

INTRODUCTION

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One thing is made clear in the essays you are about to read (and it should be equally clear even if you only look at the pictures): the body is, indeed, and has been for some time, a screen onto which various ideologies are projected, a battlefield for competing discourses. Even the definition of “the body” is becoming uncertain: it is difficult, given the often incredible reports from the front lines of medicine and technology at the close of the twentieth century, for us to say exactly where our “natural” bodies end and some technologically enhanced body begins. The increasingly common use of transplants, prosthetic and/or mechanical body parts, and various reproductive technologies (not to mention developments such as virtual reality) bring into question what our bodies are, and thus what our relationship to them might be.

There are no certain answers, but rather, another set of complex questions at the crux of such inquiries. Where does the natural body end and the prosthetic body begin? Can we use such terms as “prosthetic” and “natural” unselfconsciously? Can we use these terms together and yet avoid reiterating them as the very binaries we wish to put into question? Recorded inquiries into and meditations upon the nature of the body, on how it mediates experience, sensory or social, and how, in turn, consciousness relates to it, date back at least to Aristotle in the Western tradition; they have also long been an integral part of many non-Western traditions. Indeed, inquiries from a variety of cultures, disciplines, and historical periods focus again and again on the body. They bring to bear upon it all manner of *technics*, both to better understand its functions and to mould it into conformity with prescribed social or cultural roles. It is very important to place any discussion of technology and the body in a historical context, and for this

reason we have chosen to open the collection with a piece that focuses on the English Renaissance, "Female Bodies Misbehaving" by Torri L. Thompson. This essay, quite rightly, implicitly questions the smug assumption that we need go back only as far as the nineteenth century to understand the social and cultural impact of technology.

Technology: It's All Greek to Us

Perhaps not coincidentally, the English Renaissance saw the Western rediscovery of ancient Greek. Indeed, our English word, *technology*, derives from the ancient Greek, *technikos* (skillful), as, of course, also do our words *technique*, *technician*, and *technic*. While a technic is a tool, it is a highly specialized one, for it demands the trained hand of the artist, the artisan, or the technician. It is designed not so much to accomplish a specific task, but instead to perform that task in direct service of realizing some larger project. If we use the words *technic* and *technology* more broadly, we can then apply them not only to some mechanical thing or mechanized process, as well as to a variety of discursive practices and projects as well. Fashion magazines, literature, and extra-textual discursive practices, conjoin with the tools—literal or figurative—that we design to reshape the body or modify the behavior that emanates from the body in question. In short, under these conditions, discursive agenda, implemented through the technics appropriate to specific technologies, become themselves a sort of template that the "technicians" using them superimpose over both the body and that body's behavior: to identify points of defect, deviance, even subversion, with the object of correcting or even eliminating them.

Let us illustrate our point through an extreme example: the *Malleus Maleficarum*, written by German monks in 1484 as a handbook for clerical inquisitors in service of the Roman Catholic Church, specifies the stages and procedures designed to wring confessions from both accused witches and warlocks. The authors quite straightforwardly offer the *Malleus Maleficarum* as both technic and template. All women, they argue, are potential witches; superimpose their guidelines upon any woman, and you will find if not her manifest, then certainly her latent witchery.¹ However, the authors also made clear that men are just as susceptible to the devil's wiles. Strictly speaking, Satan's recruitment of women is merely an intermediary gesture: through women-

turned-witches he could most easily reach men and make them warlocks, thus recuperating the whole human race. Consequently, if the *Malleus Maleficarum*'s authors, Fathers Jacobus Sprenger and Henry Kramer, seem to espouse the clerical misogyny so pervasive in the European Middle Ages, we must bear in mind that their overriding concern is for *human* salvation. Yet their focus remained on the "weak link," as it were, in the Great Chain of Being: woman.

