Minimalism and Biography

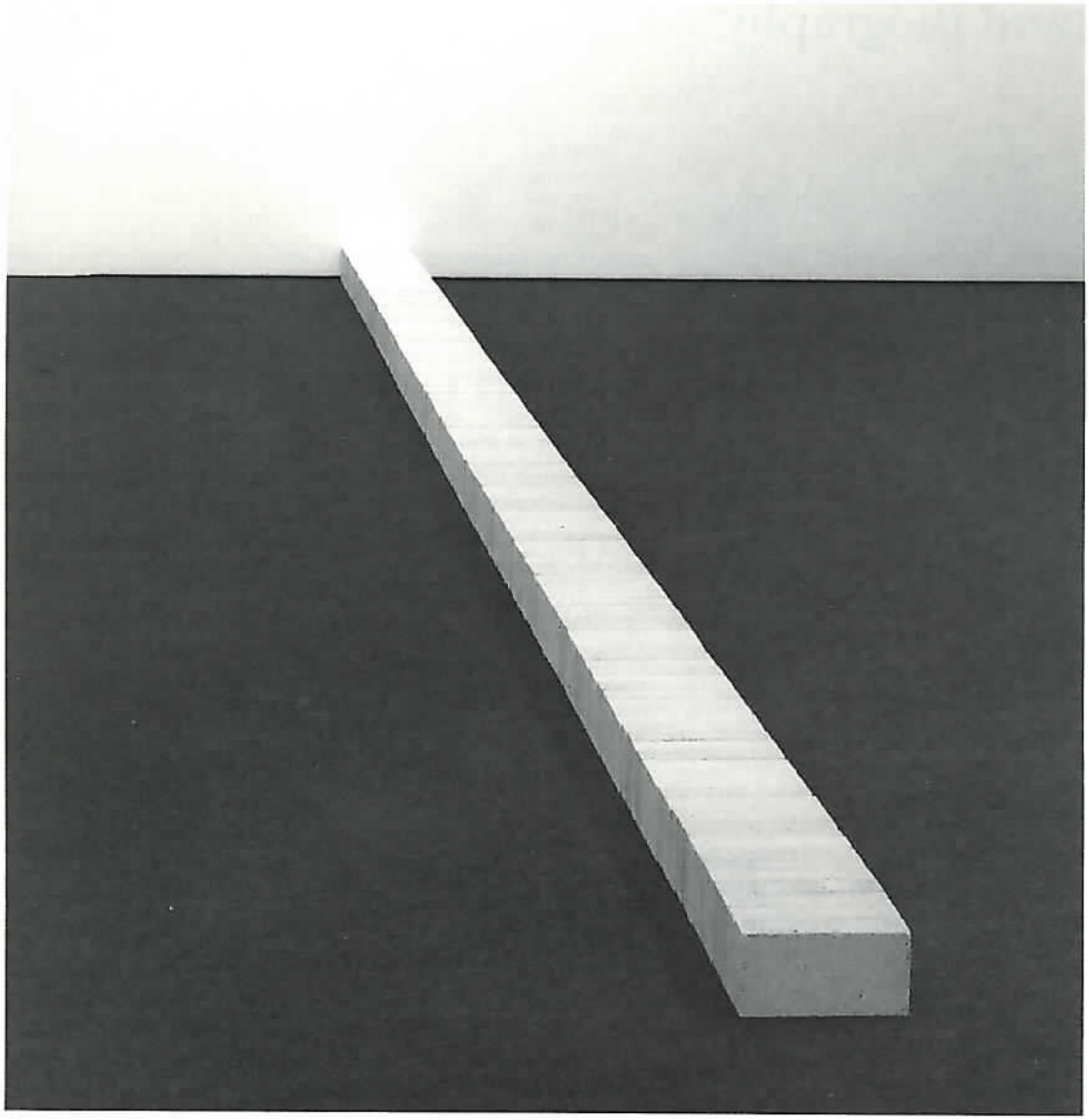
Anna C. Chave

Ever greater, apparently indelible, claims are being made for Minimalism as a movement occupying "a place in the second half of our century akin to the one held by Cubism in the first half,"[1] or as crucially defining the very cusp between late modernism and the postmodern and, as such, as a key site of origin for postmodern practices in the visual arts.[2] Where the identity of the Minimalist movement is concerned, there can be no indelible ink and no orthodoxy, however, for there have been all along not one but multiple Minimalisms, different discursive configurations describing differing movements: some medium- and period-specific, others not; the majority New York–based, but some bicoastal or global; most with an all-white, male membership, but others encompassing some white women. This is not to deny that there has emerged a formidable Minimalist canon—an area of consensus surrounding particular bodies of work by specific figures—though it bears underlining that none of the New York–based males usually assigned to this elite was self-identified as a Minimalist. The Minimalism that I construct in what follows isolates for case study certain figures commonly regarded as peripheral to the Minimalist canon, such as Simone Forti, Yvonne Rainer, and Eva Hesse, alongside some figures considered indispensable to it, namely, Robert Morris and Carl Andre. All these figures are here subjected to examination through what is, for Morris and Andre, at least, a rather unexpected critical lens: that of biography. By bringing into focus, more specifically, these figures' relations to one another, as well as to other intimates who had a professional stake in the critical and material fortunes of the Minimalist movement, I mean to help clarify how the Minimalist canon came to assume its present shape. In the process, I call into question the inevitability and the continued viability of that shape, in part by problematizing the claims now being staked over a privileged locus: the site of origin for Minimalism as a movement.

Representative of the kind of object persistently designated as "Minimalist" is *Lever* (Fig. 1), with its row of 137 firebricks neatly lined up by Carl Andre in a considered relation to a given location, initially a room in the groundbreaking 1966 show *Primary Structures* at the Jewish Museum, New York. By its industrial material, its geometrically standardized components, its serialized composition, and its affecting an ultimate elementariness of form, order, material, and facture, *Lever* appeared to test the very boundaries that distinguish art objects from all other objects in the general culture. Further, by withholding any trace of the touch of his hand or other patent expression of his subjectivity, Andre initially appeared to be placing his own status as an artist in some question and, by the same stroke, to be rebuffing the art public. By calculating *Lever*'s design and placement in relation to a given art-institutional site with a view to the public's eventual circulation through that site, however, Andre implicitly accepted the mantle of the artist and took the art public into consideration in another way.[3]

Early proponents of Minimalism, such as Hunter College professor Eugene Goossen, lauded the art of Andre and his peers for affording a "direct, unadulterated experience . . . minus messages" and free of any "boring display of personality."[4] German philosopher Edmund Husserl's directive—"Go to the things themselves"—led off an essay by Mel Bochner, who paradoxically described the work of Andre and others as rigorously excluding individual personality while being profoundly "solipsistic."[5] "Matter matters" was the maxim Andre used to encapsulate work that evidently, taciturnly insists on its strict facticity or sheer materiality. There is further and conflicting evidence, however: that of Andre's imagistic title, *Lever*, which points to a metaphorical aspect in the work, and that of the sculptor's invoking, and simultaneously denying, a relation between the work's elongated form and that of "the male organ."[6] The absence of the imprint of the artist's hand apparently discourages reading into *Lever* any additional, more personal meanings on his part—I say "apparently" because Andre would in fact regale audiences with the tale of his paternal grandfather, a bricklayer who built his boyhood home in Quincy, Massachusetts. The sculptor further characterized bricks as "Almost a personal emblem, or a psychological emblem, that relates to earliest experiences."[7] In short, if Minimalism is more emphatically depersonalized than any prior visual art idiom, Minimalism and biography, nevertheless, are not such utterly incommensurable terms as they at first appear.

That the artists associated with Minimalism were mostly spared extensive biographical inquiries is unsurprising, not only because of the intently impersonal aspects of their practices but also because the period of their work's ascendancy overlapped with the broaching of certain critical paradigms entailing the diminishment or outright erasure of considerations of artistic subjectivity. In the radicalized 1960s, neo-Marxists, including partisans of Louis Althusser, elevated the categories of the material and the social over those of the individual or the subjective. For Marxists generally—as indeed for capitalism also—the personal and expressive values have historically been derogated as secondary and, tacitly or otherwise, as feminine, since women have ordinarily been acculturated to assume these arenas as their proper domains. Feminist critics may counter that the categories of the personal and the social are irrevocably intertwined such that the "so-called private sphere" has all along been "radically implicated in patterns of modernization and processes of social change."[8] But Marxist-informed criticism has largely persisted in depreciating the biographical, in so doing finding common cause at once with much poststructuralist art criticism as well as with the deindividualizing impetus underlying key Minimalist initiatives. Thus, Hal Foster, for one, could



1 Carl Andre, *Lever*, New York, 1966, 137 firebricks, 4 1/2″ x 8 7/8″ x 348′ 6″, overall. Ottawa, The National Gallery of Canada (Art © Carl Andre/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY)

argue that by its antiexpressive procedures Minimalism "sever[ed] art . . . from the subjectivity of the artist," opening up "a new space of 'object/subject terms,' " one predicated on a " 'death of the author' (as Roland Barthes would call it [in 1968]) that is at the same time a birth of the reader" or perceiver.[9]

The unseating of the author or artist as transcendent, self-present subject and authentic locus of meaning held, from this vantage point, above all liberatory prospects. It effectively licensed a shift from a history of art narrowly focused on a succession of individuals whose lives have been overglorified in a veritable cult of personality to a history of art concerned more broadly with the roles the visual arts play in society. So far, so good. But in actuality, the leading Minimalists have been hardly less heroized than prior members of the elite of art historical canons. What their former fellow traveler Yvonne Rainer has observed about John Cage and his use of the ostensibly antiauthorial mechanisms of chance procedures might, by extension, be applied to the Minimalists themselves:

> If the avowed goal of a work is a succession of "nonsignifying signifiers," one is left with an impenetrable web of undifferentiated events set in motion by and referring back to the original flamboyant artist-gesture, in this case the abandonment of personal taste. The work thus places an audience in the "mindless" (sensual?) position of appreciating a manifestation of yet one more
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> Artist as Transcendental Ego
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> and excludes it from participation in the forming of the meanings of that manifestation just as surely as any monolithic, unassailable, and properly validated masterpiece.[10]

If the deployment of biographical modes of inquiry has mainly led the discipline in habitual and conservative directions, toward enlarging or embellishing the achievements of an already glorified canon of masters, the suspension of explicitly personal speech on the artists' part and of answering, biographical modes of inquiry on the critics' part has not necessarily redounded in progressive ways. Assuming as a premise that art and experience must be linked, that artistic as well as critical practices and positions, interests, and privileges are invariably colored by personal factors that may reward examination, the present essay proposes to turn

biography to oppositional ends, exploring what has been at stake, and for whom, in the exempting of certain artists from biographical scrutiny.[11] At issue are the consequences not only of the discounting or disuse of biography but also of a partial or uneven use of biographical information relative to the male and female artists in question, and relative to certain of the critics who bear responsibility for the imposing face, or facelessness, that Minimalism has come to assume in the public eye.

