experience and its representation within language as the 'I' of the subject (Lacan [1966] 1977: 287).

In order to live with this split, the subject identifies himself as 'I' and projects all notions of 'Not-I' onto an external object that is not him. Defining presence through its perceived opposite, that is defining the phallus by the negative in the Oedipal Stage, institutes a hierarchical set of power relations that is predicated on mis-recognition, denial and appropriation. This binary projection can be seen in operation within patriarchal culture as a series of dualistic formulations: Subject/Other; Master/slave; Man/woman; Mind/body; Culture/nature; Word/image; Theory/practice, etc. Lacan attempted to distance psychoanalysis from Hegel, and preceding Humanist philosophies of *cogito*, which foreground a mind/body split and assume a transparent subject. Nonetheless, he constructs a discourse within a traditional binary of I/Not-I. The difference is that Lacan's theory is essentially narcissistic:

Lacan invites us to look back beyond the play of rivalries and aliases that the Oedipal phase initiates, and to behold an anterior world in which the individual has only one object of desire and only one alias – himself (Bowie 1991: 32).

Lacan locates the I/Not-I binary within the definition of subjectivity itself, so that the dynamic that appears to operate outside the subject is actually the dynamic that constitutes the subject. Thus, the 'Not-I' is the 'Other' to the subject; but in fact it is an intrinsic feature of the subject himself, who is in a state of denial as to his own inherent split and the empty characteristic of his own signification. The *objet petit a* is a symbol of 'simply the presence of a hollow, a void, which can be occupied, Freud tells us, by any object, and whose agency we know only in the form of the lost object [...]' (Lacan [1973] 1998: 180). In this way, the attributes that are assigned to the *objet petit a* are the signal of the (Name-of-the-) [F]ather's death connoted, but never denoted, in the signifier itself.

Yet the *objet petit a* is also, paradoxically, associated with 'woman'. First, because it is the separation from the mother at the moment of primary narcissism that sets this life/death tension into motion. Secondly, because within the construct of secondary narcissism, it is through the woman's 'lack' of a penis that she represents the void this tension vacillates within.

In Lacan's equation the *objet petit a* is indicative of both the death of the father and the loss of the maternal body. However, a significant privileging of losses is in operation in both Lacan and Freud's formulations. Freud acknowledges that the death of the father follows on from the separation of the infant from the maternal body. Yet it is the paternal rather than maternal loss that is recognised, with regard to murder and the making of the subject. Lacan relegates the 'libidinous investment on the mother' to the realm of the 'mythical', moving the maternal figure even further away from the scene of subjectivity (ibid: 256). The relation with the mother is only 'known' after the death of the father...it does not pre-figure it in any 'significant' way. This is because, in the formulations of both Freud and Lacan, the relation to the mother is, as Irigaray reiterates, 'always kept in the dimension of need' rather than 'desire' (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 36).

The bar inscribed across the subject is Lacan's positioning of Freud's notion of the unconscious, reduced to its most fundamental function (Lacan [1973] 1998: 41-2). In Rankian terms, I should say that the bar relates to the trauma of birth, the separation from the maternal body that is so intensely traumatic that it is repressed within the subject. The pre-Symbolic relation that the infant has with the maternal body, his own embodiment with regard to this symbiosis and, indeed, his own respective embodiment, is permanently barred to the subject upon entrance to the Symbolic. In both Lacan and Rank's respective frameworks the influence of Freud remains evident: the knowledge of this earlier 'pre-condition' of subjectivity is only accessible to the subject through acknowledgement and engagement with the unconscious.

Moreover, both Lacan and Rank recognise in their own way that this engagement only occurs from a position *within* what Lacan calls the Symbolic. The 'Real', can only ever be understood to have meaning when it is articulated within language (through negotiation with the dominant [art] ideology of culture). In this respect, the hysteric/neurotic is understood to exist below the bar, outside the Symbolic, because expression is communicated as symptoms on the site of the body (as sign), rather than taking up a space, occupying a place, within signification.

Rank and Lacan, like Freud, theorise subjectivity from the position of the 'son'. Freud's theory of primary anxiety places power in the hands (or more accurately, the penis) of the father who must be killed, while both Rank and Lacan emphasise a displacement of the father (as sign) in their own respective formulations. Within these narratives, the mother is either repressed (Freud and Rank) or negated (Lacan). Thus the father must die and the mother is lost and concealed.

The idea that parental loyalties are at play in the making of the subject is, upon closer inspection, a relative notion. Nevertheless, desire for the father's position is evidenced by these theorising sons... wanted dead or alive...and at the cost of female subjectivity. Irigaray, on the other hand, wants the mother reinstated for the sake of the

daughter; and the father's erection to give way to the psycho-symbolic significance of the navel, as the scar left by the severing of the umbilical cord.

The maternal-feminine [Not-] 'I':

When Freud describes and theorizes, notably in *Totem and Taboo*, the murder of the father as founding the primal horde, he forgets a more archaic murder, that of the mother, necessitated by the establishment of a certain order in the polis. Give or take a few additions and retractions, our imaginary still functions in accordance with the schema established through Greek mythologies and tragedies. I will therefore take the example of the murder of Clytemnestra in the *Oresteia* (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 36).

Irigaray's reading of the *Oresteia*, in 'The Bodily Encounter with the Mother' ([1981] 1991), provides a mythological basis for her argument that the murder of the father is already predicated on cultural *matricide* at a 'primal level'.⁵¹ The *Oresteia* pre-figures Oedipus in the chronology of Greek mythology: Oedipus is 're-enacting the madness of Orestes' whose crime of murdering his mother, Clytemnestra, in the name of the patriarchal Order, continues to haunt the 'son' from generation to generation (ibid: 36-37). Like Rank, Irigaray's interpretation emphasises the significance of the mother in such a way that challenges the Freudian privileging of Oedipus. Moreover, her interpretation also challenges the Lacanian privileging of the Name-of-the Father.

As Irigaray's psychoanalytic theories are contemporaneous with Lacan, this refutation of the Symbolic Order, which the Name-of-the-Father signifies, is tantamount to Rank's heresy with regard to Freud. Indeed, her second book, *Speculum* (1974), is both a critique of Freud and the legacy of psychoanalysis which continued to develop after his death, in which Lacan is implicated. The analogy made here between Rank and Irigaray is verified by the fact that Irigaray, like Rank, was 'excommunicated' or as Irigaray put it, 'put into quarantine': with the publication of *Speculum*, she lost her post at the Department of Psychoanalysis at Vincennes in 1974 (Whitford in Wright 1992: 178).

Irigaray contests Lacan's emphasis on the spoken and linguistic structure of the subject. She is not interested in the apparatus of the 'I'. Instead, she is concerned with the embodied experience that cannot ever be represented by this signification, precisely because it is always only ever an empty signifier:

According to this order, when a child is given a proper name, it already replaces the most irreducible mark of birth: the *navel*. A proper name, even a forename, is always late in terms of this most irreducible trace of identity: the scar left when the cord was cut. A proper name, even a forename, is slipped on to the body like a coating – an extra-corporeal identity card. Yet, no matter what use he makes of the law, the symbolic, language [*langue*] or proper names (the name of the father), in practice the psychoanalyst usually sits behind the analysand, like the mother he should not look back at (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 39, *italics and brackets in original*).

In the psychoanalytic situation, the analyst is the Other, the subject-presumed-to-know, for the patient...but the analyst, as subject, is also an 'I'. Women are positioned within Lacan's framework as the 'other', but because they are excluded from *having* the phallus their position as 'Other' is tenuous. Irigaray speaks as Other, in so far as she is an analyst: subject-presumed-to-know. She also speaks as 'other', from her position as a woman whose subjectivity is mis-recognised as a lack. Her primary focus is on the position of 'woman' in relation to the maternal body: sexual difference and same-sex encounters between women that exist without binary opposition.

Language is problematic for auto-*authorisation*: it bars the subject from knowing 'his' own embodiment and from articulating embodied experience. Paradoxically, language is also the necessary means by which a subject is constituted and represented. As sexually distinct from men, women enter language, and are positioned to it, differently. For men, language signifies the loss of the mother and the death of the father, as his position is usurped by the son. For women, language is specifically needed to establish autonomy and distance from the maternal body that is never lost because it doubles within the female subject's own psychical corporeal embodiment. What is more, the father is not usurped nor necessarily need die, in order for women to speak. Instead the figure of the father, as for Nin, provides a potential source of identification that sits outside the semiotic relation to the maternal that can serve to guide the process of marking respective boundaries between mother and daughter identities.

The existing Symbolic structure of language, however, offers no way of establishing a positive separation between mothers and daughters, since it fails to recognise woman as a symbolic-presence at all. The acceptance of the Symbolic Order instigates an

immediate disavowal of the maternal that cuts women off from their primary source of identification. The only representations of female identity on offer within the Symbolic are predicated on man's desire. A/the woman has no access to her own sexual and sexed identity because there is no means by which to symbolically represent such subjective specificity between mothers and daughters, or between women.

In this way, the mother's sex, the maternal-feminine position of female subjectivity, is forfeited in exchange for the (patriarchal) social worth of woman as other. The daughter, as well as the son, is forced to commit matricide in order for women to appear 'feminine' for men. In so far as mothers wish their daughters to be accepted within society, they too collude in the murder of the maternal-feminine, as it would threaten the prescribed conventions of femininity that are the guarantors of their daughter's worth.

Therefore, Irigaray argues, women must create a new language, another Symbolic that is meaningful rather than meaningless; that is defined in a positive recognition of the 'maternal-feminine' as a corporeal being rather than defined in the negative (ibid: 43). Until this happens, women will continue to collude in the matricide that occurs through signification. To this end, Irigaray retains the I/Not-I binary and seeks reconciliation with/in the Not-I, disavowing the legitimacy of the classic psychoanalytic 'I' for women, who are of a different sex from men.

The Asymmetrical 'I':

Castration means that *jouissance* must be refused, so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder (*l'échelle renversée*) of the Law of desire (Lacan [1966] 1977: 324, *italics in original*).

And so, the openness of the mother [*ouverture de la mère*], the opening on to the mother [*ouverture à la mère*], appear to be threats of contagion, contamination, engulfment in illness, madness and death. Obviously, there is nothing there that permits a gradual advance, one step at a time. No Jacob's ladder for a return to the mother. Jacob's ladder always climbs up to heaven, to the Father and his kingdom (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 39-40, *italics in original*).

Gender and sex are confused at the moment language is introduced to the subject... subjectively and theoretically speaking. The difficulty that women face in creating a new language that speaks of and for their sexual difference is that cultural constructions of

gender are invariably and problematically implicated. It is at the Oedipal Stage where the Castration Complex occurs that sexual in/difference is problematically introduced within Freudian, Rankian and Lacanian psychoanalysis.

The schema of erogenous zones that defines sexuality within these frameworks is asymmetrical; in so far as the primary erogenous zone for boys and men remains constant, while it is said to shift within the development of the woman. In the pre-pubescent period, little girls are considered, within classic psychoanalysis, to be 'the same as' little boys. That is, they both have an 'active' primary erogenous zone: for little boys it is the penis and for little girls it is the clitoris. However, the 'proper' (read 'normal' heterosexual) woman shifts from her 'active' sexual form of gratification to a 'passive' one. This shift moves the primary erogenous zone from the site of the clitoris to the vaginal passage, so that the woman is, said to be, fully sexually developed only when she derives sexual gratification from the penetration of the man's penis, over clitoral stimulation. In this shift, woman occupies her 'proper' position in relation to man as the passive 'other' and the biological reproducing receptacle.

This asymmetry, however, is different from the earlier 'asymmetrical' relations to the maternal body that Irigaray outlines in her formulation of sexual difference. According to Irigaray, 'women always stand in an archaic and primal relationship with what is known as homosexuality. For their part, men always stand in an archaic and primal relationship with heterosexuality, since the first object of their love and desire is a woman' (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 44).

The Castration Complex demands that little girls, like little boys, give up identification with the mother in order to 'enter into the desire of/for the father'. However, Irigaray argues that this restricts women to the heterosexual condition of man. From the homosexual position of woman this demand is 'completely pathogenic and pathological', since a little girl's subjective identity *is* the 'maternal-feminine'. Thus for a little girl to

give up the love of her mother, is asking her to give up her relation to herself. It is for this reason that Irigaray calls upon women to 'discover the singularity of our *jouissance*':

For women, there are at least two modes of *jouissance*. One is programmed in a male libidinal economy in accordance with a certain phallic order. Another is much more in harmony with what they are, with their sexual identity. [...] But if we are to discover our female identity, I think it is important to know that, for us, there is a relationship with *jouissance* other than that which functions in accordance with the phallic model (ibid: 45).

In 'The Gesture in Psychoanalysis' ([1987] 1990), Irigaray questions Freud's assumption that a child is 'neutral' in such a way as to draw attention to the specificity of language. Irigaray is skeptical of the suggestion that the child is considered 'neutral' in Freud's framework because, 'the word for child in German, Freud's language, is neuter in gender [...].' Nonetheless, she takes this consideration on board by revisiting the *fort-da* episode that marks 'Freud's scene of entry into the symbolic order'.⁵²

Irigaray has two important points to make with regard to Freud's reading of the 'fort-da' game. First, that the specificity of the German language does not translate meaning in the same way when applied to a French speaking small boy, whose equivalent words would be 'ici' (here) and 'là' (there). After applying the same corporeal consideration to this translated set of words as she does to the German 'fort' and 'da', Irigaray concludes that, '[T]he hypothesis that the gesture [of 'fort-da'] is one of appropriation is not invalidated with the change of language: but it is open to question' (Irigaray [1987] 1990: 130-1).

The second, and in many ways more important, point that Irigaray makes is to do with the specificity of the child's sex as 'male' in the 'fort-da' example. The little girl neither gestures in the same way in the absence of the mother, nor can the 'fort-da' game represent a/the little girl's relation to the mother that is predicated on 'same-ness'.⁵³ The overlapping proximity that characterises the relation between mothers and daughters goes beyond incest, into actual embodiment:

The girl has the mother, in some sense, in her skin, in the humidity of the mucous membranes, in the intimacy of her most intimate parts, in the mystery of her relation to gestation, birth, and to her sexual identity (ibid: 133-34).

In classic psychoanalysis the doubling of mother and daughter is read as all the more reason for women to be equated with the phallus/*jouissance*; to *be* the phallus rather than to *have* it. The mother is relegated to the realm of the Real, and the daughter is confined to an imaginary relation to her primary love-object and the source of her own identity. Woman, therefore, *lacks* entrance into the Symbolic. She signifies all that is lost to the man when he renounces the maternal figure so as to identify and align his subjectivity with the (dead) father. She further symbolises the 'lost paradise' of the intrauterine state that the male subject longs to return to, in so far as she embodies this desired state.

Irigaray remarks that '[G]irls keep all or nothing. This is their mystery, their seductiveness.' In so doing, she can be seen to fuel the argument that women are equated with masquerade; that the excess of appearance is a veil to hide an inherent lack. Yet, Irigaray's comment is directed at the observation that girls enter language differently from boys, rather than perpetuating the assumption that girls have no language at all.

Woman always speaks *with* the mother; man speaks in her absence. This *with her*, obviously, assumes different types of presence, and it must tend to put speech *between* (them), lest they remain woven together, in an indissociable fusion. This *with* must strive to become *with oneself*. They turn around themselves, they rise and descend as they roll themselves around themselves but they also close up those parts of themselves which are two: the lips, the hands, the eyes (ibid: 134, *italics in original*).

An understanding of speech *that includes silence* is necessary for women in order to establish their own identities in relation to a/the maternal body. Women are left open to each other, subject to each other, in a way that requires closures for the 'definition' of individual psychological corporeality. In so far as enunciation and language initiate foreclosures, this provides a vehicle for marking the perimeters between mothers and daughters. But this device for 'closure' is not, can never be, a 'foreclosure' in the way Lacan's ressur[e]cted bar across the subject is. When a woman closes herself off, she remains in 'connection' with the maternal body where her own body meets/touches itself.

She does not lose the *objet petit a*, since she embodies it in her own subjective specific identity.

It is not the case that women cannot speak, nor even that they cannot speak their own sexually specific language, but rather that the existing phallogentric Symbolic fails to recognise the significance of such gestures and utterances. This is the tragedy of the mis-recognition that classic psychoanalysis (especially the Lacanian framework) base the definition of subjectivity upon. Like the meanings that are lost when an alias is employed to disguise the specific identity of a patient, crucial meanings are also lost when woman is disguised and defined in the negative.⁵⁴

A/The Daughter's 'I':

He [Nin's Father] tells me about his life with Mother. It is a revelation, and I know it is all true because I recognise the traits in Mother which made such a life possible. I am profoundly shocked. First, because it is strange to discover the sexual life of one's parents – one's mother. Secondly, because Mother had seemed a Puritan to me...always. So reserved, so unsympathetic, so secretive about sex. Religion. Morality. Bourgeoisie. [...] Father trying to ascend as an artist; Mother the spider, voracious, bestial, not voluptuous, naturalistic, unromantic. Destroyer of illusion. Unkempt, dirty, without coquetry or taste (Nin 1993: 206).

Unable to emulate the victimized Rosa, Anaïs determined to escape the bonds of womanhood by mimicking her absent father – by imbibing his fierce sexual independence, along with his egotism, mendacity and aesthetic sophistication. [...] Anaïs seems to have inherited her father's gifts for dissimulation and seduction, artfully fabricating alternative versions of reality in tall tales which Rosa disdainfully labelled the 'Nin lies' (Henke 1997: 125).

In so far as the maternal-feminine is concealed from the daughter within the Symbolic, the mother is part of the female subject's own anonymity in the process of *auto-authorisation*. 'Dora' is the alias that Freud associated with lost and concealed identity on the basis of his memory regarding the relation between his sister, Rosa Freud, and her maid, Rosa W... 'Rosa' is also the name of Anaïs Nin's mother. This synchronicity leads conveniently to the questions of where and how the 'mother' is positioned within Nin's framework of linguistic signification with regard to sexual difference and a/the woman as an artist. For although Rank offered Nin a theory of primary anxiety that privileged the maternal body, his linking of artistic creation to a second 'birth' was a Symbolic, rather than 'concrete', tribute to the maternal significance (Rank 1989a: 378-79). In this, he

failed to provide Nin with a framework for positively identifying (with) her biological mother, Rosa Culmell de Nin (1871-1954).

Nin's narratives of her identity text frame the loss of her father as the central axis of her auto-*authorisation*; especially in her analysis with Rank and in the period of her life that I have highlighted thus far. Rank and Nin fixated on the role of the paternal figure because it provided a basis of identification, as well as posing a threat and a challenge, to the 'birth' of the artist. However, her paternal loss is superimposed over an earlier loss of maternal identification.

Nin ultimately addressed the two modes of *jouissance* that Irigaray names: the one 'programmed in a male libidinal economy' and the singularity of women's particular *jouissance*. Yet because Nin identified with her father as a/the Artist, she had to move in an inner direction through the creative 'labyrinth' of her life and work, in order to eventually recognise her primary relation to her mother as a positive sexually specific subjective position. Following on from her work with Rank, Nin returned to the relationship with her biological mother with regard to the metaphor of mothering, emerging in/for her own creative process. As Richard-Allerdyce notes, it is significant that Nin chose women analysts rather than men to probe this theme (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 68).⁵⁵

Not only was Nin's mother the primary caretaker in (and single parent for much of) Nin's childhood, but she also lived with Nin and Hugh Guiler in France for many years; including the periods in which Nin was in analysis with Allendy and Rank (Nin 1993: 409-10). Just as Rank rebelled from the perceived inadequacies of his father's presence, the presence of Nin's mother made her an imposing figure that Nin needed to distinguish herself from. However, unlike her distant father, Nin was in no position to glorify her mother because of her close proximity.

For example, even though Nin's mother was also a professional musician (soprano singer), it is her father who is recognised as the Artist (Friedman 1991: 340).⁵⁶ Moreover,

despite suggestions that her mother was the first to supply Nin with writing materials and encourage her to write, it is her father who is credited with the birth of the *Diaries*.

(Nalbantian 1997: xv) Not only is her mother's positive influence omitted from the mythic inception of the journals, but she is also, within Nin's identity text, presented as a forceful obstacle to the artistic identity that Nin sought through her writing practice.

After my mother died, I dreamt that I published the diary, and she read it. Which indicated that the person I was most fearful to confess to was my mother. She had once said: 'since you write about that monster Lawrence, you're no longer the nice little girl who wrote such a funny diary at the age of nine.' She passed judgement on me as a writer and never would read me again. So you see that this fear lasts very long, the taboos last so long (Nin [1975] 1992: 143).

Locating the significance of Nin's mother through the Rankian formulation of the double motif, Rosa can be understood to function as Nin's double (ego-ideal) in the form of a tormenting conscience upholding patriarchal values. Her influence as a single parent compounded her position as the authority figure laying down the law in Nin's childhood. In this way, the maternal and paternal figures were conflated in Nin's psycho-symbolic associations with her biological mother (leaving her father free to be idealised). As a devout Catholic, Rosa held strict views on the roles that women should perform as a wife and mother. From quite early on, Nin felt pressure from her mother to abandon her journal, so that such 'intellectual' tendencies would not pose a threat to her future 'life as a woman' (ibid: 161). However, the suffering that Nin witnessed with regard to Rosa's own life as 'woman', 'wife' and 'mother' rendered such positions problematic for Nin.

Her mother represented a *Not-woman* position of female subjectivity for Nin. First, because she enforced patriarchal rather than 'maternal-feminine' (to use Irigaray's term) notions of female identity. Secondly, because she embodied the kind of woman Nin did *not* want to become. Richard-Allerdyce suggests that, '[T]o reject this maternal role is also to separate the ego from the ego ideal, lessening her identification with the sacrificing style of her own mother' (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 147-8).

By putting the feminine against the masculine in her first book (the study of D.H. Lawrence she published in 1932), for instance, Nin devised a way to incorporate a psychoanalytic emphasis on

self-exploration into an identification with the writer she could see as both masculine in his creative energy and feminine in his use of language (ibid: 7).

Both Irigaray and Nin, in their own ways, address the question of sexual specificity with regard to language. In both cases the charge of essentialism has been directed at them because they confront the definition of woman in order to claim it for/from their own sex. Yet, whereas Irigaray was seen to be essentialist because she defines woman in relation to biological sexual difference, Nin appears essentialist in her embrace of femininity as a position for woman. As Nin was writing a generation before Irigaray, this recourse to gender in her language is indicative of the historical conditions that she lived within, which were distinct from Irigaray's era that coincided with post-structuralism. Nevertheless, both women faced a similar problem and share a similar intent with regard to linguistically articulating a position of difference that in neither case is essentialist in fundamentals.

Nin searched for answers to her own identity as a/the woman by distinguishing between sex and gender; embodying and deploying languages of gender that eventually led her back to an appreciation of her distinct sexed subjectivity. Like her positioning of D.H. Lawrence, Nin ascribed both 'feminine' and 'masculine' genders to her romanticised (imaginary) biological father. In so doing, she was able to position herself as 'feminine'; while simultaneously constructing an understanding of her father as her 'twin' that enabled her to occupy the/his position as 'artist'.

Within Nin's subjective specific framework, gender definitions become 'ensconced' (to use a Ninian term) with degrees of material presence. Because of the significance Nin placed on her father's approval, his criticism that she was ugly in childhood had a long lasting effect:

A girl's self-image emerges from the admiration of her father and the example of her mother. [...] Yet she has been told by her papa that she is skinny and ugly after early attacks typhoid and scarlet fever. Her mama tells her that she is frail, calls her 'dainty little doll from Saint Cloud [...]' (Fitch 1993: 14).

In Nin's auto-history, 'ugly' is equated with 'skinny' and 'fragile'. These terms correspond with a notion of diminished presence or lack of substance: frail. While fragility

may have derogatory associations with ugliness, it can also be positively aligned with 'delicate' and therefore socially 'feminine' attributes. In this way, frailty is unthreatening and potentially desirable to men whose own gendered image is defined in contrast to a woman's 'delicately attractive' features. This contradictory interpretation of 'ugly' perhaps is supported by Nin's father's obsession with photographing Nin naked as a child, mentioned earlier.

While Nin read D.H. Lawrence's use of *language* as 'feminine', it is her father's *physicality* that enables her to feminise his otherwise 'masculine' identity: 'He is very sensitive, very effeminate, and extremely selfish, of course. Needs to be loved and pampered [...]' (Nin 1993: 111). Thus, Nin has 'thoughts of a 'feminine' Father!' (ibid: 113). At the same time, his creative talents and privileged position as a/the Artist remains 'masculine' - all 'toughness, substantiality (mental intellectual, artistic)' (ibid: 45).

This understanding of her father mirrored Nin's framing of herself: as physically 'feminine' and simultaneously 'masculine' in her creative pursuits. Since her father left shortly after her childhood attacks of typhoid and scarlet fever, Nin equated illness with (abandonment by) her father and affection from her mother (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 157). In this way Nin's 'femininity' was tied up in longing for the totality of her mythic reunion with her father and the stifling yet stable support of her mother.

In so far as stability was associated with a 'stasis' that contradicted the fluidity of Nin's artistic identification (ibid.), 'illness' constituted a double rejection of her mother and a reinforcement of the significance of her father's artistic identity. Thus, it is possible to conclude that Nin embraced beauty and femininity as an attempt to live up to the image of 'Donna Juana' for her father and herself; to continually disprove and wipe away his curse of 'ugliness' (*passive femininity*) by actively seducing men. As such, her physical presence *must be* seen to be 'feminine' (read 'beautiful') for her to be successful as both a seductive 'woman' (in the phallic order) and [therefore] an 'Artist':

He tells me, "You have become beautiful. Lovely, that black hair, green eyes, red mouth. And one sees that you have suffered, yet the face is placid. It is made beautiful by suffering." [...] He talks

about the Nin illnesses as proudly, almost, as about a Nin possession. The Nin liver, the Nin rheumatism, the Nin pallor. He injects pride into our humiliations, even. Pride. Pride. And I realize suddenly the enormousness of my selfsame pride (ibid: 159-60).

The incestuous encounter with her long lost father and the abortion of her child (thought to be fathered by Henry Miller), both occurring in 1934, are the pivotal events that shift Nin's parental identification from father to mother. Nin detailed both the incest scene and her abortion in her unexpurgated *Diaries* of the time and in *Winter of Artifice* (coded as a stillbirth). For example, in the middle section of *Winter of Artifice*, which bears the overall title of the complete novella, the concluding passage reads: 'The last time she had come out of the ether it was to look at her dead child, a little girl with long eyelashes and slender hands. She was dead. The little girl in her was dead too. The woman was saved. And with the little girl died the need of a father' (Nin [1945] 1979: 118). It was not until Nin began work on *Under a Glass Bell*, almost a decade later, however, that the implications of this shift were fully recognised for Nin (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 71). This process also coincided with the start of Nin's analysis with Dr Jaeger.

Nin romanticised her absent father until she was able to physically encounter him in adult life and appreciate his human limitations. It is interesting to note, as the opening quote of this sub-section reveals, that at the moment of incestuous reunion with her father, Nin speaks of 'discovering the sexual life of her mother'. As ironic as this statement may seem, it is of great significance because it is precisely at this moment that Nin's own illusions of her father began to be destroyed: 'Poor Mother, with her dark, instinctive love. She alone has suffered – not Father. He is not whole enough to suffer' (Nin 1993: 320).

By identifying with her father as her narcissistic twin, Nin finally comes face to face with the realisation that she and her father are not the same. While he wants to live in the illusions they project onto each other, Nin is compelled to move beyond them in search of an inner 'truth': 'I see all the differences between us, and as to the resemblances, I make literature of them. I feel hard inside, because Father is less honest than I am in the final

analysis, and he is vain, vain, and such a comedian!’ (ibid: 307). Thus, Nin is echoing her own entrance into the embodiment of the maternal-feminine position when she states in her journal that her mother is, ‘[D]estroyer of illusion. Unkempt, dirty, without coquetry or taste’ (ibid: 206).

‘Nin’s concept of a prototypical feminine creator’ was ‘developed partly to distance herself from her father as its masculine opposite’ (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 61). At first, in her weakness, Nin’s mother was perceived as a threat to Nin. But as Nin came to understand and value the feminine methodology she invested into her *Diaries*, she was increasingly able to appreciate the strength and bravery required to occupy the traditional subjective positions afforded to women, which both she and Rosa embodied to differing degrees.

The shift to a mother figure also sheds light into [sic] the nature of Nin’s increasing use of mothering, during this stage of her career, to theorize the kind of creativity she characterized as feminine. Incorporating Jaeger’s insight that creation does not have to oppose femininity, that literary creativity can be an active not aggressive act, Nin continued to explore her roles in her diary and her fiction, specifically in relation to the polarization of masculine and feminine represented in Volume 2 of her Diary (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 68).

Within Nin’s subjective form[ul]ation, however, her psycho-symbolic understanding of ‘mother’ continued to be experienced as a ‘split’: She ‘associate[d] creativity with transcendent motherhood; obligation with mothering as a law-defined function, through which a woman must serve as support for a patriarchal structure’ (ibid: 116). In her numerous relationships with men, Nin repeatedly felt obligated to take care of their needs with regard to financial and emotional support. In this way, she continued to be torn between the traditional roles of being a ‘proper’ woman or embodying the position of artist herself.

This tension between fostering the life and work of others and attending to her own creativity was read, by Nin, as a negative symptom of ‘mothering’ that threatened to engulf her (Nin [1975] 1992: 132). To this end, Richard-Allerdyce concludes that, ‘Nin would become stuck in mother-identification for over two decades, unable to distinguish between

her own real desires and the ideal woman she strived to be' (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 68). The explicit 'theme of woman's self-authorship' (auto-*authorisation*), in relation to this lifelong conflict, forms the basis of Nin's five-volume 'continuous novel' (*Cities of the Interior*⁵⁷) that began with *Ladders of Fire* in 1946 (ibid: 100).

Richard-Allerdyce demonstrates how by the end of this epic 'novel' Nin had moved away from a language of gender in favour of the concept of *fluidity* (ibid: 160). Nin associated this fluidity with the sexually specific subjectivity of a/the woman and, nevertheless, as others have, found it to be represented by some Modernist male writers such as D.H. Lawrence, Proust and Joyce. Nin's understanding of fluidity is best represented through the stylistic form of her *Diaries* rather than (her) fiction, which she came to fully appreciate as such with the conclusion of the 'continuous novel'. Moreover, her emerging concept of fluidity was bound up in her notion of a 'synchronic moment' in art that incorporated music and the plastic arts into her understanding of linguistic signification, thus positioning the psychical corporeal subject, with all senses operational, into the discourse of creativity in an embodied way (ibid: 123). As such, Nin used corporeality as a structure for her writing and reinvested the empty linguistic signifier with the 'body' of her lost and then found 'mother' (*objet petit a*) in the way only a speaking daughter can.

V. I'm-properly a-MUSE-ed

In the absence of any representation of it [the first bodily encounter with the mother], there is always the danger of going back to the primal womb, seeking refuge in any open body, constantly living and nesting in the bodies of other women (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 40).

And if, in the attention the 'subject' now devotes to defining the sexuality of woman, his aim is to become identical to the being – the Being –of the other –the Other? – alterity once more absorbed into the Same, wanting it, id, wanting to see her, wanting to know [*voulant ça, la, sa ...voir*] in order to be even more like Self, to be more identical to Self, she can only reply: not...yet. And as it happens, in more than one sense, in that sense, never (Irigaray [1974] 1991: 58).

Rank locates the Modern artist explicitly within the rhetoric of the 'genius-concept'. For him, the notion of the genius characterises this particular period in the history of the artist type that has reached its peak in the individualisation of art ideology. In so far as the Modern artist 'must justify both life and experience by his work and further, must have a witness of his life to justify his production'; the *Muse* is an essential personal 'public', 'through whom or for whom', the artist is motivated to create (Rank 1989a: 50-51).



Fig.86 Marcel Duchamp: *Nude Descending a Staircase*, 1912, oil on canvas, 58 x 35". Philadelphia Museum of Art: Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection. ©1995 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

Nin's circle of artist acquaintances, in Paris in the 1930s, included Marcel Duchamp who, 'served Anaïs as a symbol of her own sense of fragmentation' (Stuhlmann *in* Nin 1993: 406).⁵⁸ His *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912) resonated with Nin's own image of a Modern female subjectivity that she sought to articulate from her personal experiences (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 10).⁵⁹ Duchamp's visual-material portrayal of woman as multiple in her positions, coincided with Nin's belief that all the roles of 'woman', such as, 'mother, muse, wife, professional, artist': make the creative task of synthesis greater for women artists.

At the same time that Nin identified with

Duchamp's image, however, she distinguished woman from the contemplation of

‘destruction and death’ that she read in Modern art (both literary and visual-material). She described this in terms of the ‘cult of ugliness’: the man-made underworld of ‘despair, of the gutter and the trash of our lives’ (Nin [1975] 1992: 101-05). These words hark back to her 1954 novel, *A Spy in the House of Love*, in which she makes an explicit reference to Duchamp, and the significance of his painting as representational of her own life:

For the first time, on this bleak early morning walk through New York streets *not yet cleaned of the night people's cigarette butts and empty liquor bottles*, she understood Duchamp's painting of a Nude Descending a Staircase. Eight or ten outlines of the same woman like many multiple exposures of a woman's personality, neatly divided into many layers, walking down the stairs in unison (Nin [1954] 1973: 112-113 *my emphasis*).

Along with Duchamp, the Surrealist movement was also implicated within the ‘cult of ugliness’ (the dominant art ideology) against which Nin defined her own artistic aims. Nin was not a part of the Surrealist movement, despite its pervasive presence in Paris in the 1920s and 30s. Nonetheless, she was both interested in and influenced by them.⁶⁰ Like Nin, the Surrealists looked to psychoanalysis and the notion of the unconscious for a framework of alternative ‘reality’. There are many corollaries between the Surrealists’ aesthetic and theoretical languages and Nin’s own approach to writing. Yet, in so far as Rank’s theories diverged from Freudian psychoanalysis, the framework that Nin adopted is distinct from the psychoanalytic model that the Surrealists looked to for inspiration. According to Richard-Allerdyce, the distinction between the Surrealists and Nin is located in her philosophy of ‘personal as political’ that Nin emphasised, ‘before it was fashionable among literary and cultural critics to do so’.

Whereas Nin valued the innovations of the Surrealists and their privileging of the dreamworld, for instance, she also believed that it is only by confronting one’s own past and coming to terms with one’s own anger and pain, so one can be creative rather than destructive, that political efficacy can be achieved (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 107-8).