In an irony that was perhaps not lost on either Sprenger and Kramer or their contemporaries, one could only save a soul through the living body that housed it. Mortification of the flesh had been a Catholic tradition long before the Inquisition; after the Reformation it became more broadly a Christian one. Penance could not necessarily be affected only through prayer; the tongue alone could not bear the whole of the body's disciplinary burden. For invaluable though a single soul may be, it was the Church's responsibility to recruit as many as possible to advance the cause of heaven. Therefore, it was paramount that the devil's minions be identified and eliminated, lest they corrupt Christian society. In an excess of zeal, great injustices were perpetrated primarily against women during the European witch-hunts and these witch-hunts became the cornerstone of the Inquisition. Expanded to include Jews and heretics, no one, male or female, necessarily escaped suspicion.

We think it very much worth noting that conduct books and advice manuals of later eras make arguments remarkably similar to the *Malleus Maleficarum* about a variety of perceived social problems. Often identified as diseases, deviations, or even subversions—in either or both sexes—certain designated problematic "disorders," real or imaginary, are thought to harm not merely individual health, but the very body politic: for example, in seventeenth century Massachusetts Bay Colony, witches' covens;² in nineteenth century Britain, masturbation;³ in the twentieth century United States, homosexuality and lesbianism,⁴ Communism,⁵ and more recently, co-dependency,⁶ and cultural literacy.⁷ All these have given rise to social issue books, guides, manuals, and advice books, whether written for professionals (such as physicians, psychiatrists, social workers, law enforcement officers, and teachers) or a more general public. We certainly *do not* claim that such publications advocate using the Inquisition's fiendish physical and psychological tortures as a means of getting to the "truth." Yet they generally concur with Sprenger and Kramer on two essential points. First, they frequently claim that the perceived threat is far greater

than we might at first think. Indeed, it may, in some instances, even be part of a massive conspiracy.⁸ Second, the text sounding (or echoing) the alarm claims to offer an appropriate diagnostic template for identifying both the cause(s) and culprits. For example, during the early 1980s, when the hysteria over the McMartin Preschool Case reached its zenith, wildly improbable charges of ritual, even satanic, abuse, involving a vast national network of pedophiles and pornographers, who were said to be victimizing the children attending the school, gained wide credibility. In response, a number of purported experts and victims, affirming that the threats posed by devil-worshipping pedophiles had long been with us, became ubiquitous guests on the talk show circuit. Print media—and not just the tabloids—quickly entered the fray, offering books and articles that claimed to help concerned parents properly read the “warning signs” of possible ritual abuse, which could be anything from moodiness to bad dreams to bed-wetting to sex play.⁹

A Handbook for the Age of (Gender) Anxiety

The notion of gender identity is likewise increasingly complicated in our time: “androgyny” and “gender-bending” are currently valorized terms, at least in the fashion and entertainment industries. The success of such films as *Paris Is Burning*, *The Crying Game*, and *Orlando* provide evidence of a late twentieth-century questioning of gender and sexual identity. This questioning and refashioning of the body coincides with a number of fierce political battles that are currently being fought over issues of personal freedom and control of the body. (These include struggles over abortion rights, HIV/AIDS policies, sexual harassment, gays in the military, and arguments surrounding the ethics of new reproductive technologies.) It seems very clear indeed that the body is a contested cultural site.

Rather than trying to assemble an anthology that would present a single theoretical approach, we, as feminist editors who want to actively resist theoretical hegemony, have deliberately encouraged a diversity of voices and perspectives. *Bodily Discursions*, being organized along thematic lines, analyzes the discursive practices surrounding these issues from a variety of critical and theoretical perspectives. This anthology demonstrates that, historically, cultural conflicts seem to coalesce most insistently around the female body. Consequently, the contributors to this volume analyze a wide range of discursive practices as they

inscribe themselves primarily—but by no means exclusively—on issues involving the bodies of women. Fashion and the concomitant refashioning of women's bodies to suit a prevailing standard of beauty, social placements and displacements of women's accounts of pregnancy and childbirth (and their function as metonyms of society's fear and mistrust of the female or maternal body), plastic surgery, and other medical interventions in the human body's etiolations each serve in their turn here as a locus for feminist inquiry.