Most of the critics who built their own reputations by building the reputations of artists in Minimalism's inner and outer circles were friends and, at times, lovers or spouses of those same artists, a fact that is a matter of record on a piecemeal basis at best and thus is widely unknown outside the circles in question. One critic who has been relatively forthcoming about her at once personal and professional involvement with artists in the Minimalist group is Lucy Lippard, who lived with Robert Ryman from 1960 to 1967 and who counted Sol LeWitt both a close friend and her "major intellectual influence" during that period.[12] In a 1966 essay, Lippard assumed a position consonant with Goossen's, questioning the need for art to be "obscured by everyday emotional and associative obsessions, by definite pasts, presents, and futures, by 'human' experience." A decade later, she was "shudder[ing]" at the "narrowness" of this passage while contending that she had honored its implications only in the breach: "I never could resist puns, associative and psychological readings, and snuck them in when I could."[13] The women's movement had by then guided Lippard toward a more explicitly subjective criticism. She recalled having been inducted in 1970 from the ranks of antiwar activists in the New York art community (which included the Minimalists Andre, Morris, and Donald Judd, among others) to join an added cause: "I used to compare becoming a feminist to jumping off a building and deciding half way down that it wasn't such a good idea," she remarked drily. Openly assuming a female subject position seemed a bad idea because "women were cut out of a lot of the action, and perceived as inferior. So I didn't really think I was one of *them*."[14]

An early initiative that Lippard joined was the Women's Art Registry, a slide archive. And she recalled that much of the work submitted to WAR was abstract, although "it turned out sometimes that the same women also did much more private, personal, less neutral work, but didn't show it, didn't send it out."[15] Among a generation bent on separating itself from the heroic individualism of Abstract Expressionism, depersonalized visual modalities had come to the fore. For a woman to resist the example of Pop and Minimalism by overtly personalizing her art was to risk branding her work as retrogressive and, by the same stroke, to risk reinforcing that tacitly invidious division of labor that presupposes that women will assume "expressive roles and orientations" while men adopt "instrumental" ones.[16] Judy Chicago, who had earned notice as a Minimalist especially in her professional home base of Los Angeles, recalled facing just such a dilemma around 1970:

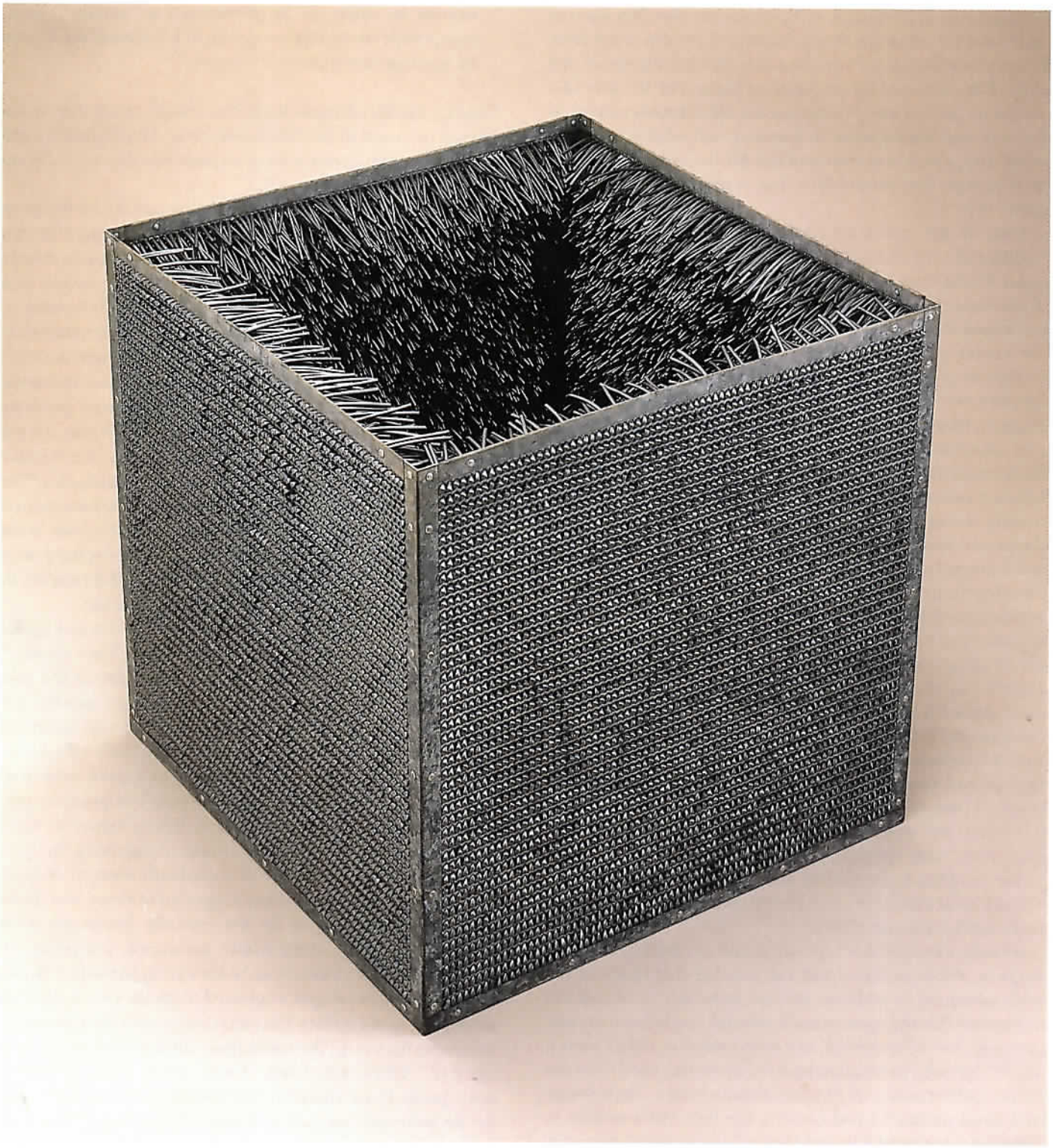
> I could not be content with having my work seen as trivial, limited, or "unimportant" if it dealt openly with my experiences as a woman, something I had seen happen to women who had not neutralized their subject matter. I also could no longer accept denying my experiences as a woman in order to be considered a "serious" artist, especially if my stature was going to be diminished anyway by the male-dominated community.[17]

Chicago sacrificed some hard-won critical credibility as she steered her work in the 1970s away from Minimalism toward idioms accommodating a more explicit visualization of women's experience.

The hesitation that Lippard and Chicago felt at the prospect of openly claiming their identities as women at this historical juncture also surfaced among the sixteen female artists whom Cindy Nemser approached for inclusion in a book of interviews, a project that she eventually framed in part as a rebuttal to Linda Nochlin's pioneering feminist tract of 1971, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" Four of Nemser's would-be subjects declined her invitation (the more commercially established, ergo least publicity starved of the women, namely, Georgia O'Keeffe, Helen Frankenthaler, Joan Mitchell, and Bridget Riley), and Nemser met with some uneasiness even among the participants.[18] In the case of Eva Hesse, force of circumstance may have helped impel her to cooperate: facing imminent death from brain tumors and intent on securing a place in posterity for a body of work that barely spanned a decade, she had incentives to respond to whatever critical attention came her way.

Eva Hesse's mature work was in certain respects not unlike that of her peer and sometime intimate, Carl Andre.[19] Employing at times such geometric fundaments as the grid and the cube, Hesse's sculpture often explored seriality and repetition through the deployment of industrial materials and modes of facture. Consider *Accession II* of 1967 (Fig. 2), an industrially fabricated, gridded, galvanized steel cube that would seem to exemplify Minimalist-identified practices perfectly were it not for the bits of plastic tubing looped by hand through the tens of thousands of holes comprising the grid, thereby endowing the cube with a randomly ordered, hirsute-looking interior. When Nemser suggested to Hesse that works such as *Accession* might be less typically Minimalist than parodistic of Minimalism, Hesse demurred, professing instead her sense of closeness to Andre's art in particular. Hesse, a German-Jewish refugee, explained of Andre's work, "It does something to my insides. His metal plates were the concentration camp for me. [T]hey were those showers that they put on the gas." When asked how Andre would react to such a description, Hesse admitted that it would probably repel him, for he believed "you can't confuse life and art." "Exactly," replied Nemser in her turn, bemoaning "[t]his whole attitude," and adding, "if you wanted to know why people have stayed away from you. certain critics That is probably one of the reasons. You scare them. Sure you scare them. You know you talking like [that] is terribly frightening."[20]

Hesse's preoccupation with the harrowing life story that she readily detailed to Nemser, in tandem with the stress on the personal that was abstractly manifest in the eccentric operations she had been defiantly performing on the standardized Minimalist grid, were, as Nemser sensed, to exact a steep critical price. While she aspired to equal critical standing with such friends as Andre, LeWitt, and Robert Smithson, Hesse was instead fated, figuratively speaking, to be pushed from the