Like many women artists involved in the Surrealist movement, Nin embraced the images of the *femme-enfant*⁶¹ and the *femme fatale*⁶²; as empowering positions from which to challenge traditional notions of passive womanliness and enter into the creative life culturally reserved for male artists. The Surrealist ideas about women were the container

for the movement's other principles, yet like Rank's use of the 'mother' in a symbolic sense, it was 'the idea of woman' rather than the 'real woman' that was operative in their formulations (Chadwick 1985: 65). The Surrealists' glorification of the unconscious and 'madness', combined with their interest in erotic desire as a means of transforming human consciousness, were the basis for idealising woman as Muse or 'Other'. In this way they could embrace these ideals by projecting them onto 'woman', while remaining 'objective' in their artistic development of form.

Whitney Chadwick, along with others, has revealed how Surrealist notions of 'femininity' that promised freedom and equality to women of the movement, ultimately only offered relative and ambiguous empowerment to them in socio-historical terms. The history of Surrealism has relied on the principles and practices established by a male-



Fig.87 Front book cover of Doane (1991). Cover photo: Louise Brooks, courtesy the Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive. Cover design: Trudi Gershenov.

dominated group that reduced the women artists to mythic images of the *femme-enfant* and *femme-fatale*, despite their own subjective specific artistic contributions to Surrealism. While these images of femininity are problematic for the identity of women (artists) in and of themselves, Nin deployed them in conjunction with Rank's theories of creativity and her own search for a/the woman's sexually distinct voice. This does not necessarily render Nin's embodiment of such images any less problematic. Nonetheless, it does position her within a different framework that allows for a more expansive reading of her

understanding of both femininity and the Muse.

The invocation of the Muse is explained by Rank as a 'demand for unconscious inspiration' that operates as a 'poetic licence'. As such, the Muse is 'the effect of the guilt-feeling' that arises during the artist's conflict between life and art (Rank 1989a: 423-24). The splitting of the artist's ego that results from this conflict produces a 'high' and 'low' self that 'characterizes his attitude' to both the Muse and his creations. Thus, either (or

both) can symbolise the 'highest and lowest' ('mortal and immortal'/'life or death') aspects of this split (ibid: 61). In this way, the Muse who is 'idealized by the poet' also represents his conflict and 'often comes off badly enough in real life' (ibid: 379-80).

In the life of many an artist this [relation of artist to the opposite sex] is a disturbing factor, one of the deepest sources of conflict, indeed, when it tends to force or beguile him into closer touch with life than is necessary or even advantageous to his production. To make a woman his Muse, or to name her as such, therefore, often amounts to transforming a hindrance into a helper – a compromise which is usually in the interest of productivity, but renders no service to life (Rank 1989a: 59-60).

In Rank's formulation the Muse is 'usually a real woman' (ibid: 52). The artist may also require more than one woman, 'for the different parts of his conflict'. This demand, Rank notes, leads to psychological, as well as social dilemmas for the artist. Ultimately, however, '[I]n every case the artist's relation to woman has more of an ideological than of a sexual significance' (ibid: 60-61).

Although on the surface this corresponds with the Surrealists' framing of 'woman', Rank is more explicit in his acknowledgement of the function of the Muse. For example, he counters the artist's emphasis, 'on the unconscious impulse to create', to which the Muse is associated, with a reminder of the importance that the 'conscious' plays in creation: 'the reference of creation to the unconscious, if nothing else, is a conscious act'. Rank attributes the over-valuation of the unconscious with strong guilt feelings, while the over-valuation of the conscious is put down to 'a desire to magnify and exalt oneself' (ibid: 423-24).

Moreover, his understanding of the Muse is closer aligned theoretically with Lacan than with the Surrealists. Lacan's references to the unconscious are not in relation to 'sexuality, or even sex', but of the 'relation to the phallus [the organ], in as much as it is lacking in the real that might be attained in the sexual goal' (Lacan [1973] 1998: 102). Thus, both Lacan and Rank desexualise desire (libido) with regard to the phallus (Lacan) and the creative impulse (Rank). They also both emphasise the splitting of the ego, and have essentially narcissistic frameworks; which function by implicating the Other within the process and on the site of individuation.

The fact that an idealized self-glorification in the person of another can take on a physical form, as in the Greek boy-love, has actually nothing to do with sex of the beloved, but is concerned only with the struggle to develop a personality and the impulse to create which arises from it. This impulse is at bottom directed to the creator's own rebirth in the closest possible likeness, which is naturally more readily found in his own sex; the other sex is felt to be biologically a disturbing element except where it can be idealized as a Muse (Rank 1989a: 56).

By Rank's own definition, the role of the Muse is not necessarily limited to women or heterosexual dynamics; since the process of projection and transference that takes place with the invocation of the Muse is of ideological rather than sexual significance. Rank places a slightly different emphasis on homosexual relations, which he finds best represented in Greek 'boy-love'; but also present in the more modern mentor/student situation. Indeed, in some respects the Muse is even more appropriately manifested in same-sex identifications, because of the primarily narcissistic strategy related to a process of self-birth (ibid: 61).

The distinction that Rank makes for a male artist between the significance of same-sex identification, and the use of a woman as Muse leans towards Irigaray's argument concerning the centrality of sexual difference in subjective identifications. As his theories of a narcissistic Muse are introduced into Nin's female embodiment of a/the artist, Irigaray's notion of 'woman-sister' homosexuality⁶³ becomes implicated within Rank's schema. In so far as Nin explored relationships with other women and came to interpret this through Rank's formulation, she can be seen to embody Irigaray's call of almost half a century later for women to, 'try to discover the singularity of our love for other women' (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 44-45).

VI. Lesbian a-MUSE-ment?

Inspiration is – I don't like to use the word abstract – but it's a pure quality which has nothing to do with the sex. Women can inspire women, and certainly very often in my early stage a woman was the symbol of what I wanted to be myself. So I would have these great attachments to the woman that I really wanted to be. Like June. I felt June was free and I was not. I was very much tied by my cultural conventional life, and I envied the freedom that she had attained by fantasy-making. I didn't realize how dangerous her freedom was. So women can do that for each other. We never know what is going to stimulate the center of creativity (Nin [1975] 1992: 91-92).

June is the only woman I will ever love in the manner I loved June, fantastically, erotically, literarily, imaginatively – the only woman who has deeply stirred me as an artist, who makes all others pale and lifeless. I miss her. I miss her (Nin 1993: 88).

Incest (from A Journal of Love): The Unexpurgated Diary of Anaïs Nin 1932-34

(1993) spans a period of Nin's life when her inter-personal relations were predominantly



Fig.88 'June Miller' from Nin (1993: un-numbered pages of photographs between 210-211).

with men. However, during this time she had one very profound encounter with a woman, June Miller, wife of the writer Henry Miller.⁶⁴ The complex triangle between them has received much attention since the release of Nin's unexpurgated *Diaries*.⁶⁵

Nin's passionate affair with Henry lasted for many years and then continued in friendship until her

death. Nin's encounter with June, on the other hand, was very brief: it was based on two visits that June made to Paris to see Henry, in the year between 1931 and 1932.

Nonetheless, it is the dynamics between the three of them that formed the basis of Nin and Henry's longstanding relationship. While this relationship goes beyond the scope of what can be included here, the influence that June had on Nin is significant to her own understanding of 'woman' in relation to her subjective specific identity, and the significance of the female Muse for a woman artist.

Nin was jealous of June, both in terms of the hold she had on Henry and in her personification of a 'vital' woman. In *A Woman Speaks* ([1975] 1992), Nin makes reference to Dostoevsky and her attitude towards June, describing the process of transforming 'jealousy' into 'love' as a form of actualization of an unconscious desire: 'What really happened was that I thought June was the acme of all women. So then you

love, and that was much more pleasurable than jealousy' (Nin [1975] 1992: 63). A large part of Nin's narcissistic emulation of June stemmed from Henry's love for both women, although it was not limited to this:

I love June because she has been a part of Henry. NO – we love each other as two women recognizing each other's value. There are resemblances between us (Nin 1993: 42, *emphasis in original*).

Nin and June allied themselves against the 'strangers' and 'symbols' of the man-made world around them, with which they were disillusioned (ibid: 30). Rather than positioning June as the 'other', Nin identified her as 'another facet' of herself - as, 'the unconscious woman in *me* that I couldn't reach or express' (Nin [1975] 1992: 68). Nin projected on to June what she could not see or accept in terms of her own subjectivity. For example, in a passage that could easily be applied to her, she describes June as, '[A] tormented, hungry child, desired and unsure of love, frightened, struggling desperately to wield power through mystery and mystification' (Nin 1993: 11).

In speaking of how women can inspire each other, Nin desexualised the definition of 'inspiration' and asserted that, '[I]t could have been a man too. It happened to be a woman' (Nin [1975] 1992: 68). Although this statement is made to corroborate Rank's view of the Muse; I would argue that the significance of June as a Muse for Nin is, nevertheless, bound up in the same-sex dynamic she introduced into Nin's erotic strategy. June replaced the phallic omnipotence of Nin's biological mother with an alternative, but equally problematic, understanding of the *sex* of woman. As such, she presented Nin with a conflict of identifications between being a woman ([like] June), an artist ([like] Henry) or a feminine artist (like D.H. Lawrence and her father).

Her movement toward a positive definition of a feminine role coincides with her continuing to hone a theory of creativity and gender. When June Miller tells her she has a "mixture of utter femininity and masculinity," for instance, Nin reports her negative response: "That is wrong, June. As soon as a woman has creativity, imagination, or plays an active role in life, people say: 'masculinity'." Depicting her own status as an artist as being compatible with a feminine role, Nin reinvents the notion of motherhood that she inherited from her parents and culture. She would develop this idea in fuller detail during her next analysis [with Rank] (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 53).

Both June and Henry offered Nin an entrance into the sphere of life, full of embodied experiences, that took her beyond the fantasy life in her mind. While Nin embraced this fullness of life and sensuality, both her identity as an artist and Henry's were defined by the capacity for mental activity; in the sense of 'true' imagination rather than 'objectivity'. In an attempt to distance June from the affinity she felt with Henry, Nin concluded that June had no 'true imagination'...because she resorted to using drugs (Nin 1993: 7-8). Moreover, in Nin's narrative, not being an artist, June, unlike Nin, lacked the capacity to understand Henry's mind and is thus rendered 'insane' in her failed attempts to do so (ibid: 23).

Nin equated June with an 'absence of secure identity' (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 35). Fluidity, the touchstone of Nin's sexually specific writing style in later years, is thus embodied by June who *is* the phallus for Nin, so that she can *have* it for the sake of her artistic identity. At the same time, however, Nin goes to great lengths to construct an understanding of herself as a 'proper' woman for the sake of her femininity, by paradoxically situating June as 'deviant' in contrast.

Thus, June is seen to embrace sexuality to excess in such a way as to make her 'manly' in her assertiveness. For example, 'June and the whores' lead in sexual activity, while Nin, 'being thoroughly Latin and sexually passive' waits for a man's pleasure (Nin 1993: 56-57). Nin also notes June's habit of masturbation in this context (ibid: 44). Nin is thus positioned as a 'real woman – a really *passive* female', while June is framed as a hysterical woman with a masculinity complex.⁶⁶

Nin is partially able to conceive of June in this way because of the anti-Semitic climate of the day and the fact that June was Jewish. June is explicitly portrayed as a destructive, 'ugly' Jewess:

Not only neurotic, abnormal, crazy, but vulgar and low-minded, stupid and destructive. Even one's crimes, one's neuroses have possibilities of beauty. June's show the face of a mean, suspicious, money-touched Jewess. June the sieve, as I called her when Henry asked me why after twelve hours of talk she could say good-bye smiling! (Nin 1993: 62).

Nin feared a 'double death' from June, to both her artistic identity and her 'powers' as a woman; specifically in the form of the 'double othering' *belle juive* image. Lying in bed together, Nin's innocence is depicted as endangered by June in bodily terms: a fear of contagion and contamination of June's spoiled body (ibid: 5). Elsewhere, in keeping with the *belle juive* imagery, Nin makes reference to *A Thousand and One Nights*. Here she places herself in the role of the female storyteller, while June is cast as the King, threatening destruction and death but ultimately to be prevailed over: 'The thousand and one nights of Montparnasse – each night a few pages, to prevent June from taking drugs. And I will tell June everything, even about my love of Henry – *that* I will keep for the last night' (ibid: 26).

At the same time that June is accused of manly displays of sexual overindulgence, she is denied the possibility of actively obtaining sexual pleasure in Nin's psycho-symbolic equation. Nin believed June to be 'sexually dead' and 'frigid' despite her 'whorish' behavior and her pretence to sexual interest. She poses the question: 'Was [June] always truly *frigid* (as Allendy suspects), or did she kill herself by excess, or by masturbation? It is strange that the idea of June's onanism⁶⁷ suddenly presents itself to my mind' (ibid: 44). In this way, Nin is able to retain the active position of *having* the phallus; while *being* the phallus, June remains unable to access her sexuality despite her illusion of activity in this sphere.

As I have demonstrated with regard to her father, physical presence is also implicated into Nin's form[ul]ations of identity in relation to June. In a time (long ago now) when robust women were still regarded as models of femininity, Nin had to defend her delicate features as 'beautiful', while also affirming her strength in other ways. Thus, Nin's fragile and delicate physique is contrasted by June who is framed in the negative as 'too strong'. She is seen to be 'tyrannical, healthy, undefeated, marvelously (sic) assertive'. Ironically, these qualities make June *vulnerable* in Nin's view. Sometimes this arouses 'pity' from Nin, while other times it provokes condemnation. This vacillation

illustrates the way in which the Muse represents the artist's own shifting attitude towards his, or her, position within the creative conflict (ibid: 20-23).

There is evidence, from Nin's *Diary*, to suggest that Nin equally threatened June and that this was also manifested in remarks regarding the body. For example, June is reported to experience her larger physique as, 'awkward and ungainly' when in bed with Nin (ibid: 39). Interestingly, June also sees Nin as 'dead': so dead that her body has no smell. Moreover, June concludes that Henry must be a homosexual (to love a 'woman without breasts!') and Nin a lesbian (to be attracted to such a weak man).

It is implied that Henry was wounded by June's malicious comments as he relayed them to Nin, but she responded with artful re-interpretation. Her small breasts, she argued, alluding to the image of the *femme-enfant*, are proportionate to her 'body of a young girl'. She attributes her lack of odor to her 'frailty, lightness of texture, [and] the fact that, not being fat, [she does not] perspire' (ibid: 63-64). Nonetheless, June's accusations seem to carry some weight for Nin because she returns to this theme later in her journal to note how her maid admires the perfumed fragrances that linger from her bath; which are so nice in contrast to the 'smelly' odors left by her previous employers (ibid: 77).

In her *Diary*, Nin paraphrases Rank's comments, the following year, on the significance of June: 'Said any lesbian tendencies were probably more imaginative than physical, due to identification with father' (ibid: 298). As well as positioning June as Nin's Muse through this suggestion, Rank also insinuates that because Nin desired her father, she could not (also) be a homosexual (desire a woman). This opinion is reversed by Henry, who reduces Nin's attraction to June to a 'lesbian' interest; convincing himself by such a statement, that June could not penetrate into Nin's 'mind' or 'soul'...the way he could. That is, that Nin's attraction to June is merely a physical curiosity or satisfaction that does not go beyond the surface of 'June's face and body' (ibid: 12). What is connoted in the above responses of both Rank and Henry, is their narcissistic desire (as men) to the object of Nin's attention. The need to qualify her relationship with June is predicated on

an either/or binary: it is assumed that Nin (as a 'proper' woman) cannot have any other desire beyond being the reflective Other to the male subject.

He [Henry] discovers through my journal that without the sucking or gestures [like those fucking] there exists *a suspended world of sensations* without factual culmination, which is more mysterious and deep than what he supposed existed between June and Jean, and June and me (ibid: 49).

Interestingly, Nin and June also each use the term 'pulling a lesbian act' to describe their respective manipulation of each other, so as to ascertain what value the other had for Henry (ibid: 41). These vindictive claims for superiority, however, are countered with contrary sentiments often enough to keep them in perspective. 'Lesbianism' is used in all these examples as a derogatory allusion to superficial (secondary) narcissistic pleasure. In so far as this is so, the verbal jousting between June and Nin, along with Rank's dismissal and Henry's fantasy regarding their lesbianism, are reductive in the light of Nin's underlying and lasting appreciation of her intimate exchange with June.

While Nin sought to understand her own womanliness through projection and identification with June, she nevertheless experienced a tension between the glorification of June as the embodiment of woman, and the real threat June posed to her own femininity. Thus, in attempting to reconcile her conflicted attitudes through symbiosis, 'going with June into everything and everywhere' (ibid: 7), Nin was not able to completely overcome the negative implications of June's presence. In the end, it was the negative transference that June evoked that ultimately led Nin to establish her own identity as distinct from her Muse. By the time their relationship had ended, she had relinquished her idealisation of June and clarified her own embodiment of 'femininity' as significantly distinct. Nin's encounter with June, like her reunion with her father the following year, confirmed that narcissistically seeking salvation in the image of the 'other' fails to re-establish the totality that, in Rank's view, an individual desires. It is only the creative process with oneself that can provide some reconciliation for embodied experiences of fragmentation.

June: the mandrake, a Euroasian plant (*mandragora*) with purple flowers and a branched root resembling the human body, from which a narcotic was prepared. The mandrake of *Genesis* was – and still is – believed to have magical properties (ibid: 30).

Nin assigns June the name 'Alraune', the German word for mandrake, which she later uses for a character in her fictional writing. A year later, when Nin and Rank unite and are searching for names to attach to each other, Nin says, 'I wanted to call you by the name of the creator of Alraune – except that I do not intend to be altogether Alraune to you....' By this time, Nin has moved on from her submerged identification with June. By the end of this particular passage, both Rank and Nin have agreed that 'You' is the most fitting name either one can use to represent the significance that the *other* holds for them (ibid: 339).

This conclusion highlights Nin's shift from a woman Muse to that of (yet) another man. Rank can only ever be Other, while same-sex identifications penetrate and confuse the boundaries of psychical-corporeality. At the same time, the designated 'You' suggests an understanding that merging with any another is always a misguided attempt to return to the intra-uterine state within the mother. Thus, the 'I' projected onto 'You' will not bring about the wished for 'us', but rather a deeper insight into the distinctness of 'I': the other subject remains separate (you) and the ego of the artist type (I) remains split. While the Muse can inspire and threaten the artist into creation, it is the creative act itself that carries a *hope* of totalisation.



Fig. 89 RyyA. Bread©: *A/The Woman* close-up of plaster coating used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster and muslin (coating), Dulux house paint, life size.

A PLAYful INTERMISSION



Fig. 90 RyyA. Bread©: *Scholarly Exhibitionist* close-up of screen with head used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster, wood, textiles and Dulux house paint screen size 130.7cm (h) 120.2cm (w).

A[d]Dress Rehearsal: The Embodiment & Spectacle of Praxis

NOTE:

This performance text is presented here as it was written at the time of its devising (Summer 1998).

The research project title was changed during the transfer from MPhil to PhD later that year. The original title is referred to here.

As noted in the introduction to the dissertation and discussed in the next chapter ('Artistica'), the use of the term 'narcissism' to describe my methodology has since been replaced with 'auto-eroticism'. Some of the other terms that appear in this text have also been re-defined since it was written.

The images that appear in this version of the performance text are still-frames from the (Hi-8 analogue) video footage of the actual performance delivered at the conference, as opposed to the re-staged photographs that were used in the POINT publication.

Preface

A[d]Dress Rehearsal: The Embodiment & Spectacle of Praxis was written as a script-based 'paper' with a view to a performed presentation for the delegates of the Practice, History & Theory Conference on 'the relationship of making to writing', University of Plymouth at Exeter, 10/11th of September 1998.

The reading of this script-based paper is one version of the text. However, the ideas for the performance explicitly shaped the writing of the paper, as well as adding additional layers of meaning and reading to the text.

I have added 'stage cues', in italics, to allow the script-based audience an indication of the non-script elements of the primary presentation of this text. Still images from the video of the actual presentation have also been imported to this document.



Introduction: I begin with a 'straight introduction', standing before a podium reading my notes. A black curtain is drawn closed behind me. I am wearing a lime-green trouser suit with a purple satin oversized shirt.

"I call myself RyyA. Bread. My working title, 'Professional Student', is a useful means of introduction for this conference; as it distinguishes my contributions from others here who may be speaking as lecturers, supervisors, educational administrators and/or professional artists and performers. This title refers to my current Research Studentship at Falmouth College of Arts where I am now in the second year of my doctoral research. My thesis is entitled, *PROJECT LIFE: Framing the Fragments of Experience & Understanding* and it incorporates both art practice and theory.

I do not consider my project to be 'practice-based'. Instead I am attempting to subvert the very terms 'practice' and 'theory' that are used to define both Art and Research, respectively and in relation to each other. In so doing I am also investigating what it means for *me* to be a self-defined 'Artist' and/or 'Academic'.

My methodology is the subtext of my thesis. The critical use of 'autobiography' is an essential aspect of my project as I am trying to develop a 'Narcissistic' strategy in which to read sexually specific subjectivity and representation. While I pay my respects to the ideological framework of psychoanalysis, I must emphasise my critical reading of its phallogentric formulation.

Ultimately, I am trying to move away from this whole structure, and take myself with me. The main objective in my work is to investigate the performative production of 'identity texts'. *My goal is not to answer the question 'Who am I?' but to identify a framework in which this question could make sense. {...and play with it}.*

Since both script-based and visual texts are under investigation in my research, performance has become a vehicle for me to traverse through these modes of articulation. The significance of a body of work changes to suit the demands of different discourses. In preparing my sculptural work for exhibitions within an artistic arena this year, I was concerned with where the notion of 'text' was located in the work, as well as the issue of artistic display. Today I am curious how the notion of 'The Exhibition' translates from an Artistic to an Academic context.

Thus my title, *A[d]Dress Rehearsal*, as well as the text it represents, is a 'play'... on words, which speaks to the masquerade of scholarship and praxis, as much as to how the body and dress are implicated in my sculptural work. By praxis I mean an intimate relationship between theory and practice."



Transition: I move away from the podium and the curtain behind me is opened to reveal a dressing screen (from a doctor's office). A few feet in front and to the right of the screen, stands a full-length plaster coating of my body (headless). The next section of script-based text has been pre-recorded onto audio-tape (using my own voice) and is amplified through a speaker, in front and on the left of the screen. A plaster coating of my face hangs from the speaker. As the tape reads the paper, I proceed to undress and make gestures behind the screen. Since the screen is lit from behind, shadows of my body are projected onto it for the audience to see.

"The sculptural work I will be discussing here has been the basis of my project to date. It began as a specific task to investigate the translation of autobiography from a literary into a visual vocabulary.



The exercise takes the notion of 'embodiment' very literally, although there are other interpretations I hope to explore.

In this 'play' I aim to strip down to my actual making process in order to expose the function of fantasy imbedded in my work. By doing this I hope to reveal the motivating tensions between provocation and pleasure.



The impetus behind my initial studio exercise was both a frustration at how I measure up to stylised representations of 'woman' provided by visual culture, and a desire to validate my body in its own terms, as a sensual component of subjectivity. This tension can be read in relation to the psychoanalytic term 'fetishism', in the sense that it is a simultaneous disavowal and acknowledgement of a culturally positioned existence.



I wanted to focus on my own specific body in order to accurately represent my perceived experience, and in the process re-define it. I refer to this gesture as *self-definition*, a term Grosz uses, which exists on a psychical corporeal level and has a material component. My libidinal investment with myself, the basis of Narcissism, is transferred from my body to the inanimate objects that represent me. This exercise signifies a performative gesture to not only be the cake (or in my case The Bread), but to have it, eat it and share it with others as well.

I refer to my sculptural work as 'plaster coatings'. The term 'coating' is useful because it describes the intimate physical relationship I have with the materials. The plaster coatings are the product of an enacted fantasy I have about my body and my ability to represent myself; an echo of the Narcissistic fantasy of being the whole self



reflected in the mirror. A fantasy that I can know myself, and that I am what I see before me. The coatings attest to the fictions inherent in their own description. Thus, the seemingly static pose of my 'leg' in one particular piece was actually made in two separate sessions, neither of which took up the pose that is finally portrayed.

The pieces are made by saturating muslin with wet plaster and covering sections of my body so that a thin plaster skin dries over my form and hardens into an object in its own right. I then climb out of the coating thus affecting a literal split between the piece and myself. The parameters of the initial exercise emphasised what I could do alone in the studio



with my own corporeal form. This unassisted approach to making the plaster coatings limited my access to my body and my ability to render myself whole, thereby reiterating and exposing the fantasy implicit in the Lacanian mirror stage.

The term 'coating' distinguishes my process from the more traditional method of 'plaster casts'. There is no casting process involved. There is no negative mould produced from which a positive is cast. My own body, if you like, is the positive; and the final pieces, although shell-like in construction, are positives as well. In these terms, the plaster coatings embody a doubling of a positive. This is particularly interesting in relation to theoretical constructions that attribute *jouissance*, excess and a fluid plurality to the female subject. The variety of body shapes and dimensions depicted in the range of pieces I have produced contradict my intention to address a corporeal specificity and reveal, in fact, a multitude of specificities.



The plaster coatings are also coatings as in a 'coat' one wears. The residual artefacts suggest a performance that has passed and escaped the viewer's gaze, while at the same time masking my body's absence by standing in for it. In this way they become like clothing, my persona is sanctified and signified through them but they do not constitute 'me'. The overlays of cultural associations that the materials bring to the work, such as medical bandages, shrouds and fashion garments, are in fact, the artefacts own entrance into artistic conventions.



They are (or perhaps I am) removable. The plaster coatings offer me more positions in which to have a presence and to therefore become. It is this element that I believe makes the plaster coating exercise performative within a visual language.

My reading of self-definition is predicated on autoerotic motivation. By autoerotic I mean 'play' and the question of what actually constitutes play for me. I want to know what happens when an outside object of desire is removed from the equation of the production process.

The idea of 'playing with myself' has erotic and sexual implications. By emphasising my corporeality and engaging my body directly with the other materials, I aimed to stimulate a libidinal investment sufficient enough to be called 'desire' and strong enough to propel my productivity. What I have found, so far, is that even in isolation, the 'other' is present. My agency is defined by how I carry out negotiations with this imaginary 'other'."



Transition: The audio tape stops at this point, and a slide with an image of the same suit that I was wearing is projected onto the plaster coating in front of the screen. I move out from behind the screen carrying a roll of cloth, a pair of scissors and my script. I am now naked. I spread the cloth on the floor and place the scissors down. I then stand behind the plaster coating to continue delivering the paper.

“The first thing I do to prepare for making a plaster coating is to undress. I do this to protect my clothes from getting dirty. Here my clothing retains my daily persona, while my naked body becomes a work suit.

I understand my naked body, as well as my clothes, to be a component of what Grosz calls the ‘imaginary anatomy’. They are psychical corporeal perceptions of my material self, which explicitly relate to such things as: my physical boundaries, my comfort, my identity and my security and protection. They are a useful medium for me to speak, provoke and perhaps subvert since they are components of my own subjectivity and are also dependent upon cultural readings to register meaning.

While I am not particularly modest about being seen naked, I always close the studio door and often lock it as well so that no one can enter by mistake. I have felt that such a display could cause embarrassment and is inappropriate in an academic context. ‘The body’ is a popular theoretical issue these days in relation to postmodernism, Feminist critique, art practice, visual culture and many other fields of study. Yet it is expected to remain veiled and ‘in its proper place’ during these debates. It is not that the body is absent from academia but there is a failure to acknowledge and utilise it to its full potential.

I lock my studio door because I am a woman in an intellectual setting who is concerned with being taken seriously. What are the implications of being seen working naked by those I intend to have a dialogue with about my work? Can my project be considered with the same degree of seriousness if a voyeuristic opportunity has been allowed to transpire? Perhaps more than being seen naked, I object to the lack of control implicit in such a chance encounter. But whose lack of control? Mine or the other person involved?’



I step forward and demonstrate the cutting of the cloth, then return to my position behind plaster coating.

“Once I have determined what pose I will take and what part of my body I will focus on, I cut the cloth to be used as wraps with the plaster. This act of cutting is one of the most sensual moments in the plaster coating process. Often I do this on my hands and knees as the fabric is laid out on the floor. It requires my body to stretch across the width of the fabric as I make the cut. I both experience this gesture and imagine how I look sprawled out on the floor working naked. I find this evocative and enjoyable and I have an opportunity to savour the moment unlike the actual plaster work which is countered with a race against time.

Of course this enjoyment is premised on an imaginary gaze, which positions me as the object and thus problematises the sensation. Why is it necessary for me to include this voyeuristic element in my experience of the act of cutting the cloth? Is it simply an

awareness that certain others might find this scene provocative or is there something inherently provocative in it for me?

Part of me feels that this admission of an imaginary other's gaze is politically incorrect in terms of feminist discourse. I should be ashamed of colluding with the voyeur. At the same time this presence cannot be ignored, especially since I derive so much pleasure from it. But what side of the gaze am I positioned on in this imaginary exchange of looking, and how does it correspond with the physical sensations I am simultaneously experiencing? I suggest that in this situation I am both the voyeur and the exhibitionist.

I fantasised that by smearing my body with Vaseline (the releasing agent for my skin), walking around my studio naked and covering myself with plaster I would experience an erotic stimulation, the climax of the experience being to look upon an image of my material body that was specifically addressed to me, by me.

With disappointment, I found the practice itself no more erotic than engaging with my body in other ways, like exercising or bathing...in other words, a chore. I found that the Vaseline was messy and sticky, the plaster was cold when applied and often painful to remove despite using a release agent. I consistently felt a strong resistance to stripping off and getting dirty, only to get dressed again later to go home and bathe. I liken the experience to another that I have of being inclined to have sex but not enough to justify having a shower afterwards if I am already clean.

In such instances, the imaginary voyeur *is* the erotic element of the exercise, since I found this performance was only stimulating if I also fantasised someone else's gaze or knowledge of my actions. When I lock the studio door I also privatise my practice in a significant way. I believe that in my isolation, I create an imaginary witness who I am confident will appreciate my actions on the libidinal level I am experiencing them.

While the parameters of the plaster coating exercise do not explicitly incorporate a role for any 'audience', an audience is nonetheless implicated into my imaginary reception of the plaster coatings. I want to establish an autoerotic strategy of making that will be

suggestive and communicable to the viewer. However, this raises important questions with regard to my methodology: can my body be used to represent an autoerotic space that is not on display for the viewer? Even more crucially, how is an autoerotic desire generated? And, if I am not actually working from a place of autoeroticism then is this suggestion to an 'other' misplaced? Does subversion hinge on the actual sensation of libidinal investment within my making? And who is to know whether that has occurred or not? In other words, who witnesses the fantasy?

Fantasy plays an important role in ego formation and identity construction. Imagining oneself in relation to various environments, including other people, is a primary element of fantasy. In so much as my plaster coatings are concerned with re-dressing and re-enforcing my own identity, through an accurate and self-defined portrayal of my material experience, fantasy is a relevant component of the process.

Fantasy is what happens when I play with myself. It is predominately a narcissistic strategy of bringing the outer world into my own imaginary. It is a strategy of assimilation and hypothesis. I chose 'fantasy' as my topic for this conference because I have an active imagination...

Some things are better left unsaid... perhaps fantasies are such things. But I am always compelled to reveal them, to explore them, express them, wear them and indulge them. It is through my fantasies that I am motivated.

This paper, *A[d]Dress Rehearsal*, has rehearsed fantasy in an effort to discuss it. The danger of performing a fantasy, however, is that it quickly becomes 'reality', i.e. not satisfying. So if you will excuse me for minute, I will now slip into something more comfortable."



Conclusion: I go behind the screen and turn off the lamp. The only light is from the projector, still casting as image of my suit onto the plaster coating. I silently dress behind the screen, no shadows can be seen now by the audience. Small noises are heard of clothes rustling and a zipper being zipped. I then emerge, fully dressed in the suit I was wearing to begin with and join the delegates for a brief Q&A session. The projector is turned off and the house-lights are restored. The 'stage' remains visible at the end.





Fig. 91 RyyA. Bread©: *Scholarly Exhibitionist* close-up of plaster coating used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster and muslin (coating), Dulux house paint, life size:



Fig. 92 RyyA. Bread©: *A/The Artist* close-up of screen with head used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster, wood, textiles and Dulux house paint screen size 130.7cm (h) 120.2cm (w).

I. Visual-Material(ity) Matters

Having introduced RyyA. Bread© and the implications of a sexed and embodied author function by way of Nin's identity text, her literary practices and related frameworks, the aim of this chapter is to situate my own praxis within this necessarily elaborate construct. The context of my own auto-*authorisation* and the means by which I have approached the question of embodied methodology differ from that of Nin, at the same time that my engagement with her has been a-*muse-ing* to my senses. Thus, the process of defining my own auto-erotic methodology, in terms of an interdisciplinary praxis, requires a further investigation into both psychical corporeality and modes of textual production. At stake in the differences between Nin and myself are the particular forms in which subjective specific desire is aroused, understood and represented.

Therefore, the following chapter, 'Artistica', sets out to distinguish RyyA. Bread© from Anaïs Nin and other Others, by shifting the discourse of a/the artist from a broad definition and literary context as deployed by Nin and Rank, to the specific sites of material signifiers and visual-material textual production. To this end, the 'elaborate construct' of frameworks is further extended to include artists explicitly working within these modes of signification. The principal artists concerned are George Segal, Marcel Duchamp and Louise Bourgeois.

George Segal is important to my work because of specificity of the medium implicit in my plaster coatings. The primary theme of his work is the essentially modernist notion of public and domestic spaces and 'man's' place in society; which he depicts through a figurative plaster coating technique. Segal is sympathetic to the working class labourer and the representation of the proletariat. His repertoire is amassed with works that depict man labouring on construction sites, working at or with machines and moving through the public domain as part of an anonymous crowd caught up in the mechanised motion of industrialism. These are apparent in Segal's work of the 1960s and 70s.

However, his most successful rendition of this theme was his public tribute to the mill workers of Youngstown, Ohio, *The Steelmakers* ⁶⁸ (1980):

Of course, *The Steelmakers* is more than a composition. It is an unidealized celebration of labor, an evocation of working-class experience that unquestionably entitles Segal to the suggestive epithet coined by Martin Friedman of the Walker Art Center, 'proletarian mythmaker.' Unlike the grandiose portrayals of social realism, *The Steelmakers* remains at the level of individual experience, conveying the drudgery, the drama and nobility of work in the mills. The muscles of the union men in the tableau had been educated by twenty years of routine strain and stance. Creating a monument to them, Segal drew on both his own firsthand acquaintance with heavy labor, and the imaginative identification with the factory workers [...]. (Hawthorne and Hunter 1988: 113).