We do not, however, claim a unifying thread or overarching theoretical purview between the essays presented here, even if they are all feminist in their outlook. Literary criticism, social theory, psychoanalysis, cultural studies, art history, and the history of rhetoric all attest to the diversity of the approaches taken by the eleven essayists. The individual contributions tacitly demonstrate that each contributor takes the term "feminism" to mean different things: to some, it may mean a hyphenated ideology, whereas to others, it is a methodology—a technic. Yet in their different ways, the essayists anthologized here all make rigorous inquiry into the emergence of truly entrenched and deeply conflicted cultural discourse(s) surrounding the body, traditions of oppression that are themselves framed through institutional practice. As a result of this conflict, the body has been technically and rhetorically manipulated throughout history in response to cultural and social anxieties that are specific to a given historical moment. Moving from the English Renaissance to the European Enlightenment and up through our own *fin-de-siècle* twentieth-century, the scholars whose work appears here all analyze how these anxieties have been played out, literally as well as figuratively, upon the proving ground of (primarily) women's bodies. This phenomenon can be seen in the physical punishment enacted upon the female body, from the Renaissance "scold's bridle" to the plastic surgeon's scalpel. Indeed, the body—whether female or male—can be seen to disappear, as in late twentieth-century technologies such as virtual reality. The maternal body in particular begins to become transparent, invisible, and even expendable. This phenomenon can be seen in accounts of reproduction and birth dating back at least to the nineteenth century, as well as in current medical and ethical approaches to pregnancy, which focus almost exclusively on the foetus, literally or figuratively looking straight through the body of the pregnant woman.

The contributors to *Bodily Discursions* focus on the politics of gender and sexual difference as those rubrics apply to women pri-

marily, and to men secondarily. For it is the cultural constraints and social codes that depend, systematically and institutionally, upon differentiating hierarchically between the sexes, that in turn give rise to other hierarchies, whether as a social order or as a tradition of oppression. We are not saying that these last two terms are interchangeable, any more than we are saying that all men oppress all women. The issues this volume, taken as a whole, discursively addresses are far too complex for us to reduce to simplistic, sexually coded notions of oppression, victimization, and collaboration. By focussing on the female body, the essays here implicitly open up debate on the male body. Angela Wall's contribution offers several perspectives on the male homosexual body in particular. Indeed, Naomi Wolf's comment to male readers of *The Beauty Myth* is wholly pertinent to this collection. Men are warned to pay attention to what is happening to women because "Their turn is next" (288).¹⁰

No Pain, No Gain

Just as *Bodily Discursions* does not have relevance for women only, we do not wish to discuss gendered difference in narrow terms of sexually distinguished cultural and social surveillance. Such a strategy would not merely be naive, for it would evade questions of systematic control and institutional practice, but it is ultimately counterproductive. It assumes that Plato was right: reality and representation remain separate and discrete, one from the other, and what is more, the former is necessarily superior to the latter. In *Nostalgia and Sexual Difference*, Janice Doane and Devon Hodges forcefully reject imposing binaries of any sort; their point has vital implications for feminist analyses of power, authority, and enfranchisement, whether collective or individual.

Opposition is a power game. The opposition *male/female* . . . is also typically hierarchical. The disparaged term, "female," helps preserve the value and integrity of the privileged term, "male." Those . . . who want to maintain the reality of a distinct male identity need to keep the terms "male" and "female" separate and opposed. It is not always obvious that the "female" sphere is being disparaged, but once we see how *female* is placed in a system of opposition that aligns it with the degraded term of other oppositions, such as *image* (which is opposed to *reality*), *fiction* (which is opposed to

truth), or *the present* (which is opposed to *the past*), we can see how male identity and formulations of the real are secured and their importance maintained by woman's traditional place and speech (9).