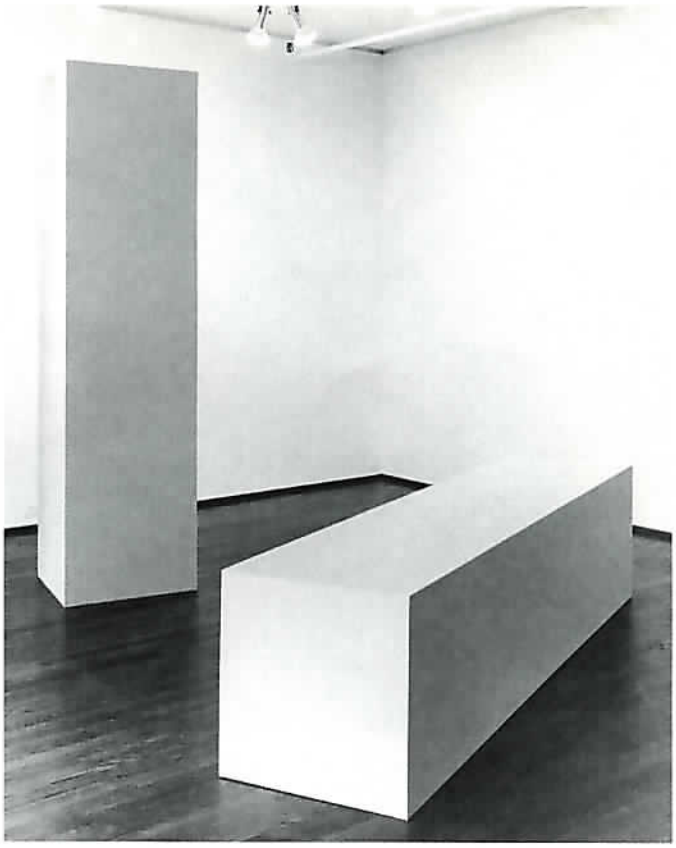
2 Eva Hesse, *Accession II*, 1967, galvanized steel and plastic tubing, 30 3/4 x 30 3/4 x 30 3/4″. The Detroit Institute of Arts. Founders Society Purchase, Friends of Modern Art Fund and Miscellaneous Gifts Fund (© The Estate of Eva Hesse)

same building that Lippard had reluctantly stepped off—to be cast to the likes of Lippard and Nemser, to feminists whose early credo was "The personal is political."[21] What specially marked feminism's so-called second wave in the United States was this very belief that "The ubiquity of sexism . . . demanded a movement for sexual liberation that was every bit as encompassing as the structure of domination against which it was obliged to struggle"; therefore, the liberation of women would require "challenging the way in which male domination manifests itself and is reproduced within our most intimate, even unconscious activities."[22] Hesse's case seemed ripe for analysis in such terms, not only because of her art's personal dimensions but because she left as part of her legacy an extended series of eminently revealing diaries. Primed by reading Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (in 1964), the Hesse who emerges in those diaries was keenly aware of the

forces within her personal and domestic, as well as public and professional, life conspiring to admit her to, at most, secondary standing as an artist.[23]

Several decades after the opening, sweeping, blustering sallies of second-wave feminism—in a society notably less monolithically patriarchal—poststructuralist feminist theorists have left behind militant, pragmatic dissertations on the politics of housework and the like and moved their more ambivalent discussions to more rarefied planes. As Barbara Johnson frames it: "deconstruction introduces a fissure between 'woman' as a concept that can never be a proper name for all women and 'feminism' as a movement that must—but *cannot*—consider 'woman' as an epistemological ground for action."[24] Those scholars who are more impelled by the "must" than the "cannot" in Johnson's formulation—I count myself among them—may proceed on the basis that long-standing discrepancies in the social treatment, and so the histories, experience, and social possibilities of men and women (patriarchy, in a word), compounded by more and less profound differences in the biological realities of male and female beings mean that "women's interests and needs" are bound to "differ in fundamental ways from those of men, and that these conflicting interests cannot be addressed within the category of a universal subject."[25] Other scholars are more impelled by the "cannot" than the "must" in the dilemma Johnson outlines, however, among them some female critics who have staged a kind of rescue mission around the legacy of Hesse, intent on framing it as broadly human rather than particularly female.[26] Such initiatives are undoubtedly necessary if Hesse's distinctive achievements are to be duly validated under the present dominant critical regime.

Something akin to the sway that Clement Greenberg held over United States art critical discourse in Hesse's day has of late, arguably, come to be held by his former disciple Rosalind Krauss. In Krauss's view, "The significance of the art that emerged in this country in the early 1960s is that it staked everything on the accuracy of a model of meaning severed from the legitimizing claims of a private self."[27] What underlies Hesse's eccentric art, as Krauss interpreted it, is precisely "the message of privacy . . . of a withdrawal into those extremely personal reaches of experience which are beyond, or beneath speech."[28] Unsurprisingly then, in Krauss's widely assigned 1977 textbook *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, Hesse's name would figure in a mere two sentences.[29] Following her early fealty to Greenberg, Krauss's vision of the history of modern sculpture, and of sculpture's eventual primacy over painting, had been heavily colored by her deepening acquaintance with one of her colleagues in the Art Department at Hunter College, Robert Morris. Spurred by an interest in Marcel Duchamp and an involvement with the pioneering, prop-based choreography of Simone Forti, his first wife, Morris had quit painting to stake out some areas in the practice of sculpture (Fig. 3)—including a deaestheticized, antiexpressive visual mode, now classified as Minimalist, a mode that "takes relationships out of the work and makes them a function of space, light, and the viewer's field of vision," as he theorized it in 1966.[30] In the writings of Krauss and of her former student Hal Foster, among others, Morris's Minimalist initiatives particularly have come to serve as a very



3 Robert Morris, *Columns*, 1973 refabrication in painted aluminum of 1961–63 original of painted plywood, each unit 96 x 24 x 24". Teheran Museum of Contemporary Art (© 2000 Robert Morris/Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York)

pivot of a paradigm shift in twentieth-century art, the shift that is said to have opened up "a new space of 'object/subject terms' " and eventuated " 'a death of the author' . . . that is at the same time a birth of the reader."[31]

Krauss and another of her former students, Maurice Berger (who became for a time also a colleague at Hunter College), are conspicuous among the readers "birthed" by Morris's work. Further, around the time when Krauss first advanced the importance of a "model of meaning . . . severed from the legitimizing claims of a private self"—in a 1973 essay entitled "Sense and Sensibility," which featured Morris, among others—her "private self" was reputedly entering into an intimate as well as professional relationship with Morris.[32] A potential for overidentification with a subject of her criticism could have contributed to Krauss's receptivity to a critical position that debarred all inquiry into the private, then, for she would surely have wished to deflect the suggestions that typically arise when such cases become a matter of public knowledge. Typically, the suspicion is that a critic's judgment may be prejudiced or impaired by a deep, intimate connection to an artist, and that self-interest may fuel a critic's enthusiasm for an artist whose works became well represented in the critic's private collection as a benefit of that liaison. The tenure of the romantic relationship is difficult to pinpoint in Krauss and Morris's case, given the principals' disinclination to go on record on the matter, but the two figures' lives would in any case remain intertwined: they bought a SoHo building

4 Lynda Benglis, *For Carl Andre*, 1970, pigmented polyurethane foam, 56 1/4 x 53 1/2 x 46 1/2". Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Museum Purchase, The Benjamin J. Tillar Memorial Trust

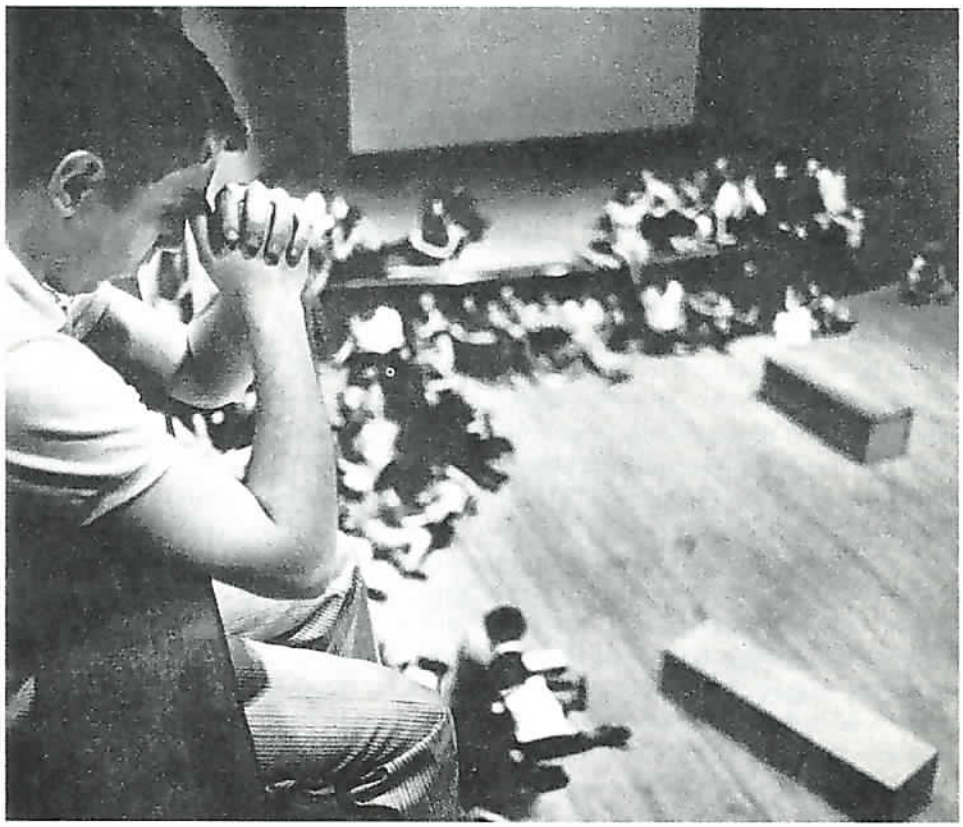
together around 1976, for instance, where they remain to this day close neighbors.