Fig. 93 George Segal: *The Steelmakers*, 1980, Plaster, wood, plastic and metal, 120 X 120 x 60". Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

The interesting difference in Segal's engagement with the Modernist theme of the worker is his performative and inscriptive process of plaster coating that materially marks the embodiment of his subject('s) matter. It is for this reason that his work is seen as an accurate portrayal of 'the worker' experience, rather than an idealised image. Yet, this

material approach is still framed within a discourse and narrative of 'work' that remains in the business of myth making through 'imaginative identification' with another's experience rather than positing experience as embodied practice. This has the result of segregating 'working class' labour from the practices of art making. Thus the social implications of art within a wider economy, and Segal as an artist, remain veiled behind some Other story.

While already familiar with the work of Segal, I revisited images of his work during the production of my plaster coatings because his figurative plaster technique makes him the artist closest to this exercise *in terms of medium*. My engagement with Segal was limited to the early phase of making the plaster coatings. After noting Segal in this context, I then put him aside (for over two and a half years) to continue my own investigations.

In examining photographed recordings of my own process of plaster making in relation to Segal, I am alarmed at the overlaps and slippages found by juxtaposing my

work with images of his. In the cases of similarity it must be made clear that this is not intentional parody or mimicry, in the way that Cindy Sherman, Orlan or others (even Segal) respectively take up established artistic conventions. Clearly, the fact of working on my own body by myself is in marked contrast to Segal's use of others in the production process.

Segal was re-introduced into my research in the summer of 2000 for a closer reading of his identity text in terms of 'subjective specific embodied experience', which, as I have already stated includes sexual difference but is not limited to it. To only read Segal in terms of traditional gender roles within art is a misrecognition of his own subjective specific position within his work and in a social-historical context. Attention to race, class and even gender are evident within his work. They are, however, framed under the rhetoric of 'public art' rather than personal identity politics. Segal's own identity text remains detached and unidentified with the identities he portrays. Nevertheless, he addressed identity politics early on in the growing cultural awareness of their significance and to some extent, I would argue, contributed to the location of such concerns within artistic discourse.



Fig. 94 George Segal: *Jacob and the Angels* (work in progress), 1984, plaster, wood and plastic and rock, 132 x 144 X 76". Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

While Segal represents to me the white male artist who I distinguish myself against, his own subjectivity and even my relation to him is not that simplistic. Segal makes explicit references to Judaism in such works as *The Butcher Shop* (1965), *The Holocaust* (1983) and *Jacob and the Angels* (1984).⁶⁹ Jewish himself, Segal's engagement with this theme is not intended as a direct reference to his identity. This disassociation and the tension that I hold between Segal, as white male artist and something more, is part of a particular historic and

cultural environment which, although noted to some extent in the previous chapter with regard to my own identity, is also relevant to a reading of Segal within an artistic context:

Within the framework of diversity and identity-based art, the self-representation of Jews as a religious, ethnic, and cultural minority thus proves both problematic and paradoxical. During the early decades of this century, Jews had to fight for a place in the emerging world of American art. They had to overcome prejudice, battle the powerful voices of anti-Semitic critics, and fight the nativism that rejected the art of immigrants and first generation Americans. In postwar America, however, Jews - especially Jewish men - came to hold prominent places as artists, collectors, dealers, and critics. Indeed, the enterprise of such Jewish critics and painters as Clement Greenberg, Harold Rosenberg, Mark Rothko, and Barnett Newman did much to create the postwar dominance of American art in the international domain. The New York School of painting and criticism, which emerged in the early 1940s, eventually came to represent "Jewish" in popular consciousness, though its participants kept their frequently deracinated voices entirely within a secular domain (Kleeblatt 1996: 4-5).

Kleeblatt specifically locates the emergence of Jewish identity within art as a late inclusion within the discourses of identity politics that began in the 1960s and reached cultural awareness in the 1980s (ibid.). Despite the disallowances of his own Jewish identity within his work, Segal nevertheless was a Jewish artist who made explicit reference to Jewish culture as early as *The Butcher Shop* in 1965. As such, it is surprising that Kleeblatt makes no reference to Segal in the catalogue, or in the exhibition, of *too Jewish?*

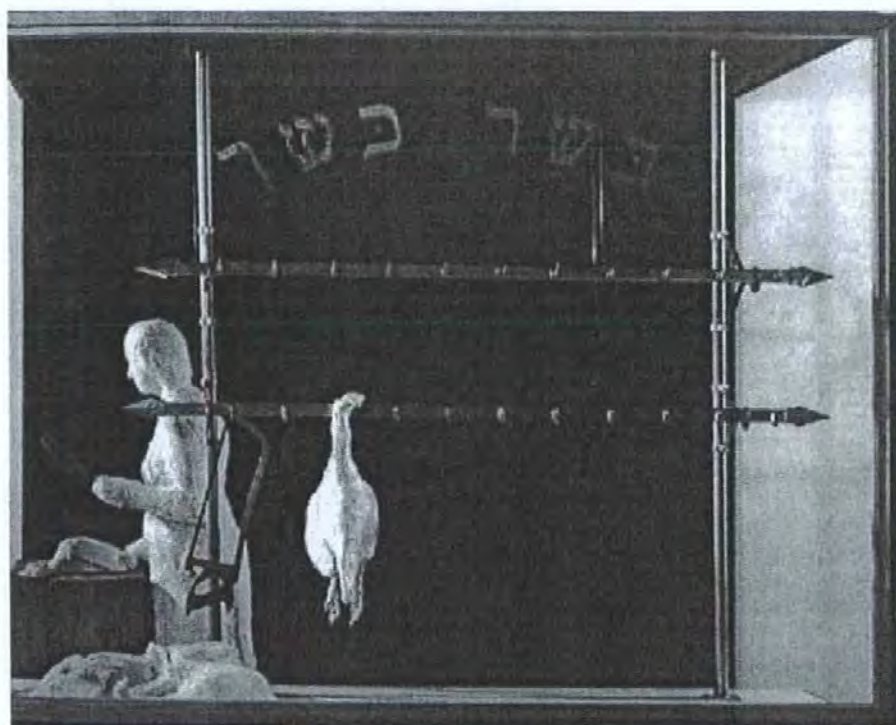


Fig. 95 George Segal: *The Butcher Shop*, 1965, Plaster, metal, wood, vinyl, Plexiglass and other objects. 94 x 99.25 X 48". Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (Gift from Women's committee fund, 1966).



Fig. 96 Rona Pondick: detail of *Little Bathers*, 1990-1991, sculptural installation made up of multiple units of teeth and plastic.

The piece *Little Bathers* (1990-1991) by Rona Pondick, which I was familiar with in a different context, is cited in *too Jewish?* The contrast between Segal's depiction of *The Holocaust* (1983)⁷⁰ and the piece *Little Bathers* is another example of the difference between my own aesthetic sensibilities and my engagement with Segal in terms of the plaster coating exercise (Kleeblatt 1996: 18-19).

Pondick's use of repeated forms that make mass out of individual units and denote an imaginary anatomy, resonates much more to me personally than the interpretation given by

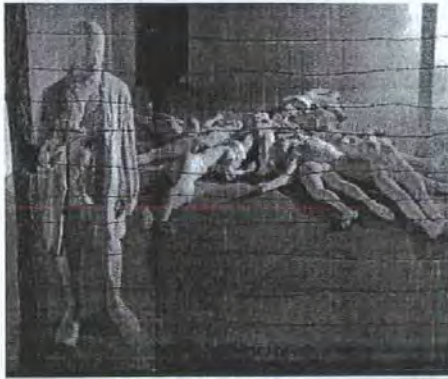


Fig. 97 George Segal: *The Holocaust*, 1983, plaster and mixed-media. 120 X 240 x 120". Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

Segal. I appreciate his work, I even like it, but it does not provoke the same visceral response. However, because Segal considered using dead corpses as models for his figures, and subsequently used friends and family who in some cases were Holocaust survivors (Hawthorne and Hunter 1988: 132), this piece shares with my own plaster coating exercise the performative concerns of identifying an

appropriate sitter to reflect the different methodological approaches in our respective practices. It matters who the sitter is.

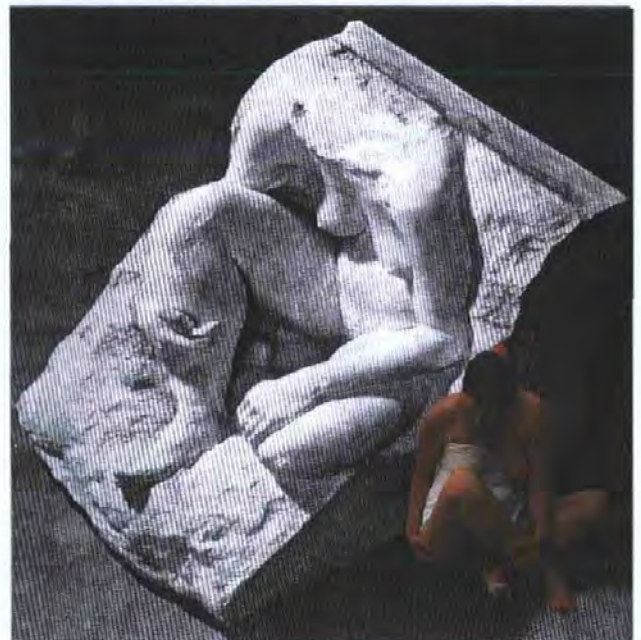


Fig. 98 RyyA. Bread©: *I'm-positions I*, 2001, digital image incorporating George Segal: *Seated Woman: Floor Piece* (bas-relief), 1975, plaster, 25 X 23 X 29". Sidney Janis Gallery, New York., and RyyA. Bread©: studio shot of 'plaster play', 1997, camera self operated.

II. Arousing (I'm proper) 'I'dentifications

Masturbation is traditionally taboo not because it damages your health – it is not only safe sex, it is safe incest – or because it is against the law, but because we fear it may be the truth about sex: that sex is something we do on our own. That our lovers are just a prompt or a hint there to remind us of our own erotic delirium, the people who connect us to somewhere else. People, that is to say, who are gods and goddesses in spite of themselves; because as people our lovers are too complicated to excite us. The erotic is a simplification (Phillips 1996: 101).

I return to my flat with the intention of starting a section on the relationship between Nin, Rank and the definition of the artist in terms of subjective specific representation. Instead of sitting at my keyboard to begin writing down my initial thoughts, I take off my clothes and go to bed. Here I lie on my stomach, balance the paperback, Little Birds, between the mattress and the pillows and slip my right hand down between my legs, while my left hand is free to turn the pages. This is what I call embodied research... (RyyA. Bread© Journal entry 1999)⁷¹



Fig. 99 RyyA. Bread©: *Embodied Research I*, 2000, digital camera.

[Little] Birds of a Feather...?!

The Nin I knew when I began this research was not the literary figure I have presented here, but an imaginary presence that seduced me through her erotica, as a site of repeated libidinal investment and sensual imaginings. Such familiarity with Nin, which



Fig. 100 RyyA. Bread©: *Embodied Research II*, 2000, digital camera

began in early adolescence and continues to this day, is mediated not directly through the words on the page, but read and intercepted, carried to me, through my imagination and my fingers to my erogenous zones; repeatedly inscribed across many years and many readings.⁷²

My own identity construction as an artist, and a sexual being, has been greatly influenced by my early, and long-term, exposure to *Little Birds*. Furthermore, the tensions I experience as a woman trying to engage with the creative process are connected to the narrative constructions of



Fig.101 RyyA. Bread©: *Embodied Research III*, 2000, digital camera.

subjectivity encrypted in this text. For this reason, I was compelled to go deeper into my understanding of Nin and her strategy of the 'erotic'. Thus I began with an object of personal significance and through acts of association have come/cum to locate Nin as a pivotal character, on the very grounds in which she was first introduced to me. She is positioned



Fig.102 RyyA. Bread©: *Embodied Research IV*, 2000, digital camera.

within my psycho-symbolic framework as an 'Imaginary Other', one among an indefinite many, and I am engaged in a phantasmic and fantastic relationship with her that is predicated on psychical corporeal ego-libidinal investment.

As I incorporate my relationship to Nin into my thesis, that relationship changes. What is gained by shifting the position of Nin within my psychical topography from a place of secret pleasures to the pivotal axis of my scholarly pursuits? And in what ways does this kind of imaginary negotiation inform and reflect my practice?

I should know already the dangers of turning fantasy to reality. The transition is marked with loss and bitterness and yet once again I embark on the process. These stories are lodged within the bedrock of my sexual fantasies. It is a big step to take such intimate material and drag it out into the open air for scrutiny and analysis. I have no desire to deconstruct these stories. They are my fairytales. Is there a way to look at Nin, through Little Birds, without deconstruction? Where will I position myself within this text? (RyyA. Bread© Journal entry 17/03/99)

Hinz notices in her Introduction 'the extent to which Nin's work encourages scholars to move out from their individual areas of specialization'. It is indeed regrettable, as Hinz says, that the various authors of the essays published in MOSAIC have not stated how their interest in Nin was aroused and maintained (Andersen 1979: 260⁷³).

My interest in Nin is founded, and has been maintained, on arousal itself. Unlike the contributors to MOSAIC, my primary concern is with the extent to which this arousal intersects with the ideological and methodological premises of both Nin and myself, respectively. To celebrate her scholarly contributions to literature, Nin's friends and critical followers have published many collections of essays about her work and life. While in many cases they are personal tributes to Nin, they remain, for the most part,

impersonal in their interpretations. It is ironic that such readings have consistently neglected to include the subjective stance of the commentators, considering Nin's own insistence of producing texts through personal experience. As one of her critical followers has suggested 'Anais wanted it [her fiction] to be experienced directly by the senses, absorbed, not understood cerebrally, with detachment' (Spencer 1986: v).

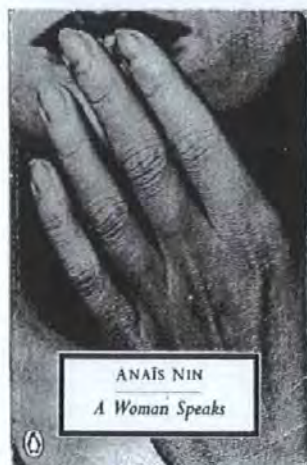


Fig. 103 Front book cover Nin ([1975] 1992). The cover shows *Hand on Lips* by Man Ray courtesy of Lucian Treillard © ADAGP, Paris and DACS, London 1992.

My subsequent research on Nin enabled me to situate *Little Birds* within her oeuvre overall. In so doing, the initial associations of libidinal significance that *Little Birds* held for me personally were confirmed as part of a larger project of libidinal interest in Nin as well. The fact that there is so much more about Nin to inspire me beyond the erotic stories in *Little Birds* is an indication that the potential was germinated, in part, by my particular use of the book across time and space. Thus, *Little Birds* is an example of how I utilise my private life within my work, by drawing on a consistent source for motivating arousal

and exploring its significance both within an academic framework and in relation to my art practice. In this way, *Little Birds* provided a further entrance into the interplay between linguistic and artistic textual production, mediated through my own subjectivity. Moreover, Nin's narratives of embodied experience predicated on erotic exchange provided a stepping stone (or feather bed) for articulating my own understanding of 'auto-erotic-authorisation'.

One of the primary objectives of my research has been to use the acknowledgement of my fantasies as a framework for my methodology in the same way



Fig. 104 RyyA. Bread©: *Auto[erotic]-Representation(s)*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.

that Nin ‘proceeded from the dream’ to embark on her own creative endeavours (Nin [1975] 1992: 109-139). Nin’s references to dreams are to do with the place she affords to the *unconscious* in the structure and approach to her writing. My recourse to fantasy as an element in my praxis, however, is concerned with the *conscious* structuring of the dialogue between the ‘psychical’ and ‘corporeal’: simultaneously at play in an embodied methodology of visual-material/scripted textual production.

The difference between these two positions is related to the continuum Rank posits for the artist’s relationship to the Muse that I have discussed in the previous chapter. Nin’s ‘(over-) valuation’ of the unconscious points to her strong feelings of not merely ‘creative’ guilt as Rank defined it, but the guilt of being a (creative) woman within symbolic structures that privileged the male experience of embodiment and signification. On the other hand, my own strategic shift towards ‘(over-) valuation’ of the conscious (in Rankian terms) results in what he has called a ‘desire to magnify and exalt’ the identity text of RyyA. Bread©.



Fig. 105 RyyA. Bread©: rehearsal shot of *I::DO*, 2000, Main Lecture Theatre, Falmouth College of Arts.

The difference in our erotic ‘methodologies’ is to do with the site of libidinal attachment. Nin focused on her object-libido investments, whereas I focus on my ego-libido investments. Nin had sex and cultivated intimate relationships with others to feed her object-libido, whereas I have slept, exercised (sometimes), smoked, masturbated and covered my body in plaster-cloth to stimulate my own ego-libido. Although we depart from different points along a psychical corporeal continuum of creative production, I encounter Nin at the shared space of engaging with an Other at the level of both the Imaginary and the Symbolic.

III. Flights of Fancy – artistic models

Now this notion of desire as an absence, lack, or hole, an abyss seeking to be engulfed, stuffed to satisfaction, is not only uniquely useful in capitalist models of acquisition, property, and ownership (seeing the object of desire on the model of the consumable commodity), it inherently *sexualizes* desire, coding it in terms of prevailing characteristics attributed to the masculine/feminine opposition – presence and absence (Grosz 1995: 177 *italics in original*).

But it is always the same discourse that is being developed, more and more brilliantly, even at the cost of some inflation. The (male) subject gathering up and regrouping the plurality of the feminine commodity, scattered in its silence, its in(con)sistent chatter or its madness, into coins that have a value on the market. Whereas, if 'she' is to begin to speak (herself) and, above all, understand (herself), one should first of all suspend for recasting the systems of credit. In every sense. Investigating the credits and credence that support monopolies in all their present forms. Otherwise, why speak of 'her', given that it is only in/through her silence that she circulates, helps them circulate? (Irigaray [1974] 1991: 60).

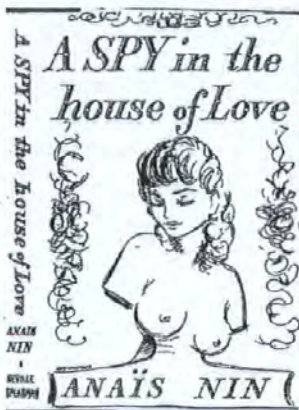


Fig. 106 Front book cover of Nin ([1954] 1955) *A Spy In The House of Love*. London: Neville Spearman. Cover art by Guy Nicholls.

As noted earlier, both Rank and Lacan desexualise desire in their respective frameworks. However, the 'sexualisation of desire', which Nin deployed in her erotic strategy, is historically linked to the creative process and the social role of a/the Modern (male) artist. By assigning women to the status of Muse and model, male artists have enjoyed the carnality of desire and aligned it with their creative motivation for artistic pursuit. Even in seemingly subtle ways, this dynamic remains inscribed within and/or representative of the identity text of a/the artist, and in this way perpetuate the sexed biased as male.

Segal:

1:30 pm – "Just consider the plaster a beauty treatment," Segal jokes, as the model resumes her pose on the bench. Mailer's legs receive a coat of Nivea moisturizing cream and then, dipping four bandages in a bucket of warm water, Segal begins molding damp plaster around her feet. The sculptor works up the right leg to the kneecap, then down from the left knee to the foot, where he pays careful attention to the detail of the sandal. The speed with which the bandages harden paces the artist and determines his technique: he applies several bandages at once, then works them around the surface with his fingers and knuckles. Smoothing the cloth out with the heel and the sides of his hand, he snatches more bandages, dampens and applies them, all in a quick rhythm punctuated by the clicks of Newman's cameras. A telephone rings in the studio, but Segal ignores it. In order to fashion a continuous plaster surface, he must be able to join and smooth overlapping bandages and hence an entire section of the body must be completed at once (Hawthorne and Hunter 1988: 81).

In *George Segal* (1988) a chapter is given over to describing Segal's process of applying plaster to his model that is illustrated with photographs of a session in progress (ibid: 79-87). The model for this session was a woman, and a point is made of explaining

that Segal's wife was often his sitter, but on this occasion she had opted out and a friend had agreed to sit instead. Both the photographs and the commentary that runs alongside them work to represent the traditional relationship between male artist and female model/object. One particular photograph showed Segal standing over the woman, applying plaster to her face. She is positioned in a coy pose with bare shoulders and head bent to one side, propped up by her bent arm. I considered this image, in relation to the text of how Segal executed his sculptures.



Fig. 107 Arnold Newman: Documented studio session of Segal and his model Norris Mailer on February 20th, 1982. Hunter and Hawthorne (1988:86, plate 89).

His work, and this portrayal of him as a/the artist, creates an important contrast to the exercise I had set up for myself with plaster. In my initial response to his work in the context of this research, the 'whole' bodies represented through Segal's plaster coating and casting method, and the solidity and mass that his plaster figures convey, provoked a sense of envy. His plaster casts and moulds of the

human form (both male and female) are incredibly detailed and technically sophisticated, especially compared to mine. My own plaster coating exercise disrupts the figurative representation that Segal achieves by using others as models.



Fig.108 Arnold Newman: Documented studio session of Segal and his model Norris Mailer on February 20th, 1982. Hunter and Hawthorne (1988:80, plate 81).

In making myself both the artist and the 'model' within the exercise, a degree of cohesion and detail is forfeited in order to examine the embodied relation to the materials from more than one subject position within the process. This loss of a solid or 'whole' figure in my plaster coatings approach challenges the position of both artist and model that appears in this representation of Segal's identity text.

For Segal, desire is already sexualised within the working process by the implication of

another as the model. He may or may not personally sexually desire his model, but he does not have to. He can engage in his work, be consumed with 'creativity', by conflating object-libido into the desire to work.

Duchamp: A rogue in the (R)rose...Sélavy!?

By making nudes the bearers of fluidity and change against a stable form, Duchamp may already have been designating sexuality as the source of the energy that undermined fixity, pointing forward to his later assumption of a second identity as (R)rose Sélavy (Eros, c'est la vie) (Seigel 1995: 64).

[w]hen viewed in the context of period conventions for representing women, *Rose Sélavy* becomes an explicit parody, radically dislocating this historical alignment of femininity the commodity. By approaching feminine attributes as surface embellishments and mimicking conventional constructions of femininity in an overtly fabricated image, Duchamp exposes gender as artificial not natural (Jones 1993: 27).



Fig. 109 Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, *Marcel Duchamp as Rose Sélavy*, c.1920-21. Gelatin silver print. Collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California.

As a male artist, Duchamp explicitly addressed the question of (male artistic) desire through codes of gender.⁷⁴ (R)rose Sélavy is a female persona that Duchamp creates and inscribes with authorial and visual-material presence. Photographs of Duchamp as (R)rose Sélavy were taken by Man Ray in 1921 and used for promotional advertising of perfume endorsed under this identity. Duchamp as *Rose Sélavy*, parodies Baudelaire's notion of the 'Art[ist] as Prostitute' (Jones 1993: 21), by invoking and embodying seductive images of 'femininity' that

are linked to the conventions of (male) artistic identity and production through his embodied gesture.⁷⁵

(R)rose Sélavy is thus a visual-material alias, as well as a linguistic one. And while Freud remains hidden, Duchamp can be seen, quite literally, inside the [R]rose. Duchamp, as (R)rose Sélavy, is read as a liberating gesture to reveal the artifice of gender (and art) as a signifier, yet he is only able to do this because he is a male artist - 'Daddy' to postmodernism. There is nothing revealing about a woman putting up/on a pretence...she

is merely being a ‘proper’ female. What is stunning about Duchamp’s disguise is that his presence as a man is still within the reading of a ‘woman’.

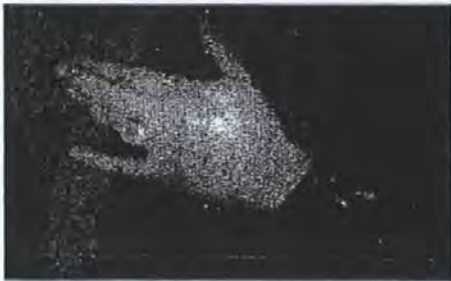


Fig.110 Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, Close-up of *Marcel Duchamp as Rose Sélavy*, c.1920-21. Gelatin silver print. Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Samuel S. White III and Vera White Collection.

(R)ose Sélavy’s hands are an important feature of this identity text with regard to authorship and sexual relations. Significantly, the hands of (R)ose Sélavy are not Duchamp’s. In the photographs a woman’s hands are added to give a more ‘feminine’ quality to (R)ose Sélavy’s persona.⁷⁶ In terms of authorship, the hand that

produces the signature is (R)ose Sélavy ‘herself’ in so far as signification exceeds the signifier.



Fig. 111 Marcel Duchamp in collaboration with Man Ray and Marc Allégret, *Anémic Cinéma*, 1926. Final two frames of film showing signature of ‘Rose Sélavy’ and fingerprint. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Film Stills Archive.

With regard to *Fresh Widow* (1920), Chadwick notes that in ‘identifying the project as her intellectual property, Duchamp made Rose (*sic*) complicit in the act of designating readymades’ (Chadwick 1998: 41). Jones (1994) cites Duchamp’s ‘single completed film’, *Anémic Cinéma* (1926), as another example where the copyright of a piece belongs explicitly to Rose Sélavy. The last two frames of the film document this gesture. As Jones remarks, ‘[E]ndowed with the preeminent (*sic*) marker of individual identity in modern industrial society (the thumbprint), Rose Sélavy’s “existence” is affirmed’ (Jones 1994: 158). In this way, the hand (including the thumb) once again appears as the significant feature that distinguishes Duchamp from Rose Sélavy.

My own insistence on including the copyright symbol in the authorial name of RyyA. Bread© can be read in relation to Rose Sélavy’s ability to own intellectual property. However, the inscription ‘copyright Rose Sélavy’ on *Fresh Widow*, for

example, is 'ambiguous'. It raises the question, '[W]as she the copyright beholder or the was she Duchamp's intellectual property, *his* "fresh widow"?' (Chadwick 1998: 42, *italics in original*) and reveals what Jones (1993) has termed in her title 'the ambivalence of male masquerade' in Duchamp's use of Rose Sélavy as an *alter ego* overall. In contrast to this, the authorial-function of the copyright symbol in my identity text is an attempt to embody female authorship in a way that Duchamp, as a man, cannot. Duchamp as (R)rose Sélavy exposes the excess signification of gender, but as far as I can see he does not pose anything new in terms of sex, nor does he make an explicit distinction between the two terms.

For a man needs an instrument to touch himself: a hand, a woman, or some substitute. [...] Sciences and technologies also require instruments for autoaffect(ta)tion. And to some extent they thus free themselves from the control of the 'subject' and threaten to rob him of a fraction of his solitary profit. To become his rival by winning their autonomy. But thought still subsists. At least for a time. The time it takes to think (oneself) woman? (Irigaray [1974] 1991: 58).



Fig. 112 Marcel Duchamp: *Why Not Sneeze, Rose Sélavy?*, 1921, painted metal bird cage, marble cubes, thermometer, and cuttlefish bone on small bone cage, approx. 4½ x 8 x 6". Philadelphia Museum of Art: Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection. ©1995 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris

The piece *Why not sneeze Rose Sélavy?*

(1921) (with one 'r' rather than the usual double consonant), which significantly is authored by Duchamp rather than his alter-ego (Rose Sélavy), is worth noting in this context with regard to the location and direction ascribed to female sexuality.

In this piece the cage, if not the bird, corresponds with Nin's title, *Little Birds*. The 'little birds', however, are notably absent from Duchamp's piece; there are no feathers to incite the nose into action. Instead they have been replaced by marble renditions of sugar

cubes...heavy sweetness: crystalised, solid, settled at the bottom of the cage. A cuttlefish bone and thermometer are both protruding erect from between the bars, half imprisoned by the 'symbolic' structure of the cage, half suspended in the Real space surrounding them.

If Duchamp's own subjectivity is signified by the cuttlebone, as Seigel suggests in *The Private Worlds of Marcel Duchamp* (1995), then he is 'henpecked' by the little birds

(in their) absence. The lack of little birds, on/in the site/sight where they should be, invokes the threat that the presence of their sharp beaks pose for Duchamp's phallic flesh. At the same time that this threat traumatises him, Duchamp's (cuttle)bone is moored within a saccharine-coated tangibility of the marble (sugar) cubes that anchor and surround him within his imprisoned situation.

It [the title] refers clearly to something which is not happening: R[r]ose is not sneezing. [...] What makes the object appropriate to the title is that it provides an image of confinement, a metaphor for inner space from which the sneeze cannot escape. [...] The implied answer to the question is that R[r]ose prefers the state of permanent anticipation that is not sneezing to the release of tension the small explosion would bring: because eros is desire, delay is the only state in which it survives undiminished (Seigel 1995: 170).

This quote, obviously informed by Lacanian thought, reads as a decidedly male interpretation either by Seigel, Duchamp or both. It is a justification for [a] man's inability to 'bless' [you] a woman with or for her own orgasm (sneeze). As Irigaray has noted, desire is always already fulfilled in the sex of a woman in relation to herself and when is she ever wholly satisfied by a man? (Irigaray [1974] 1991: 56). *Why not sneeze Rose Sélavy?* could sustain this interpretation, but like the identity text of *Rose Sélavy*, Duchamp offers ambiguities in this piece rather than fixed meanings.

Unlike R[r]ose Sélavy, Nin does 'sneeze' ...into a dainty handkerchief with lace embroidery. She is not afraid of snot, she embraces the bodily fluids that pour in and out of her body and intermingle with others. She does not excuse herself for her bodily spasms but she nonetheless desires the blessings of others.

The rogues' new robes:

Parody is one way in which women artists have attempted to make visual-material signification measure up to accurate female representation. This strategy was especially useful in the 1970s and 1980s for raising a political awareness of women's historical position within art; the most (in)famous example being Lynda Benglis's *Posed with Instrument* (1974). By 'prop[ping] a dildo onto her nude body', this piece mimics explicitly manly artists, by reversing the appropriation of gender (Straayer 1990: 266).

For women, however, parody can only go so far before it is re-appropriated back into existing systems of understanding. Benglis's promotional campaign successfully,



Fig. 113 Marcel Duchamp: *Rose Sélavy* mannequin at the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, Galerie Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1938. Original object lost; photograph courtesy Arturo Swartz. Photographed by Enrico Cattaneo.

'usurped the position of the male artist in a pointed and parodic fashion' (Meskimmon 1996: 37). Nonetheless, the gesture works by displaying female identity not only in relation to normative male values of what it means to be an 'artist', but in a titillating manner that continues to pander to the male gaze.⁷⁷

While Duchamp can embody the visual-material 'idea' of woman for parodic display, there is one sense in which as a woman my embodiment of A/The Artist can be nothing other than improper parody...a sham[e]: 'Put simply, male femininity is not identical with female femininity, and either signifies differently according to the subjectivities of the participants in the semiotic event' (Florence 1998: 253). At the same time, however, as Duchamp as (R)ose Sélavy illustrates, the cultural model of A/The Artist has always been a constructed narrative; produced and maintained as it has evolved through history. There is such a thing as a woman 'artist', yet the very term is a contradiction because of women's historical exclusion from the normative definitions of Art until very recently.

Jones argues that the Artist's body within modernism must be seen to be 'male', while at the same time be 'naturalized' to uphold the myth of Genius as 'divinely inspired'. The 'Modern Artist' further had an anti-bourgeois identity that stressed creativity. Within this social climate, Jones proposes two vestimentary identity texts available to this (male) artist:

As photography gave members of the growing bourgeois class access to self-imaging, it became increasingly urgent for those aristocrats and artists who wished to differentiate themselves from the *arrivé* tastes of the bourgeoisie to adopt poses and vestimentary effects that marked them as *different from* conventional middle-class style (Jones 1995: 20-21).

Baudelaire's notion of the 'dandy', whose specifically male image is wrapped in and around clothing, appears in Paris in the mid 1800s; when industrialisation is changing the socio-cultural terms of place and identity with the rise of the urban environment and capitalism is one 'vestimentary effect' that Jones cites. Yet she argues that this must be seen in relation to his alter 'ego' of the bohemian/worker motif. This populist position aligned itself with the working class and thus rejected the 'feminised bourgeois commodity culture' (ibid: 22).⁷⁸ Segal can be read within this motif insofar as he aligns himself with the labourers that he portrays in many of his plaster works and embodies the traditional male artist position in relation to his female models.

In Jones' view it is this identity text of the artist as bohemian/worker that has been



Fig. 114 'Joaquín Nin y Castellanos, Anaïs Nin's father, in 1933' –from Nin (1996: un-numbered pages of photographs between 210-211).

culturally favoured, over time, because it upholds the 'codes of patriarchally defined masculinity' (ibid: 32). Thus the trope of the dandy was the more radical of the two artistic guises afforded to (male) artists precisely because it, 'compromised the machismo of the modernist artistic genius' (ibid: 22). Duchamp (and later Warhol) are posited by Jones as exemplars of this trope. Nin's father can also be seen within the identity text of the 'dandy' insofar as her descriptions of him as a 'feminine father', noted earlier, correspond with the effeminate associations with this trope.

Clothing is gendered through a history of constructed meanings but (this) signification is unfixed and shifts according to context. The dandy signifies the effect of 'loss of place' on subjectivity and to this end embodies the concept of the 'shifter' (Fillin-Yeh 1995: 36). The 'freedom of movement' and 'fascination with boundary lines' that Fillin-Yeh identifies with the dandy as 'shifter' is problematic in that she fails to distinguish the dandy as a specifically male identity text that cannot be superimposed onto a/the woman in the same way. The theme of the 'shifter', however, raises the question of

context in reading embodied signification. Florence argues that *gender* is signalled differently in different periods (Florence 1998: 254), while Jones makes the same point almost verbatim regarding *creativity* (Jones 1995: 19). This theme is especially relevant to my work in so far as my subject positions shift according to each practice that I engage in.

A ‘vestimentary’ strategy, or ‘Breadlin[e]guistics’, has been deployed to construct and locate the identity text of RyyA. Bread© within my praxis. By way of photographic image making, the material concerns of my praxis are organised according to the clothes I wear to perform various tasks. Through photography the clothes that already inscribe and describe significance on/into my embodied subjectivit(ies) in the performance of wearing, are re-invested and re-invented with regard to sites and sights of work. An early wave of these photographs culminated in a photo-essay entitled, *To Peer* (1998).⁷⁹ The words that complement the photographs are dictionary definitions pertaining to verbs in general, and in particular to action words alluding to the various activities that make (up) the practice(s) of my praxis.