We concur with Doane and Hodges that "we have yet to see how the promotion of fixed sexual differences—whether they are described as natural or culturally constructed—does anything but maintain an all-too-familiar system of oppositions and stereotypes" (11–12). To put it another way, simple role reversal, making the "bottoms" exchange places with the "tops," as it were, accomplishes nothing, for it activates and transmits power and authority through repressive hierarchical structures. Admittedly, avoiding oppositional discourse can prove very difficult indeed, but the contributors to *Bodily Discursions* have attempted to avoid such oversimplifications.¹¹

In addition, as editors we remain deeply suspicious of essentialist arguments; yet at any given cultural or historical moment, and in respect to any of the issues referred to above, we keep returning to the same question: Does the material body truly exist or can it only really exist as a social construction? Since we all must live in our bodies, this question becomes imperative. The body, whether a natural phenomenon or a socially constructed entity, is mutable and, we would therefore venture to speculate that, perhaps, it has always been so. On the other hand, is it *absolutely* mutable? Have Dolly Parton and Michael Jackson—going beyond cosmetics, camera angles and lighting, diet, and exercise—remade themselves entirely by turning to plastic surgery as well? By the same token, can we argue that Madonna, who apparently draws the line at plastic surgery, reinvents her public self and her body any less successfully? Is it enough to say that our bodies, modified by heredity, fashion, health, environment, self-regard, and evolution, remain first and last not so much instruments as technics? Perhaps then the question is not whether the body is "natural" or "socially constructed," but, instead, if we regard our bodies as technics, who, then, are the technicians who would make use of them? Should we count ourselves as technicians, assert that we all manipulate other bodies—from friends giving each other diet and exercise advice to medical researchers experimenting with gene therapy? As feminists, we remain suspicious of totalizing arguments, yet undeniably we have to recognize that we too are part of cultural, economic, and social, not to men-

tion environmental, ecosystems. In an attempt to avoid facile relativism on the one hand, and too absolute a reading of overdetermination on the other, we return first to questions of gendered bodies and look for fresh points of departure.

In all the essays in this book, the contributors question how the body relates to issues of societal control and ideological domination. It is clear that "technologies of misogyny" (to use Deborah Wilson's phrase) are consistently operative from the Renaissance through the present day: the tradition of oppression, particularly as it is enacted upon the female body, has been remarkably continuous. Both Cynthia Huff's essay on childbirth in the early to mid twentieth-century, and Julie Shaffer's essay on female virginity and the married woman's chastity as commodities in the eighteenth century, point to the same conclusion. Whether virgin, pregnant, or otherwise sexually claimed through marriage, a woman's body serves as a primary locus for patriarchal control. In our own time, as Susanmarie Harrington demonstrates, the example of Kimberly Bergalis shows the body as a machine for the production of ideology. It is equally revealing that both Torri Thompson discussing the Renaissance, and Cathy Peppers analyzing postmodern cyberculture's interventions on the gendered (and in Adams's and Peppers's cases, to a much lesser extent, the racial) body, focus on its malleability for both cultural and political reinscription(s). Both these studies make clear that, in divergent ways, the body is literally moulded; unquestionably, it becomes, to paraphrase Teresa de Lauretis, our only technic and possession ("Desire" 132).

The inscription of the public agenda on the body has been and continues to be a very visible and tangible one. As Angela Wall's inquiry into competing AIDS discourse(s) shows, it is so highly politicized that it configures and reconfigures the full spectrum of polemical discourse, from the Reagan administration's public health policies to ACT-UP's extended critiques of those policies. In this collection, we hope to ask some new questions that will go beyond reducing the body, and the discursive practices that apply to it, to a simplistic binary argument.

Several of our authors, in speaking of very different historical periods, ask whether women can in fact subvert society's efforts to patrol their bodies. To cite one example, Cathy Peppers's analysis of Gina's situation in *Synners* problematizes the issue of control and invasion by asking whether we should identify the use of Gina's synning capabilities as an act of rape. It is important not to

oversimplify issues of control, for they are anything but simple. Recognizing the complexity of these issues, many of the essays here implicitly ask such questions as what constitutes consent? Or violation of personal space? And most importantly, what constitutes personal space? If "personal space" is now no longer "sacred," was it ever? We can see clearly—in cyberpunk fiction, plastic surgery, and virtual reality, as well as in the current political debate over reproductive freedom—that the notion of an inviolate "personal space" has become at best a debatable concept.