Krauss's liaison with her artist colleague was complicated from the outset by his collaboration with another, erstwhile, Hunter College professor, Lynda Benglis, or so Benglis and some others perceived.[33] In a sequence of publicity photographs, Benglis entered into a tacit, antic contest of exhibitionism and machismo with Morris in 1974, culminating in her vampy, nude self-portrait with double dildo published in the November issue of *Artforum*, at Morris's encouragement.[34] The following month, Krauss and others on *Artforum*'s masthead vituperatively attacked Benglis's gambit as "exploitative" and "brutalizing."[35] Meanwhile, Morris's comparably outrageous image of the bare-chested artist sinisterly clad in helmet, sunglasses, and chains (a picture issued by the Sonnabend Gallery as a promotional poster) entirely escaped censure—certainly from Krauss, who seems indeed to have been responsible for taking the photograph.[36] Besides her mischievous publicity campaign, the versatile Benglis produced an exceptionally fresh and experimental body of work from the mid-1960s through the mid-1970s. Some of that work irreverently and theatrically engaged certain of the premises underlying Minimalist sculpture, in part through objects that articulated a kind of liquidation of painting as a medium, including rainbow-hued, carpetlike works of poured pigmented latex rubber, or the big, cornered, hardened pile of oozing brown polyurethane foam that Benglis designated *For Carl Andre* of 1970 (Fig. 4). Such a vision (of painting's demise) could be construed as compatible with Krauss's own, yet Krauss ignored Benglis entirely in her 1977 sculpture textbook.

A certain overweighting of Morris's role as progenitor or "intellectual superman"[37] has served to occlude or subsume the initiatives of other generative and engaging figures of this era with differing reference points, emphases, and values, in short. Inasmuch as the act of writing history implicitly entails constructing a relationship to the past, whether recent or distant, it is an act "always already invested with interests and prejudice (prejudgment) rather than embodying the creation of value-free science."[38] Morris blithely observed, "Art has always been dependent upon and served one set of forces or another with little regard for the morality of those forces. . . . Art is always propaganda—for someone."[39] And seen from that vantage point, he and Krauss have served as deft propagandists, one for the other. But the lionizing of Morris by Krauss and others has not only functioned indirectly to slight other individuals whose achievements and scope of influence might render them equally or more deserving of such attention, it has also traduced much that was most radical—because at least incipiently communitarian—about the creative ferment at this historical juncture in the United States (that is, in the waning of the New York school's star).

The discounting of Morris's personal history—including the contributions to the most lauded chapters in his career by a succession of women deeply involved in his life, from Forti and Rainer to Benglis and Krauss—has served to elevate his art historical profile by feeding some old-time myths of artistic greatness: that the genius realizes his masterworks, which must transcend the vicissitudes of his life, and attains fame all on his own striving and merit. Such a selective construction of history was never available to Hesse, whose critical fortunes have all along been colored by attention to her biography. Accounts of Hesse's career habitually extend credit to a network of enabling colleagues, usually without acknowledging the extent to which the stream of influence ran both ways: "Eva influenced her male friends as much as they influenced her. LeWitt, Andre, Smithson, myself . . . were all influenced by her," Mel Bochner remarked recently—and he could have added some peers who were not friends to the list, including Morris and Serra. Bochner observed, too, that "certain developments" since the 1960s have rendered the metaphoric dimensions of Hesse's work more apparent: "What strikes me as a central issue seems to be her involvement with the phenomenology of being Eva Hesse—physically, emotionally, and intellectually."[40] The erasure of artistic subjectivity that seemed such a radical prospect to certain male artists in the 1960s could hardly portend the same for their female contemporaries, for whom erasure was almost a given.[41] With women all but invisible as creative subjects or agents, the very act of constituting them as such—Hesse's act and Nemser's act—held another kind of deeply radical potential. The deployment of personal material by or about a female artist would have an additional, often inadvertent effect, however, insofar as it was and is liable to being taken as corroborating invidious stereotypes of the narrowly confessional and autobiographical impulses underlying women's creative processes.

By liberally sharing her life story, by leaving her diaries to posterity, and by playing to the camera's lens, Hesse would seem to have invited personalized critical treatment.[42] But the pronounced camera-shyness of Andre and Judd, for example, was seemingly immaterial to the kind of privacy these men



5 Simone Forti, "Platforms," 1967 performance of 1961 dance construction, Loeb Student Center, New York University (photo: Peter Moore, © Estate of Peter Moore / VAGA, New York, NY)

were reflexively accorded by critics. For years, Morris (a.k.a. "Body Bob") deployed even his stripped body in the process of building his career without its having been construed as in any meaningful respect an exposure of a private self. Morris's 1962 relief *I-Box*, with its frontal nude, photographic self-portrait, adorned the cover and first page of the catalogue of the retrospective organized by Krauss and Thomas Krens at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, in 1994, and the next four pages also featured full-page photographs of Morris at and with his work. But the figure described in the ensuing essays remains—more like the *I-Box*, with its little pink, I-shaped door swung shut—a man oddly without a body or a biography, and certainly without any private history with one of the show's chief architects (unless we read between the lines to the works variously on loan from and dedicated to her).[43]

The depersonalized view of Morris prevalent in the Guggenheim catalogue (which lacks even the most skeletal chronology, that indispensable scholarly amenity of the standard retrospective catalogue) must devolve in part from the fact that his own copious statements mostly forgo the autobiographical. In 1989, however (that is, in a moment remote from his Minimalist past, when issues concerning identity had newly acquired a critical cachet in some circles), Morris published some "autobiographical asides," divulging, for instance, that the first Minimalist works that he had made, starting in 1961, "Those gray columns and slabs I copied directly from the photographs of the ruins of the King Zoser complex at Saqqâra, Egypt" that had engrossed him as a boy at the Nelson Gallery in Kansas City, Missouri. He told also of the childhood lure of the sadistic, hypermasculine atmosphere of the stockyards, that "dense and stressful labyrinth" where his father had worked and, "like Virgil, guided me through its noxious circles."[44] In that light, it is noteworthy that Morris's sadomasochistic self-portrait was realized as an advertising poster for a 1974 show involving labyrinths, the built version of which had eight-foot-high walls and claustrophobia-inducing corridors too narrow for two adults to pass easily.

Such personal anecdotes do not provide sufficient accounts of the works in question, of course: biography can never presume to accomplish that. A glaring omission at the center of Morris's account of what have lately been cited as the first Minimalist objects bears underlining, for that matter, for the gray, elongated, wooden box that marked the ex-painter, sometime dancer-choreographer Morris's debut as a sculptor—a column that served in 1962 as a prop in a performance he contrived, a column that he later paired with a twin and exhibited as sculpture—plainly owed less to Egyptian artifacts glimpsed in photographs during boyhood than it, or they, did to the two elongated, wooden boxes that Forti designed for her "dance construction," "Platforms" (Fig. 5), which debuted at Yoko Ono's Chambers Street loft in May 1961, a year that Morris and Forti shared a studio, as well as the year that they divorced.[45] "Platforms" entailed having two performers, "preferably a man and a woman," perform simple tasks, in part while sequestered inside two wooden boxes, each open on one side and "long enough and high enough to hide a person" but "not . . . exactly alike."[46] Morris's pair of wooden columns, which were alike in dimensions, one to another (each 8 feet by 2 feet by 2 feet), incorporated (or entailed refabricating) the single column used in a February 1962 performance by Morris at New York's Living Theater, where it stood on end for three and a half minutes before he toppled it, by pulling a string from offstage, and left it lying for

another three and a half minutes. The initial plan, for Morris to fell the column by standing inside it and tipping it over bodily, was foiled when he sustained an injury during rehearsal. The pair of columns he realized later, arranged with one erect and one prone, would "synchronously restage the two positions successively taken by the column in the Living Theater performance."[47]

The claims being made for the seminal status of Morris's early work, and with it for a canonical strain of Minimalism—the notion that these artists definitively put "the question of the subject in play" by arranging performative situations—would be better displaced to Forti's work of 1960–61, then.[48] Whereas Morris's work apparently evidenced and addressed a kind of neutral or generically interchangeable viewing subject, Forti's subjects were sometimes marked by gender-coded traits (as in "Platforms"). Prior to "Platforms," she employed Minimal or rudimentary wooden props in her 1960 "See Saw"—with Morris reading aloud from *Artnews* "in a monotonous self-contained voice" while Rainer was "throwing herself around and shrieking"—and in her 1960 "Rollers," which involved two wooden boxes with ropes attached, serving as makeshift wagons for towing performers.[49] Forti's dance constructions, however, have been mentioned in only one of the monographs on the Minimalist movement—tellingly, the one authored by a historian not of art but of music.[50]

Morris's fall 1963 Green Gallery show was "the effective advent of Minimalism," pronounced Thomas Crow in a recent textbook on art of the 1960s.[51] Crow does mention that Morris had earlier been building objects akin to those featured in the show as props for Forti; indeed, while separately discussing her work, Crow labels a reproduction of her "Slant Board" as involving a "prop by Robert Morris."[52] By this account, the theatrical props she designed remain mere props or, worse, proto-Morris sculptures, then, while the theatrical props that he based on her initiatives—that boxy column and its successors—are assimilated to an autonomous history of sculpture and canonized as the point of origin for Minimalism. Venue is an issue in the segregation of a history of Minimalism from a history of dance, of course, as Crow observes that the Minimalists "transferred the aesthetic of task and function from Judson-style dance to the gallery."[53] But the venue for Forti's 1960 dance constructions was the Reuben Gallery, and the original venues for what are now called Morris's first Minimalist sculptures were performance spaces. Further, by relegating Forti's dance constructions to the status of minor previews to the main event, critics generally have perpetuated a gendered division of labor whereby dance is coded as a marginal and feminine (or effeminate) province while sculpture is central and masculine. Such divisions traduce the category-shaking radicality of Forti's and Morris's early efforts, however, and unjustifiably narrow the parameters of Minimalism as a movement.[54] (Not only for Morris, but for Hesse also experimental dance catalyzed a departure from painting: her first three-dimensional work was made as an inhabited prop for a "Sculpture Dance," part of a series of happenings organized by Allan Kaprow, Walter de Maria, and others at Woodstock in 1962, and even occasionally in her mature work, she toyed with the link between sculpture and theatrical prop.[55])

The integration of Morris's personal and professional histories, in this case through a focus on his working relationship with his first wife, may afford an inroad toward correcting the critical asymmetry that allows his production to figure as an impersonal, towering cultural force while Forti's pathbreaking experiments are eclipsed to little more than footnotes, and Hesse's hugely influential enterprise is still considered liable to being depreciated as "purely personal."[56] Compounding this asymmetry is an influential critical account that goes so far as to argue that the burgeoning feminist art practices of the 1970s and after—with their embrace of the body, subjectivity, biography, and expressivity—owe the very possibility of their existence to the famously depersonalized, or (as I have characterized it in another place) distinctly masculinist, movement of Minimalism,[57] that "feminist art begins where minimalism ends," as Foster frames it, pointing to Minimalism's alleged role, again, in putting the "subject in play." Distinctly unlike the subject of and for feminist art, however, the subject entailed in canonical Minimalist sculpture was "somehow before or outside history, language, sexuality, and power," as Foster himself acknowledges.[58]

Unlike any of the male artists engaged with Minimalism in the 1960s, Hesse's example lends itself to being described as protofeminist, and as fecund for the unfolding of certain of those feminist art practices that would so radically undermine the premises of high modernism.[59] Hesse escalated Minimalism's impetus toward the birth or mobilizing of the perceiver—by making works whose detached or dangling components, informal-looking organization, and pronounced tactility tended to invite the touch of spectators[60]—but not at the cost of staging a death of the artist. In lieu of the apparently neutral and neutered forms commonly identified with Minimalism, Hesse tendered forms more idiosyncratic, more suggestive of the body, and more patently open to those metaphoric valences that the Minimalists claimed to abhor—forms more expressive, in a word, and in that sense, more aligned with values the society codes as feminine. Where the canonical Minimalist object would typically have an alienating or distancing effect on viewers, Hesse's sculpture would generally compel a more complex dialectic, as of attraction and repulsion or seduction and alienation.