Work in context, as well as the context of work, is taken up in the collaborative photographic work and article by Jo Spence and Terry Dennett, entitled; *Remodelling Photo History: 1981 to 1982* (Spence 1988: 118-133).⁸⁰ Like *To Peer*, this example juxtaposes the written word with the photographic image to *articulate* a relation between embodiment and signification. In the script-based text they identify themselves as



Fig. 115 Jo Spence, business card, 1986. Spence (1988: 213).

‘photographic workers’ and go on to define their practice in terms of ‘worker photography’: ‘[...] our workplace being photography as a production process in which we are daily involved’ (ibid: 118).

Spence and Dennett are politically invested in the deconstruction of myths surrounding the history of photography with regard to social representation: especially the relations between work and gender, and the photographer/model. They refer to their methodology as ‘photo-

theatre', employing; 'non-naturalistic modes of representation which allowed [us] to create a kind of hybrid 'spectacle' whilst drawing upon and disrupting well known genres of photography which have been concerned with the representation of aspects of female representation' (ibid: 120).⁸¹ Furthermore, they use their own bodies to position their identity texts *as artists* within the photographic texts that they produce. *To Peer* takes up this line of investigation, within the context of a sexual specific multi-practic[e]al-praxis, by asking; *what kind of artist and what specific practices?*:⁸²

What follows is an edited and reformatted presentation of the photo-essay, *To Peer*:

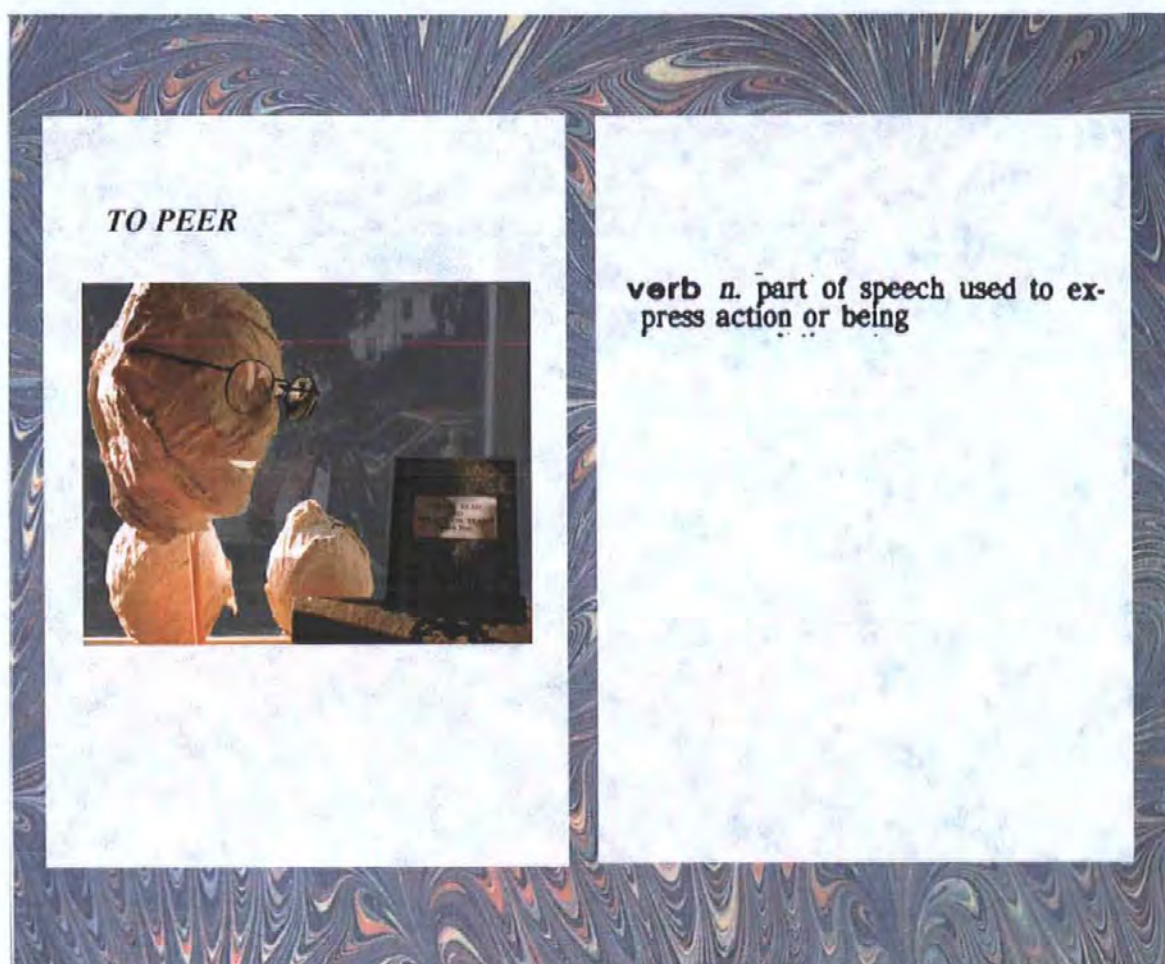


Fig. 116 RyyA. Bread©: (left) *To Peer*, 1999, as installed in *Identity Texts* exhibition at The Look Gallery, Exeter: wooden stand, plaster coating head, eye-glasses, photoalbum on small display bracket; (right) opening (right-hand) page of photoessay.

book *n.* sheets of paper bound together; literary work -*vt.* reserve room, ticket etc.; charge with legal offence; enter name in book -**book-keeping** *n.* systematic recording of business transactions -**book'maker** *n.* one who takes bets (*inf.* **book'le**)



read *v.* (*read* *pr.* *ed*) & *n.* 1. *vt.* Interpret mentally, declare interpretation or coming development of, (*read* *dream*, *riddle*, *omen*, *man's heart* or *thoughts* or *face*); ~ cards, person's hand, etc., (as fortune-teller); ~ the sky (as astrologer or meteorologist). 2. (Be able to) convert into the intended words or meaning (written or printed or other symbols or things expressed by such symbols, or abn.); *reads* or *can read* *hieroglyphics*, *shorthand*, *the clock*, *Braille*, *Morse*, *music*, *several languages*; *cannot* or *does not read* or *wrote*; understand words intended by (person); (of computer) copy or transfer (data) from (~ in) or to (~ out) magnetic tape etc., whence ~in, ~out, *vt.* 3. Reproduce mentally; or (often aloud, out, off, etc., or w. ind. obj.) vocally, while following their symbols with eyes or fingers, the words of (author, book, letter, etc., or abn.); *read* the letter *over* or *through*; *was reading* *Plato*; *read* it to me; *have no time to read*; *the Bible is the most read* of all books; ~ person a lecture or a lesson, reprove him; *Bill was ~ for the first* etc. time; allowed its first etc. **READING**; **TAKE** as read; ~ proof, (Print.) check its correctness and mark changes needed; seldom ~ French (anything written in it); ~s well, has good intonation etc., *reads* expensively. 4. Study by reading (esp. subject at university); (in p.p. in act. sense as *s.*) *was*, *deeply*, *slightly*, *little*, etc., ~ versed in subject by reading, acquainted with literature; ~ up, make special study of (subject). 5. Find (thing) recorded, find statement, in print etc. (*revenge*, *we read*, *is a kind of wild justice*; *I have read somewhere that* ...; *have read* of it). 6. Interpret (statement, action) in certain sense (*may be read* *secret* sign; *my silence is not to be read* as consent). 7. Assume to be intended in or deducible from writer's words, find implications, (*you read too much into the text*); ~ between the lines, search for or discover hidden meaning in document, speech, etc. 8. (Of editor or text) give as the word(s) probably used or intended by author (*Bosley reads* *persequi*); (loc. in correcting statements) for 'white' read 'black', 'black' should replace 'white'. 9. Bring into specified state by reading (*read myself* to sleep); ~ oneself in, (of incumbent) enter upon office by public reading of the 39 Articles etc.; ~ out, expel (from political party etc.) (as if) by reading form of dismissal. 10. (Of recording instrument) present (figure etc.) to person reading it (*thermometer reads* 20°). 11. *vt.* Carry out course of study by reading (*is reading* for the *Bary* shall not read for hours). 12. Convey meaning when read (*name reads* from left to right); sound or affect hearer or reader well, ill, etc., when read (*play reads* better than it acts; *reads* like a threat, translation, etc.). 13. *n.* Time spent in reading.



Fig. 117 (top) RyyA. Bread©: 'book; book keeping; bookmaker', *To Peer* (1999:2-3). 35mm colour slide.
 Fig. 118 (bottom) RyyA. Bread©: 'read', *To Peer* (1999:24-25). 35mm colour slide.

perfor¹m *v.* 1. *v.i.* Carry into effect, be agent of, (command, promise, task, operation, etc.); go through, execute, (public function, play, piece of music, etc.). 2. *v.i.* Act in play; play, sing, etc.; (of trained animal) execute tricks etc. at public show etc.; hence *~ING* *a.* (*~ing arts*, those, such as drama, that require public performance). 3. Hence *~ABLE*, *~ATIVE*, *adj.*, *~ER* *n.* [ME, f. AF *parfourmer*, f. OF *parfournir* (assim. to *forme* *FORM*¹), f. *par* *PER-* + *fournir* *FURNISH*]



lā'bour¹ (-ber), *lā'bor¹, *n.* 1. Bodily or mental work, exertion, (*HARD labour*; *~ in vain*, lost *~*, fruitless efforts; *~ of love*, task one delights in or does for love of someone). 2. Toil tending to supply wants of the community; body of those who contribute by toil to production, labourers; the labouring classes as a political force; (*L~*) the Labour Party. 3. Task (*~ of Hercules*, one needing enormous strength etc.). 4. Pains of childbirth, (uterine contractions in) process of giving birth, (*in labour*). 5. *L~ Day* (celebrated in honour of workers, esp. 1 May or *first Monday in Sept.); *L~ Exchange*, (colloq. or Hist.) employment exchange; *~ force*, body of workers employed; *labour-INTENSIVE*; *~market*, supply of labour with reference to demand on it; *L~ Party*, (Polit.) party representing interests esp. of workers; *~saving*, designed to reduce or eliminate work; **~ union*, trade union. [ME, f. OF *labo(u)r* f. L *labor* -*oris*]

lā'bour² (-ber), *lā'bor², *v.* 1. *v.i.* Use labour, exert oneself, work hard (*~ing man*, labourer); strive for purpose to do; advance with difficulty (*wheels labour in the sand*); be troubled (*her labouring heart*) or impeded; suffer under (delusion etc.); (of ship) roll or pitch heavily. 2. *v.t.* (arch. or poet.) Till (ground). 3. Elaborate, work out in (excessive) detail, treat at (great) length, (*I will not labour the point*); (in *p.p.*) much elaborated, showing signs of labour, done with great effort, not spontaneous. [ME, f. OF *labourer* f. L *laborare* (*labor* *LABOUR*¹)]



Fig. 119 (top) RyyA. Bread©: 'perform', *To Peer* (1999:4-5). 35mm colour slide.

Fig. 120 (bottom) RyyA. Bread©: 'labour; labor', *To Peer* (1999:6-7). 35mm colour slide.

brūsh¹ *n.* 1. (arch. exc. U.S., Austral., etc.) Undergrowth, thicket, small trees and shrubs growing or (in U.S.) cut in faggots; land covered with such growth; (Austral.) dense forest. 2. Implement of bristles, hair, wire, etc., set in wood etc. for scrubbing or sweeping; bunch of hairs etc. in straight handle, quill, etc., for painting, drawing, writing, etc.; one of pair of thin sticks with long wire bristles for striking drum, cymbal, etc. 3. Bushy tail, esp. of fox; brushlike tuft. 4. (Electr.) Brushlike discharge of sparks; piece of carbon or metal ending in wires or strips securing good metallic connection; movable strip of conducting material for making and breaking connection. 5. (Austral. & N.Z. sl.) Girl, young woman. 6. Application of brush, brushing; short smart encounter, skirmish, graze. 7. ~fire (small-scale) war; ~turkey, (Austral.) large mound-building bird; ~wood, undergrowth, thicket, cut or broken twigs etc.; ~work, painter's (style of) manipulation of brush. 8. Hence ~less *a.*, not requiring use of brush; ~v² *a.* [sense 1 ME, f. AF *brousse*, OF *brosse*, *broce*, scense 6 f. foll., other senses ME f. OF *brosse*, *broisse*, perh. both f. Rom. **bruscia*]

brūsh² *v.t. & i.* 1. Move briskly (esp. *by, through, against*); sweep or scrub clean, put in order, with brush; graze or touch in passing; remove (dust etc.) with brush; treat (surface) with brush to change its nature or appearance; ~ed aluminium (lustreless); ~ed fabric (with nap raised). 2. ~ aside, dismiss or dispose of curtly or lightly; ~ off, dismiss, rebuff; ~-off *n.*, dismissal; ~ over, paint lightly; ~ up, furbish, renew one's acquaintance with (subject); so ~-up *n.* [f. *prec.*]



stū'dj¹ *n.* 1. (arch.) Thing to be secured by pains or attention (*it shall be my study to please*); make a ~ of, try to secure (see also scense 3). 2. In a brown ~, in a reverie, too intent on one's thoughts to observe what is passing. 3. (in sing. or pl.) Devotion of time and thought to acquiring information esp. from books, pursuit of some branch of knowledge, (gives his time to study; my studies have convinced me of its truth; the study of mathematics, morals; continued his studies abroad; Institute of Advanced Studies); make a ~ of, investigate carefully (see also scense 1); (Theatr.) memorizing or memorizer of roles; ~-group (of persons meeting from time to time to study a particular subject or topic). 4. Thing that is or deserves to be investigated or carefully examined (the proper study of mankind is man; his face was a study). 5. Drawing etc. made for practice in technique or as preliminary experiment for picture or part of it (his studies are exquisite, but his finished work disappointing; a study of a head); (Mus.) composition designed to develop skill in some particular branch of execution; literary portrayal of an aspect of behaviour, character, etc. 6. Room used for literary occupation, transaction of business, etc., (you will find him in his or the study). [ME, f. OF *estudie* f. L *studium* zeal, study]

stū'dj² *v.* 1. *v.t.* Make a study of, take pains to investigate or acquire knowledge of (subject), scrutinize or earnestly contemplate (visible object), (study law, French, philosophy; study person's face or character, a map, the stars); read (book) attentively; try to learn (role) by heart; take pains to achieve (result) or pay regard to (studies others' convenience, his own interests). 2. *v.i.* Apply oneself to study esp. reading (~ for the Bar, cf. READ 1). 3. *v.t.* (arch.) Be on the watch, try constantly to manage, to do (studies to avoid disagreeable topics). 4. (in p.p.) Deliberate, intentional, affected, (a studied insult; with studied politeness, rudeness, unconcern, abandon); hence **stū'died** *adv.* [ME, f. OF *estudier* f. med. L *studiare* f. L (as *prec.*)]



Fig. 121 (top) RyyA. Bread©: 'brush', *To Peer* (1999:8-9). 35mm colour slide.

Fig. 122 (bottom) RyyA. Bread©: 'study', *To Peer* (1999:10-11). 35mm colour slide.

swim *v.* (-mm-; swam; swum) & *n.* 1. *v.i.* Float on or at surface of liquid (sink¹ or swim; vegetables swimming in butter; with bubbles swimming in it). 2. Progress at or below surface of water by working legs, arms, tail, webbed feet, fins, flippers, wings, body, etc.; (fig.) go with gliding motion; ~ with the tide or stream, act with the majority. 3. *v.t.* Traverse or accomplish (stream, distance, etc.) thus, compete in (race) thus, compete with thus, cause (horse, dog, etc.) to progress thus. 4. Hence ~mer¹ *n.* 5. *v.i.* Appear to undulate or reel or whirl, have dizzy effect or sensation, (everything swam before his eyes; my head swims; have a swimming in the head). 6. Be flooded or overflow with or with or in moisture (eyes, deck, swimming with tears, water; swimming eyes; floor swimming in blood). 7. ~ming-bath, indoor swimming-pool; ~ming-bell, bell-shaped swimming-organ of jellyfish etc.; ~ming-bladder, fish's air-bladder; ~ming-pool, artificial pool for swimming in; ~ming-stone, float-stone. 8. *n.* Spell of swimming; deep pool frequented by fish in river; (fig.) main current of affairs (in the ~, engaged in or acquainted with what is going on); ~suit, bathing-suit. [OE swimman, = OS, OHG swimman, ON swim(m)a f. Gmc. *swemjan]
swimmeret *n.* Swimming-foot in crustaceans. [f. SWIMMER + -ET¹]
swimmingly *adv.* With easy and unobstructed progress (going on swimmingly). [f. SWIM + -ING² + -LY²]



profess *v.t.* affirm belief in; claim, pretend -**profess**'edly [-id-li] *adv.* avowedly -**profess**'ion *n.* calling or occupation, esp. learned, scientific or artistic; a professing -**profess**'ional *a.* engaged in a profession; engaged in a game or sport for money -*n.* paid player -**profess**'or *n.* teacher of highest rank in university -**profess**'orship *n.*



Fig. 123 (top) RyyA. Bread©: 'swim, swimmeret; swimmingly', *To Peer* (1999:14-15). 35mm colour slide.

Fig. 124 (bottom) RyyA. Bread©: 'profess', *To Peer* (1999:16-17). 35mm colour slide.

prō'cēss¹ *n.*, & *v.t.* 1. *n.* Progress, course; in ~ of construction etc., being constructed etc.; in ~ of time, as time goes on. 2. Course of action, proceeding, esp. series of operations in manufacture, printing, photography, etc. (~ heat, steam, etc., those got as by-products of manufacturing processes); natural or involuntary operation, series of changes. 3. Action at law, formal commencement of this, summons or writ (~server, sheriff's officer). 4. (Anat., Zool., & Bot.) Natural appendage, outgrowth, protuberance. 5. *v.t.* Treat (material, food esp. to prevent decay) by particular process. 6. Hence ~ER¹, ~OR, *ns.* [ME *f.* OF *proces* *f.* L *processus* (as *PROCEED*)]
procē'ss² *v.i.* (colloq.) Walk in procession. [back form, *f.* foll.]



rēflē'ct *v.* 1. *v.t.* (Of surface or body) throw back (heat, light, sound, object, etc.), cause to rebound, (shine with ~ed light, be noticeable only because of another's brilliance). 2. (Of mirror etc., or transf.) show image of, reproduce to eye or mind, exactly correspond in appearance or effect to, (*laws reflect the average moral attitude of half a century earlier*); ~ing telescope, = REFLECTOR 2. 3. (Of action, result, etc.) bring back or cause to rebound (credit, discredit, etc.), (abs.) bring discredit, (up)on person or method responsible. 4. *v.i.* & *t.* Go back in thought, meditate, or consult with oneself (*on, upon, or abs.*), remind oneself or consider (*that, how, etc.*). 5. *v.i.* Make disparaging remarks (up)on. [ME, *f.* OF *reflecter* or *f.* L *reflectere* flex- bend); see RE- 9]



Fig. 125 (top) RyyA. Bread©: 'process', *To Peer* (1999:20-21). 35mm colour slide.

Fig. 126 (bottom) RyyA. Bread©: 'reflect', *To Peer* (1999:22-23). 35mm colour slide.

Traces, if not direct references, to the two versions of the modern (male) artist identity text posited by Jones can be seen in the orange 'labour suit' and the *Professional Student* suit that have emerged as predominant, although not definitive, vestimentary affects and effects of my praxis. It is easy to see the definition of the artist as worker/labourer inscribed in my orange boiler suit. As such, it is no surprise that it is almost identical to those worn by the working figures in Segal's *The Steelmakers*, where they are even coloured with orange pigment.

However, the auto-history of how this garment entered my wardrobe and discourse positions my own embodiment of this identity specifically within the context of my praxis and, in so doing, shifts the significance of 'labour'. *What kind of 'work' do I do? Where has my labour been spent? How is my spending underwritten?* These questions were raised around the time of the Research Studentship interview (March 1997) and relate to the 'birth' of the self-defined title *Professional Student*. This reflection also inspired the acquisition of the orange boiler suit.⁸³

Over the course of my research, the labour suit has come to mark a distanced relation to materials. Measurement; purchasing; cutting; screwing and/or nailing; assembling and manoeuvring around (the) materials during the making and installing processes are especially situated within the psycho-symbolic significance of this suit. This sits in marked contrast to the more intimate involvement that I have with materials during other aspects of my artistic process.

The first trouser suit that I ever owned was b[r]ought together for the Research Studentship interview. It consists of a lime green jacket and trousers; and a satin, lavender vest (actually lingerie attire) that extends well below the hem of the jacket. This suit became



Fig. 127 RyyA. Bread©: *Measuring Labour* from I-play series, 2000, 35mm colour slide, camera operated by Mary Anson.

the signifier for the subject position of *Professional Student*, which was validated within my identity text when the interview was successful and I was awarded a funded studentship. This outfit remains my specified attire for formal meetings regarding my research project; and thus represents my professional, (psychical-) ‘corporate’ identity as RyyA. Bread©.

As a woman artist, the aim of these vestimentary displays is not to assert my subjectivity as ‘masculine’, nor to validate my practice in terms of phallic structures that privilege the male anatomy or dress. Instead, these identity texts suggest that gender is not the only defining feature of (identity) textual production:

The point is not to claim that women can be dandies too, for that would immediately alter the sexed bodily basis, but rather to recognize where sex-specific formations signify the same or analogous positions in relation to the social body. It is also to note the definitional connection of dandyism, an exclusively male phenomenon, with the female body. In what sense, then, is it exclusively male? If the phallus is properly regarded as separable from the penis, female psychic structures become visible which overlap in fundamental structural ways (Florence 1998: 261).

In an interview with Bourgeois for an piece called, ‘Rushes: on Robert Mapplethorpe’ (Arena Films/BBC, London) Nigel Finch discusses with her the significance of Mapplethorpe’s photograph *Louise Bourgeois, 1982*, in which Bourgeois is posed with her sculpture *Fillette* (1968) under her arm:



Fig. 128 Robert Mapplethorpe: *Louise Bourgeois, 1982*. Copyright © 1982 The Estate of Robert Mapplethorpe

“Why did you choose a large phallus? [to take to Mapplethorpe’s studio]”

“It is not a phallus. This is what people say and what it is is completely different...The piece is called *Fillette* (1968). *Fillette* means *une petite fille* [a little girl]. If you want to indulge in interpretation you could say that I brought a little Louise...It gave me security.”

“Why do you have a grin on your face?”

“Yes, of course, because I knew what people were going to say.”

“It is a very big penis, isn’t it?”

“That’s what you say, but it is not what I say. [...]” (Bourgeois [1993] 1998: 202).

With *Fillette*, Bourgeois plays with her sexually specific identity text of a/the artist through image and

language, as Duchamp does from his respective sexed position. Like Benglis, Bourgeois is ‘posed with instrument’ in an attempt to subvert the classic equation/conflation of penis

with phallus. Both of these women artists incorporate parody into these respective pieces. The difference between these two gestures (aside from six years) is in how they position their own embodiment within the pre-existing socio-cultural signification. More will be said in this chapter with respect to Bourgeois in terms of methodological embodiments (both hers and mine).

For now I will merely conclude by noting that in the black/white photographs of 1997⁸⁴, I too ‘posed with [an] instrument’ in my own parodic rendition of A/The Artist.⁸⁵ Women may not need an instrument for auto-affectation, since her lips are already touching (Irigaray), but his does not mean that when she handles an instrument she is acting out symptoms of penis-envy. While, ‘Clothes Make the Man’, as Jones’ title (1995) suggests, clothing and tools are also instrumental in a woman’s act of self-definition and for affecting visual-material articulations of her own embodied experience. The phallus is neither the penis, the pen, the screwdriver nor the mallet; and the excess signification that overlaps onto these (part) objects is in keeping with the *jouissance* of woman...keeps woman in touch with the phallus as a signifier of creative process.



Fig. 129 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled, 1997, b/w photograph, camera operated by Clare Hareford.

IV. Auto-erotic Representation(s)

The narcissistic genesis of the ego entails that the subject cannot remain neutral or indifferent to its own body and body parts. The body is libidinally invested. The subject always maintains a relation of love (or hate) toward its own body because it must always maintain a certain level of psychical and libidinal investment. No person lives his or her own body merely as a functional instrument or as a means to an end. Its value is never simply or solely functional, for it has a (libidinal) value in itself. The subject is capable of suicide, of anorexia (which may in some cases amount to the same thing), because the body is *meaningful*, has significance (Grosz 1994: 32).

If machines – including theoretical machines – can sometimes set themselves in motion by themselves, perhaps women can too? (Irigaray [1974] 1991: 58-59).

The following questions both informed the initial parameters of the plaster coating exercise and introduced the significance of auto-eroticism explicitly into my praxis: what happens when an outside ‘object of desire’ is removed from the equation of making; how do I negotiate unknown terrain that is predicated on my own ego-libido; how do I negotiate desire if not sexually; what replaces sexuality as an interactive strategy for object-libidinal investment; how is auto-erotic desire generated; and how is it harnessed as inspiration and motivation for my creative process? In other words, how can I become my own Muse?

Freud identified two ways of finding an object: the first is ‘anaclitic’ (or ‘attachment’) based on early infant prototypes of auto-eroticism. The second is ‘narcissistic’, whereby the subject ‘seeks for the subject’s own ego and finds it in other people’ (Freud [1905b]: 222). The emphasis in my auto[erotic] form of representation(s) is thus an anaclitic strategy of text production, whereas, Nin’s erotic strategy is primarily a ‘narcissistic’ one.

Auto-eroticism entails obtaining ‘satisfaction from the subject’s own body’. It is to do with ego-libidinal investments and arousal contained within/on the site of psychical corporeal specificity (ibid: 181). It is distinct from Freud’s notion of primary narcissism (and Lacan’s version of secondary narcissism), as it occurs prior to the ‘psycho-sexual intervention’ of the Oedipus stage, before



Fig. 130 RyyA. Bread©: Untitled, ‘Shape of Red’ series 1999, 35mm colour slide.

desire is constituted as a lack in genital representation (Grosz 1990: 30). 'Identification' and 'introjection' are located in this early phase and relate back to auto-eroticism through the connection of thumb-sucking and the oral phase. Lacan clearly distinguishes auto-eroticism as outside the Symbolic Order and distinct from (secondary) narcissism because the *objet a* (the lack upon which desire is constituted) is not yet separated from the infant [i(a)] during the oral phase (Lacan 1998: 179-80).

Freud credits Havelock Ellis with introducing the term 'auto-eroticism' in 1918. However, Freud considered Ellis's working definition as 'spoilt', because he includes 'the whole of hysteria and all manifestations of masturbation [...]' (Freud [1905b]: 181). Freud's schema of pre-genital organisation is structured around three phases of infantile masturbation. The 'early' phase, as Freud refers to it, is active until around the age of four when it usually becomes dormant until the third phase (ibid: 188-89). However, Freud is explicit in not putting auto-eroticism and object-love on a temporal continuum, since children between three and five years old are capable of very clear object choice (ibid: 193-94 n.2).



Fig. 131 RyyA. Bread©:
Untitled, 'Shape of Red' series
1999, 35mm colour slide.

The most general and most important factor concerned [with the repressed guilt attached to memories of pubescent masturbation] must no doubt be that masturbation represents the executive agency of the whole of infantile sexuality and is, therefore, able to take over the sense of guilt attaching to it (Freud [1905b]: 190 n.1).

The second phase is varied according to subjective specificity and is predicated on the repressed earlier phase. In this phase sexual excitation manifests as 'a centrally determined tickling stimulus which seeks satisfaction in masturbation', or one that 'achieves satisfaction without the help of any action by the subject' (ibid: 190).

The third phase marks a return of early infantile masturbation brought on by both 'internal causes and external contingencies'. The external contingencies that Freud

emphasises pivot around the sexualisation and/or seduction of a child that prematurely re-introduces him/her to the genital pleasure and leads the child to masturbation. Freud's claim that '[O]bviously seduction is not required in order to arouse a child's sexual life; that can also come about spontaneously from internal causes,' is highly problematic in its implications with regard to sexual abuse (ibid: 190-91).⁸⁶ Nevertheless, it does not necessarily condone adults acting in response. In terms of establishing an anaclitic, auto-erotic strategy this comment is significant.

While the idea in itself may be morally redeemable, Freud links the effects of seduction ('polymorphously perverse' disposition, scopophilia, exhibitionism and cruelty) with the child. A child is prone to a polymorphously perverse disposition, which equates the 'seduced child' with an 'average uncultivated woman', 'prostitutes' and indeed, 'the immense number of women [...] who must be supposed to have the aptitude for prostitution without becoming engaged in it [...]' (ibid.). Again, this raises serious alarms, not just with regard to sexual in/difference and gender coding, but in terms of class issues as well...at least. However, in turning this statement around, there is a more interesting reading to be made with respect to the 'polymorphously perverse' and sexually specific *jouissance*. Rather than a victimised child mirroring a deviant woman, outside the Oedipal domain there is a hope in Freud's inferno of finding a woman who, through internal causes, has the capacity for multiple openings on/into *jouissance* and are easy to access through the site of one's own body:

The child does not make use of an extraneous body for his sucking, but prefers a part of his own skin because it is more convenient, because it makes him independent of the external world, which he is not yet able to control, and because in that way he provides himself, as it were, with a second erotogenic zone, though one of an inferior kind. The inferiority of this second region is among the reasons why at a later date he seeks the corresponding part-the lips- of another person. ('It's a pity I can't kiss myself', he seems to be saying.) (Freud [1905b]: 182 *parenthesis in original*).

Irigaray's theories of sexually specific *jouissance* emerge from the site of woman's own embodiment and specifically the lips of the woman, who in always touching herself, is always already in touch with the maternal-feminine. The concept of two-lips kissing is bound up in Freud's discussions of auto-eroticism, which Irigaray notes. The difference is

in what constitutes 'lips' and the notion implicit in Irigaray's framework is that a woman is distinct from a man because her 'lips' are multiple and not restricted to the mouth (Irigaray [1974] 1991: 56).

Freud frames (oral) 'lips' as an 'inferior' erogenous zone that for some children take on an overvaluation that relates back to the sucking of the breast. Although he explicitly identifies the lips as *inferior to the maternal breast*, it is the *penis* that holds superiority over all other erogenous zones in his framework. Thus *masturbation* is heir to sucking (breast and then thumb) in the infant's development (Freud [1905b]: 181-183).

V. Lesbian Fetishistic Arousal

The concept of fetishism operates as a 'borderspace' to negotiate between sexuality and desire on the one hand, and art as an external object bound up in the process of identification and subjectivity on the other.⁸⁷ Because of the mutual influence between Dalí and Lacan, Dalí's *Surrealist object* is a particularly relevant art historical link between fetishism and psychoanalysis. Clothing and capitalism are two themes pertaining to 'objects' that particularly pervade the discourse of fetishism with regard to Modern art. The question of 'female fetishism' has entered feminist discourses as a possible, yet highly contentious, site to theorise woman's desire; especially with regard to textual production and women's strategies for subverting conventional codes of female representation. Grosz, however, points out that both Freud and Lacan define fetishism as a 'uniquely male perversion'. In this respect, it shares its masculine attributes with exhibitionism, as opposed to the 'feminine' equivalent perversion of kleptomania (Grosz 1995: 142, 241 n.1).

Indeed, in this line of investigation, one place where female fetishism has emerged from, is the site of women writers such as in Schor's well-known article, 'Female Fetishism: The case of George Sand' ([1985] 1986). Mary Kelly has been identified as the



Fig. 132 Mary Kelly: detail of the *Post-Partum Document Introduction*, 1973, Perspex units, white card, wool vests, pencil, ink. 4 units, 20 X 25.5cm each.

first visual-material artist to use female fetishism explicitly within her work. She is particularly important because of her sophisticated level of psychoanalytic theoretical engagement. Apter, as well as others, have returned to Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* (1983) to elaborate her ideas and continue to explore the implications of this concept (Apter in Hunt [ed.] 1991: 164-190). The themes implicit in Modern art's historical alliance with fetishism, and the valuable textual contributions offered towards specifically understanding female fetishism, provide many possible entry points from which to relate my own work.

However, for the purposes of defining my auto-erotic methodology as distinct from Nin's erotic strategy (in the general, as well as genre, sense), the focus has been narrowed down to Grosz's contribution regarding 'lesbian fetishism'.

In Space, Time and Perversion: essays on the politics of bodies (1995: 141-154)



Fig. 133 Front book cover of Grosz (1994). Cover art: Linda Dement, Jacket design: David Thorne.

Grosz introduces her concept of lesbian fetishism into the field of female fetishism in relation to classic psychoanalytic discourse, and in a 'strategic and political' alliance with feminist theorists, such as Schor. Grosz takes up the concept of lesbian fetishism from the position of a fetishist who wants to 'have it both ways'.⁸⁸ She wants to retain the psychoanalytic position that, 'female fetishism is psychically inconceivable', while suggesting, 'that both 'normal' (i.e. heterosexual) femininity and female homosexuality' operate 'as modes of fetishism'; in socio-political and discursive terms that go beyond psychoanalytic formulations.

In keeping with her fetishistic stance, Grosz's approaches the notion of lesbian fetishism as a 'half-serious – half-playful' exploration of the theoretical boundaries inscribed in the discourse of perversion as it pertains to questions of agency and desire (Grosz 1995: 142).

The underlying aim of the essay is explicitly framed as a speculative recuperation of psychoanalysis for a 'theory of and for lesbians' ('lesbian theory'). Elsewhere in her book, Grosz elaborates on what she means by such a theory. I suggest that the following quote speaks to Irigaray's notion of woman-sister relations ("secondary homosexuality"[sic]) in relation to the quest for a maternal-feminine sexually specific language.