This line of inquiry is not unrelated to the issue of how one considers technology. Can we use technology to our own ends?—clearly, women and men have benefitted from technologies in many ways—or will it ultimately destroy us? In the conclusion of her essay, Cathy Peppers points out that it is not enough for us to divorce ourselves intellectually from technology, since, as Gina observes, "All appropriate technology hurt somebody . . . *Fire for Christ's sake* [hurt somebody]" (183). And of course she is right: we cannot disavow "technology" as some Frankensteinish Other not of our making, unrelated to the many devices in modern life that allow us to travel more easily, to communicate more efficiently, and, perhaps, to lead richer lives.

It seems then that we should consider the possibility that technology could be used to contest totalizing cultural imperatives. Judy Wajcman, in *Feminism Confronts Technology*, observes that

a recognition of the profoundly gendered character of technology need not lead to political pessimism or total rejection of existing technologies. The argument that women's relationship to technology is a contradictory one, combined with the realization that technology itself is a social construct, opens up fresh possibilities for feminist scholarship and action. (x)

If we juxtapose Wajcman's observation with Mary Shelley's ironic gloss on science and technology's progressive march forward ("The labours of men of genius, however erroneously directed, scarcely ever fail in ultimately turning to the solid advantage of mankind"), we might achieve an appropriately and usefully ambivalent attitude toward current technological advances in medicine, communication, travel, and education.¹² On the one hand, as feminists we resist a totalizing, monolithic construction of scientific and/or technological progress. On the other hand, we would be fools to

argue that such progress can so rigidly over-determine our cultural situation(s) that the only use we can make of technology is to articulate more fully the terms of our own oppression.

The question posed by Gina about rape foregrounds another consideration implicit in many of the essays in this collection: How do desire and technology "interface"? Cathy Peppers examines the ambiguities inherent in cyberpunk's envisioning of the desiring body's radical separation from desire itself; Christine Laennec's essay addresses the profound ambivalence in the image of the (man-made) Assembly-Line Love Goddess; Alice Adams's and Deborah Wilson's work analyzes the male desire to achieve maternity through mechanical means. There are several kinds of desire analyzed in these essays. In critical readings of William Gibson's cyberpunk novels (Peppers), Brian De Palma's *Body Double* (Schreyer), and James Burt's "love doctoring" (Adams), we see male sexual desire as misogynist domination. In *Body Double* and in advertising practices alike we also find the idea of female sexual desire predicated upon a male gaze. Men's desire for control and manipulation of women is manifest, for example, in the use of the Renaissance scold's bridle, in Locke's manipulation of the figure of Rhetorica, in eighteenth-century conduct manuals for women, in childbirth practices, in fashion photography, in plastic surgery, and in AIDS discourse. At the same time, we can see that some women have considered what we might term patriarchal control of their bodies in a positive light. Examples of this perspective can be found in the practice of "churching" (discussed by Torri Thompson), in Gina's "synning" (in Cathy Peppers's essay), as well as in Roberta Schreyer's analysis of the character of Holly Body, who, like some of her real-life counterparts, does not consider her work in porn films or her status as a porn movie star degrading, but rather, empowering.¹³

Not Merely Academic

These issues of control may at first seem like idle professorial chit-chat, but they are in fact questions that women deal with in everyday life. Are we being exploited in a job, or are we gaining valuable professional experience? If we have prenatal testing, are we taking the first step down the garden path of eugenics, or preventing future loss and heartache? Is it a sign of complete hypocrisy for feminists to wear makeup? Conversely, can they be politically effective if they have moustaches? (Apparently so, to

judge from the emergence of Frida Kahlo as the new middlebrow pop feminist icon for the 1990s.) How serious should we be, and how many jokes at our expense should we laugh at—or make? Perhaps, as with racism and homophobia, the question should not be whether we have internalized the terms of our own oppression, but rather, to what degree. Once we accept that we cannot transcend our own overdetermined cultural moment, we still have to decide whether and/or where to draw a line.