An unprecedented foregrounding of the role or status of the viewer is increasingly cited as the most radical innovation, even the keystone, of Minimalism. "Your work and that of some others made the role of viewer more 'open-ended'—at least it made me more self-conscious, more aware of my own presence alongside your sculpture," declaimed Ian Burn and Karl Beveridge, in 1975, of and to Donald Judd.

> Perhaps this was a function of the sculpture's alienating effect; the art object, being (as it were) exclusive of me, forced me self-reflectively to deal with my own presence. This focused attention anew on the subject-object relation . . . made the relation explicit . . . made it conscious again. This became important for a lot of us. It encouraged me to view myself as object-and-subject. For a moment, this seemed radical, even revolutionary. It was radical. It touched the very alienating structure of modern art.[61]

Given the marginality and relative meagerness of the historical record on modern dance, it remains underrecog-

nized that the Minimalist sculptors' initiative in putting a subject in play in relation to their objects stemmed largely from reciprocal exchanges with such pioneers as Forti and Rainer. Of Forti's prescient 1961 "Evening of Dance Constructions," Rainer mused ruefully, "I sometimes wonder if more feedback would have prevented her retirement. . . . [I]t was as though a vacuum sealed that event. Nothing was written about it. . . . It would be another two and a half years before the idea of a 'construction' to generate movement or situation would take hold."[62] Rainer has acknowledged her own debt to Forti, whose studio she shared for a time when it was Morris's studio as well. And Rainer would come to number among Forti's successors as Morris's domestic partner.[63] Lippard recalled first seeing Rainer dance at the Judson Church during the winter of 1963–64: "I was particularly turned on by those elements [of the dance] bounding on so-called Minimal Art, with which I was coming of age as an art critic. Since then, I have gradually become aware of how crucial these ideas have been to the 'advanced' art, dance, film, and performance that have followed."[64]

In an incisive essay of 1966, Rainer explained how her own practices paralleled those of Minimalist sculptors.[65] While the sculptors were exploring ordinary materials and commonplace principles of order, she (like Forti before her) was investigating ordinary or nondance movement, sometimes drawn from the body's interactions with simple props or commonplace objects. To explore unstylized or deskilled modes of movement better, Rainer's troupes routinely positioned professionally trained dancers such as Julie Judd (wife of Donald Judd) alongside amateurs such as Morris, Andre, and the sculptor Rosemarie Castoro (who was Andre's wife).[66] Rainer would decline to be constrained by Minimalism's "anti-metaphorical strategies," however, and she all along interjected autobiographical material into her work.[67] Plagued throughout her adult life by ill health, she staged a "Convalescent Dance" in 1967, for instance, performing her "Trio A" with a body gravely weakened by a recent hospital stay. For Hesse (who was a fan of Rainer's work), illness was no less familiar a realm of experience, and she also found means to explore it in her work.[68]

By portraying Rainer and Hesse as artistic autobiographers of a kind and as plagued by illness, it may seem that I am bound to reinforce stereotypical gender divisions, between men who would transcend their private lives in their art and women who compound the two; between hale men and frail women.[69] But while Rainer and Hesse conspicuously endured more serious medical problems than their male peers, further scrutiny yields a more complicated perspective, for Morris in fact shared Rainer's penchant for encrypting personal material, at times of a medical nature, into his work, albeit with a wry consciousness of the artist's self as a "self," a willful construction. Berger has summed up the autobiographical subject at issue in Morris's work with a line of Samuel Beckett's: "I seem to speak, it is not I, about me, it is not about me."[70] In a 1963 Green Gallery show—in the same year and at the same site where he is said to have inaugurated Minimalism—Morris exhibited, alongside his *I-Box*, two other ironic self-portraits. *Portrait* (1963) is a wooden rack holding a row of identical, small, opaque gray bottles said to contain samples of his own blood, sweat, sperm, saliva, phlegm, tears, urine, and feces; *Self-Portrait (EEG)* (1963) incorporates an electroencephalograph done while, he has said, he focused on himself for the amount of time it took to produce a record of his brain waves measuring as long as his body is tall.[71] Using autobiography as a "found object," Rainer, for her part, integrated in the solo "Ordinary Dance" of 1962, for instance, a "litany of street names and grade school teachers": lists whose autobiographical character would have been recognizable to few besides herself.[72] "My work in a broad sense has always been autobiographical," she noted not long ago. But while "interested in private experience and the problems of projecting and transforming it," she cared further about how to "link it all up with the kinds of conditioning and power structures that govern our lives." And she drew a line at lapsing into what she disparaged as the "*merely* personal."[73]

The "I" that Morris articulated in his "early objects and dances is always rhetorical, always institutionally grounded, deflected away from the private personality or history of the speaker," Berger has argued, "The 'I' who mocks the notion of the self-portrait in *I-Box* exists *not* as expressions of personality or ego but as constantly shifting surrogate."[74] All biography is rhetorically constructed, of course, but as a representation of an actual, historical being. In my view, Morris's "I" is best understood as both rhetorical and autobiographical, then, and certainly as evidence of a specific personality and ego. In their recourse to autobiographical material, Rainer and Morris would share an emphasis on the constructed character of the artistic subject, however.[75] And that contention would notably separate them from Hesse—whose work was no more transparently (or "merely") autobiographical than theirs but who cherished a troubled dream of an ideal unity or continuum between art and life—as well as from Andre, who conceived his sculptures as being "of very subjective origin—infantile origin."[76]

Through intermittent interviews and the published recollections of selected old friends (including Barbara Rose and Hollis Frampton), Andre has steadily crafted and polished a certain, unilinear, teleological life story. Nearly all substantive catalogues of his work for the past three decades have, accordingly, proffered a point by point source for almost all of his signature materials, forms, and practices (working with bricks, metal plates, granite, and timbers and writing poetry) in an oft-told tale: that of the overall-clad grandson of a humble but proud Swedish bricklayer and son of a marine draftsman and housewife-poetess, who grew up by the shipbuilding yards and the granite quarries of historic, blue-collar Quincy, Massachusetts, and took further vital aesthetic sustenance from a stint in the early 1960s working on the railroads. A tale is often recycled, too, of an epiphany experienced just prior to his first New York solo show while canoeing on a New Hampshire lake in 1965: that his work should be as level as water. Thus, a mix of innocently pastoral and industrial images came appended to the sculptures that Andre referred to, also in a pastoral way, as "plains."[77]

The brutal aspect of Andre's work—the fact that his plains could remind as alert an observer as Hesse of the floors of Nazi gas chambers—is nowhere explained by this tidy idyll. And here we may see why some feminists have welcomed the tidings of Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes that it does not matter who is speaking, or that the author has expired, for

Andre would return us to a familiar biographical model, to a would-be definitive, yet highly partial, mythologized, and virilized portrait of the artist. As early as 1968 he prepared a self-interview for the catalogue to his Mönchengladbach solo show, replete with Whitmanesque paean to his native Quincy, "CITY OF GRANITE QUARRIES AND SHIP BUILDING YARDS GREAT UNCUT BLOCKS OF STONE ACRES OF STEEL PLATES." Yet Dan Graham would characterize Andre's art around the same time as "disencumber[ed] ... of the weight of personal and historically evolutionary determination."[78] And Andre's pithy life story would largely be ignored in those (many) accounts bent on integrating his work into the Minimalist canon. That omission may be attributed to the depreciation of the biographical under the critical paradigms that have prevailed over the course of his career, as well as to his own conflicting directives on the correct approach to his art. Thus, in the catalogue for a recent, vast retrospective in Germany—entitled by the artist *Carl Andre / Sculptor 1996*—the chief curator, guided by Andre's directives, talked paradoxically about Quincy and the railroad as "place[s] that opened up possibilities for his sculpture, fertilized it" but have had "no direct influence on [the] content" of the work.[79] Absent from her narrative, or any provided by Andre, meantime, is an accounting of a personal past evidently instrumental to the course of his career, namely his connections with women from Rose, Castoro, Lippard, Hesse, and Angela Westwater to Ana Mendieta—whose 1985 plunge from Andre's thirty-fourth-story apartment window was no Lippardian figure of speech.[80] Whatever the unknowable facts of that case, Andre, forever the artistic autobiographer, followed the trial with a singular, semiprivate exhibition featuring a wooden window frame of approximately Mendieta's height stretched with metal screening torn in the lower part of the frame.[81]

In a 1994 roundtable on the "Reception of the Sixties" in *October*, a magazine cofounded and coedited by Krauss, she would summon former students Foster and Benjamin Buchloh, among others, to rally in defense of Morris against what she deemed an unacceptable response from the general press to the Guggenheim retrospective's claims of preeminence for Morris.[82] Krauss, on this occasion, upheld her conceit of Minimalism as signaling the advent of an "artistic personality ... voided by industrialized production." But Denis Hollier (her current domestic partner) reflected that, for him,