Becoming-lesbian, if I can put it this way, is thus no longer or not simply a question of being-lesbian, of identifying with that being known as a lesbian, of residing in a position or identity; the question is not am I – or are you – a lesbian, but rather, what kinds of lesbian connections, what kinds of lesbian-machine, we invest our time, energy, and bodies in, what kinds of sexuality we invest ourselves in, with what other kinds of bodies, and to what effects? What it is together, in parts and bits, and interconnections, we can make that is new, exploratory, opens up further spaces, induces further intensities, speeds up, enervates, and proliferates production (production of the body, production of the world)? (Grosz 1995: 184)

Grosz begins her piece on lesbian fetishism by outlining the historical and textual context of Freud and Lacan's respective positions on fetishism; with regard to the Oedipus Complex, castration and Lacan's distinction between the phallus (as signifier) and the penis (as sign) (ibid: 142-147). She then distinguishes four basic forms of psychical defence (repression, negation/denial, repudiation/foreclosure and disavowal); and locates fetishism as a form of disavowal within this mapping. Within the psychical defence of disavowal, the ego is split to maintain two contradictory beliefs simultaneously; 'the denial of woman's lack and its recognition and acceptance'. In this respect, disavowal is located midway between 'psychosis' and 'neurosis': 'It is as if one part of the ego (which accepts castration) is neurotic, and the other part (which repudiates castration) is psychotic' (ibid: 148).

Once fetishism is identified as a particular psychical defence mechanism, Grosz positions psychoanalytic constructs of femininity within the classic understanding of disavowal. Freud argued that there is no reason for the female child to disavow the mother's castration, whereas disavowal of her own castration was considered a 'normal' first reaction in a woman's psycho-sexual development. Thus, while disavowal is a process utilised by both sexes, there is a significant difference between the fetishist's disavowal of the mother's castration and the female child's disavowal of her *own* castration (Grosz 1995: 149).

Grosz describes the three 'paths' opened up by the effect of this self-referential disavowal in classic formulations of 'feminine development': heterosexual (secondary) narcissism, hysteria and the 'masculinity complex'. She notes that in documented cases of female fetishism, such as the ones cited by Greenacre and Schor that the girls lack the essential tension between denial and acceptance of castration because they believe themselves to have a penis like a little boy. Thus, they are too close to psychosis to fit the fetishist's ambivalent condition of being suspended, necessarily, between the two terms of the split ego (ibid.).

Within Freudian psychoanalysis, however, 'lesbianism could be seen as a form of female fetishism'. As with male homosexuality, two forms of female homosexuality are identified: the female homosexual either seeks a feminine love-object (as heterosexual men do), or a masculine love-object (whether male or female). Lesbians who seek a feminine love-object are situated within the masculine complex. In so far as both classic fetishism and the 'masculinity complex' involve a splitting of the ego, it is this path that leads to a connection with Grosz's lesbian fetishism. However, and importantly, while male fetishism is predicated on a fundamental 'fear of femininity', the masculine woman is motivated by a *love* of her same sex (Grosz 1995: 153).

Like with the fetishist, the 'masculinity complex' involves a disavowal of the woman's castration: albeit her own castration, rather than the mother's. And like the fetishist, the 'masculine woman' adopts a phallus 'substitute', transferring her libidinal investment to an object outside her own body (object-libido). This ability of the 'masculine woman' to have an external love-object (another woman), distinguishes her path from that of the secondary-narcissist or the hysteric whose libidinal investment remains on the site of their own body (ego-libido) in part, or in whole, respectively. Thus the 'masculine woman' is able to function as if she *has* the phallus, rather than *is* the phallus. Yet, whereas the 'masculine woman' takes another subject as a love-object, the classic fetishist displaces value onto an inanimate or partial outside love-object.

Thus, Grosz contends that while the fetishist is the 'most satisfied and contented of all perverts' because his love object is 'unlikely to resist [his] wishes and fantasies', the masculine woman is the least content (Grosz 1995: 145). While Grosz fails to explicitly say so, this is partly because the 'masculine woman' is confronted with the issues of interpersonal dynamics and all that this implies in terms of negotiating wishes, fantasies and the boundaries of another person. Rather than at the personal level of this exchange, Grosz points to the same concerns on a larger socio-political scale. In so far as the masculine woman's values run contrary to normative cultural views of heterosexual (secondary)

narcissistic femininity, her fetish, unlike that of the male fetishist, fails to provide a safe expression of her 'perversion'. Instead, the masculine woman's desire, 'introduces her to the effects of widespread social homophobia'. At the same time, and perhaps on a more positive note, it is the split ego of the masculinity complex, Grosz suggests, 'which inclines her to feminism itself, insofar as feminism, like any oppositional political movement, involves a disavowal of social reality so that change becomes conceivable and possible' (ibid: 153).

The split ego of both the fetishist and the masculine woman, incurred through disavowal, can be understood in terms of Rank's framework, as the conflict between life and art that defines the artistic type. As such, it is significant that disavowal is distinct from 'psychosis', in so far as it has representation within the Symbolic and 'generate(s) the impulse to produce profuse signifiatory contexts and fantasy scenarios' (ibid.).

Partial objects and partial subjects:

The difference between the hysteric and the narcissist is the difference between the displacement of the phallus onto a part or onto a whole of the subject's own body (perhaps a difference of degree rather than kind?). Whereas the narcissist's whole body is the phallus (and thus she requires an external love object to bestow on her the status of the object of desire, accounting for her reliance on an anaclitic lover, whether heterosexual or homosexual), the hysteric gains a self-defined status as phallic: a part of her own body takes on the function of the phallus (confirming her object-like status in patriarchy), while her subjectivity remains in an active position (one which takes her own body as its object) (Grosz 1995: 151).

The setting in motion of this process [infantile sexual excitation] is first and foremost provided for in a more or less direct fashion by the excitations of the sensory surfaces – the skin and the sense organs – and, most directly of all, by the operation of stimuli on certain areas known as erotogenic zones (Freud [1905]: 124).

While Grosz focuses on the 'masculinity complex' as a potential site for theorising lesbian desire, it is the implications and cross over of all three paths of 'femininity' within my plaster coating exercise that inform my understanding of auto-eroticism within the context of my praxis. The plaster coatings, as 'coatings', are distinct from those cast from moulds. There is no 'positive' or 'negative' aspect to the coatings as there is in a casting process. Moreover, the coatings do not have an 'inside' and an 'outside'. Rather, they have *more than one* exposed surface. While one surface of the coatings is mediated through/on the exterior surface of my body, the other surface is defined by my hands that

manipulate the (plaster soaked) material(s) as they bring them into contact with the rest of my body.

The narrative that structured the plaster coating exercise was one of 'access', in terms of constructing and 'getting out from under' the coatings. Once the water was added, the plaster was only 'workable' for a few minutes at most. In this time the cloth had to be saturated and my body covered.⁸⁹ Although the material(s) merged with my body in a fluid state, the plaster (soaked material) then hardened into a 'shell' that was encrusted onto the surface of my body. Body hair, trapped within the drying plaster, became a corporeal link between my own embodiment and the visual-material image I was creating of/on my body.

Because the materials that I used shifted from liquid to solid form during the process of engagement, the 'entrances' and 'exits' were pivotal concerns in the choice of pose, which shaped the final form of each piece. Thus in terms of a psychical corporeal performance, it was the pre-empted trauma of (hair-splitting) separation, the need to establish boundaries and distance between my embodiment and the (plaster soaked) material, that dictated the passage through the subjectivising act of textual production.

I want my erotic life to be located in my art work. I want to feel the sensuality of my materials and make 'love' to myself through my casting [coatings]. I want men and women to look at my work and be aroused and stimulated by the process of making I have used. I want to make 'love' to my viewers through my work and my body. I want my studio to be a place of sensuous desire for me. Where I go to release my desire in an autoerotic manner (Diary of RyyA. Bread© 21/7/97).

I want to inhabit the ridiculous of jouissance. I want to be there and I want others to recognise and acknowledge with humour and respect this place I have been. I want the viewers to be aroused by the knowledge that I was there first, so that an intimacy is formed between the viewer and myself over the acts (Diary of RyyA. Bread© 25/7/97: 25-26).

The sentiments extracted from my journal (above) can be read in relation to Freud's discussion of inverts. For inverts, Freud claims, the exclusive aim in sexual intercourse is 'frequently' masturbation (Freud 1905: 58): '[...] while mutual masturbation is the sexual aim most often found in intercourse between two inverts' (ibid: 65). In my praxis, I have

started with the hypothesis that there is nothing beyond myself within the making process, or otherwise. Yet the boundaries of ‘myself’ include the psychical corporeal negotiation of an imaginary other – that is sometimes introduced through object-libidinal investment. Since my goal is to function at the level of auto-eroticism and ego-libido, a process of transference back on/into myself is important. This process has been framed in terms of introjection.

The phantom Other, or *Phantom Lover*, is the introjected identity of an embodied individual who enters my imaginary anatomy when I am made aware of their presence. The Muse acts like a ‘mask’ that enshrouds the Other as I become aware of its psycho-symbolic significance and attempt to find my own position in relation to it. The mask signifies *my own projection* of that individual (thus the ‘phantom’) rather than any inherent identity attached to their embodied experience of themselves. This masked Muse is especially present in my relationships with embodied individuals that I have a strong investment of shared time and/or space with, or those who instantly trigger strong emotional

responses from me. While the masked Muse is a consistent presence with whom I having a shifting relationship with, the significance of this presence and the people that it represents are not fixed. The identity of the Muse constantly shifts, as does my relationship to it.

The *Imaginary m/Other* is distinct from the *Phantom Lover*, but included what I call *Imaginary Others*. Here, even my ‘double’ that constitutes a split ego in Rank’s formulation is spli[n]t-ered. The *Imaginary m/Other* corresponds with Irigaray’s maternal-feminine. As such, the *Imaginary Others* represent both modes of *jouissance* that Irigaray



Fig. 134 RyyA. Bread©: *Phantom Lover*, 1999, 35mm colour slide.

names: The *Phantom Lover* operates at the gendered, phallic mode of post-Oedipal Symbolic Order, while the *Imaginary m/Other* expands into the singularity of woman's sexed *jouissance*. The *Imaginary Others* combined speak to the singularity of my subjective specific *jouissance*:

The boundaries between the inside and the outside, just as much as between self and other and subject and object, must not be regarded as a limit to be transgressed so much as a boundary to be traversed. [...] Boundaries do not so much define routes of passage: it is movement that defines and constitutes boundaries. These boundaries, consequently, are more porous and less fixed and rigid than is commonly understood, for there is already an infection by the one side of the border of the other, there is a becoming otherwise of each of the terms thus bounded (Grosz 1995: 131).

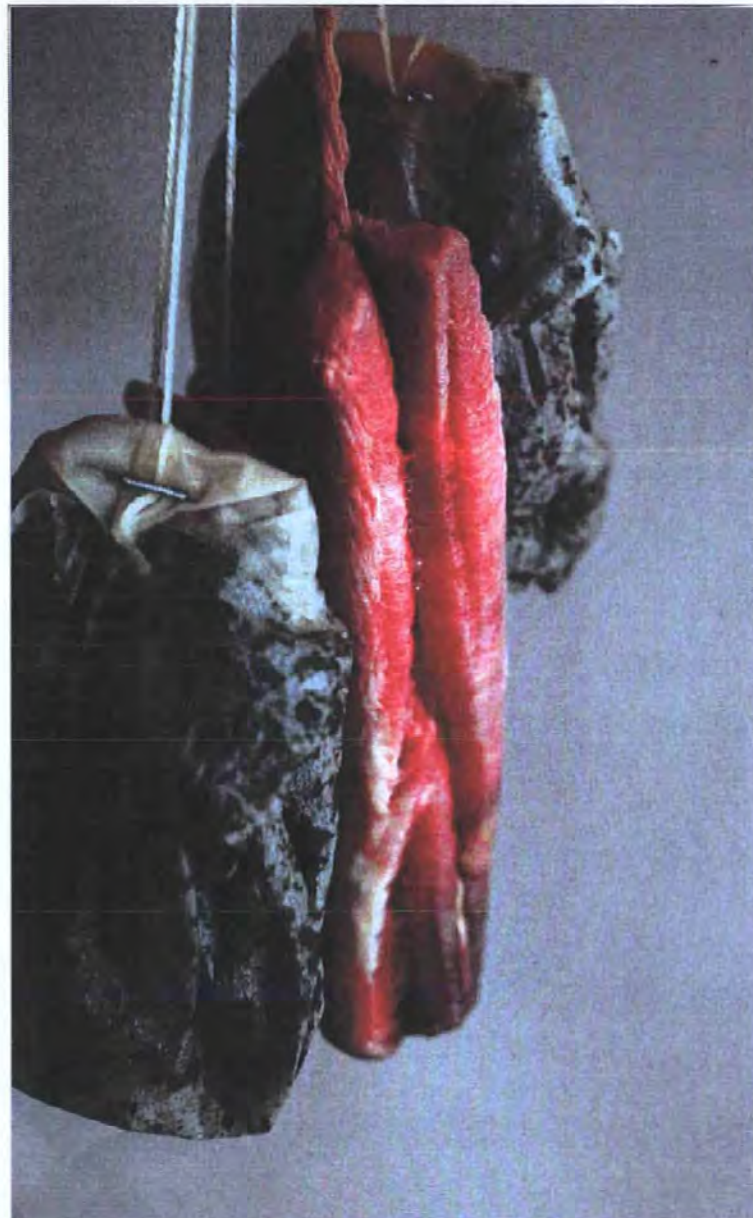


Fig. 135 RyyA. Bread©: *Absorbing Bodily Fluids*, 'Shape of Red' series 1999, 35mm colour slide.

VI. Sleepwork...domestic bl[k]iss

Within my own auto[erotic]-representation(s) the physical presences of embodied others, as well as the objects that are associated with them, have a direct effect on the *S[h]elf portrait* sculptures. The two terms cannot be separated. The sculpture and the visual-material representation of inter-personal relationships are the same thing. My portrayal of embodied others is not about 're-creating a past' but about presences that remain significant within the present context of making. The depiction of these portraits is not about 'control' as much as about engaging with and acknowledging the psycho-symbolic significance of these relationships to my own embodied experience within the making process.



Fig. 136 George Segal: *Rush Hour*, 1983, Plaster, 96 X 96 x 192". Sidney Janis Gallery, New York.

Segal's *Rush Hour* (1983) offers a different approach from my own to the theme of the individual in relation to an inhabited surrounding. His depiction here is of a public, urban and anonymous space, rather than a personal matrix of relationships. The title links this space to a particular time in the day defined by and implicating the journey to and from 'work'. Within my art practice it is the negotiation

of the relationships that are depicted through the *S[h]elf Portraits* that define and implicate a journey to and from my own practical 'work' within the context of representing embodied subjective specific experience.

The realm of the domestic is a 'working' space within my praxis. It is not segregated from the activities that take place in the studio or the library etcetera, although it has its own particular bearing on the making process. My written practice is primarily located within this realm, as I write and read in my study at home. In terms of my artistic practice there are definite tasks that are performed in the studio and others that I am more inclined to do within my domestic space. For example, the plaster work and most of the

wooden construction is contained within the studio; and certain photographic exercises require the spaciousness of the studio and the coatings that are stored there. However, much of the photographic work is performed at home, using personal and daily objects that I do not wish to expose to the making processes occurring in the studio.

In general, my attitude has been to take home as much work as I feel can realistically be done in that space. I deliberately never made the studio into a particularly comfortable space to spend time in. It is the space that I entered to perform messy and large scale tasks: I go in and work, and then leave. Thus the slow, indulgent and reflective elements of my artistic practice are reserved for the intimate and tranquil space of my domestic realm. However, both my studio and my domestic spaces are 'private'; and in a sense my studio is even more so, as I share my living space with another.

The domestic, as a site of subjective occupation, is also relevant to my praxis because it represents an embodied integration of my practices with other daily impressions. As my praxis is mediated through my subjective specific embodied experience, everything that I do informs my work and I bring my work into all that I do. Thus, the simple gestures of stacking dishes, sorting laundry, cutting vegetables, walking the dog etcetera are constantly being related to the activities that I perform specifically in regard to making my work. At the same time, the domestic realm can just as often sit in tension with my praxis. Thus, there is a constant negotiation that is taking place between the various



Fig. 137 RyyA. Bread©: *Domestic Bl[k]iss*, 2000, 35mm colour slide.



Fig. 138 RyyA. Bread©: *RyyA. Pan Plus*, 1997, 35mm colour slide, camera operated by Clare Hareford.

subject positions that I occupy and the spaces that these positions inhabit and make use of.

The bedroom, and especially the bed, further relate to my thesis in terms of positing 'sleep' as a significant aspect of an auto[erotic] methodology. 'Sleep' is indeed a primary activity that I perform within my bedroom - although other actions, such as those cited below are also included in my experience of this space. This contrasts with one critic's view of Bourgeois's *Red Rooms* installation (1994): '[And indeed] bedrooms are places for temporary privacy, anticipation and planning – least of all, perhaps, sleep' (Morgan 1995: 57).

Yet despite Morgan's dismissal of the activity of sleep in his reading of *Red Rooms*, it is obviously a theme that Bourgeois, herself, was interested in, as evidenced in her piece, *Sleep II* (1967). In his interview with Bourgeois, in 1969, William Rubin posed the following questions to her:

"To what extent do particulaized organic and sexual references (e.g. the phallic character of *Sleep II* and *Labyrinthine Tower*) become conscious and/or problematic in the conception? Do you ever feel any conflict between the allusive and formal levels of the work?" (Bourgeois 1998: 85-86 quotations in original)

To which Bourgeois replied:

"As I said before, I am not particularly aware or interested in the erotic of my work, in spite of its supposed presence. Since I am exclusively concerned, at least consciously, with the formal perfection, I allow myself to follow blindly the images that suggest themselves to me. There is no conflict whatsoever between these two levels." (ibid.)



Fig. 139 Louise Bourgeois: *Sleep II*, 1967, marble, 59.3 X 77 x 60.5 cm, Robert Miller Gallery, New York Abb. S. 127.

While my own praxis explicitly attempts to harness an [auto-]erotic strategy, Bourgeois refuses to acknowledge this presence in her work.

Nevertheless, her title frames the large marble, rounded form that is leaning and being pulled down by gravity, with the action of 'sleep'. Even ignoring the 'phallus as penis' suggestion of form, as

Bourgeois asks us to do (with good reason), I would

argue that the piece still refers to the erotic implications of sleep itself, in the ego-libidinal sense that I pose this gesture in my own formulation of an auto[erotic] methodology.

It is my contention that what I do in my bed has a literal connection to my research activities as a scholar/artist. Nin is an important link to my articulation of this relevance because my primary engagement with her occurs in this space. Moreover, what she did in her bed is also 'literarily' (to use a Ninnian term) significant to the production of her *Diaries*



Fig. 140 RyyA. Bread©: *Sleeping On It*, 1997-2000, plaster, flannel on wood stretcher.

and other writings. While psychoanalysis primarily refers to sleep for what it can offer to the discourse of dreams and the unconscious, my interest in sleep is the not-conscious space that it offers for embodied experience. Sleep appears in Freud's work at this level in his discussions of auto-eroticism: 'Sensual sucking involves a complete absorption of the attention and leads either to sleep or even to a motor reaction in the nature of an orgasm' (Freud [1905]: 96).

The significance of my bed is an example of how my theory is extracted and developed from my journal keeping practice. My bed is situated within the private domestic sphere of my life and yet its effects extend into the realm of my research insofar as my praxis is motivated through my own embodiment, and my body is partial to my bed. In my bed I sleep, masturbate, fantasise, dream, cuddle and have sex (with my husband) (to varying degrees and not necessarily in that order). These activities have a direct bearing on the development and understanding of my praxis.

In my journal I wistfully pose the question, *does sleep count as work?* on more than one occasion, in the hopes of justifying this most prolific activity. I have been tempted to explain my propensity to sleep in terms of acute depression due to being overwhelmed by

my circumstances. However, to do this is to accept a psychological framework that pathologises sleep. The fact that I *do* sleep so often, and have a personal-historical tendency towards this behaviour, makes me reluctant to merely negate it. What if I accept sleeping as part of my working process rather than a negative strategy of resistance? What is happening when I choose to sleep rather than work with plaster, read a book, or write up my reflections? Why is sleep so appealing and irresistible?

The condition of sleep, too, resembles illness in implying a narcissistic withdrawal of the positions of the libido on to the subject's own self, or, more precisely, on the single wish to sleep. (Freud [1914]: 76)

Freud made the above reference to sleep in his essay, 'On Narcissism: An Introduction' (1914), where he equated the wish to sleep with the withdrawal from object-libido onto ego-libido. Despite his negative interpretation of this, I find the explanation useful. Sleep acts as a vehicle to negotiate between myself and my environments. It offers an alternative space to 'put' myself that provides release from the anxieties of having to occupy more than one subject position simultaneously, freeing mental energy for more productive work.

If it is true that we operate within a patriarchal structure, then the amount of energy that is required to resist this structure in every aspect of existence becomes enormous. While it is easy to chastise myself for 'sleeping too much' and not engaging/getting on with my work, perhaps the time spent sleeping is also used to transport me into the

space which ultimately makes it possible for me to do work. It seems that actual gaps with which to digest the negotiations taking place in the kind of subversive strategy I am employing (that of working within a structure to re-define it) are necessary for the process. Since neither my personal circumstances nor my academic pursuits offer complete respite from active resistance and questioning, 'sleep' offers a place for that gap to exist.



Fig. 141 RyyA. Bread©: 'sleepwork' from sketchbook, 1997, ball-point pen and water-colour 22.8cm x 15.2 cm

The artist, too, has this feeling of *Weltschmerz* in common with the handicapped neurotic; but here the paths diverge, since the artist can use this introverted world not only as protection but as a material; he is thus never wholly oppressed by it – though often enough profoundly depressed – but can penetrate it by and with his own personality and then again thrust it from him and re-create it from himself (Rank [1932] 1989: 377).

To sleep through the hours designated for the production of work is perhaps the ultimate statement on the embodiment of my practice, but it still requires waking effort to justify such an action. These waking hours are often very late at night, since this is a subjective specific time of peak productivity for me, especially in the scholarly tasks of reading and writing. Thus, my propensity for sleep is countered with ‘perverse’ work schedules. Insofar as sleep is framed as a form of ‘work’, as often as not, it is the dayshift.

My refusal to read my excessive sleeping patterns as symptomatic of inherent illness is based on an ideological assertion that my daily activities be framed within the context of creativity. I wanted to be motivated to work by something other than fear of failure, a need for approval or sexualised/romanticised desire; another Other beyond the ‘a’s in Ryya Aviva Jacobs/Sanders cum RyyA. Bread©. All of these paths require a preoccupation or dependency on *another’s* response as fuel for my production. It was my hope that by turning the focus of my thesis specifically onto the question of my subjective specific multiplicity, I would engage with an auto-erotic model of desire as an alternative structure for accessing a sexually specific auto-*authorisation*.



Fig. 142 RyyA. Bread©: *A/The Artist* close-up of plaster coating used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster and muslin (coating), Dulux house paint, life size.

A PLAYful INTERMISSION



Fig. 143 RyyA. Bread©: *Scholarly Exhibitionist* close-up of screen with head used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster, wood, textiles and Dulux house paint screen size 130.7cm (h)120.2cm (w):

ACT of ALIENation

NOTE:

What follows is an edited version of *ACT of ALIENation*. This was a short live performance devised for a regional research seminar (*Theorama*) that was hosted by the Falmouth College of Arts research students in May 1999.

One aim of the text was to incorporate my photography into the representation of my praxis. Two slide projectors were used in the performance. Slides from my photographic work were juxtaposed with others of my most recent sculptural installation (*Tongue Tied*, March 1999). This was done in part to demonstrate the distinction and overlaps between documentation and representation, and in part to provide a visual component to the embodied actions of the piece.

A further objective of the text was to emphasise spoken verse (*parole*). To this end the script was memorised and recited, rather than read off the page.

At the beginning of the piece an orange page with the title of the piece and two dictionary definitions (psychoanalytic and psychological respectively) of the term 'alienation' was distributed to the audience (see next page, where the [visual-]scripted text has been enlarged to be legible in this reproduction).

work in process
by BYYA. Broad

ACT of ALIENation
THEATRANA, PCA, 13th May 1988



alienation (aliénation) The term 'alienation' does not constitute part of Freud's theoretical vocabulary. In Lacan's work the term implies both psychiatric and philosophical references.

1. **Psychiatry** French psychiatry in the nineteenth century (e.g. Pinel) conceived of mental illness as *aliénation mentale*, and a common term in French for 'madman' is *aliéné* (a term which Lacan himself uses; Ec, 154).

2. **Philosophy** The term 'alienation' is the usual translation for the German term *Entfremdung* which features in the philosophy of Hegel and Marx. However, the Lacanian concept of alienation differs greatly from the ways that the term is employed in the Hegelian and Marxist tradition (as Jacques-Alain Miller points out; S11, 215). For Lacan, alienation is not an accident that befalls the subject and which can be transcended, but an essential constitutive feature of the subject. The subject is fundamentally split, alienated from himself, and there is no escape from this division, no possibility of 'wholeness' or synthesis.

Alienation is an inevitable consequence of the process by which the ego is constituted by identification with the counterpart: 'the initial synthesis of the ego is essentially an alter ego, it is alienated' (S3, 39). In Rimbaud's words, 'I is an other' (E, 23). Thus alienation belongs to the imaginary order: 'Alienation is constitutive of the imaginary order. Alienation is the imaginary as such' (S3, 146). Although alienation is an essential characteristic of all subjectivity, psychosis represents a more extreme form of alienation.

Lacan coined the term **EXTIMACY** to designate the nature of this alienation, in which alterity inhabits the innermost core of the subject. Lacan devotes the whole of chapter 16 of *The Seminar, Book XI, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (1964a) to a discussion of alienation and the related concept of separation.

alienation 1. Most contemporary usage reflects the standard dictionary meanings: a feeling of strangeness or separation from others; a sense of a lack of warm relations with others. 2. Existentialists, however, have made the term a central construct in their psychology and appended a subtle but important meaning to the above. Rather than concentrate solely upon alienation of one human from others, they also stress the alienation of a person from him- or herself. This separation of the individual from the presumed 'real' or 'deeper' self is assumed to result from preoccupation with conformity, the wishes of others, the pressures from social institutions, and other 'outer-directed' motivations. 3. An antiquated term for progressive insanity.

to be, 4.5 (1985/1986), *Person*
the history of *Psychology*
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It has been suggested that I take the Martian approach to my thesis project, and try to communicate my work to an alien...

[SLIDE 1/LEFT PROJECTOR]



...who could then take this information back to the 'mother ship'...

(a metaphor for the external examination). And so, in preparation for this task, I am now going to imagine that you are the alien. In so doing, I also invite you to imagine yourself as this alien.

[SLIDE 2/ RIGHT PROJECTOR]



And yet, before I would ever attempt to communicate such an intimate part of myself, like my work,

[SLIDE 3/LEFT PROJECTOR]



...to a foreign body, there is a certain process that would have to take place; a process of alienation.

You are the alien...

[SLIDE 4/RIGHT PROJECTOR]

and 'I' am me.

Our encounter is unspecified, in terms of time, space and context, but we are here, nonetheless.

There are certain assurances that I want to have.



I want to know that if I share my work with you, you will have the capacity to recognise the brilliance of it.

I want to know that you will have the patience and appreciation to overlook any ungraceful moments of my presentation.

I want to know that when I have revealed myself to you, that you will know me, love me and embrace me.

I want to be assured that my work, as a representation of myself, will appear attractive to you, and that I will be able to seduce you.

And once I have seduced you, I want to know that you will have the ability to hold me and contain me.

I am tired of spilling over.

I am tired of being wasted.

I am tired.

What do I want out of an encounter with you, the alien?

*I want to seduce you, but I want to seduce you on my own terms.
I don't want to have to lose two stone, wear 'sexy' clothes (whatever that
may be for an alien), cook three meals a day, and do your laundry just to
catch your attention.*

*I don't want to have to punctuate every statement that I make with
reference to previous authors and ideologies.
I don't want to have to succumb to your kisses, your caresses, to have my
presence felt.*

*Nor do I want to compromise my impulses with dry talk of methodologies
and contextualisations.*

*This is not to say that I do not want kisses and caresses, methodologies and
context.*

*This is not to say, that my impulses, if left unchecked, will not lead me to a
strong desire to fornicate with epistemologies and ontology.*

*But I resent the inevitable conclusion of being fucked by you, without any
guarantee of me doing any of the fucking!*

I want to fuck you...

...the alien.

[SLIDE 5/LEFT PROJECTOR]



*If you are the alien that is supposed to know,
and I am meant to impart this knowledge to
you; then there are certain things I want this
process to include.*

*I want this process to be a play; an
enactment of pleasures, of tensions, of
suspense: of fragmented experiences that
never quite add up to an understandable
whole, but leave a warm feeling inside of
you when you think of me.*

*Above all, I want this process to be physical,
but mutually so. I want it to be tender, but
passionate.*

I want intimacy.

*I want my work to invoke an intimacy that
my personal relationships sometimes lack.*

I want the play to be the thing.

*And because you are an alien, and not a human, perhaps you will be able to
receive me and be intimate with me in ways that I cannot satisfy in my daily
life. If not, then I see no point in trying to impress you or share my work*

with you. I may as well go on working by myself, playing with myself in my own private fantasies.

But I take on the Martian approach in the hopes that I can seduce you, and that being fucked by an alien is not the same as being fucked by another person. Perhaps aliens are better lovers. As I stand here, I try to imagine what it would be like to be fucked by you, or better yet, for me to fuck you.

But the only one I am really interested in seducing is me. This is why the suggestion of an imaginary encounter with an alien is ironic, because I am the alien. I am always imagining this encounter through my interactions with others. I am always preparing for first contact through my labors of love that are my work.

My fantasy is not merely to fuck you, but to have an alien enter my space and participate in my masturbation. I should like my meeting with you to be a process of mutual masturbation that included an acknowledgment of such implications. And so, until such time as my first contact with an alien actually occurs, the only thing left for me to do, and I invite you to do the same, is to fuck off.

Thank you for taking part in this act of alienation.



Fig. 144 RyyA. Bread©: *Scholarly Exhibitionist* close-up of plaster coating used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster and muslin (coating), Dulux house paint, life size:



Fig. 146 RyyA. Bread©: *Professional Student* close-up of screen with head used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster, wood, textiles and Dulux house paint screen size 130.7cm (h) 120.2cm (w).

Chapter Four: A SUBJECT SPECIFIC INTERPLAY

I. Subjective Specificity

[I]t is precisely the minor differences in people who are otherwise alike that form the basis of feelings of strangeness and hostility (Freud [1918]: 199).

It is precisely the differences in people that form the basis of...*subjective specificity*. (RyyA. Bread©)

The *passage* between things and objects indicates a primary minimal measure of human difference. This primary measure before repression points to different "holes" in the Real (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 15).

I have referred above to two points that Irigaray makes with regard to Freud's 'fort-da' example: first, the German words for 'far' and 'near' do not carry the same corporeal-linguistic significance when translated into another language; second, the subject of the 'fort-da' event is necessarily a little boy. Both of these points converge with her explicit assertion that '[S]ubstitution is not always possible, least of all as concerns sexual difference' (Irigaray [1987] 1990: 132). In this way, Irigaray grounds her argument for sexual difference alongside 'linguistic specificity', in terms of constructing and reading theoretical texts:

Freud is writing in German; moreover, he is Jewish, which means that for him the opposition between vowels and consonants will be particularly important. We must bear in mind that such are his culture and language, we must understand this, and not blindly transpose a model constructed in one language onto another (ibid: 131).

When I read Freud, I am reading English translations of German texts, written by a Jewish German man who studied in France. When I read Lacan, I am reading English translations of French texts written by a French theorist who is informed by Freud's words and sentiment (read in German, French and English).⁹⁰ When I read Irigaray, I am reading English translations of a French woman theorist's words and sentiments contesting German and French male theorists who have been read, at least, in French translations. When I read Rank, I am reading English translations of another Jewish German man, who also migrated to France and then to the United States. When I read Lichtenburg Ettinger (below), I read English translations of a Jewish woman theorist who was born in Israel, lives in both Paris and Tel Aviv, and writes in both Hebrew and French. Like Irigaray,

Lichtenburg Ettinger confronts the German and French texts of Freud and Lacan from a feminist position that recognises sexual difference.

Unlike the other psychoanalysts in this list, but leaning towards an alliance with *my* praxis, Lichtenburg Ettinger's psychoanalytic engagement coexists alongside her own art practice.⁹¹ I will say more later on about the relationship between these two modes of signification within her process of making meaning. For now, it is enough to note that Lichtenburg Ettinger frames her artistic practice in terms of 'painting'. This is not a genre that is included in my own praxis. However, Lichtenburg Ettinger herself does not restrict her understanding of this term to a conventional understanding of paint on canvas.⁹² As such, shared 'holes' of interest can be found within our respective visual-material approaches.

Returning to the list above, none of the theorists share with each other the same relation to the languages they read and write in (the closest in this list being Freud and Rank). In a discourse that implicates the structures (*langue*) and use (*parole*) of language into the understanding of subjectivity to the extent that psychoanalysis does, these differences are, as Irigaray points out, extremely significant.⁹³ In so far as 'the unconscious is structured like a language', it is important to ascertain not only whose unconscious is implicated within a process of interpretation,⁹⁴ but also what particular language structure(s) it is informed by.

As analysts, the language that these theorists share is psychoanalysis. Yet they are not situated within this language in the same way and their distinct positions within the discourse of psychoanalysis problematically resists the notion of a unified understanding of its vocabulary. Indeed, Rank, Lacan, Irigaray and Lichtenburg Ettinger are important contributors to (psychoanalytic) discourse because they each, respectively, re-define and inscribe new meanings to Freud's founding formulations from their own subjective specific speaking positions. What is more, they are positioned differently within a broader discursive field through their engagement with other disciplines, for example: Rank

focuses on literature; Lacan on Surrealism; Irigaray on philosophy and Lichtenburg Ettinger on what Florence and Foster (2000) called 'idifferential aesthetics'.

Since English is neither the first language nor the written language used by any of these theorists, I sit outside their linguistic departure points, in so far as I read only their English translations. These are mediated by the interpretations of a translator. Thus, not only am I dependant upon a translator's ability to transfer meaning from one language to another, but I am restricted by the limitations of translation to express specific concepts arising from a particular linguistic framework. These limitations are worth noting, and would be even more problematic if the aim of this thesis involved a comprehensive appreciation of psychoanalytic discourse on its own terms. However, with respect to (my) subject(ive) specificity, my meanings are drawn from the sources I can, and have, accessed and they remain significant, albeit circumscribed, within this context.

The fact that I am not a trained analyst engaged in the practice of psychoanalysis further distances me from the linguistic field that these theorists operate within. My understanding of their praxis is limited to an academic appreciation of the theoretical aspect of their works, divested of clinical application and implications. Such readings are appropriated to further the insight and articulation of my own praxis elsewhere. Thus my reading of their sentiments is translated not only from one verbal language to another (through a series of others), but from specific discourses to another (with some exception in the case of Lichtenburg Ettinger).