For this reason, it is important for us to try to understand what is happening at this point in our history. To do so, we must analyze the past, and also realize that we will always be hindered by a cultural blind spot with regard to our own time. What conclusions are we to draw, for example, from the coincidence of Twilight Sleep maternity homes (which Cynthia Huff discusses) becoming popular at the same time as S. Weir Mitchell's famous "rest cure," a practice that similarly infantilized women and induced them to forfeit control not just of their bodies but also of their minds, to male doctors?¹⁴ The fact that upper- and middle-class women were treated in this way confirms that the long-enduring social need to control and repress women was focused on their "unruly" bodies. However, while we build our own understanding of how the body has been manipulated in earlier periods of history, we must not distance ourselves from the past experience of others. We may not be able to identify personally with choices made by people in the past, but we should stop to reflect that we, too, (men and women) are operating within cultural pressures of which we cannot fully be aware.

In questioning, as Torri Thompson does in the opening pages of this volume, what history is and how it gets written, we are confronted with the issue of representation, which is central to this anthology. Throughout the collection, questions relating to perception and the viewer's gaze are raised, in such diverse media as advertising and fashion photography, AIDS discourse, and film. Challenging the predominance of representation, the essays also consider the body not only as the object of a gaze, but as the source of voice, as a speaking subject (albeit often, paradoxically, deprived of the power of speech).¹⁵ These challenges merge forcefully in Thompson's essay on the forcible and sadistic silencing of women, in Huff's essay on the "anesthetizing" of the maternal voice (both in birthing practices and in the practices of literary historians), and Harrington's and Wall's essays on AIDS discourse and the body. Wall's analysis of the male homosexual body, as the 1990s

equivalent of Freud's hysterical female body, presents another instance of a voice (in this instance that of AIDS activists), which has been denied, erased, and explained away as the result of physical deviation from the norm. On the other side of the same coin, Harrington shows how Kimberly Bergalis's "innocently infected" body, carried on a stretcher to Congressional hearings, simultaneously speaks for and embodies, figuratively as well as literally, the right-wing stance on AIDS.

The work in *Bodily Discursions* opens up many avenues of inquiry. In doing so, it focuses primarily on women; it also reflects on class, and to a lesser extent, race. As editors, we are aware of the collection's limitations, but we feel that the questions raised here resonate equally through issues of class and race, and hope that they might open up new avenues of study in these directions. For, as has often been pointed out, gender, class, and race are not discrete issues, but remain in many striking instances inextricably linked. Yet, as the historian Joann McNamara has quite correctly remarked, scholars tend to "see women as gendered and men as people."¹⁶ Just as it is important to keep in mind that gender does not refer solely to women, it is equally important to remember that sexism, racism, homophobia, and classism are all manifestations of the same hatred and fear.

The fate of the body in the late twentieth century has much to teach us. Is it possible that the idea of the masculine as a norm from which women deviate is being replaced by a new ideal, a perfect or perfected (once machinomorphic, now technomorphic) body from which everyone else deviates? Perhaps our era, in which many upper-class girls get nose jobs for their sixteenth birthdays, is exposing a formula that has been operating in Western society for a long time. We seem to be a long way from being able to "recognize each other as different *and therefore exciting*, imperfect *and as such enough*" (Chapkis 175). But it does seem that, if we want to better understand our culture and our history, they are to be found written on the body, not only for us to read but to learn from, and not only to learn from, but, subsequently, for us to act upon.

Notes

1. See Evelyn Fox Keller's analysis of the cultural impact of the witch hunts in Europe, especially as they evolve through the political economy of academia generally, and the scientific disciplines particularly.

Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (New Haven: Yale U P, 1985), 59–61.

2. See Marion Starkey's *The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Inquiry into the Salem Witch Trials* (Magnolia, MA: Peter Smith Publishers, Inc., 1969), still a standard work on the Salem Witch Trials, mass hysteria, and the motivations of the accusers.

3. For their classic analyses of Victorian anxieties over "self-abuse" (the Victorian euphemism for masturbation) as debilitating to both the individual and therefore to her/his society at large, see Steven Marcus, *The Other Victorians: A Study of Sexuality and Pornography in Mid-Nineteenth Century England* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), 19–22; and Ronald Pearsall, *The Worm in the Bud: The World of Victorian Sexuality* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 417–21.