> the distance and the proximity of the 1960s is best emblematized by the effect of estrangement induced by the fact that today an autobiography by Althusser exists. ... [T]hat the name of Althusser can—or has to—bear responsibility for such a book today ... might be consonant with the return of the body, the return to expressivity, the return to the biographical, to the subject. Somehow, all the values against which, precisely, Althusser became an author, making him one of the heroic figures in the fight for the suppression of the centered subject, are now back. ... Suddenly, the promoter of the concept of *procès sans sujet* turns out to be a *sujet sans procès;* he becomes a subject precisely because he is deprived of a *procès*, in that he was not allowed to stand trial, as a subject, for his wife's murder.[83]

Some fissures in the argument for the author's removal here become starkly visible: in the matter of accountability, of needing an embodied author to interrogate, on the one hand, and, on the other, in that telling formulation of the "heroic figures in the fight for the suppression of the centered subject." This formulation parallels passages in the recent Andre retrospective catalogue, for instance, that herald him and his peers for being "self-effacing," refusing "personal 'touch,' " yet "us[ing] a distinctive, personal language" and "add[ing] to the world something that makes them unique and identifiable."[84] Here the deprivileged author envisioned by revisionist critics comes unmasked as an author doubly privileged, basking in the glory, not to mention the economic advantages, of the prior, "unique," and "heroic" author while enjoying some powerful new prerogatives or protections; here we glimpse a form of "authoritarianism masquerading as antiauthoritarian," to borrow a phrase of Craig Owens'.[85] The return to the subject that Hollier implicitly mourns can better be seen not as a 1990s retreat from 1960s radicality, then, but as a newly framed initiative from that very—activist—decade of the rekindling feminist movement, as well as of such protofeminist figures as Hesse, Forti, and Rainer.[86]

Homi Bhabha insightfully observes that " 'masculinism' as a position of social authority is not simply about the power invested in the recognizable 'persons' of men." In fact, "it would be perfectly possible for a woman to occupy the role of a representative man, in the sense I am giving to that term." Masculinism is instead "about the subsumption or sublation of social antagonism; it is about the repression of social divisions; it is about the power to authorize an 'impersonal' holistic or universal discourse on the representation of the social that naturalizes cultural difference and turns it into a 'second'-nature argument."[87]

In their aim to address broadly the state of culture under capitalism, would-be revisionist, Marxist-identified historians, such as Crow (and Buchloh), who have trained their sights on the 1960s have generally come to occupy a rhetorical space as problematic as that staked out by the poststructuralists, Krauss and Foster—namely, the all too familiar space of the normative authority (read: straight, white, male) who speaks from an unmarked subject position as if speaking neutrally or universally for or on behalf of the good of us all. But this cloak of impersonality—long assumed as the art historical authorities' garb and widely draped by said authorities over the shoulders of the canonical Minimalists—can only ever have passed for radical raiment among those secure in their entitlement to speak. For those unacculturated to the prerogatives of speaking, unused to holding the floor, anonymity is but regulation wear; hence the feminist epigram, drawn from Virginia Woolf, "Anonymous was a woman." And insofar as impersonal speech coincides with institutional speech, to the less or disempowered generally, the specter of the anonymous author/ity hardly augurs emancipation. In this light, the answer to Foucault's blithe, Beckett-derived 1960s question, "What does it matter who is speaking?" was and is: it matters crucially.[88] And as for who is *not* speaking: that matters even more.

Not many female artists in or prior to the 1960s managed to

"speak" or, in any case, to attain the authority to speak and be heard. All the more reason then, why the speech of Eva Hesse signaled a new quarter heard from, a quarter that has in due course shaken the indifferently male textual monolith of the history of art. The reasons that Hesse (more than, say, Frankenthaler or Mitchell) helped disrupt the discursive proceedings-as-usual have to do with the risk she took in insinuating into an ostensibly desubjectivized, sexually neutral, or indifferent visual modality an emphasis on the personal, implicitly including that mark of difference: her identity as a woman. In Hesse's wake, feminism "infiltrated or overtly influenced every art-(or un-art-) making process of [the 1970s] in distinct and irreversible ways," as Mary Kelly phrased it, "notably, by transforming the phenomenological presence of the body into an image of sexual difference, extending the interrogation of the object to include the subjective conditions of its existence, turning political intent into personal accountability, and translating institutional critique into the question of authority."[89]

If by its (and her) very character, Hesse's art is and has been subject to investigation in relation to her biography, then her male peers' more reticent production should no longer be exempted. From the inside view of Lippard in 1968, Minimalism's vaunted impersonalism already seemed to be "just a new kind of personalism."[90] From my view as outlined in 1990, that impersonalism, rather than being so neutral as was generally said, smacked of certain tropes of masculinism as they intersect with tropes of power: both the power of the virile body and that of the realms of industry and technology, with their governing principles of rationality, systematism, regularity, and instrumentality—realms that may indeed at once affirm and threaten the privileged status of the virile body.[91] Too little has yet been said on this subject of masculinism and of heterosexual masculinities, however—or too little that takes exception to the prevailing "order of discourse."[92] By particularizing, deidealizing, and complicating the construction of masculinity, we can move toward foiling the normativizing yardsticks against which those who are counted "different"—by virtue of gender, sexuality, skin color, or other attributes—are always implicitly measured and found to be stunted, peculiar, other. By restoring to men—in critically conscious ways—their private and family lives and their embeddedness in their bodies and in nature, we can also move, importantly, toward defeminizing and so upwardly revaluing those realms of experience; we can move toward a society where what is coded as feminine will not reflexively be counted as secondary.

Anna C. Chave has authored studies of Rothko (1989) and Brancusi (1993) and numerous articles concerned with how modern and abstract art (Minimalism, O'Keeffe, Hesse, Agnes Martin, and Pollock and Krasner among others . . .) may be sexually and ideologically inscribed [Queens College and the Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York, 365 Fifth Ave., New York 10016].

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Notes

Christopher McAuliffe, Jo Anna Isaak, and Maurice Berger came to my aid in various ways with this essay. So, too, did audiences at the 1997 "Sculpting Words" conference at University College, London; at the 1997 Mount Holyoke College symposium on "The Future of the Social History of Art"; at Dartmouth College; and at the University of Leeds, where I delivered earlier versions of this paper. The Mount Holyoke event honored Robert L. Herbert, to whom I dedicate this essay.

1. Lynn Zelevansky, *Sense and Sensibility: Women Artists and Minimalism in the Nineties*, exh. cat., Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1994, 7.

2. Foster, 54, and passim. The present essay particularly questions certain aspects of the version of Minimalism synthesized by Foster in this article—a version that is increasingly acquiring a canonical status.

3. "The piece was designed for a specific space so that viewers in two neighboring galleries would have distinctly different views of it," either as a kind of "horizon line" or "in receding perspective," noted David Bourdon, *Carl Andre: Sculpture, 1959–1977* (New York: Jaap Rietman, 1978), 27. *Lever* figured in the catalogue for the Jewish Museum show as a drawing by Andre, labeled a "proposal" for a piece involving one hundred firebricks in a line extending from a position flush with the wall of one room through a doorway into a second room (in Kynaston McShine, *Primary Structures: Younger American and British Sculptors*, exh. cat., Jewish Museum, New York, 1966, n.p.). As it was ultimately realized, the work consisted of a row of 137 bricks that did not penetrate but "stopp[ed] short" of a doorway (David Bourdon, "The Razed Sites of Carl Andre" [1966], in Battcock, 103; note that this firsthand account places the number of bricks at 139, though subsequent reckonings by Bourdon and others consistently use the figure 137. The move to confine the work within a single room reportedly stemmed from issues of artistic territoriality, which came to be endemic in group shows involving so-called site-specific work. Lately, Minimalist art's tacitly theatrical or performative dimension (of which Michael Fried famously complained in his 1967 "Art and Objecthood," reprinted in Battcock, 116–47) has been emphasized as a distinct achievement of the movement by numerous critics, including Hal Foster. Views of the Minimalist movement as having newly foregrounded the role of the spectator, and thus as having (generously) mobilized or empowered a viewing public, would appear at odds with the experience of the lay public, at least, for whom Minimalism's perceived withholding of the (expected) fruits of an aesthetic experience has seemed to be paramount. A once outspoken ally of the Minimalists, Lucy Lippard, recently observed of the movement, "What I didn't like was the exclusivity, the inaccessibility, the disregard for the audience," quoted in Susan L. Stoops, "From Eccentric to Sensuous Abstraction: An Interview with Lucy Lippard," in Stoops, 28. Spectators differ one from the next, then as now, however, and I have argued that Minimalism may afford radically different kinds of experiences for different viewers, in Anna C. Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts* 64 (Jan. 1990): 44–63.

4. E. C. Goossen, "Two Exhibitions," in Battcock, 169, 168. When Gregory Battcock's key, early attempt at gathering a canonical body of Minimalist criticism first appeared, in 1968, he held the title of lecturer in the Art

Department at the City University of New York's Hunter College, a department that, over time, housed numerous of the individuals instrumental in forming or defining the Minimalist movement and in making one another (key or bit) players within it, including Goossen, a longtime department chair, Tony Smith, Ad Reinhardt, and, later, Robert Morris, Rosalind Krauss, Maurice Berger, and Phyllis Tuchman, among others. (Full disclosure: I was curator of the Hunter College Art Gallery, from 1981 to 1983 and visiting associate professor in the Art Department there, from 1991 to 1993.) The second of the two phrases cited here derives from Goossen's text for "probably the first exhibition devoted to . . . 'Minimal' art," the 1964 *Eight Young Artists* show he curated at the Hudson River Museum (ibid., 165); besides Andre, that show included the following artists who were then or would become affiliated with Hunter's Art Department: Robert Huot, Antoni Milkowsi, Douglas Ohlson, and Patricia Johanson, whom Goossen married.