Moreover, my relationship to the English language, from which I register meaning of these texts, is split between American/USA - English and English spoken in Britain, where I have now lived for seven years. 'English' is used, and signifies, differently between the USA and Britain: each country having its own distinct socio-historical relations (and internal variations) to the language. While this distinction may be negligible in terms of interpreting the written word, it is more obvious when it comes to my own utterances. My specific understanding and enunciation of the seemingly 'same' language

is a continual site that marks my difference, my foreignness, my other-ness, to the place in which I live. At the same time, by living in this other place, my own relation to language is effected, which subsequently affects my subjectivity (and visa versa). This condition informs my daily, embodied experience and renders me to a constant state of linguistic and contextual translation and re-inscription. To this end, the subtlety of the cultural distinctions makes the effects and affects all the more insidious.

Such a relation to language suggests that *parole* is a symptom of subjective specific positioning within specific spatial-temporal locations. A corollary to this is that both *langue* and *parole* have a corporeal dimension within the psychical-corporeal subject. Having no recourse to an operative language is tantamount to having no corporeal 'place' (Butler 1997: 4). At the same time, the specific relation to language that each individual has also means that more than one linguistic place can be occupied simultaneously. However, within such a fragmented occupation of language, each respective location is subjected to a state of mutual mutation.

Nin spoke three languages: Spanish, French and (American/USA) English. Spanish was her first language, but French was the language she associated with her Spanish father, who adopted it for his professional career (Fitch 1993: 12). Nin wrote her journals in French from the age of eleven to seventeen (ibid: 424 n.9).

At seventeen, she chose English as the language she would write in for the rest of her life. It was her third language, and she resisted learning it for some time after arriving in New York. Her resistance stemmed in part from her father's letters, in which he disparaged English and asked her to renounce both it and Spanish in order to keep her French identity (Richard-Allerdyce 1997: 19).

Bourgeois, who began writing her diary when she was twelve, also writes in three languages: French, English and 'drawing'. 'Her memories of childhood and of places in her life are written in French; all of her published texts are in English' (Bernadac [ed.] in Bourgeois 1998: 20). The drawing diary, however, is the language that Bourgeois privileges out of the three. In describing the significance of this language, she says, 'The images are personal. [...] Especially, I recollect the life I led near the water, in both France

and New York. I have always lived near the river. The murmur of the water, the memory of that musical murmur, is calming' (Bourgeois 1998: 304-05).

Language is indicative of cultural history and auto-historical identity. As such, a/the subject's relation to language is bound up with the psychical-corporeal identifications and refutations of their inhabited environments. Although Nin primarily wrote in English, she often reverted to French expressions (and more occasionally Spanish) in her journals to express linguistic specific sentiments whose full meaning was 'untranslatable'. For example, Nin writes, '[W]hen I told a lie it was a *mensonge vital*, a lie which gave life' (Nin 1993: 235). The phrase '*mensonge vital*' denotes the double meaning connoted in Nin's passage: the lie was both 'necessary' and 'life-giving'.

The implications of language specific sentiment can also be seen in operation with regard to the theoretical writing of those psychoanalysts listed above. Lacan's emphasis on the 'Name-of-the-Father' (*le nom du père*), for instance, carries particular significance in the French language with which he works, as noted earlier in a quote by Spitz. In French, the closeness of the words 'name' (*nom*) and 'no' (*non*) contribute to, and reinforce, Lacan's assertion that the Name-of-the-Father initiates subjectivity by resurrecting a *prohibitive* bar (across the 'S') that represents the Law of the Symbolic Order.

Irigaray's consideration of the implications of the French word for 'mother' (*maman*), in terms of linguistic-corporeal signification, is another example that is consistent with her emphasis in the maternal-feminine:

These same [tantric (*sic*)] traditions tell us that, in order to indicate that which is not yet manifest, one must say *m*, keeping the lips together. We often find the *m* in the word for mother. In French *maman* signifies, phonetically at least, that which remains unable to represent itself, speak itself, master itself, that which delays absorption but favours respiration, that which covers the whole of a black expanse expressed by the *m* and which is accompanied potentially by every possible colour thanks to the *a*. This name is one of the most perfect words possible. (Irigaray [1987] 1990: 135).

There are also certain psychoanalytic concepts that remain denoted in the language they are conceived within, in order for them to carry an expressed meaning. Thus particular words, such as *Spaltung*, *jouissance* and *objet petit a*, remain 'fixed' in their original language and pass through discourse in an un-translated state. The language of

psychoanalysis is permeated with these linguistic marks left by the embodied locations of the theorists who contribute them; thus inscribing the respective term with a socio-historical context. Psychoanalytic terminology is precise and complex, and is layered by the evolution of concepts within individual theorist's own auto-historical development of formulations, and from the critical responses/overlay of others. In this respect, it can be overwhelming to engage with the language of this theoretical discourse, since each term carries with it a history of the movement and the inter-relations of its members.

Lacan's use of language is deliberately seductive and deceptive, especially with his use of sophisticated wit and linguistic puns. His indulgence in 'Lacanian algebra' tends to obscure rather than to clarify his theoretical equations. I have often felt that the moment I attempt to understand Lacan on/by his own terms, is the moment when I enter defeat in terms of establishing my own articulated position. His equations seem to be rigged with a self-effacing mechanism for those who attempt to trespass on his territory. Grosz, who demonstrates an appreciated ability to outline Lacan's concepts with lucidity and insight, expresses a similar sentiment in the following passage:

Lacan's work seems to demand an either/or response in feminist terms. Given its difficulty, sophistication, and obscurity, undertaking to read his work with the aim of, as it were, independently evaluating it seems impossible. If one is to comprehend even some of his work in depth this is to be already committed to supporting it. As Lacan himself said in describing his work: 'I prefer there to be only one way in, and for that to be difficult...' [...]. This ensures that the 'way into' his texts is *his way*. It is only by a willing, if provisional, suspension of logical judgements and a belief in the underlying coherence of his work that there is any possibility of understanding it (Grosz 1990: 141 *italics in original*).

In the respective work of Irigaray and Lichtenburg Ettinger, the language that is deployed borders on cryptic in its complexity at times, precisely because they are equipped and prepared to enter into direct dialogue with Lacan specifically⁹⁵, and psychoanalysis in general. They do so on/in his (and Freud's, et al) terms in order to contest these terms. In so doing, they are forced to take up...and make up, new terminology, since there is a point in which existing language fails them in their sexually specific rebuttals. Their respective languages are comprised of precisely invented jargon constructed in response to earlier precise inventions laid out in dominant psychoanalytic discourse.

To this end, it is the challenges posed by the practical construction of her own linguistic texts that informs Irigaray's calling for a new language to be created by and for women. Lichtenburg Ettinger has much to offer in terms of a new model of language (*langue*), which elaborates Irigaray's notion of the 'maternal-feminine' into what she terms *matrixial-feminine symbolic*. However, in my view, her use of [(visual-)scripted] language (*parole*) fails to provide a satisfactory answer to the problems posed by redressing psychoanalytic terminology. I assume that much of the difficulty in reading her texts arises from the translations into English of already difficult material; a view upheld by Griselda Pollock in the 'Preface' of Lichtenburg Ettinger's *The Matrixial Gaze* (1995). Nonetheless, it is ironic and disappointing that her obviously important work should be so obscured by its linguistic signification when her thesis ingeniously argues for an understanding of the matrixial-feminine that, unlike Irigaray's formulation, has Symbolic significance and representation...and is communicable.⁹⁶

Signification is a good thing in the theory of the matrix, which is not nostalgic for the chaos of the prelinguistic or the possible psychosis of those who cannot find themselves in language. In this theory, the direction from the Real to the Symbolic is emphasized, for it is not only symbolic signification that is at stake, but also desire⁹⁷ (Pollock in Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 90).

In *Taboo of Virginity* (1918), Freud refers to the notion of the 'taboo of personal isolation' in Crawley's anthropological text, *The Mystic Rose: A Study in Primitive Marriages* (1902).⁹⁸ Crawley's concept is primarily about man's relation to 'fellow' men.⁹⁹ Freud, however, in this early piece on 'the narcissism of minor differences' shifts the source of hostility and strangeness from between men onto the site of 'woman'. Thus his own notion is to do with man's rejection of woman as the opposite sex ('but otherwise alike' as he astonishingly puts it); what Pellegrini frames as, 'the woman question'.¹⁰⁰ Pellegrini suggests that the normative assumption that 'woman's difference provokes man's performance anxieties', is actually reversed: 'It is man's performance anxieties that demand and construct woman's difference, that demand and construct woman as difference. This demand is the narcissism of minor differences' (Pellegrini 1997: 31-32).

My own understanding of subjective specificity can be read in relation to both Crawley's 'taboo of personal isolation' and Freud's 'narcissism of minor differences', (only) in so far as it is concerned with identifying the perimeters of the psychical corporeal subject in relation to other embodied individuals. However, rather than a homogeneous heterosexual framework that posits sexual difference as part of the same, as Crawley and Freud's formulations imply; my understanding of subjective specificity is to do with sexual difference in terms of heterogeneous homosexuality and the psycho-symbolic significance of inter-personal (and inter-sexual) dynamics. Subjective specificity is thus framed, not in terms of binaries, but rather, with regard to *sites* that help to locate an individual's own position in the mapping of psychical corporeal identifications and definition.

Nor is my understanding of subjective specificity rooted in 'hostility' or 'strangeness'. Part of the process of identification is reconciling those *points* of non-slippage; defining the edges of the 'rim'¹⁰¹. In the same-sex identification between women this is particularly important because, although there is an assumption of *sameness*, within this space there exists, simultaneously and often in tension, a multitude of differences corresponding to both sex and gender; as well as auto-historical and socio-cultural considerations. Thus, (the narcissism of) subjective specificity is about the process of weeding through the overload of meanings inscribed and described in and through relations between both men and women; even when the site of negotiation is another woman (subject of the same sex).

For example, when I read women as 'feminine' it is an externally imposed reading of gender that speaks *for* men, which is not to say that I derive no pleasure from it. However, when I read myself in relation to 'femininity' it is experienced as an improper identification because I invariably fail to measure up to it. In contrast, when I read women who are speaking *for* woman in terms of sexual specificity as 'woman', it is an articulation that illuminates and breaks through the male impositions. Thus, I read against men and their construction of women as 'feminine' to preserve my own integrity. And when I read

myself towards 'woman' (and other women), it is a proper confirmation of my own identity as belonging to a different sex. Nevertheless, I still must distinguish myself from other women to shape my own 'I', that is, in [O]rder that I can speak of my own understanding of embodied experience and make these meanings *articulate*.

In the Hebrew Bible, one of the many names for God is *El Harahmim* translated as 'God full of Mercy' or compassion, and also as *misereri, misericordiam, caritas, pietas, gratia* and so forth. These are indeed the figurative meanings of *Rahamim*. But the literal meaning, the signifier, is: wombs, uteruses, Matrixes. The text literally signifies a 'God full of wombs' or (in Latin) full of 'matrixes'. [...] When we read in *Genesis* 43,14: 'and God Almighty gives you mercy' we hear in Hebrew: 'and God's Breasts give you wombs/matrixes'. These meanings are abolished in all classical translations of the Bible. The abolition of the wombs and the breasts from God's name in translations from the Hebrew constitutes, in my view, not only the elimination of conventional feminine imagery from God's Image, but also a foreclosure of a matrixial-feminine symbolic dimension of alliance (Lichtenburg Ettinger 2000: 202).

Lichtenburg Ettinger's concept of a *matrix* offers a framework for understanding the 'sites' of subjective specific navigation that I speak of. Historically moving forward from and with Irigaray's contributions that remain silenced in the 'not-I' of the 'I/not-I' binary, Lichtenburg Ettinger constructs a framework for relations predicated on *severality*: creating 'borderlinks' between 'I's and 'non-I's (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 98).¹⁰² The 'originary formation' from which the concept of the matrix is modelled is located within the womb of a/the woman at the late prenatal stage of pregnancy. However, Lichtenburg Ettinger is explicit in distinguishing her reference to this site from either an 'organ' or an 'origin', as it is usually referred to (Lichtenburg Ettinger 2000: 193-95). Instead, she defines this site as:

[...] a shared *borderspace* in which *differentiation-in-co-emergence*, *separation-in-jointness* and *distance-in-proximity* are continuously reattuned by metramorphosis created by, and further creating – together with matrixial affect – *relations-without-relating* on the borders of presence and absence, subject and object, among subjects and partial-subjects, between me and the stranger, and between those and part-objects or relational objects. Co-emerging and co-fading *I(s)* and *non-I(s)* interlace their borderlinks in metramorphosis (ibid: 193-94, *italics in original*).

Thus, the womb functions as a space, and a structural model, for recognising subjectivity not in terms of (the) One *against* (and only known through) an-Other, but rather as forming in/a relation *with* each other. The womb is a 'shared', *embodied* space that signifies differently for the participants involved. It is the site as 'space', 'aerials' and

‘interplay’ that is emphasised here, instead of ‘subjects’ and ‘objects’ themselves and/or separately. ‘In the matrixial stratum of subjectivization’, Lichtenburg Ettinger asserts, ‘*subjectivity is an encounter*’ (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 45 *italics in original*).

Both the ‘I’ and the ‘non-I’ are simultaneously ‘partial-subjects’ and ‘partial-objects’ for, and defined by, each other: “‘grains’ of *I* and *non-I* and not yet ‘mother’ and ‘infant’ – constitute a cluster of feminine rapport” (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 100). The ‘I’ in Ettinger’s formulation is ‘the becoming-subject-to-be’ and includes both male and female (the becoming-) subject(s) (-to-be). The ‘non-I’ is understood as, ‘woman’ as its becoming-archaic-m/Other-to-be’ (Lichtenburg Ettinger 2000: 196). To this end, the term, ‘non-I’, corresponds with Irigaray’s notion of the maternal-feminine. However, Lichtenburg Ettinger posits a framework whereby matricide is not the only outcome afforded to this sexually specific, and symbolic, recognition of woman and woman’s sexually specific desire is not necessarily foreclosed by the phallic Order:

In my view, these two complexes (matrixial and castration) constitute different psychical dimensions, heterogeneous to one another, whereby feminine difference does not stem from masculine difference (ibid: 197).

Lichtenburg Ettinger’s framework contends with Irigaray’s ‘(at least) two modes of *jouissance*’. As such, it recognises the phallic Symbolic, while simultaneously broadening the understanding of the Symbolic structure beyond Lacan’s narrow view (ibid. p.100). The matrixial gaze is positioned in a parallel relation to the phallic gaze of Lacan’s theoretical construct. While the phallic gaze is *organised* around the trajectory of a straight line, the matrixial gaze is spread out; it ‘diffracts’ through ‘webs of links’ *and* encompasses the phallic angle within a broader (but not infinite) expanse (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 103). Importantly, Lichtenburg Ettinger asserts that ‘[...] the phallic gaze can’t master the matrix’ (ibid. 109).

The phallic and the matrixial economies co-exist, and the definition of subjectivity is contingent upon both. The ‘co-emerging’ and ‘co-fading’ that occurs within the prenatal site of the womb, also defines the relations between the phallic and the matrixial

'stratums'. Thus, the matrix is the more dominant active stratum in the 'subjectivising process' during the prenatal phase, but it fades in the post-natal phase when the phallic stratum emerges as dominant. In this framework of 'relations-without-relating', Lichtenburg Ettinger posits two 'autonomous' *objet a*, one for each respective stratum, and the matrixial *objet a*, 'either precedes or co-exists with the phallic *objet a*' (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 45). In this way, the matrixial *objet a* corresponds with Irigaray's *placement* of maternal-feminine, whose matricide prefigures the death of the father that is superimposed over the dead mother in Freud's phallic Order.

Female subjects have a double access to the matrixial sphere in the Real, since they experience the womb both as an archaic out-side and past site, out of chronological time – which is true for males as well – *and* as an inside and future site, whether they are mothers or not – that may (or not) become present (Lichtenburg Ettinger 2000: 196).

Lichtenburg Ettinger's framework of a matrixial symbolic order takes on board psychical corporeal sexual difference at the same time that it offers a shared space for both sexes to (co-)emerge from. The mother-daughter relation that Irigaray can be seen mourning for with her acute awareness of cultural matricide, is given signification and special significance within Lichtenburg Ettinger's model. However, within the process of subjectivization, this privileging does not diminish other participant's relation to the maternal figure or to other others. Instead it provides a framework for 'plural' relations among several to be established and sustained as simultaneous, yet distinct (specific), heterogeneous, inter-personal and inter-sexual...intersubjectivities.

II. 'Relations without relating'

[R]ank believed that Freudianism would provide the intellectual tools with which to probe the gnarled roots of artistic creativity (Spitz 1991: 237).

Discussing art in the psychoanalytical context is inseparable, to my mind, from debating sexual difference, since we enter the function of art by way of the libido and through extensions of the psyche closest to the edges of corpo-*reality* (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 92, *italics in original*).

Lichtenburg Ettinger is especially relevant to this thesis because her theoretical investment in psychoanalysis explicitly, and inextricably, includes engagement with (her) artistic (visual-material) practices. In this respect, she and Rank both concern themselves with discussing the artist's relation to art in psychoanalytic terms of subjectivisation. An important distinction between Lichtenburg Ettinger and myself, however, is the acknowledgement afforded to Rank. Therefore, before taking up the question of how visual-material textual production is implicated in Lichtenburg Ettinger's praxis, and how this relates to my own thesis, it is necessary to situate Rank within our respective formulations.

Lichtenburg Ettinger makes reference to Freud, especially using his comments regarding 'intra-uterine existence' and 'womb-fantasies' in *The Uncanny* (1919), to establish discursive precedent for her own theory on the matrixial stratum (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 7-8):

In my view, the conception of such an awe-inspiring highway to hell is linked to the fact that the followers of Freud did not develop his sporadic remarks about phantasy and the complex of intra-uterine existence into a *different web of meaning donation/revelation*, while the phantasy and the complex of 'castration' received majestic treatment, ennobled with variegated implications, all leading harmoniously to the creation of One sovereign, phallic-Symbolic, expelling all the remains of the other fantasies onwards to predictable destinations (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 14, *italics in original*).

In my view, Rank was the follower of Freud that Lichtenburg Ettinger laments after and yet fails to recognise. As my earlier discussion of Rank has emphasised, the split ego represented by the conflict between art and artist in his formulation is *not* Oedipal in origin, but modelled on the trauma of birth and the implicit separation from the maternal body. In further support of Rank's relevance here, it is worth reiterating that in 1919,

when Freud wrote *The Uncanny*, he still regarded Rank as his protégé and a valuable asset to the psychoanalytic community. Moreover, at least five years earlier, Freud had favourably received Rank's thesis in *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (1914), which undoubtedly influenced Freud's remarks regarding the significance of the womb in this text. Finally, when writing *The Uncanny*, Freud had yet to cement the Oedipus Complex into his framework to the extent that he was to do so in *The Ego and the Id* (1923); which, as noted earlier, is the point at which Rank's theoretical position became intolerable to him.

Nonetheless, within the three texts written by Lichtenburg Ettinger that I cite, there is only one mention of Rank's name. Moreover, this reference is imbedded within a quote from Lacan's "Le malentendu", in *Ornicar?* (no.22 1980), and functions as negative reinforcement in her passage. Firstly, Lichtenburg Ettinger inserts Lacan's quote to support her discussion of how the phallic Order forecloses female desire and deepens the 'misunderstanding into which each subject is born.' Secondly, by way of Lacan, who in this instance lends credence to Lichtenburg Ettinger's argument, Rank is dismantled by relegating the 'trauma of birth' to the Real and therefore demonstrating the perpetuated misunderstanding of how desire functions *within* the Symbolic Order:

The desire of the woman as subject within such singular series of encounters is already a *webbed* desire, further composited but not fused or mingled with the Name of the Father. *Her*-desire is both phallic and matrixial. An exclusively phallic desire in such a meeting, which would have designated the reduction of the libido as masculine (only) to the signifier at the price of the destruction of supplementary feminine eroticism, would only have deepened the misunderstanding into which each subject is born: "Otto Rank came close to this when he spoke of the trauma of birth. There is no other trauma: Man is born misunderstood...That is what it has transmitted to you by 'giving you life'....There is no other trauma of birth than that of being born desired. Desired, or not – it's all the same since it comes through the by/speak-being (parl'être)'" (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 101 *italics in original*).

I would argue, however, that Rank's formulations on the psychology of the artist not only have historical importance with respect to Lichtenburg Ettinger's work, but also have an ideological affinity. Despite his theoretical limitations with regard to sexual difference, he and Lichtenburg Ettinger both share a privileging of the intra-uterine relationship between the mother and infant, and take this as the basis for their respective

symbolic structures in which to locate the understanding of artistic subjectivity and the creative process.

While Rank is implicated in Lichtenburg Ettinger's dismissal of frameworks that treat the womb as 'origin', his theory does not call for a return to the original source. In Rank's schema, the artist's conflict between art and life manifests either as failed attempts at narcissistic identification with anOther and, more constructively, through artistic production. These acts are gestures of reconciliation that are framed as compensation for the intra-uterine state of (co-)existence, which continues to inform and motivate the creative subject upon entering the Symbolic Order.

At stake in the attention given to Rank (or not), is the significance attached to the *ego*, which was one of Rank's fundamental divergences from classic psychoanalysis:

The precondition, then, of the creative personality is not only its acceptance, but its actual glorification, of itself (Rank [1932] 1989: 27).

It is through an emphasis of the ego that the artistic type is differentiated from the neurotic and is able to establish a productive creative process. Moreover, in Rank's framework, it is at the level of the ego (rather than the unconscious) that the conflict between artist and art is located. Thus, the reason Rank was so helpful for Nin was that he encouraged her to embrace the identity of a/the artist by *articulating* rather than repressing her ego identifications (for better or for worse).

The significance of the ego cannot be overemphasised in terms of my embodied auto-erotic methodology and my understanding of subjective specificity. It is through the (glorification of the) identity text of RyyA. Bread© that meanings are made of my research. And it is through the act of psychical-corporeal investment (ego-libidinal arousal) and definition (auto-*authorisation*) that the research is located within a broader framework while retaining its original contributions. In this way, my thesis embodies the conflict between the artist, or rather the *Scholarly Exhibitionist*, and *her* introjection of the dominant (or pre-existing) (art) ideologies. At the same time, it also reflects a/the

(scholarly) daughter's need to differentiate from the (theoretical) mother's presence in [O]rder to signal, within discourse, her own specific voice of maternal-feminine recognition.

In contrast to Rank, Lichtenburg Ettinger dissolves the significance of the ego in favour of the matrixial 'borderspace' between individuals:

[B]y the concept of the matrix the basic notion of subjectivity as leaning on a unit of One (separate or fused) is questioned, and the sub-symbolic One-less seeps onto the symbolic. The one-less matrix is subjectivizing (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 47).

Insofar as my understanding of subjectivity is multiple, fluid, shifting and refers to others within the process of auto-*authorisation*, my auto-erotic framework can be read in terms of Lichtenburg Ettinger's understanding of the matrixial gaze as, 'linked to a feminine One-less desire' (ibid: 50). Nevertheless, this does not eradicate Rank's framing of the conflict between art and artist, nor does it alter my desire to establish my singularity, as an individual comprised of an indefinite number of subject positions, with(-in) matrixial '*differentiation-in-co-emergence*, separation-in-jointness and *distance-in-proximity*.'

Just as the phallic gaze cannot master the matrix, neither can I (which is not to say that I can, or should, be conflated with the phallic gaze). Nor do I desire to master it, although I do strive to comprehend and situate/define my subjective specificity within it. There is space within Lichtenburg Ettinger's framework for me to occupy without having to abandon my sense of distinct identities or needing oppose her in [O]rder to define my own embodied presence.

The symbolic framework constructed by the matrixial stratum encompasses the/my 'I' within its definition: '[...] a matrixial multiple plural subjectivity is also singular and partial. It emerges from joint corporeal resistance, shared affected instances, from exchanges of phantasy relating to non-Oedipal sexual difference, and from inter-connectivity' (ibid: 27). The matrix is predicated on the co-existence of several 'I' and 'non-I' participants who remain distinct, 'shared-but-singular (or particular)' (ibid: 28). Thus the act of auto-*authorisation*, which is important for establishing my 'I' as distinct,

does not necessitate a rupture but simply a marker that *traces* the edges of my psychical corporeality and *inscribes* this into a web of links and borderspaces. The embodied enactments of this tracing and inscribing are what I call *psychical corporeal performances*.

Subjectivisation of the 'I'/infant in the prenatal intra-uterine state is not only an encounter with the 'non-I' of the other participants (i.e. the maternal figure) in the shared (border)space of the womb, *but also an ego-libidinal auto-erotic encounter between the (emerging) 'I' and its own corporeality*. Thus, *auto-eroticism* functions in my thesis as a *structural symbolic framework* to signal the distinct identities of a/the subject, in an analogous and corresponding manner to Lichtenburg Ettinger's utilisation of the late prenatal womb as a structural model for the encompassing matrixial-feminine symbolic.¹⁰³

While Lichtenburg Ettinger focuses on the encounter between the (co-)emerging subject and mother to define the matrixial stratum of inter and intra-subjective relations between several; my own emphasis is on how this stratum is played out specifically on/within the site of the emerging 'I': 'I' as matrixial participant; 'I' as a linguistic signifier; 'I' as a visual-material form; 'I' as the embodied subject RyyA Bread©; 'i^a' as my psychical corporeal relation to my specular image; and 'a' as 'I', RyyA., who has rediscovered the misplaced *objet a* of maternal-feminine identification through methodological embodiments.

In this way my process of auto-*authorisation* involves the shaping and tracing of *I's* in a matrixial (border)space where *I* am simultaneously 'I' and 'non-I'. Since my auto-erotic methodology rests *within* Lichtenburg Ettinger's model of the matrix, she can be read as a theoretical mother to my own work. What distinguishes her from other m/others in my theoretical genealogy, such as Nin, Bourgeois and Irigaray¹⁰⁴, is that Lichtenburg Ettinger literally offers her (matrixial) womb (as discursive precedence), from which my identity text(s) (subjective specific positions as/and [em]bodies of work) can (co-e)merge from/with-in 'maternal' and matrixial-feminine symbolic [O]rder.

III. Dotting I's within and through theory (with a small 't')

[T]he insistence that autobiography 'proper' is essentially a prose-form-[but it] also adds considerable support to the belief that autobiography is by nature a literary kind (Marcus 1994: 40).

Thus after modernism, we pose feminism. That is, I present what I have outlined as critical feminism, as the place where theory, art/literature, and autobiography are conjugated. Here, struggling with the complexity of subjectivity and its inscriptions, articulated with the riddles of sexual difference and the politics of feminine alterity, we might decipher the inscriptions of the feminine, of what is uncannily familiar, and even a graceful solace, a *jouissance* that can be touched at the matrixial threshold where art, working "in an of the feminine" – inscribing the resistance of the feminine – opens for us to glimpse "a beyond that is inside the visible" (Pollock 1996: 85).

With regard to methodology, the *specificity of practices* that constitute a particular praxis is as important as the linguistic and sexual specificity of the practitioner. The specific mediums and materials that are utilised in the process of textual production not only shape, but inform, the meanings that are made. Indeed, while the psychoanalytic-linguistic and visual-material practices in Lichtenburg Ettinger's praxis makes her a strong contemporary model in which to relate my thesis, in terms of methodological and ideological affinity, the different mediums that we deploy point to our embodied subjective specificity, which is significant within our respective projects. Thus, although links can be traced within our respective practices, the alliance that I propose between Lichtenburg Ettinger and myself is based, not so much on our distinct material engagement, as in our shared emphasis on the *interplay* between visual-material and linguistic theoretical textual productions.

Rank and Nin both used a broad(est) definition of 'artist' in their discussions of the creative process. At the same time, they both worked, almost exclusively, within literary practices where the medium of *articulation* privileges the paternal signifier of the 'word'. Within my project, literature was initially taken up in relation to the plaster coating exercise, as an exercise explicitly concerned with translating the literary genre of 'autobiography' into the visual-material form of auto[erotic]-representation(s). Neither Nin nor Rank were 'in the frame' of my research when the plaster coating exercise was established. In so far as modes of signification pertain to the relation between the Real and the Symbolic and can be discussed in sexually specific *parental* terms, my focus was on

‘writing the/my body’ through engagement with materiality rather than words, in [O]rder to encounter and signal a *maternal*, rather than *paternal*, mode of signification:

Where do we meet this real? For what we have in the discovery of psycho-analysis is an encounter, an essential encounter – an appointment to which we are always called with a real that eludes us. [...] First, the *tuché*, which we have borrowed, [...], from Aristotle, who uses it in his search for cause. We have translated it as *the encounter with the real*. The real is beyond the *automation*, the return, the coming back, the insistence of the signs, by which we see ourselves governed by the pleasure principle. The real is that which always lies behind automation, and it is quite obvious, throughout Freud’s research, that it is this that is the object of his concern (Lacan 1998: 53-54 *italics in original*).

A ‘borderlink’ between Nin, Bourgeois, Lichtenburg Ettinger and myself is the practice of journal keeping that informs other, respective modes of making in our work: Nin culled her journals to create her literary ‘fictional’ texts; Bourgeois’s ‘constant practice of [diary] writing goes hand in hand with that of drawing’ (Bernadac [ed.] *in* Bourgeois 1998: 18); Lichtenburg Ettinger finds ‘grains’ of theory in her ‘notes’ on her visual-material practice (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 92); and the journals that I kept during the plaster coating exercise initiated and (in)formed the basis of my linguistic investigation (where Nin, Bourgeois and Lichtenburg Ettinger are situated) within my academic thesis.

The journals that I wrote, primarily during the intensive phase of the plaster coating exercise, culminated in a self-assigned (visual-)scripted text entitled, *Transgressing The Boundaries of Acceptability: A Progress Report* (September 1997). Although this ‘progress report’ left some themes noted and yet undeveloped, it nevertheless began the process of negotiating my subjective position within linguistic signification. Moreover, it identified theoretical implications of the plaster coating exercise and mapped out the terrain in which my subsequent linguistic investigation was concerned. Thus the ‘progress report’ that came out of the plaster coating exercise, via the journals, has been one of the most important guiding texts to shape the direction of the research, and the remaining themes have been picked up and developed in other texts.¹⁰⁵

The methodological juxtaposition of literary autobiography with visual-material auto[erotic] – representation(s) in my thesis, is bound up with the investigation of what remains un-translatable from one mode of signification to another. In her essay, ‘Working

Hot: Materialising Practices', included in the newly released volume *Differential*

Aesthetics: Art practices, philosophy and feminist understandings (Florence and Foster

2000¹⁰⁶), Barb Bolt critiques Butler's theory of performativity in terms of this question:

The risk in the privileging of language, is the conflation of 'to matter' and 'to materialize' with meaning or signification. In returning matter to the sign, instead of establishing the facts of matter, 'matter' slips away [...]. If we have to return to the matter as sign what happens to the matter of bodies and the matter of materials in this materialization? Is there a space for an actual concurrent production, a materialization of matter that does not just mean, but has effects? (Bolt 2000: 320).

Bolt identifies similarities between 'the way in which 'art' materializes' and Butler's project that 'specifically addresses the way in which sex and gender are materialized' in so far as, 'Art practice is performative [...] it enacts or produces 'art' as an effect.' However, Bolt draws attention to the 'disempowerment' of materialization within Butler's theory that is, 'unable to account for the materialization that occurs in the interplay between the matter of bodies, cultural knowledges, or discourse, *and* the materials of production' (ibid: 319-20, *italics in original*). Thus for the sake of positioning her art practice within cultural knowledge, in such a way that it retains the significance of the material engagement of practice, Bolt posits the concern of 'materialization' alongside the notion of performativity; as a matter of what I have called 'subject' specific significance. With the exception of Butler's contributions, both my theoretical framework and art practice differ from Bolt's praxis.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, the need to locate materialization (to use Bolt's term) within the performative act of theoretical textual production is a shared theme, with which Lichtenburg Ettinger is also concerned.

Lichtenburg Ettinger poses the question: 'Through making art and reflecting on it, is it possible to formulae (sic) theoretical paths that are not a tear or a cut and that do not collapse onto the royal way of the phallus?' (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1996: 98). In describing her praxis, Lichtenburg Ettinger does not qualify her use of the term 'theory'. She does, however, attempt to define it in relation to her praxis. As such, she juxtaposes her production of 'theory' with her 'artworking', and then negotiates the relationship and 'borderspaces' that these two terms share with one another. To this end, Lichtenburg

Ettinger is engaged in expanding the normative understandings of theory with respect to methodology in such a way as to make space for the aesthetic affects and effects of visual-material engagement.

Griselda Pollock has been described as 'a powerful advocate' for Lichtenburg Ettinger (Florence and Foster [eds.] 2000: 176). As a prominent and pioneering feminist art historian, invested in the aesthetics of difference, Pollock's support and theoretical interest is currently raising awareness and broadening the impact of Lichtenburg Ettinger's work within a critical art context. Moreover, she is doing this in such a way as to retain the psychoanalytic specificity of Lichtenburg Ettinger's methodology as theoretically and politically significant. Pollock stresses the need to take art more seriously, and to recognise the political significance of the aesthetic sphere, rather than to merely reduce it to the 'cultural or entertainment end of our movement'. Thus, she calls for politically going to the borders of 'what is known aesthetically' to access radical new ways of theorising (Pollock 1996: 85). Lichtenburg Ettinger, whose praxis sits within, and stretches, the 'borderlinks' between sexual difference, aesthetics and psychoanalysis provides an exemplary response to Pollock's call.

Close (Parental) Encounters of the Triadic Ki[n]d:

Within my visual-material artistic practices, the plaster coating exercise marked the first step towards addressing the specific affects and effects of matter in the materialisation of signification, while my subsequent (scholarly) engagement with Nin literarily informed an investigation of what remains distinct with regard to linguistic signification. Through my reading of Nin, in relation to various psychoanalytic frameworks, the significance of including literary references within my thesis became (more) a[p]parent, methodologically speaking. From my position as a (theoretical) daughter, like Nin, I have needed to identify with the paternal linguistic signifier in [O]rder to establish enough distance to engage with the maternal-feminine without being *submerged* in, or *confused* by, it.

Bourgeois experienced Breton and Duchamp as 'too close' to her and had a 'violent objection' to them. Yet, despite their (theoretical) proximity, Bourgeois was alienated by 'their pontification', which points to her differing position(s) and concerns with regard to materiality (Bourgeois [1992] 1998: 229-30). In somewhat of a reverse situation, I, at times, experience artists who are engaged with visual-material auto-*authorisation* as 'too close for comfort' at the level at which identification *matters*. In this way, recourse to Nin, as a literary interlocutor, provided a necessary distancing strategy from the maternal-feminine implicated within my framing of visual-material textual production.