4. See John Gerassi for his analysis of hysteria over a "homosexual ring" operating in Boise, Idaho, in 1955: *The Boys of Boise: Furor, Vice, and Folly in An American City* (New York: Collier Books, 1968), especially 28–86. Although his psychology is very dated, Gerassi's inquiry is thorough and sympathetic, and he makes a forceful and—in the context of his time—progressive argument for decriminalizing homosexuality between consenting adults.

See also Jonathan Katz's interview with an anonymous man who was unjustly accused of sexually exploiting young boys during this period of scandal in Boise. Jonathan Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.—A Documentary* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), 109–19.

Both Katz and Gerassi present overwhelming evidence that the Boise "scandal" was blown up entirely out of proportion, and that the subsequent miscarriages of justice were many and far-reaching. Katz's interviewee asserts that the furor originated in a cynical and cowardly effort to discredit a local politician, whose brother was notoriously gay, and that no "ring" of adult male homosexuals conspiring to corrupt adolescent boys existed (109).

In a military context, see Randy Shilts, *Conduct Unbecoming: Gays and Lesbians in the U.S. Military—Vietnam to the Persian Gulf*. (New York: St. Martin's P, 1993). Shilts argues that in the view of the N(aval) I(ntelligence) S(ervice), all female marines and naval personnel are potential lesbians. His argument is most compelling as he compares NIS investigative guidelines for ferreting out lesbians with the *Malleus Maleficarum's* guidelines for ferreting out witches, 625–38.

Shilts also presents overwhelming documentation of anti-gay and anti-lesbian purges in the U.S. Armed Services, and the concomitant search for "rings" and "conspiracies," whose object was to "subvert," through seduction, "unsuspecting innocents," especially 383–93, 411–22, 499–509.

Gerassi, Katz, and Shilts all fully document the complete disregard for the civil rights of suspected lesbians and gay men, the appallingly coercive tactics—even psychological torture—in civil and military contexts respectively: sleep deprivation, isolation, imprisonment without access to legal counsel, and other violations of individual rights to due process.

5. There are of course any number of excellent sources on the anti-Communist hysteria of the McCarthy era, HUAC, and their political and cultural legacies. Victor S. Navasky's *Naming Names*, (New York: The Viking P, 1980) is particularly strong in its analysis of the rhetoric and representations of "communist subversion" in public discourse and popular culture during the McCarthy era; see also Nicholas von Hoffman, *Citizen Cohn* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), more specifically, for his close analysis of Cohn's political relationship with Senator Joe McCarthy, and, specifically, his role in the Army-McCarthy Hearings, 234–45.

6. The literature and media cultures of co-dependency, self-actualization, and recovery focus primarily—and too often deleteriously—on women. Wendy Kaminer notes that "According to one publisher, the co-dependency market is 85 percent female" (15). She also asserts, in her bracing critique of the "recovery movement," that

There are differing feminist perspectives on this mostly female phenomenon. Stressing that women should not be submissive and self-effacing, the recovery movement includes some popular feminist ideals. But calling femininity a disease obscures the fact that many women are trapped in abuse by circumstance, not weakness. They enter abusive marriages unwittingly, out of bad judgment or bad luck, not masochism; they remain because they can't afford to leave, perhaps because they've had less than equal educational opportunities or because they have young children and no day care. Problems like these are political as well as personal; they require collective as well as individual action, and objectivity, as well as introspection (15).

In other words, angry, dissatisfied women may not be dismissed (or persecuted) as witches any more, but instead run considerable risk of being judged as "dysfunctional," rather than being encouraged to identify the circumstances of their own oppression and direct their anger outwards.

Wendy Kaminer, *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional: The Recovery Movement and Other Self-Help Fashions* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1992).

7. See E. D. Hirsch *Cultural Literacy: What Literate Americans Know* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987).

8. As in the following specific instances: Salem, MA, in the 1690s; Boise, ID, in 1955; the Army-McCarthy Senate Hearings in 1954; the lesbian and gay purges in various branches of the armed forces since World War II, but especially in the 1950s and mid-to late 1970s.