5. Mel Bochner, "Serial Art, Systems, Solipsism," in Battcock, 92–102.

6. Bourdon, 1966 (as in n. 3), 104: " 'All I'm doing,' says Andre, 'is putting Brancusi's *Endless Column* on the ground instead of in the sky. Most sculpture is priapic with the male organ in the air. In my work, Priapus is down on the floor. The engaged position is to run along the earth.' Rhetoric aside, he denies emphatically that his work has even implicit sexual meaning. But as originally planned, *Lever* was not without sexual connotations, coursing through the doorway like a 34 1/2-foot erection." Even without its intended penetration of the portal, the work was experienced in sexual terms, by Lynda Benglis, for one, who found that the " 'room was female' with Andre's piece 'a male protrusion into it' "; quoted in Stoops, 42. A certain would-be orthodox view of Minimalism has it that to view works such as *Lever* in terms of metaphor or reference, as Andre and his contemporaries do here, and I have done elsewhere, is to perform incongruously an iconographic exercise on art that was conceived precisely to defeat such exercises, art that would exemplify pure materiality, and thus pure nonreferentiality. For accounts specifically taking me to task, see Foster, 247 n. 37; and David Batchelor, *Minimalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 71–72. Even were I to concur that the artists' view of their enterprise must dictate the parameters of any valid reading of it, this criticism presupposes a singleness of purpose on the part of the Minimalists with respect to matters of iconicity and indexicality, which they manifestly did not possess, while implicitly consigning present-day critics to an ever untenable fiction: that of the artwork that can escape not merely fixed symbol systems—the usual domain of iconographic modes of inquiry, which the Minimalists did indeed defeat, and which I in fact forgo—but all metaphor and reference. In time, Andre publicly acknowledged the futility of that aim. In a 1978 interview he said, ". . . I was both naive and being polemical. . . . I now realise that one cannot purge the human environment from the significance we give it," in Peter Fuller, "Carl Andre on His Sculpture, II," *Art Monthly* 17 (June 1978): 10.

7. Carl Andre, in Fuller (as in n. 6), 10.

8. Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 3. (In context, Felski uses this phrase in summarizing an argument of the literary theorist Gail Finney.) "It is patriarchy, not capitalism, that determines the sexual identity of those who perform the various functions that capitalism demands, and, for this reason, it is precisely patriarchy that remains completely unexplained after an analysis of capitalist functions has been completed," observes Balbus, 79.

9. Hal Foster, "The Crux of Minimalism," in *Individuals: A Selected History of Contemporary Art, 1945–1986*, ed. Howard Singerman, exh. cat., Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1986, 172–73 (the first published version of this previously cited essay).

10. Yvonne Rainer, "Looking Myself in the Mouth," *October* 17 (Summer 1981): 69–70. This essay boasts an impressive subtitle: "Sliding Out of Narrative and Lurching/Back In, Not Once but . . . /Is the 'New Talkie' Something/to Chirp About?/From Fiction to Theory/(Kicking and Screaming)/Death of the Maiden, I Mean Author, I/Mean Artist . . . No, I Mean Character/A Revisionist Narrativization of/with/Myself as Subject (Still Kicking) via/John Cage's Ample Back."

11. "Any True Discourse that relies on a *disembodied* founding subject does indeed both mask and justify the authoritarian process by means of which such a subject has (at least in part) been formed," Balbus observed in his critique of Michel Foucault; therefore, "A True Discourse that posits an embodied founding subject is a prerequisite for any material appeal against this very process"; Isaac Balbus, "Disciplining Women: Michel Foucault and the Power of Feminist Discourse," in *Feminism as Critique*, ed. Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 125.

12. Lucy R. Lippard, ed. and annot., *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (1973; reprint, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), viii. Lippard, who began working regularly as a critic in 1964, met Ryman, LeWitt, and Dan Flavin in the late 1950s when all four held menial positions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. For a while she worked full-time to support Ryman, and she has acknowledged him and LeWitt as the first men "to take me seriously as a professional"; Lippard, 16–17. Lippard married Ryman in 1961; he remarried in 1968. She observed that Ryman was "never called a Minimalist in those days" because his early work was rooted in Abstract Expressionism (*Six Years*, viii). However, Tony Smith, Agnes Martin, and Anne Truitt produced work in the 1960s that had roots in Abstract Expressionism but that could be and at times (as with Ryman's work) was assimilated to a Minimalist context. In my view, Minimalism is better understood as having emerged through a dialectical relation with the New York school than as existing in strict opposition to it.

13. Lippard, 3.

14. Lucy Lippard, quoted in Stoops, 27, 26. As an antiwar activist, Lippard belonged to the Art Workers Coalition. The Women's Art Registry was established as an offshoot of the AWC in 1969, but she "resisted them for over a year." She helped form the Ad Hoc Women Artists Committee, another offshoot of the AWC, in 1970, in order to mount a protest against the Whitney Museum of American Art's exclusion of women artists; Lippard, 28, 3, 25.

15. Stoops, 27.

16. Balbus, 78.

17. Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower: My Struggles as a Woman Artist* (1975), rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor/Doubleday, 1982), 65–66. Exhibiting under her given name, Judy Gerowitz, Chicago was (with Tina Matkovic and Anne Truitt) one of three women out of forty-two artists in the 1966 *Primary Structures* show. *Through the Flower* is the first of two volumes that cast her life's work in autobiographical terms. Truitt, who by contrast has sustained a kind of Minimalist vision, eventually published three volumes of edited journal entries, starting with *Daybook: The Journal of an Artist* (New York: Pantheon, 1982).

18. Riley sensed in Nemser's project "a slight ring of women's lib . . . in which I am not interested"; Frankenthaler declined to have a recently published (and approved) interview with Nemser incorporated in the all-women anthology; and O'Keeffe and Mitchell were "adverse to being taped." The tape recorder also "frightened" Hesse, though she consented to be interviewed. Cindy Nemser, *Art Talk: Conversations with Twelve Women Artists* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975), 4–5. The risks or costs of being marked and segregated as a "woman artist"—of being stigmatized as secondary; of ghettoization; of being held accountable to an insufficiently flexible or considered feminist "party line"—were more apparent or immediate to many or most female artists and critics in the 1960s and 1970s (and, arguably, ever since) than the potential benefits attaching to such identification. Those who made a point of claiming such identification or of aligning themselves with a feminist ideology generally took that step with a degree of ambivalence. The preponderant desire, although a fantasy then as now, was to do work in and for a world where an artist's gender would never count against her.

19. Hesse noted once that she had "a thing going" with Carl Andre: "I spend time going where I know he will be but he is never (almost) there. We have a date tomorrow eve.—I doubt he will keep date. He is a strange one." The note, dated May 7, 1967, is in a ledger given to her by a more faithful friend, LeWitt (Eva Hesse Archives, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio). Hesse is grouped less often with Andre and LeWitt than with various artists who are credited with instigating a reaction against Minimalism: the Post-Minimalists, as they were christened by Robert Pincus-Witten, in essays collected in Pincus-Witten, *Postminimalism* (New York: Out of London Press, 1977). Insofar as the Post-Minimalist rubric evokes figures distinctly junior to the Minimalists, with bodies of work decisively separate from and belated to theirs, it somewhat misleads in Hesse's case, however. Hesse (born in 1936) was younger than Andre by only four months and, although she arrived at a Minimalist idiom some years after he and others did, the work that she did that was Minimalist or in dialogue with Minimalism began emerging into public view in New York City not long after Minimalism first visibly coalesced as a movement there. A show that Flavin curated at the Kaymar Gallery in 1964 with his own work plus that of Judd, LeWitt, Ryman, and others was followed by the Tibor de Nagy Gallery's 1965 *Shape and Structure* show, including Judd, Morris, Andre, and others, and the Dwan Gallery's 1966 *10* exhibition, with a similar cast of characters. Lippard included Hesse's work in the first exhibition she curated, the *Eccentric Abstraction* show at the Fischbach Gallery in New York in 1966, the same year as the Jewish Museum's *Primary Structures* exhibition. Lippard helped to conceptualize that last show with Kynaston McShine, though she was not acknowledged in the catalogue; Lippard, 1973 (as in n. 12), viii. (Only after the *Primary Structures* show did the adjective "minimal" begin to enter general critical usage to describe the work that is now so categorized; see Frances Colpitt, *Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective* [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993], 3.) Hesse's paintings, drawings, and reliefs of the first half of the 1960s were mostly executed in a Duchampian and Picabian, or neo-Dada and Surrealist, mode far removed from Minimalism. The chameleonlike Morris was in his own way recapitulating Duchamp throughout the early 1960s, however, before and after he produced works that are now viewed as seminal for Minimalism, and there were neo-Dada and Surrealist aspects to the early work of Andre, Flavin, and Walter de Maria as well. Conceived and executed during Minimalism's heyday, Hesse's mature work is best understood, in my view, as occupying a position complexly both inside and outside of what is now viewed as canonical Minimalism—a position parallel in certain respects to that of her friend Robert Smithson (born in 1938); that of Richard Serra (born in 1939, arrived in New York in 1966); or that of the maverick Dan Graham (born 1942), whom Hesse admired. As with Hesse's work, elements of Graham's 1960s work can be construed as sharply parodistic of Minimalism (and the same is true of the Californian Bruce Nauman and some others).

20. Hesse, who would elsewhere in this interview stress that she viewed art and life as ideally unified and inseparable, admits at this juncture to torn feelings, saying that she cannot abide "romanticism"; it was a contradiction, she allowed: "I can't give you a statement to satisfy it." Cindy Nemser,

transcripts of interview with Eva Hesse, Eva Hesse Archives, Archives of American Art, reel no. 1475, frame nos. 20, 40, 41, 94 (orthography reproduced here as in the original manuscript).

21. This is not to suggest that Hesse drew no notice from nonfeminist critics: to the contrary. But Lippard and Nemser initially gave her by far more sustained support and attention than others, and female, if not feminist, museum curators have from the outset been the stalwarts behind the organization of Hesse exhibitions. While at work on her important early monograph on Hesse (Lucy Lippard, *Eva Hesse* [New York: New York University Press, 1976]), Lippard would explain that she hoped to "tread the same precarious edge that Eva did in her own work—which was pure abstract art but was utterly informed and expanded by her life. I knew her well and it would be absurd to 'forget' what I knew of her as a person and write a hard-assed Minimal critical book"; Lippard, 26. I was commissioned to provide a contemporary feminist perspective on Hesse for the Yale University Art Gallery's 1992 survey exhibition of her work; see Chave, 1992 (one of numerous essays in Helen A. Cooper's catalogue), as well as Chave, 1998, which serves in part as a corrective to a certain imbalance of emphasis in the earlier essay.