As I have discussed earlier, Nin created distance from the sexual specific identity of her mother (and herself) by identifying with her father who, for her, represented both genders within the identity of the artist. I, on the other hand, have established distance from same-subject artists and their visual-material practices, by identifying with Nin who, for me, represents the embodiment of a/the woman artist engaged in the act of auto-*authorisation*...elsewhere. In this way, the definition of my own embodiment remains the pivotal axis of my artistic visual-material practices while the Other is moved to another (academic) context whereby its relevance to my psychical corporeality can be appreciated and articulated.

As such, Nin is not only positioned as a theoretical m/other, but as a *paternal* 'signifier' as well: one whose own work challenges the cultural-historical assumption that linguistic signification is a male prerogative, while simultaneously retaining the sexual specific function of the linguistic signifier as paternal. Just as Nin's distancing strategy ultimately led her back to an embrace of the maternal-feminine, my distancing strategy also leads back to a site of interdisciplinary practitioners, whose work touches the concerns I have identified through my own subjective specific auto-erotic encounters.

The 'shifting' (and multiplying) tactic I have described here is consistent with my definition of subjectivity, and the methodological approach I have taken to my thesis throughout. The interplay between my multi-practic[e]al praxis is mediated through my

own subjective specific embodied identity text, RyyA. Bread©. As a linguistic signifier, this authorial name binds a multitude of fluid and shifting 'intersubjectivities' implicated in, and emerging from, the process of auto-*authorisation*.

Lichtenburg Ettinger's matrix is predicated on the notion of 'several participants', yet her own emphasis is primarily on the relation between the (co-)emerging participants of infant (I) and mother (non-I) (to be). The 'duality' of this focus is reflected in the two practices of 'theory' and 'painting' that, by her own definition, comprise her praxis. As my earlier discussion of her specific practice interplay revealed, the way in which Lichtenburg Ettinger engages with and frames this duality clearly distinguishes her two-fold praxis from traditional binary readings, such as theory/practice. Moreover, within these two (broad) terms, several mediums and modes of signification are implicated. Nonetheless, the difference between Lichtenburg Ettinger's framing of a two-form praxis and my own staging of a *tripartite* interplay is significant.

My engagement with Nin's identity text led me to enquire where and how the 'mother' was situated, within her literary signification specifically, and linguistic significance more generally. Classic psychoanalysis constructs a 'not-mother-no-daughter/Son-[dead] Father' family scene of subjectivisation. This emphasis on the part of Oedipal sons, conflates the daughters' experience with either the son (first erogenous zone) or the mother (second erogenous zone) without any recognition of sexual difference, or of the distinction between daughters and mothers.

Both Irigaray and Lichtenburg Ettinger redress this situation by evoking their respective maternal-feminine and matrixial-feminine sites of encounter. However, in privileging the maternal significance, neither of these theorists attempts to resuscitate the 'dead' father from the morgue of signification. Although Lichtenburg Ettinger does posit a co-existing relationship between the phallic and the matrixial stratum, the question of how to encounter (*tuché*) the 'father' from within the matrix remains open for exploration:

The Name of the Father appears on the level of whole objects. It is not the specific paternal image that is determinate in the father's role as personifying the *paternal-function*, but the fact that he

represents language and “carries” the symbolic dimension which enables the infant to create a distance from the mother as a source of originary experience. The *Ideal of the I* has a calming influence, it is a “sympathetic” paternal being in the sense of that which (or whoever) helps us distance ourselves from the archaic symbiotic and incestuous phallic mother – who, in her connivance with the fragmentary body, threatens us with her infinite, engulfing power. The *Ideal of the I* is a brick-on-edge course reabsorbed into the relations with the symbolic Other beyond the mother, while the archaic part-objects (including the archaic bodily phallus as a part-object) which are ascribed to the mother resound, from time to time, from the reliquary of personal unprocessed history (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 11-12, *italics in original*).

Lichtenburg Ettinger refers to the paternal function as the *Ideal of the I*, which functions at the level of whole objects, while the archaic m/other (non-I) functions at the level of part objects. Yet within the matrix, the ability to conceive of a subject as ‘whole’ is thrown into question, as subjectivity is defined as always ‘part’ of, and through, an encounter with other participants. Thus the *Ideal of the I*, like Lacan’s \$, remains a signifier that cannot be embodied.

In situating the significance of the paternal function in relation to the matrixial-feminine symbolic, Lichtenburg Ettinger takes care not to revert back to a Freudian equation of penis as sign of the phallus, or to privilege the paternal signifier in such a (Lacanian) way as to foreclose maternal significance. I concur with Lichtenburg Ettinger’s position on these two points, at the same time that I suggest that within my understanding of an embodied methodology, ‘the specific paternal’ function of the father is not the ‘ideal’ of ‘I’. In my view, the ‘father’, as a single/individual parental signifier, is no more capable of ‘representing language’ for the daughter than, alone, a/the mother is.

The mother and the father function with relative degrees of ability to ‘carry’ the symbolic dimension. The signifier, in remaining distinct from a sign, is embodied (in part only) by both sexes who have differing ways of approaching signification, predicated on sexually specific departure points. Ideally speaking, both the maternal and paternal signifier have a part to play in a/the daughter’s process of auto-*authorisation*, and the articulation of ‘I’. In my view, the intercourse of parental functions has been ignored and/or desecrated on too many times in an attempt to annul or kill the significance of ‘one’ or the ‘Other’ (to the signified).

In [O]rder to (re-)produce my identity text(s) as 'I', I would therefore argue that the maternal and paternal functions must again be wed (for, by and within the daughter), and that the notion of a multiple-*triad* must be reconsidered; as a template cellular unit for a multiplicity of cells laid out within what Lichtenburg Ettinger has identified as a 'matrix'. While the matrix is formulated around the 'coexistence of mother and unborn child', the triad of my cellular unit is comprised of a maternal-daughter-paternal (I³) configuration. 'I' cannot conceive of this triad alone because there are so many layers (of words) covering it over; in other words, closing it up/off. Thus I turn, incestuously, to literary and linguistic m/others, women theorists whose precedence paves the way for me to speak as a sexually specific woman as 'I' and have it register meaning.

What is more, I turn to the (predominantly) visual-material 'theorist', Louise Bourgeois who, as indicated in the title of her book *Louise Bourgeois: Deconstruction of the Father/Reconstruction of the Father – writings and interviews 1923-1997* (1998), (re-)calls for the paternal function to be present alongside the maternal in her process of auto-*authorisation*. Bourgeois does not formulate subjectivisation in relation to (psychoanalytic) linguistic theory to the extent that the other sources I have drawn on do, however the 'material' she engages with touches shared theoretical concerns: 'But being so three-dimensional and tangible, I am interested in a three-dimensional reality much more than theories. As far as theories go I am interested in *the differences between things*' (Bourgeois [1994] 1998: 263, *my emphasis*).

The triad configuration of maternal-daughter-paternal (I³) is reflected in the tripartite form of my final thesis submission, as well as in the interplay between the linguistic and artistic practices that recognises embodied (live) (psychical corporeal) performances as a (third) practical subject within the interplay. Importantly, however, this triadic cellular unit is not limited to three participants. Just as my understanding of 'mother' and 'father' is doubled within my auto-historical experience of the family unit, my subject positions are multiple within the identity text of RyyA. Bread©, and my praxis

is comprised of various mediums within the inter-playing practices – the theoretical parental structure is indefinite in potential identification and adopted alliances.

Thus, the maternal-daughter-paternal triad (I³) is not defined by biological reproduction but rather textual (re-)production, where the subject that is born out of theoretical engagement is the author as much as the texts. Like Rank's notion of the second 'self' birth of the artist, this birth of the subject is predicated on (methodologically embodied) auto-*authorisation* rather than biological parents. At the same time, many parental figures emerge and are adopted, as the influential work inherited by others is used as 'steps' in the (re)productive ladder of cultural knowledge that, in the case of some feminist theory at least, leads back to the maternal-feminine through a matrix of co-existence.

That an entity is not the *causa sine qua non* does not proscribe against its being the *causa causans*. Observing light through a prism (though 'we know' that the prism is not the absolute origin of the resplendent spectacle before us) we do not deny its effect upon the light, still less call for the death of the prism. That the author can only be conceived as a manifestation of the Absolute Subject, this is the root message of every authocide. One must, at base, be deeply *auteurist* to call for the Death of the Author (Burke 1992: 27).

Burke argues that the centrality of the (classic) subject lies at the root of Barthes's call for the 'death of the author'. Although my framework calls for the 'glorification' of subjective specific identity (texts), the process of defining the psychical corporeality of a/the author implicates a multitude of others, both imaginary and embodied, into the author's (identity) text(s). Thus, the paradox of my auto-erotic embodied methodology is that to call for(th) RyyA. Bread© is to call on the lives of other individuals. Regardless of whether they are deceased and living, the Others that are called to [O]rder, in the calling on/of RyyA. Bread©, live on in their significance and are given (encoded) signification.

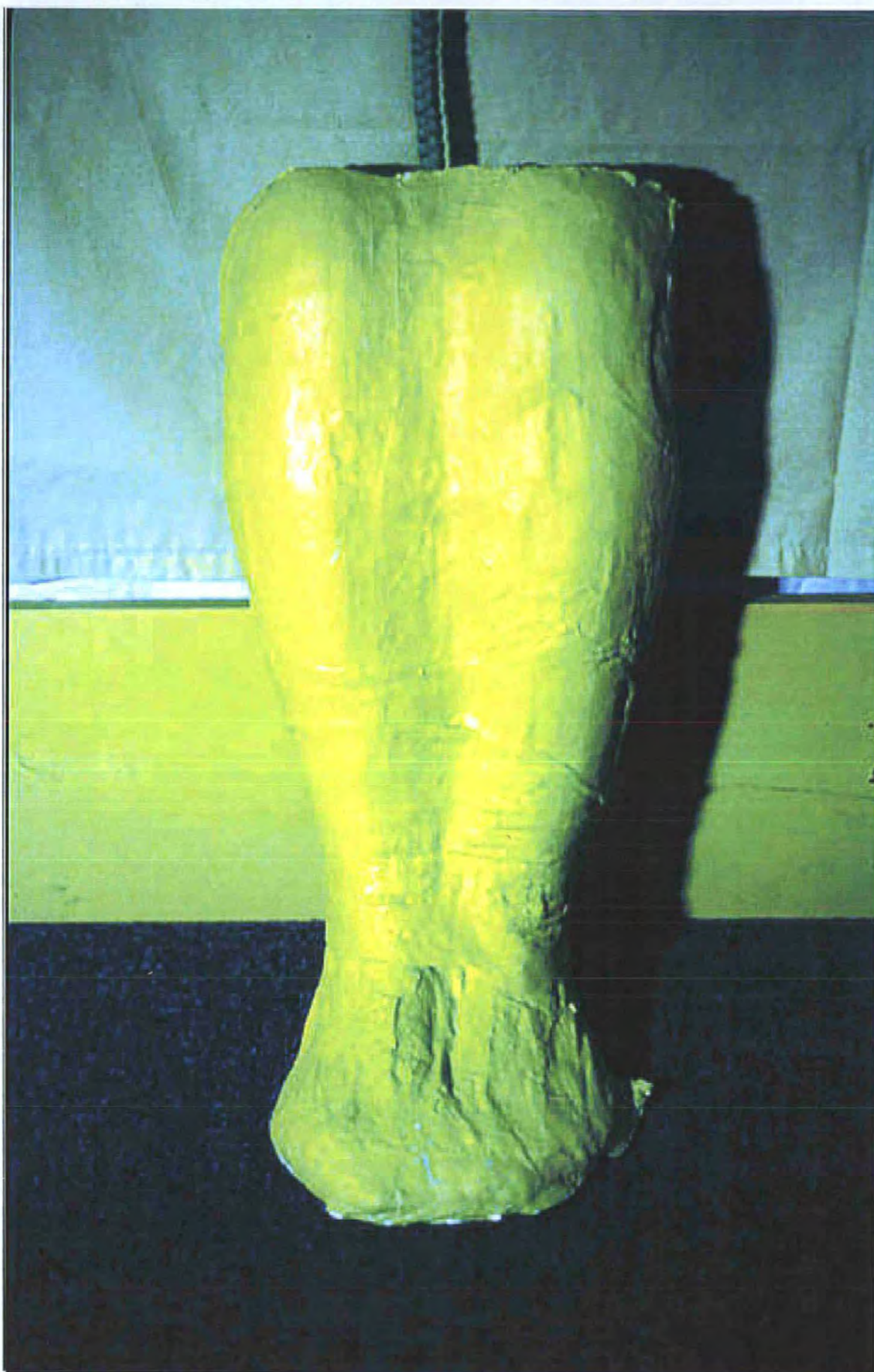


Fig. 147 RyyA. Bread©: *Professional Student* close-up of plaster coating used in *I::Do*, 1999 – 2000, plaster and muslin (coating), Dulux house paint, life size:

¹ *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis* (Lacan 1998) was first published in 1973 and translated in 1977. The text is a translation of a Seminar held in 1964 (Miller [ed.] Lacan 1998: title page). All references to this 1998 edition can therefore be assumed to have been delivered by Lacan in 1964 unless otherwise noted, as in this first reference which is part of the 'Preface' that Lacan added in 1967.

² 'The Death of the Author' (1968) by Roland Barthes is considered to be the seminal text regarding the status of the author in modern textual production (Burke 1992: 19). Here, Barthes makes a radical move to murder the classic author, in order to emphasise the written word, insisting that the text speak only for and about its linguistic elements; *écriture*. In so doing, Barthes calls for the end of writing as a form of expression and/or representation, in order to open up a multitude of potential interpretations. This proposition denies the status of the author as privileged over that of the 'reader' in the hierarchy of interpretation and would seem to refute my suggestion that Barthes' premise is predicated on the power of the 'One'. Indeed, in many ways this proposition is in accordance with the objectives within feminist theories of textual criticism. Feminism itself, as a critical theoretical project, has evolved out of the re-evaluation of the issues inherent in the term author. Nonetheless, his declaration sought to disempower the role of the author at a particular historical moment when white, Western males who had traditionally occupied the authorial position were threatened by an infiltration of emerging marginalised voices (Miller 1993: 23-24). Thus in his dismissal of the author's position, Barthes's simultaneously reinforces the exclusionary monopoly on interpretation invested in traditional knowledge production.

³ The issue of 'essentialism' has been a source of contention within feminist discourses. Essentialism, within a feminist context, refers to theories that place an emphasis on the biological body in the definition of 'woman'. For example, Irigaray has been accused of being essentialist in her attempts to define the female sex in terms of an inherent difference arising from same-sex relations with the maternal body. The other side of the continuum posits that woman is culturally constructed and defined by the status she is afforded within the social domain. This view was first put forward by the philosopher Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* [1949] (1952) who was instrumental in the rise of second wave feminism in the 1970s (see Schor 1989). Both Butler and Grosz, through different routes, provide respective approaches to defining 'woman' that move beyond the essentialist debate. Butler examines how both sex and gender are culturally inscribed and posits a model of performativity (born out of her own focus on 'queer theory') as a means of understanding how subjectivity is continually re-inscribed through repeated signification. She suggests a possibility for subversion within the gaps of re-inscription (see Butler 1990, 1993). Grosz returns to the Freudian model of 'psychical corporeality' in order to elaborate on the way in which the body mediates between simultaneous inscription and description. In other words, the body becomes the site through which all understanding passes both 'outward' into the symbolic realm of signification and 'inward' to the imagination where meanings are interpreted. Thus the body embodies the binary of 'inside/outside' and as such demonstrates that it is not a dualistic relation, but rather a constant flow of mutual formation (Grosz 1994).

⁴ Prior to Structuralism, the author was privileged as the 'man behind the word(s)', just as the artist was endowed with 'genius' in regard to art. In this definition both the author and the artist precede their creations. They are accorded with the virtue of having direct access to the 'truth' through their creative engagement in their respective practices (that are often conflated within discourse). The role(s) are understood to be that of mediator between the 'Creative Spirit' and the final text, what Barthes refers to as 'the 'message' of the Author-God' (Barthes [1968] 1977: 146). The critic's function within this economy, is to access meaning from the text by demonstrating, and theorising, the connection between the work and the author/artist as a creative individual.

⁵ *Écrits* (1977) is a collection of Lacan's major papers that was published in 1966 and a selection subsequently appeared in English in 1977. The dates given in brackets next to the 1977 date in my references are therefore a part of this edition.

⁶ My objects of play are understood in terms of 'primary' and 'secondary' objects. 'Primary' objects pertain to my own textual products and directly to my identity text as RyyA. Bread©, for example: clothes; articles of personal hygiene; home furnishings; tools and equipment; and 'raw' materials. 'Primary' objects also relate to things that have been given to me by other people, often in the form of a 'gift'. These sometimes overlap with the type of objects cited above, but also include a much wider range of 'artefacts'. In many cases these have been made by the person who has bestowed the object upon me, and thus are visual-material textual products that have significant, additional aesthetic value. 'Secondary' objects are things that I specifically acquire, or designate as such in my psycho-symbolic schema, because they are associated with a particular individual (or event). Insofar as secondary objects can include 'purchased' items, they enter my menagerie as 'ready-made' and have a pre-existing place in (popular) culture. Secondary objects are distinct from primary objects in that they do not originate from the source that I attach to their significance. Primary and secondary objects cross-reference each other and create new configurations of object-relations during the process of

play. It is through this type of engagement with the object of playing that the colour schema and co-existing subject positions that structure my thesis have emerged.

⁷ The building of a set of seven lime-green bookshelves for my flat was one of the most pleasurable making experiences within my research process. This was because it fulfilled a functional purpose and therefore improved my sense of order within my thinking environment. With the shelving completed I was able to order my books and files in an accessible manner that displayed to me my working process. The incorporation of the 'shelf-unit' as a structural form for my photographic portraits was in part an attempt to retain and translate this moment of pleasure found in the construction of this particular form. The fact that there were seven shelves built for my flat and seven *S[h]elf portraits* is a coincidence that has only revealed itself to me in this writing process. Nonetheless, I believe it supports my assertion that the structure of this site was inspired by the significance of shelving within my making environments.

⁸ In the bottom shelf, the rope is coiled into a bottle resting horizontally on a mound of sand. The combination of this and the envelopes that are affixed to the inner walls of the shelf, suggest the link between 'message in a bottle' and finding a safe haven within my marital relationships. It also pays tribute to the seven years during which my present husband and I wrote to each other prior to our marriage.

⁹ Lippard is a feminist art critic of the 1970s through to the present who in her early work especially was invested in making women artists visible within critical discourse and defining what could be termed a 'feminine aesthetic'. It was her book, *From the Center: Feminist Essays on Women's Art* (1976a) and her critical reading of Eva Hesse in a book of the same title (*Eva Hesse* 1976b) that I read during my BA. In my MA dissertation, *The Ship That Launched 1,000 Faces: Masquerade and the Body* (1996) I discuss the problematic issues implicit in the notion of 'feminine aesthetics', which raises questions about what it means to be 'feminine' and a 'woman' along continuums of sex and gender (Bread (Sanders) 1996: 27).

¹⁰ Hesse died of a brain tumour connected to her use of synthetic materials of high toxicity which she worked with in her shared studio/living environment (Lippard 1976b: 154).

¹¹ The mediums, scale and 'subjective perspective' have shifted over this span of sixty years, as has her role in public appreciation; yet her underlying theme of positioning subjectivity (and sexed identity) within formal and psycho-symbolic language has remained consistent.

¹² Aside from seeing several pieces and installations in various New York galleries in the early 1990s, I also heard Smith speak at her exhibition *Kiki Smith: Unfolding the Body – an exhibition of the work in paper* at Brandeis University, Mass. 3rd October – 15th November 1992. This particular exhibition stands out in my mind as especially concerned with the representation of the female body in terms of fluids and flesh. Some of the other work was more focused on internal body organs cast in metal and concerned with fragmentation and displacement/de-contextualisation from the body into aesthetic form.

¹³ The terms *thesis*, *dissertation*, *praxis*, *practice*; *text* and *work* have specific functions within my methodological vocabulary. They relate to the particular formal elements of the research project that overlap with each other and could become confusing. Thus, what follows are my own working definitions of these terms: 'Thesis' denotes the ideological argument of the overall project. 'Dissertation' refers specifically to the (visual-)script-based document included in the final submission. 'Praxis' pertains to the thesis in relation to the *linguistic*, *artistic* and *performative* practices that inform it. The term 'text' is applied to the products of these various practices. 'Visual-material' texts are specifically non-script based, in two and three-dimensional form. '(Visual-)script-based' texts are constructed through words that may, or may not, have juxtaposed images. 'Text' also pertains to the notion of 'identity texts', as constructions of subjectivity and embodiment. Live performance is considered a visual-material text even when it includes a (visual-)scripted element because the words are delivered through spoken verse and therefore have a pronounced materiality. Finally, there is the word 'work' (as a noun) that remains a polyvalent term referring to various combinations of the descriptions I have just outlined.

¹⁴ The claim for interpretative authority over the treatment of patients was often a source of colleague rivalry. However, conflicts over power have also, throughout the history of the discipline, focused around the methods of training. The most noted example of this is the politics that ensued between Anna Freud and Melanie Klein over training in child analysis. Lacan's excommunication from the International Psycho-Analytical Association was also connected to his approach to training analysis (Macey [1994 intro.] in Lacan 1998: xi-xii). The influential works that informed the training became absorbed as common practice so that the stakes involved in this aspect of the praxis were great with regard to an analyst's career. What is more, the two issues are interrelated since traditionally the training of an analyst includes their own undergoing and successful completion of analysis.

¹⁵ The psychologist Jean-Martin Charcot introduced 'hysteria' into medical discourse in the late 1800s (Wright [ed] 1992: 163). Freud moved to Paris from Vienna around 1885 specifically to study under him. *The Studies on Hysteria* (1895), which Freud co-published with Breuer, was based on five case studies of women that they treated together for hysteria under the influence of Charcot. This work established the introduction to 'psychoanalysis' and laid out the questions that concerned Freud for the remainder of his career. (ibid: 127-128)

¹⁶ Initially it was anticipated that my engagement with Nin would be restricted to the chapter on 'Linguistica' because of the literary medium Nin used to articulate her embodied experiences. As it has transpired, however, the full implication of my involvement with her continues to be revealed throughout the remainder of the dissertation. This has occurred because the significance of my relationship to Nin is so implicitly bound up in the praxis as a whole.

¹⁷ Noted thanks to Duncan Reekie for introducing this term to me and demonstrating it so well.

¹⁸ The *Code of Anonymity* questionnaire elaborates on the use of the symbol 'I' as a structural device. A sample document was created with the letter 'I' displayed in a variation of fonts. This was then circulated to family and friends with a cover letter and questionnaire asking them to choose three fonts that they identified with and why. Additional questions related to identification with flowers, food, colour and something of their choosing was also included. Finally they were asked to write the letter 'I' and their name in a blank space provided. The cover letter was a facetious deliberation on the need to protect the anonymity of those around me, as I become a celebrated Artist and historians delve into my background. Explicit in this sentiment was the need to establish a self-referential method for denoting specific personalities and events in my auto-history without compromising confidentiality or portraying recognisable likeness. The *Code of Anonymity* was both a collaborative and performative approach to cataloguing inter-personal relations in a systematic schema. It was an exercise that addressed the audience of those who know RyyA. Bread©, and more importantly that I know personally. This schema (and the responses that came back from the questionnaire) was put to one side as something to be explored in greater detail after the doctoral research because of the scope of the project.

¹⁹ *D.H. Lawrence: An Unprofessional Study* was first published by Edward Titus in 1932 with a run of just over 500 copies; it was reprinted in 1964 by Swallow Press (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 22). This was the second piece of writing to be published by Nin. The first was a prelude to it entitled, 'The Mystic of Sex: A First Look at D.H. Lawrence' [1930] published in *The Canadian Forum: A Monthly Journal of Literature and Public Affairs* (October, 1930) (Market 1997: 223). Initially her second manuscript on Lawrence was entitled *D.H. Lawrence: A Study in Understanding* (c.1931) (Fitch 1993: 93). After reading Potter's *First Study*, Nin was forced to re-evaluate her own notes and decided to focus more on the sexual aspects of Lawrence's work, as this was of particular interest to her and she had been surprised to find that Potter had completely neglected it (Market 1997: 225). Nin was the first woman to critically write about Lawrence (Jason 1996: 1). She was also the first to discuss several themes that were not to be taken up again until much later in critical studies of Lawrence's work. Both of these factors mark her as an original contributor to the study of this Modern literary figure (Market 1997: 223-235). Nonetheless, Nin's study has been greatly ignored and/or easily dismissed from when it was first published and continuing through to present critical studies of Lawrence. Market cites several examples of recent critics who write about insights Nin explicitly identified in her study and/or referred to in her *Diaries* that are presented afresh with no acknowledgement to her (Market 1997: 223-235).

²⁰ Rank worked (himself) out of a Freudian departure point, going on to develop his own theories of creativity that privileged the maternal significance and rested heavily on literary sources. Although Nin influenced him in terms of the inclusion of women within the artistic sphere, Rank's recognition of woman as a potentially creative subject was not politically motivated, nor did it have a significant impact on the discourse of his time. Later he contributed to the founding of 'social work' in the United States, which after being written out of much of the history of psychoanalysis, is where his mark is most inscribed and visible.

²¹ While Spitz uses the examples of both Rank and Erik Erikson to consider this question, it is Rank that is pertinent to my own concerns.

²² In her 1968 forward to *Art & Artist*, Nin identifies three 'impulses' that she considered vital for an understanding of Rank. The first impulse, like Spitz's portrait, frames Rank as a 'rebel' to the symbolic father, Freud. The second impulse that Nin states with regard to Rank also substantiates Spitz's reading of him. Rank is an artist himself, of a literary kind, engaged in the creative process, which his theories espouse. The third impulse that Nin notes is Rank's investment in society beyond individual therapy, including his emphasis on education and the training of social workers (Rank 1989a: vii-viii). This third impulse is

particularly relevant to Nin's own creative process, since she was often accused by her critics of being too subjective to be of value to anyone beyond herself.

²³ The 'double' (*Der Doppelgänger*) was of long standing interest to Rank. The first two publications in 1914 and 1919 constitute his main development of the theme; what the English translator Henry Tucker Jr. (1989b) calls the 'original article'. The 1925 version is an expansion of these earlier texts into a separate publication. For the French translated version in 1932 he joins the theme of the 'double' with the legendary figure of Don Juan about whom he had also previously written. Parts of the 1925 version of his study were then translated in English in his text *Beyond Psychology* ([1941] 1958). In 1971 the full English translation of the final German version of 1925. The copy I have is the re-published edition of 1989 (Tucker, Jr. (tr. and ed.) in Rank 1989: vii-ix):

- [1914] 'Der Doppelgänger' in Freud, S. (ed.) (1914) *Imago: Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften*. Leipzig, Vienna, and Zürich: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag. Vol.III: 97-164.
- [1919] 'Der Doppelgänger' in (1919) *Psychoanalytische Beiträge zur Mythenforschung: Gesammelte Studien aus den Jahren 1912 bis 1914*. Leipzig and Vienna: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag: 267-354.
- (1925) *Der Doppelgänger: Eine Psychoanalytische Studie*. Leipzig, Vienna, and Zürich: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag: 117-27.
- (1932) *Don Juan. Une étude sur le double*. Lautman, L. (tr.) Paris: Denoël and Steele: 9-163.
- [1941] 'The Double as Immortal Self' in Rank, O. (1941) *Beyond Psychology*. Camden, N.J.: Haddon Craftsmen, Inc.: 62-101.
- [1941] 'The Double as Immortal Self' in Rank, O. (1958) *Beyond Psychology*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc.: 62-101.
- (1971) *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study*. Tucker, Jr. H. (tr. and ed.) Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press.
- [1971] (1989) *The Double: A Psychoanalytic Study*. Tucker, Jr. H. (tr. and ed.). London: H. Karnac (Books) Ltd.

²⁴ The predominant features of the double in literary representation include: a 'likeness' that is perceived by the main character as a 'reflection'; a relation with the reflection that is at 'cross-purposes'; a 'catastrophe' that pivots around a relationship with a woman; and a tendency for the main character to commit suicide - a death intended for the double likeness. Often, Rank notes, these stories overlap with a 'system' of paranoiac delusions (Rank 1989b: 33).

²⁵ In 1949, Nin achieved a symbolic transformation in her own identity as Hugh Guilier's wife (or not) without having to alter her own name. Nin played an influential role in the shift from Hugh Parker Guilier, the banker, to 'Ian Hugo', the artist. On one hand this 'encourages her to view the marriage as an artistic and professional union' (Fitch 1993: 265). At the same time, I would note that it also allowed her to further conceal her identity as 'wife' when it suited her.

²⁶ In the spring of 1934, Nin's position with regard to Rank shifted from 'patient to pupil' when she enrolled in classes at the Psychological Center of the Cité Universitaire, which Rank had founded (Jason 1978: 86). 'While in a formal sense Nin was Rank's student,' Jason asserts, 'in another sense he was hers - he was a student of her behavior and her work' (Jason 1986: 15). In November of that year, Nin followed Rank to New York to work with him as his secretary, translator and a lay analyst herself until the late spring of 1935 when she returned to France. Nin last met with Rank briefly on a visit to New York in 1936 (Jason 1978: 86). He died three years later (1939) after having re-married and settled in the States (Jason 1986: 14).

²⁷ While most sources discuss the nude photographs taken by Nin's father in terms of just Nin, in this reference to Richard-Allerdyce (1998: 17) it is suggested that all of Nin's siblings were subjected to the experience as children.

²⁸ The first time was in 1924 when Nin returned to France with her husband Hugh Guilier, after ten years of growing up in the USA (Nin 1993: 406-407). During this first reunion Nin played the role of 'ambassador' to her parents acrimonious divorce (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 20).

²⁹ This study is conducted through readings of Nin's fictional works cited above, of which 'Stella' and 'The Voice' are included as part of *Winter of Artifice* (1939); and *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954). Jason believes this later novel to be a mature rendition of the Don Juan/doubles motif that deals with the 'origin of the Don Juan personality' more extensively. In his words this novel is 'a veritable feast of artistic extensions of Rank's speculations on the double and the Don Juan figure, first encountered by Nin as we have observed, some twenty-two years before her publication of this novel' (Jason 1978: 90).

³⁰ In *A Spy*, the 'lie detector' fades from a tangible character into a 'shadow' of guilt that haunts the main character, Sabina writing down his observations of her in a notebook and preaching 'psychoanalytic doctrine' that 'no one except for Sabina seems to hear.' He represents 'that part of her that wishes to be caught and to atone' (Jason 1978: 93). In Nin's earlier story (*The Voice* 1939), The Voice is an analyst who serves as a 'double' for the character of Lillith by returning her to a 'hidden' self. Lillith's love for him is thus framed as 'another form of self-love'. While The Voice 'appears as a composite character,' Jason argues that 'it is hard to find a detail of appearance, situation, or psychology that does not harken back to Nin's sketches of Otto Rank' (ibid: 87-88).

³¹ According to Spencer, Nin unmask both her father and 'The Voice' in the *Winter of Artifice* (1939) through their depiction as impotent men beneath her own projections of omnipotence (Spencer 1997: 106). In his essay 'Erato Throws a Curve: Anaïs Nin and the Elusive Feminine Voice in Erotica' (1997), Edmund Miller also notes how Nin's personal agenda, to 'explore sexual variety' in her erotica, sabotaged the original collector/patron's reception of the work. Miller's critique of Nin's erotica takes her to task for her inability to arouse a male reader: '[...] the characteristic Ninnian situation is a woman squashing an aroused lover.' Impotence is cited as a prevailing theme in Nin's erotic representations of masculinity, despite such descriptions being the 'very last thing a man wants in erotica.' For example, in the title story of 'Little Birds', impotence is coupled with the male character's pathetic attempts at exhibitionism directed at a group of young schoolgirls...the 'little birds' (Miller 1997: 172-3).

³² Volume One: 1931-1934 was published in 1966.

³³ In this passage Nin claims that such omissions are enacted out of 'affection' for the journal itself. Yet her reference to omissions touches deeper concerns regarding her futile attempts to capture all of her embodied experience in words, and her deliberate expurgation of the diaries. The comment that 'there are still so many omissions!' is cryptic in this respect, considering Nin's hopeful awareness of a future audience for her diaries (Nin 1993: 109-10).

³⁴ In *The Double*, in his discussion of the narcissistic identifications that occur in fraternal relations, Rank quotes J.B. Schneider: 'The relationship of the older to the younger brother is analogous to that of the masturbator to himself' (Rank 1989b: 75-76).

³⁵ Rank relates 'nomenphobia' to superstitions in European cultures whereby 'if two offspring of the same family bear the same name, one must die.' He also links it with the notion of 'name magic'; 'the invocation of spirits by calling their names' (Rank 1989b: 53).

³⁶ When Michael inquires as to how Maia will pay for the gifts she is picking out, Maia replies, "'the whole point of Christmas is that things should be *given* away, isn't it? Besides what could I pay with? We have no money up there [in the stars].'" And she laughed at the mere suggestion of such a thing' (Travers 1934: 188).

³⁷ All references to the Bible are taken from the King James version.

³⁸ Lacan's denotation for the 's' with a bar through it is *not* intended to be the dollar sign that I use to refer to it. This has been deployed in my own denotation because it is a 's' with a bar through it and it is available on the keyboard, whereas Lacan's denotation requires its own special icon.

³⁹ This is the point of Lacan's well-known story of the sardine can that appears within this passage (Lacan [1973] 1998: 95-97) and relates to his larger work on perspective and pictorial representation.

⁴⁰ Nin's 'synchronic moment' in art 'whereby the forms and colors of Modernist art and jazz music provide a model for accessing one's inner patterns' (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 159) is discussed in Richard-Allerdyce's text in terms of a 'somatic experience of language' (ibid: 5). This concept, she argues, breaks down the polarities of gender and makes space for a fluid understanding of subjectivity while still establishing a structural framework (ibid: 164).

⁴¹ Butler makes a similar point with regard to the 'general understanding of the *proper name*.' As she says, '[W]hether the name is shared by others, the name, as a convention, has a generality and a historicity that is in no sense radically singular, even though it is understood to exercise the power of conferring singularity' (Butler 1997: 29).