9. Hirsch's book offers a checklist, composed of an arbitrarily selected collection of facts, allusions, dates, and personages, that the reader can use to discover whether or not s/he is "culturally literate," 146-215.

Similarly, many self-help guides and confessional books also offer checklists and questionnaires that purport to offer the reader quick, straightforwardly diagnostic templates to determine whether or not the reader, the reader's family, adult partner, friends, or even work environment are "dysfunctional" or "co-dependent." Thus, they urge the reader to score her/his reading on scales that determine levels and types of dysfunction.

The problem, as Kaminer points out, is that often the terms are made too elastic, and that they become so inclusive as to be meaningless. According to Kaminer, one such term would be "child abuse." "If child abuse is every form of inadequate nurturance, then being raped by your father is in the same general class as being ignored or not helped with your homework. When everything is child abuse, nothing is." (Kaminer 26-27).

10. While men have not infrequently turned to plastic surgery for cosmetic reasons, their numbers seem to be growing, and plastic surgery for male beauty seems to be gaining more acceptance. See, for example, Richard Alleman, "Waist Not," *Vogue* (June 1993), 126-27.

On the other hand, for the last twenty years, major cosmetics companies in the U.S. have developed full lines of cosmetics for men, but have not yet determined how to market them. The exceptions would be "personal care" products such as shaving lotions, shampoos, colognes, and more recently, lines of skin care products, such as Clinique's lines of facial scrubs, creams, and toners for men.

Of course, whether the average male will come to accept mascara and lipstick as part of his daily grooming ritual remains to be seen.

11. Nonetheless, the rhetoric of opposition remains firmly entrenched, even in the most provocative, sophisticated, and challenging texts engaged in critiques of the body. For example, in his introduction to *Body Politics*, Michael Ryan insists on localizing (em)body(ied) oppression in "The heterosexual white males who largely shape and run our world," whom, he claims,

don't like bodies. They prefer the abstractions of moral mythology, which transform people and things like welfare mothers,

communism, Saddam Hussein, gays and lesbians, homelessness, economic inequality, and the like into allegorical figures like "Evil," "Individual Responsibility," and "Political Correctness." Those people and things are thereby denied the complex modes of representation they deserve, modes that elude moral allegorization. Moral allegorization is especially difficult when one is connected bodily to the people and things one represents (xi).

While Ryan's point about "the abstractions of moral mythography" remains valuable, and, therefore, should be given serious attention, we must interject that, by categorically dismissing heterosexual white males as chief villains and world oppressors, he is engaging in the very sort of discursive practice he wishes to repudiate. Michael Ryan, "Introduction," in *Body Politics: Disease, Desire, and the Family* (Boulder: Westview P, 1994, xi-xiii).

See also Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, "Scenes from the Last Sex: Feminism and Outlaw Bodies," in Arthur and Marilouise Kroker, eds., *The Last Sex: Feminism and Outlaw Bodies*. (New York: St. Martin's P, 1993), 1-19, for a similarly entrenched oppositional discourse.

That important work on the cutting edge of cultural criticism resorts to a simplistic rhetoric of opposition underscores just how difficult it is to redefine critical perspectives and terms.

12. Professor Waldman to Victor Frankenstein, just prior to Victor's creation of the creature. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, ed. by Johanna M. Smith (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's P, 1993), 49.

13. Andrew Ross, *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 188.

14. See Ellen L. Bassuk, "The Rest Cure: Repetition or Resolution of Victorian Women's Conflicts?" in *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge: Harvard U P, 1986), 139-51.

15. Feminist criticism—particularly the work of French critics such as Luce Irigaray and Helene Cixous—has argued that women's voices are in no way disconnected from their (female) bodies. Along similar lines, Belenky, *et al.*, in *Women's Ways of Knowing*, using Carol Gilligan's work as a departure point, study how women from various backgrounds are able or unable to speak for themselves, and to articulate—or not to articulate—an autonomous subjectivity.

16. Comment made during a question and answer session at a conference on Women and Gender in The Middle Ages and The Renaissance, the Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois, May 3, 1991.