⁴² Butler outlines J.L. Austin's distinction between 'illocutionary' and 'perlocutionary' speech acts, in *How to Do Things With Words* (1962), in order to discuss the ambiguities of locating the utterance within what Austin terms a 'total speech situation'.

⁴³ The preceding chapter from the one Spitz wrote on Rank is entitled, 'New Lamps for Old: reflections from and on Phyllis Greenacre's *Childhood of the Artist* (ch.11: 221-231). Here Spitz reads the analyst, Greenacre's work on creativity and the 'splits in the self-representation of the artist' through the story of 'Aladin and the Wonderful Lamp' from *The Thousand and One Nights*. While both Greenacre's work and Spitz's essay pertaining to it are compelling in relation to Rank, it goes beyond the scope of what can be included in my thesis. By drawing attention to this text, my intention is not to add yet more 'stories' to the myth-making process of my dissertation. Rather, I refer to this merely to situate *The Thousand and One Nights* within my own narrative, through the few references that Spitz makes to the 'frame story' while locating Aladdin's tale.

⁴⁴ Earlier verses make reference to this encounter (Genesis 32.24-32:30) and it is then repeated here. I have chosen to quote the later version to make reference to the blessing.

⁴⁵ All references to Freud are taken from *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (1974), edited by James Strachey in collaboration with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson, editorial assistant Angela Richards (Hogarth Press, twenty-four volumes, 1953-1974).

⁴⁶ In this passage Pellegrini is making reference to findings from the following; Gilman, S. (1993) *Freud, Race, and Gender*. New York: Routledge: 38-39.

⁴⁷ After writing my own metaphor of the kitchen in this piece, I was surprised to find that in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis* (1998), Lacan uses the metaphor of the 'menu' twice in reference to the oral drive and satisfaction. First, to suggest that it is not food that satisfies, but the 'pleasure of the mouth' itself, which in the analytic situation does no more than 'order the menu' (Lacan 1998: 167). In the second passage, Lacan is more provocative in re-telling a fable of a beggar at the door of a restaurant that requires the assistance of the 'patronne' to de-code not only the foreign language but also the unfamiliar Chinese food that is served within. Out of nowhere Lacan suggests that it would be more appropriate to, 'if you felt like it, and if the opportunity presented itself, to tickle her tits a bit?' since 'one goes to a Chinese restaurant not only to eat, but to eat in the dimensions of the exotic' (ibid: 269-270). This comment confirms the sentiment that I was initially aiming to express in reference to Freud and the 'kitchen'.

⁴⁸ The *belle juive* is an excessive and specifically racial form of the prevailing image of the 'femme fatale'. Like the femme fatale, the belle juive is erotic and seductive to the same degrees that it marks danger. Since the belle juive is doubly cast as other with regard to gender and race, the danger and seduction is intensified in the identity of the Jewish woman.

⁴⁹ Reference to selected transcriptions of Anaïs Nin's lectures entitled, *A Woman Speaks* (1975).

⁵⁰ The money that Nin received for her erotic writing was an explicit motivation for her engagement with this genre. The commercial success of the erotica benefited the men in Nin's life perhaps more directly than it helped her. When Nin first wrote the erotica in the 1940s, the money she made from this endeavour supplemented her adulterous relationship with, and professional support of, Henry Miller. It seems fitting that the later, more substantial, proceeds of the same material should end up aiding her husband, Hugh (Fitch 1993: 408), whose income she had relied on to enable both her own writing career and others', as well as the sexual exploits that fertilised her writing.

⁵¹ 'The Bodily Encounter with the Mother' in particular, along with Irigaray's more general thesis on sexual difference from other texts, is of primary consideration within my former MA dissertation (1996); where the specific significance of Clytemnestra is looked at in greater detail with regard to masquerade. In the MA thesis I argue that, '[W]hile Helen of Troy is the *Face Which Launched 1,000 Ships*, I read Irigaray's account of Clytemnestra as the *Ship Which Launched 1,000 Faces* because it signifies a shift in the understanding of woman from 'other' to a corporeally present being' (Bread (Sanders) 1996: 14). Hence, the title of my thesis, *The Ship That Launched 1,000 Faces: Masquerade and the Body*, reflects the importance of Irigaray's re-reading of Greek mythology. While the MA thesis located Irigaray in relation to Butler and Grosz, it did not develop the significance of her thesis with regard to Lacan and linguistic signification specifically. Thus it is for this reason that the same material is taken up again in this context.

⁵² In the 'fort-da' incident that Freud relays in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1919), the little boy's gestures of throwing the reel away from himself and reeling it back in, correspond with saying 'o-o-o-o' (fort) and 'da'. The combination of gestures and utterances that takes place in this event, are interpreted by Freud, as a child's (in this case Freud's grandson, Ernst) attempt to 'master' the absence of his mother. Irigaray

conducts a close analysis of the corporeal implications to the mouth of uttering the words 'fort' (far away) and 'da' (near) with respect to their signification in 'the economy of consonants and vowels'.

⁵³ Irigaray notes how in the absence of her mother a girl's gestures are not the same as the boy's which Freud observed. Irigaray explains that the little girl; 1). Becomes anorexic in every way due to the distress; by anorexic she means that the little girl literally closes up. 2). Plays with a doll in order to organise symbolic space, and 3). She dances to construct a vital subjective space. Irigaray's observations demonstrate that gestures themselves can have sexed meanings and convey sexed understandings of subjectivity' (Bread (Sanders) 1996: 24). In my MA thesis, Irigaray's comments on the little girl's differing response to the absence of the maternal figure are paraphrased (Irigaray [1987] 1990: 132) so as to ground my reading of the significance of the maternal-feminine within a specific visual-material example pertaining to marking boundaries of self-defined space. In a footnote to the former summery, a further note is made: 'Irigaray's emphasis on space is significant to her theory of how the mother/daughter relationship proceeds. Because the daughter has no cultural validation as an active subject she can only identify herself as part of her mother, she has no means of self-definition. For the mother there is fear of being literally consumed by the daughter' (Bread (Sanders) 1996: 43 n.18).

⁵⁴ In both instances, it is the identity of a/the 'man' (as an empty signifier) that is thought to be protected by such concealment. Thus, a further tragedy is that men cut off their own nose to spite their face. For in restricting women to a mirror image of their own desire, men deny themselves the pleasure (*jouissance*) of knowing woman in her (the) full sense. It would not be wrong to say that men fuck themselves when they fuck women...and of course on some level this is known, which is why both virgins and whores are regarded with such high esteem...and why little is said about woman beyond these two mythic extremes.

⁵⁵ Nin turned first to the Jungian analyst, Dr Martha Jaeger, from 1943 until 1945; and then to Dr Inge Bogner, from 1946 until Nin's death (1977).

⁵⁶ Rosa Culmell de Nin was of Danish-French ancestry (Nin 1993: 409). She met her husband, Joaquin, who was eight years her junior, in a music store in Havana in 1901, where she was buying sheet music for her vocal lessons with one of her sisters. Joaquin became Rosa's singing tutor. Although her singing career did not match the success of Nin's father's profile as a Pianist, in the New York Cuban community that Rosa brought her children to when she left Europe after Joaquin's abandonment, she was respected as a musician and taught voice.

⁵⁷ *Cities of the Interior* included *Ladders of Fire* (1946); *Children of the Albatross* (1947); *The Four-Chambered Heart* (1950); *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954) and *Seduction of the Minotaur* (1961). The novel that followed, *Collages* (1964), was the last fictional work that Nin wrote. In 1966 she published the first volume of her expurgated *Diaries* having finally come to validate this form as her sexually specific contribution to literature.

⁵⁸ Nin and Henry Miller would visit Duchamp in his studio and in 1934 she brought a portfolio of his reprints to NY with her to show to galleries (Fitch 1993: 177). In *Incest*, Nin makes a reference to a studio visit that she and Henry made just before her departure to NY in 1934: 'Marcel Duchamp. Book of his *notes* – sketches for a book never written. Symbol of the times. Henry said he would like to have his letters published. I said, 'Yes, pre-posthumous letters.' We laughed' (Nin [1934] 1993: 400 *italics in original*).

⁵⁹ Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912) is cited in her *Diaries* as well as in her fictional pieces such as *Cities of the Interior* (1954), *A Spy in the House of Love* (1954) and more generally as a theme in *Seduction of the Minotaur* (1961) (Richard-Allerdyce 1998: 128, dates cited from Fitch 1993: 495).

⁶⁰ Between 1932 and 1933, during the same period that they discovered Rank's work, Nin and Henry Miller began reading as much Surrealist material as they could find, including *This Quarter and transition* (*sic*). Nin heard Dr Allendy, her analyst at the time, speak on the Surrealists during his Sorbonne lecture entitled 'Metamorphosis of Poetry' in January 1933. A few months later, Allendy introduced Nin to the French Surrealist playwright, Antonin Artaud, with whom she became close friends (Fitch 1993: 139-143).

⁶¹ The *femme-enfant* was characterised as female youth and innocence expressed through uninhibited behaviour, creative spirit, and a willingness to defy social convention. The 'prototype' for this identity text was illustrated by a photograph of a 'school-girl' in *L'Écriture Automatique* (1927) and was depicted again in Julian Levy's poem 'The Queen of Diamonds' and Breton's story of *Nadja* (1928) (Chadwick 1985: 33-4). The notion of the *femme-enfant* was the Surrealist search for a 'woman-child' that was 'capable of bewitching the male-artist and leading him away from the confining world of the real' (*ibid*: 49). This identity-text limited the subjectivity of women within a specific identity that presented obstacles to their careers as artists and led them dangerously close to clinical insanity (*ibid*: 74). Nonetheless, the majority of

women Surrealists embraced this role willingly because it allowed them to 'play' with their own femininity and break out of conventional societal roles. Among those identified by Chadwick as representative of this image are, Marie Berthe Aurenche, Gala Dali and Meret Oppenheim, to name but three.

⁶² The *femme-fatale* was not an explicitly named identity text of the Surrealists in the way that the *femme-enfant* was; nor is it mentioned in Chadwick's consideration of Surrealist women. Nonetheless, Doane has described the *femme-fatale* as, 'the most persistent incarnation of femininity' within Modernity (Doane 1991: 1). The *femme-fatale* can, in some ways, be understood as the 'woman-child' who has lost her innocence. It is the image of a seductive and dangerous woman who lures men into her powers with malicious intent to overpower them.

⁶³ In distinguishing, 'a difference between archaic love of the mother and love for women-sisters', Irigaray hesitantly uses the term "secondary homo-sexuality" (*sic*) (Irigaray [1981] 1991: 44-45).

⁶⁴ June Miller (also known as June Mansfield) was born in 1902 in Austria-Hungary as 'June Edith Smerth'. The Galician family name was changed from 'Smerth' to 'Smith' when they emigrated to the USA in 1907. Settling in New York with her parents and four other siblings, in 1917 June dropped out of high school in Brooklyn to 'become a taxi dancer'. In 1923, while working at Wilson's Dance Hall on Broadway, June met Henry Miller who, at the time, was married with a five-year old daughter. A year later, following his divorce, Henry and June married. In 1930 June encouraged Henry to go alone to Europe and concentrate on his writing. Although he left with June's promise to financially support him, Henry found, once in Paris, that her money was not forthcoming. Thus, Henry was forced to find other ways of getting by, which included accepting Nin's more than generous financial contributions to his personal cause. After June's two visits to Paris between 1931 and 1932, they ostensibly broke off their relationship, and were officially divorced in 1934 (Stuhlmann [ed.] in Nin 1993: 408-409).

⁶⁵ Aside from shedding new light on the literary reception of both Nin and Henry Miller, it has also received a great deal of public exposure through the Philip Kaufman film version, *Henry and June* (1990).

⁶⁶ In conjunction with this, Nin realised that like the other men she has been attracted to, Henry is 'also sexually passive' underneath his 'masculine' façade (Nin 1993: 56-57, *italics in original*). He relies on dominant women to 'lead' the sexual act, and tries to teach Nin to do so as well...but this offends Nin's sense of 'femininity' and she reads it as a failure of Henry 'to take responsibility for his desire.' Nin desires a 'real man' who can lead in sex and affirm her 'passivity', thus validating her womanliness as she paradoxically strives to be an artist (*ibid.*). Insofar as this is so, this position is consistent with Riviere's reading of masquerade (Riviere [1929] 1986).

⁶⁷ In the dictionary 'onanism' is defined as both 'masturbation' and 'coitus interruptus', which makes this a particularly accurate term for Nin to use in this context because of its presumptuous contradictions. It is worth noting that Onan is a man in Genesis who is punished by God for letting his 'seed' fall to the ground: 'And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the Lord: wherefore he slew him also' (Genesis 38.6-10, *italics in original*). (Special thanks to Angeline Morrison for pointing out this reference.)

⁶⁸ *The Steelmakers* was commissioned by the Youngstown Area Arts Council for the Federal Plaza pedestrian mall. This was also Segal's most rewarding public sculpture commission because it supported the common bond of the local community during a threatened period of factory closures, and was therefore well-received by the people of the town, as well as an art community (Hawthorne and Hunter 1988: 108-115).

⁶⁹ My personal identification with Judaism as discussed in 'Linguistica' is accessed through Segal's piece, *Jacob and the Angels* (1984) most out of these examples cited above. For me the psycho-symbolic significance of Jacob's Ladder is bound up in my paternal surname, 'Jacobs', and consequently my associations with my father and his Jewish family history: which is different again from that of my mother's. The image of 'Jacob's Ladder' that Segal depicts in *Jacob and the Angels* has strong visual-narrative associations for me with my own psychical corporeal mapping of the relation between my father, his son (my [half] brother) and myself.

⁷⁰ *The Holocaust* (1983) was commissioned by San Francisco's Committee for a Memorial to the Six Million Victims of the Holocaust (Hawthorne and Hunter 1988: 132).

⁷¹ In this chapter my own journal entries have been quoted in italics and twelve point type (rather than ten point) in [O]rder to keep them distinct from the (indented) quotes of Others, and on par in significance to the body of the text.

⁷² I first discovered *Little Birds*, among a stash of 'dirty' magazines in a house I would frequently visit as a young girl.

⁷³ Reference to 'introduction' of Hinz and Fraser (eds.) (1978) *The World of Anaïs Nin: Critical and Cultural Perspectives*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. (MOSAIC, XI/2): 3.

⁷⁴ The artist Hannah Wilke, most noted for her filmed and photographic pieces of the 1970s (Meskimmon 1996: 52) is a link between Segal, Duchamp and myself. Two pieces in particular support this reading. The first is *Venus Pareve* (1985) that was included in the exhibition *too Jewish?* (1996). The second is Wilke's 1976 documented performance *C'est la Vie Rose* which was a parody on the 'legacy' of Duchamp. *C'est la Vie Rose* particularly implicated Duchamp's identity text as *Rose Sélavy, Large Glass* (1915-23) and his staged 'semi-retirement' from art to play chess (Meskimmon 1996: 52). Wordplay, identity specific titles, and female (as artist) representation are central themes in both these examples and are at play in much of the work of both Wilke and myself. These concerns are also taken up in the work of Duchamp. *Venus Pareve*, comprised of twenty-five hand-modeled self-portraits cast in both plaster and edible chocolate, relates directly to my plaster coating exercise and Segal's figurative plaster work. Wilke, like myself and unlike Segal, is positioned as both the 'artist and sitter'. Both Wilke and Segal, unlike myself, use casting as part of their process, although Segal also deployed a technique of 'coating' with no moulds. The familiar Latin word, with all its associations to Western art and culture, is juxtaposed in the title of the piece with the Hebrew word, *Pareve* that would be unfamiliar to 'nonreligious Jews' (such as myself). As such, the title 'immediately identifies Wilke [...] as Other' (Klablatt 1996: 8-9). Wilke embodies 'otherness' as an assertion of her subjective inclusion within traditional Western art discourse. My own engagement with the Other is distinct in that it is framed in terms of auto-(erotic)-authorisation. Thus the Other is positioned within my work as external embodied subjects (and objects) that contribute to the formation and understanding of my own psychical corporeal definition.

⁷⁵ Chadwick (1998) notes that Duchamp, in wanting to embody an 'Other', had initially considered using a Jewish name but 'then decided to change gender' instead because it was 'much simpler': "'Rose" he claimed, was a popular and thoroughly banal name in the 1920s, and "Sélavy" obviously puns on "c'est la vie" while whispering "Levy," and so intimating his initial choice. Given the anti-Semitism rampant in the United States and France, a Jewish guise would surely have pushed Duchamp toward the margins, but changing gender decisively sent him to the edge and over, projecting him into a free fall of gender indeterminacy as he played out the persona of Rose [as her name was initially spelled]' (Chadwick 1998: 41). Chadwick suggests that emphasising gender rather than race was a more radical gesture on Duchamp's part. However, in light of my discussion of Freud in relation to race and gender in chapter two ('Linguistica'), I would argue that instead Duchamp uses gender, like Freud, to move away from the stigma of Jewish identity that might undermine his own status as a/the (male) 'artist'. To this end, adopting the female persona of *Rose Sélavy* reinforces his own masculinity (as Duchamp) by contrast, and perpetuates the discourse of a/the (male) artist in relation to femininity that is already at play within the culture at that time. Thus, Duchamp's work is read as radically ambiguous, yet it stays within accepted 'margins' of dominant thought, rather than work through a Jewish guise as too marginal (too Jewish).

⁷⁶ There is a discrepancy here. Fillin-Yeh (1995) claims it was Grace Ewing who collaborated with Duchamp in Man Ray's photographs, contributing both hat and hands to the image (Fillin-Yeh 1995: 33). However, Chadwick (1998) cites Germaine Everling as the female participant (Chadwick 1998: 44). Seigel (1995), on the other hand, makes no mention of a female collaborator at all. I am suggesting that this is a notable oversight by Seigel, rather than a claim by this author that Duchamp had no outside intervention.

⁷⁷ My discussion of parody with regard to Benglis is paralleled by Meskimmon (1996) with respect to Hannah Wilke's self-representations as well (112-13). The advertisement for a 1973 exhibition, in which the artist was 'clearly' and problematically 'more the object than her artworks', is cited here along with the documentary material for the performance piece *So Help Me Hannah* (1985). Meskimmon uses these examples to discuss the 'difficulties facing women artists who attempt to confront frankly female sexuality in their self-representations' (Meskimmon 1996: 113).

⁷⁸ Jones cites Vincent van Gogh and Paul Cézanne as two outstanding examples of the artist 'as worker' during the late 1800s in Paris, and goes on to show its steadfast presence in later artists such as Jackson Pollock in New York (Jones 1995).

⁷⁹ 'To Peer' was included in a joint exhibition at The Look Gallery, Exeter, UK; by Deborah Robinson and myself, entitled *Identity Texts*. This event was put on to run parallel to the *Practice, history and theory conference: the relationship of making to writing (sic)* held at the University of Plymouth at Exeter, September 1998; where I performed the paper, *A[d]Dress rehearsal: the embodiment and Spectacle of Praxis*. This was subsequently published in *Point: Art & Design Research journal*, no.7 (Spring/Summer 1999). It is worth noting that The Look gallery is located in the front room of a hair salon: hair, like clothing being a material signifier manipulated by cultural intervention. Hair is distinct from clothing however, in that it is already 'manufactured' by the material sign/site of the body.

⁸⁰ *Remodelling Photo History: 1981 to 1982* was first published as an article in *Screen*, vol.23, no.1, 1982.

⁸¹ Florence's direction to the 'interior theatre' of Mallarmé, as a 'site of artifice, transformation and masquerade' (Florence 1998: 257) can be read in relation to this 'photo-theatre' technique coined by Spence and Dennett. Both of these frames of reference are instrumental in understanding the relationship between clothing and my own embodiment within my praxis.

⁸² Within 'To Peer' the practice of photography appears alongside the verb (and noun), 'study'. The corresponding photographic image includes an anthropomorphic ensemble of clothes positioned in relation to a camera on a tripod that is pointed down at a sketch book resting on the 'lap' of the signified subject. The book is opened to a page with a photograph of myself on it (although this is not apparent from the actual image used in the final version).

⁸³ Initially I planned to sew textile photocopies of my high school diploma and subsequent degree certificates as a way of displaying my scholarly achievements as academic investment. When I got the suit, it was already psychically inscribed with this symbolic meaning, and therefore the inclusion of the patches seemed less urgent. In the mean time, I took to wearing the suit to perform the laborious tasks within my domestic and artistic practices and thus the completion of the envisioned 'piece' was suspended...in my mind's 'I'.

⁸⁴ Taken in collaboration with Clare Hareford at the outset of my Research Studentship.

⁸⁵ At the time this photograph was taken the feather was worn to signal my identity as a 'native American' currently living on foreign ground. The feather was further intended to allude to the 'feather in one's cap'. It can also be linked to the feathers of Nin's 'little birds'. In retrospect, however, although the feather is a strong feature in the structure of the photographic image, I now view it as both a problematic and unsuccessful element of the picture.

⁸⁶ Freud's theories of seduction and the implications of this for women's subsequent accorded place within classic psychoanalysis is a theme that was controversial from the start and goes beyond what can be discussed here.

⁸⁷ In discussing Nin's treatment of lesbianism in *The Voice*, represented through the character of Lilith, Richard-Allerdyce includes a dubious footnote reference to Lacan and 'fetishism' (Richard-Allerdyce 1997: 64, 184 n.44). The reference is dubious, in part, because it conflates 'fetishism' with a range of specific perversions. It is also dubious because Lacan's notion of a lack is problematically equated with a female subject that in classic psychoanalysis cannot become a fetishist. Nevertheless, the fleeting and undeveloped connection that Richard-Allerdyce makes between Nin and fetishism is not to be abandoned on account of the reference's shortcomings.

⁸⁸ Grosz identifies three choices that feminist theorists have with regard to classic psychoanalysis: First, to accept their formulations unproblematically, as Richard-Allerdyce appears to do in this instance at least. Secondly, to reject the discourse completely, but in so doing lose 'an account of psychical and fantasy life'. Or third, in what would be the fetishist's solution, combine a little of both, 'developing paradoxes and contradictions to see how the theory itself copes (or does not cope) with its own unspoken or unacknowledged implications' (Grosz 1995: 154).

⁸⁹ This process could be repeated up to three times within one 'plaster coating', but more than once was an elaborate and problematic situation. After the first 'batch' was applied to my body, my movement was severely restricted to my arms and hands. The water could not be added to the plaster until just before it was used, and soaking the cloth was difficult to do in a stationary state. This comic set of circumstances was compounded by the temporal urgency that required such tasks to be performed quickly.

⁹⁰ In a passing comment to his students, to do with reading Freud's texts on the 'drives and their vicissitudes', Lacan unsurprisingly posits the original German version as 'eminently desirable' over the French and English translations that he deems, 'always more or less improperly translated.' However, Lacan goes on to

designate the English translation as the lesser of the two translated evils when he says, '[...] I certainly give the worst marks to the French translation, but I will not waste time pointing out the veritable falsifications with which it swarms' (Lacan 1998: 175).

⁹¹ Lichtenburg Ettinger has had solo exhibitions in major museums including the Isreal Museum, Jerusalem; Le Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels; Le Nouveau Musée, Villeurbanne and the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford. She has also participated in numerous contemporary group exhibitions, including *Face à l'Histoire* (Pompidou Centre, Paris) and *Kabinet* (Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam) (Florence and Foster (eds.) 2000: xvi).

⁹² Lichtenburg Ettinger's paintings bring together on paper; acquired family photographs, (visual-)scripted text and ink. They are constructed through the 'false memory machine' of the photocopier, whereby the photographs are repeatedly reproduced through a series of copies until the original image is all but traceable on the page. Marks are then added onto the defaced surface with additional (fluid) coloured ink. The (visual-)scripted text is incorporated at various stages of this process (Buci-Glucksmann 1996: 281-289). Lichtenburg Ettinger refrains from describing her artwork in detail in her theoretical writing. As such, I have drawn on Buci-Glucksmann's (1996) critical reading of her artwork to provide additional insight into her visual-material work.

⁹³ The terms '*langue*' and '*parole*' were introduced into the discourse of semiotics by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, working in the early 1900s. Heath sets out the definitions of '*langue*' and '*parole*' in the beginning of Barthes text *Image Music Text* (1977), because of the importance of these terms to Barthes' semiotic approach to language and narrative. (Heath 1977 p.7) While Freud distanced his understanding of the significance of language from Saussure, by emphasising the importance of the 'body' in speech, in the 1960s Lacan's shift to the emphasis of the signifier rather than the sign brought psychoanalysis closer to Saussure's linguistic model. (MacCannell in Wright 1992 pp.209-215)

⁹⁴ In discussing the 'two extremes' of the analytic situation, Lacan identifies on one hand, the 'primal repressed' signifier as symptom; and on the other, "interpretation," which he links to desire: 'Interpretation concerns the factor of a special temporal structure that I have tried to to define in the term metonymy. As it draws to its end, interpretation is directed towards desire, with which, in a certain sense, it is identical. *Desire, in fact, is interpretation itself*' (Lacan 1998: 176 *my emphasis*).

⁹⁵ Lichtenburg Ettinger's primary interlocutor is Lacan. She attempts to situate her own framework beyond, yet in relation to him, at a symbolic level. She particularly hones in on his late work. For example, in *Encore* (1972/3), Lacan clearly identifies his understanding of the *objet a* from the 'departure point' of the male position, which Lichtenburg Ettinger takes as a cue that 'other possible "lacks" may exist' (Lichtenburg Ettinger 1995: 20). She also finds traces of these sentiments in Lacan's late unpublished seminars, *Les non-dupes errent* (1973-74) and *Le Sinthôme* (1975-76). These texts are significant because they each leave borderline openings for possible subversion of the phallic stratum that otherwise dominates Lacan's work, both characterising and defining it as a closed Order.

⁹⁶ It is also frustrating that this kind of wordplay appears to be contagious and that by engaging in this type of discourse I too contribute to the plethora of playful yet difficult terminology.

⁹⁷ The 'matrix' is posited as a symbol that replaces Lacan's symbol of the phallus, but nonetheless functions as an empty signifier that by definition has no intrinsic meaning in and of itself (Pollock in Ettinger 1996: 89).

⁹⁸ 'Crawley, in language which differs only slightly from current terminology of psycho-analysis [...]' is Freud's introduction of Crawley's text into *The Taboo of Virginity* (Freud 1918: 199). In drawing on Crawley, Pellegrini notes that Freud is 'joining the authority of psychoanalysis to the authority of anthropology' and that in so doing he 'exposes the complicity of both discourses in the project of colonization' (Pellegrini 1997: 31-32).

⁹⁹ Crawley's 'taboo of personal isolation' is to do with the preservation of man in relation to other men. This man to man relation is at times played out across an economy of women. Rather than in Western culture where the bridegroom has the 'privilege' of deflowering women, in the primitive cultures cited it is another man's 'job' to perform the rupture of the hymen in order to protect the husband from incurring repercussions (Freud 1918: 194).

¹⁰⁰ The 'narcissism of minor differences' appears first in *The Taboo of Virginity* (1918) with regard to sexual difference, and re-appears in *Group Psychology* (1921) and *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930) in terms of national and cultural borders. In Pellegrini's argument on the loss of female Jewish identity in Freud's

formulations, she asserts that '[N]ot only is woman's difference from man superseded by the male Jew's difference, but on this reading, his difference has been there all along. Accordingly, 'The Taboo of Virginity,' an essay ostensibly concerned with the management of sexual difference, is really and only about the boundary crises Aryan/Semite or Christian/Jew' (Pellegrini 1997: 31-33).

¹⁰¹ Notable within the context of Freud's discussion of drives and 'sado-masochism', Lacan uses the notion of the 'rim' in his diagrams to denote the 'erogenous zone in the drive'. The rim is linked to auto-eroticism in so far as the drive (which is in fact defined as a 'partial drive') is circular and returns to surface of the erogenous zone. However, Lacan distinguishes the drive from auto-eroticism because of the presence of the *objet a* that marks the status of the subject within the Symbolic. Thus, the drive moves in an 'outward and back' direction 'in which it is structured' but it is only (mis)recognised through the filter of the Other (Lacan 1998: 177-80).

¹⁰² The references made here to Lichtenburg Ettinger's work move between three of her important texts *The Matrixial Gaze* (1995), 'The With-In-Visible Screen' (1996) and 'Transgressing With-In-To the feminine' (sic) (2000). Despite her main points being outlined in the earliest of these sources, I have found that the later texts often provide a clearer explanation and have thus cited them in such instances. While Lichtenburg Ettinger's thesis is consistent throughout these sources, the context remains distinct in each case, and places a different emphasis on the various points of her overall framework. Thus, *The Matrixial Gaze* (1995) is the most in depth in terms of detailing her theoretical formulations and situating them in relation to her primary references. While the significance of her art practice is noted in this work, it emerges with more focus in the two later texts, which are both included in respective books specifically concerning feminine/ist aesthetics and art practice. In terms of theoretical inclusion, 'The With-In-Visible Screen' (1996), offers a more concise version of the 1995 text, while emphasising the relation to art practice. 'Transgressing With-In-To the feminine' (2000), on the other hand, elaborates on her existing theory by introducing new material; namely the psychoanalytic significance of the figures Tiresias (Freud 1919) (Lacan 1972, 1973), and Antigone (Lacan's *Ethics* seminar 1959-60).

¹⁰³ My framing of auto-eroticism as a structural model can also be understood in relation to the respective construction of symbolic structures by the other psychoanalysts that I have called upon. For example: Freud signals the fear of castration through the myth of Oedipus; Rank signals separation as the 'trauma of birth' through the maternal significance; Lacan signals the Name-of-the Father and Symbolic Law through the Mirror Stage (related to the myth of Narcissus); and Irigaray signals the cultural matricide of the maternal-feminine through the mythic figure of Clytemnestra.

¹⁰⁴ In such a familial mapping of my ideological genealogy, Irigaray would thus be positioned as a 'grandmother' who laid (down on) the ground for Lichtenburg Ettinger to formulate the matrixial stratum that gives the maternal-feminine a signifying voice and a symbolic place to listen and be heard.

¹⁰⁵ *Transgressing The Boundaries of Acceptability: A Progress Report* functioned as a 'first draft' for the scripted component of the *A[d]Dress Rehearsal* performance piece that was written almost a year later. Moreover, the final dissertation remains framed within the map of concerns laid out in this 'progress report'. However, over the (three) more years it has taken to construct the final dissertation, these concerns have become more fully embodied with/through the creative experience of further theoretical engagement.

¹⁰⁶ *Differential Aesthetics: Art practices, philosophy and feminist understandings* (Florence and Foster [eds.] 2000) is, among other things an important, current and sophisticated contribution to the recent interest in art practice as research and research as art practice, with which my thesis is concerned and located within. Although its publication date comes late in the course of my research, many of the essays address familiar issues that I have been engaged with for some time.

¹⁰⁷ Bolt turns to D. Olkowski's 'science of the singular' (1999), V. Kirby's recourse to quantum theory (1997), P. Carter's concept of 'methexis' (1996) and its relevance to Indigenous Australians, and C.S. Peirce's 'indexical sign' (1955) to locate a framework for recognising the importance of materialization. Her art practice is specifically engaged in the medium of 'painting', while I work with sculptural materials, photography and installation instead. Nevertheless, we both are explicitly concerned with how our respective practices, to quote Bolt, 'implicate my body in the process' (Bolt 2000: 315-333).

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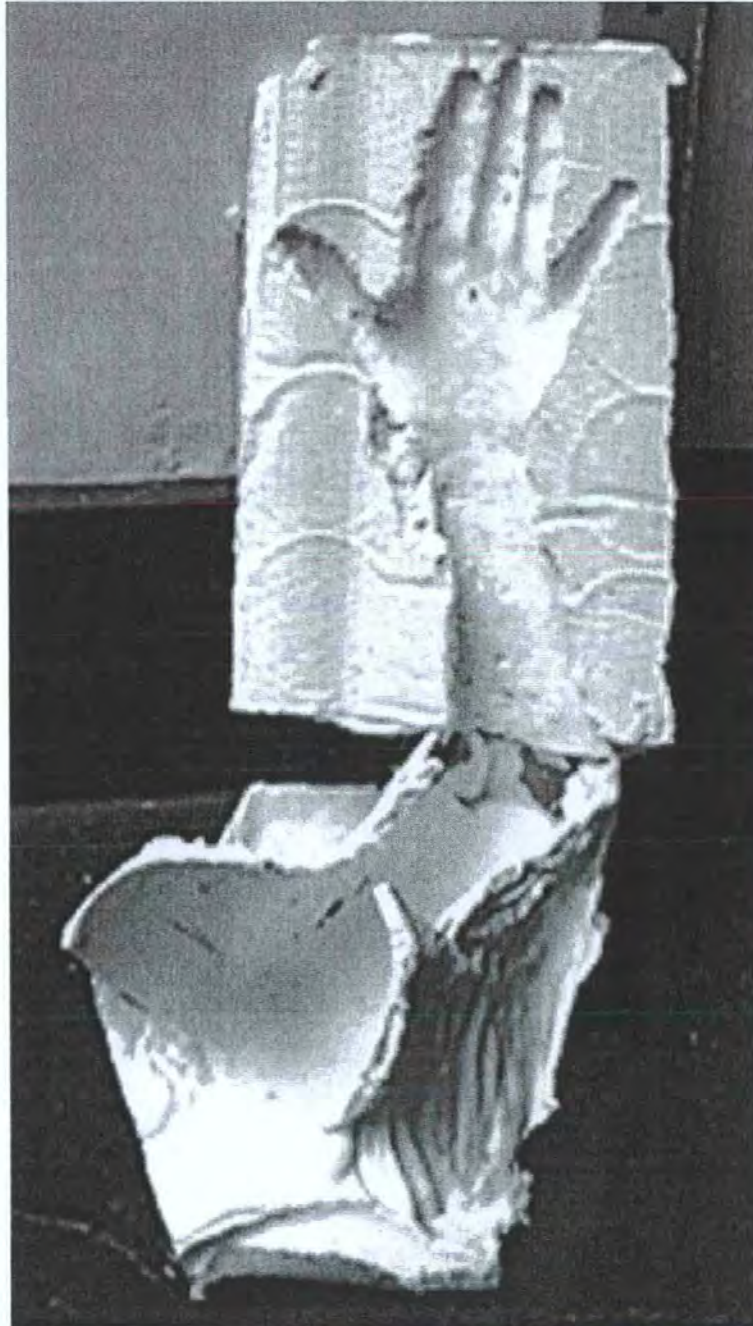


Fig. 148 RyyA. Bread©: *A Hands On/In Experience...*, 1997, plaster, two fragments; approximately 40.6cm x 20.5 cm x 10.7 each.