22. Balbus, 61. See also Rita Felski, *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), chap. 2, 51–85.

23. Hesse was evidently of two minds, however, about whether she wanted strictly to make important art or purposely to make important art "as a woman." In 1965, she worried, "Do I have a right to womanliness? Can I achieve an artistic endeavor and can they coincide?" and noted that "there are handfuls [of women] that succeeded, but less when one separates the women from the women that assumed the masculine role"; see Chave, 1992, 99. Five years later, she remarked that "excellence has no sex" (jotted by Hesse on a letter of Jan. 6, 1970, from Cindy Nemser, Eva Hesse Archives, Archives of American Art, reel no. 1475, frame no. 19), though she acceded to Nemser's request to participate in a book of interviews with female artists. Extracts from Hesse's diaries were first published in Robert Pincus-Witten, "Eva Hesse: Last Words," *Artforum* 11, no. 3 (Nov. 1972): 74–76.

24. Barbara Johnson, *The Feminist Difference: Literature, Psychoanalysis, Race, and Gender* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 7. This paradox, whose ramifications have sharply divided feminists, is often framed in terms of (the risk of) "essentialism"; useful discussions of the problem include Diane Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature and Difference* (New York: Routledge, 1989); Elizabeth Grosz, "Sexual Difference and the Problem of Essentialism," in *The Essential Difference*, ed. Naomi Schor and Elizabeth Weed (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1994), 82–97, and Griselda Pollock, "Inscriptions in the Visible," in *Inside the Visible: An Elliptical Traverse of 20th Century Art / In, of, and from the Feminine*, ed. M. Catherine de Zegner, exh. cat., Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 1996, 67–87. Egalitarian feminists—who would share the idealist view that "excellence has no sex" (see n. 23 above)—must ultimately confront the stubborn fact of patriarchy and consider "how and why is the sexual difference between men and women transformed into a hierarchical opposition in which men are in the dominant and women in the subordinate position?"; Balbus, 169.

25. Felski (as in n. 22), 70.

26. See Briony Fer, "Bordering on Blank: Eva Hesse and Minimalism," *Art History* 17, no. 3 (Sept. 1994): 424–49; and Anne M. Wagner, "Another Hesse," *October* 69 (Summer 1994): 49–84. Wagner's essay takes my 1992 essay on Hesse to task for being an overly personalized, overly biographical, and insufficiently historical reading of the artist's work. Oddly enough, her own account of Hesse relies throughout on evidence culled from the diairies, whose accessibility she laments. Heavily biographical, though in a way different from my own account, Wagner's reading also relies crucially on a fact drawn (without acknowledgment) from my historical findings concerning the means by which Hesse's mother committed suicide. For my (abridged) reply to Wagner, see Anna C. Chave, Letter to the Editor, *October* 71 (Winter 1995): 146–48. For Wagner's revision of her own essay, see Wagner, *Three Artists (Three Women): Modernism and the Art of Hesse, Krasner, and O'Keeffe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

27. Rosalind E. Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1977), 266.

28. Rosalind E. Krauss, "Eva Hesse," in *Eva Hesse: Sculpture, 1963–1970*, exh. cat., Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1979, n.p.

29. Krauss (as in n. 27). Returning to Hesse's case in the final chapter of a recent book, Krauss opens with an elliptical private reference of her own, citing a slur that Greenberg had long ago muttered in her presence against "smart Jewish girls with their typewriters." With her obedience to Greenberg decidedly behind her, Krauss proceeds to diminish another smart Jewish girl whom she views as having been constrained specifically by a sense of obedience, namely Hesse, who is charged with sustaining a putatively anachronistic obedience to the authority of the medium of painting. See Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), 309, 313–14. Regarding Greenberg's critical reign and Krauss's discipleship, see Florence Rubenfeld, *Clement Greenberg: A Life* (New York: Scribner, 1997).

30. Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture" (1966), in Battcock, 232. That some critics have taken to isolating this sentence of Morris's text as a credo for the Minimalists generally is misleading insofar as elsewhere in his and his peers' writings of this period relatively little heed was given to the role of the viewer, who—as in the Morris passage cited here—tends to figure at best as possessed of no more than a "field of vision."

31. Foster (as in n. 9), 172–73.

32. Rosalind Krauss, "Sense and Sensibility: Reflection on Post '60s Sculpture," *Artforum* 12, no. 3 (Nov. 1973): 48. Members of the Fox artists' and critics' collective assailed "Sense and Sensibility" as "insidious" on the grounds that "Krauss promotes an utterly dehumanized form of art, an art which 'implies the disavowal of the notion of a constituting consciousness. . . .' On the 'theories' of Minimalism, she builds a fascistic and totalitarian dogma. She proposes 'meaning itself as a function of external space' or 'public space,' oblivious (or perhaps not?) to the *ideology of the institutions* which determine this 'public space.' While she pretends this would make 'meaning' in art more social, *in reality* the result would be the absolute control and manipulation of art by its public (hence institutional) meaning, the final denial of any possibility of personal meaning. This is abhorrent! While this is certainly a 'direction' of much recent art, we've argued here that this is what we have to struggle *against*—not celebrate and turn it into a formal doctrine, as Krauss tries to do. . . . [T]he crucial question is: where would Krauss *herself* be in this picture? As a professional manipulator of the 'public space' in the media, what role has she in mind for *herself*? Obviously she learned more from Greenberg than she is letting on"; Karl Beveridge and Ian Burn, "Don Judd," *Fox* 2 (1975): 141 n. 10.

33. Lynda Benglis, conversation with author, winter (Feb.?) of 1991. Though it has been stated in print that Benglis had an affair with Morris at the time of their collaboration, she denied having had such a relationship with him in conversation with me. Benglis and Morris's collaboration began in 1971 and led to her making a video (*Mumble*) in 1972, and to his making one (*Exchange*) the following year. Robert Pincus-Witten discusses the autobiographical dimension to these videos, which dealt with "the frustration and confusion of physical desire with artistic creation," and cites Morris's stating in one of them, " 'the maniacal pursuit of art has led me to hurt women,' " in Pincus-Witten, "Benglis' Video: Medium to Media," in Pincus-Witten (as in n. 19), 160–61. Benglis taught at Hunter College from the fall of 1972 through the fall of 1973; in the spring of 1980; and in the fall of 1981. See Carrie Przybilla, "Chronology," in *Lynda Benglis: Dual Natures*, by Susan Krane, exh. cat., High Museum of Art, Atlanta, 1991, 116–18.

34. Benglis reports that Morris and Robert Pincus-Witten "kind of gave me permission" to publish the picture in question. Initially, she considered including a man, possibly Morris, in the image—"Morris came with me to buy the dildo and we had different poses"—but finally she determined that the dildo rendered her a figure "both male and female so I didn't really need a male"; Benglis, quoted in France Morin, "Lynda Benglis: Conversation with France Morin" (1977), in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*, ed. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 621.

35. Lawrence Alloway, Max Kozloff, Rosalind Krauss, Joseph Masheck, Annette Michelson, "Letters," *Artforum* 13, no. 4 (Dec. 1974): 9.

36. See the tiny print in the photograph credits, Krens and Krauss, viii. Benglis's and Morris's oft-reproduced images may be found side by side in, for instance, Krane (as in n. 33), 40–41.

37. This is how Morris is said to regard himself, by Krens, in Krens and Krauss, xxix, but this self-evaluation seems in keeping with the assessment of the catalogue's coauthors.

38. Felski (as in n. 8), 207. (In context, Felski used these phrases to characterize a position attributed to Friedrich Nietzsche.)

39. Robert Morris, "Notes on Art as/and Land Reclamation" (1980), in *Continuous Project Altered Daily: The Writings of Robert Morris* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), 229–30.

40. Mel Bochner, quoted in Joan Simon, "Mel Bochner Interviewed by Joan Simon: About Eva Hesse," in *Eva Hesse: Drawing in Space*, by Brigitte Reinhardt, Klaus Bussmann, and Erich Franz, exh. cat., Ulmer Museum and Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster, 1994, 91–93. Andre has also insisted, of late, "No one seems able to answer the questions that Eva Hesse asked. She is more alive than most of the living are now"; Andre, quoted in David Batchelor, "3,000 Years: Carl Andre Interviewed by David Batchelor," *Artscribe International* 76 (Summer 1989): 63.

41. Lippard has recalled that as she became established professionally during the 1960s, she herself fell victim to the truism that "if you got anyplace as a woman you must be better than most women because everybody knew women were inferior. You couldn't identify with other women; the art world bore it out. There were virtually *no* women artists visible"; Lippard, 26. As supportive as she was of Hesse's career, Lippard has admitted that she resisted for some time viewing Hesse's work with the same seriousness that she accorded the work of her sculptor husband, Tom Doyle; Lippard (as in n. 21), 23.

42. On Hesse's history of posing for photographs, see Chave, 1998.

43. The exception to the unmitigatedly antibiographical slant of the catalogue is Maurice Berger's contribution, mentioned below.

44. Robert Morris, "Three Folds in the Fabric and Four Autobiographical Asides as Allegories (or Interruptions)," *Art in America* 77, no. 9 (Nov. 1989): 144, 148.

45. The "pervasive . . . charge that Morris has made a career by habitually helping himself to other people's ideas" has been addressed by Thomas Crow, who noted that Morris's "defenders . . . are forced to deflect accusations of

opportunism by declaring that his mobility of manners and media constitutes a challenge to conventional notions of an autograph style." For Morris, as for Picasso, Crow argued (in an equation that incidentally balloons Morris's stature), "the key to any adequate historical understanding . . . is grasping his acuity in synthesizing the best art in his vicinity." Crow criticized specifically the inattention of the essayists in the 1994 Morris retrospective catalogue to the full extent of his debt to Jasper Johns; Crow, "Yo Morris," *Artforum* 32, no. 10 (Summer 1994): 82–83. Johns's reputation is hardly imperiled by such an omission, however, whereas the same cannot be said for Forti, who has barely been granted a reputation outside a circle of avant-garde dance aficionados.

46. Forti, 62: "The man helps the woman get under her platform, walks over to his, and gets under it. Under the platforms, the two gently whistle. . . . It is important that the performers listen to each other . . . The piece goes on for about fifteen minutes. The man should wear a watch so that he knows when the designated time is up. He emerges from under his platform, and helps the woman from under hers."

47. Kimberly Paice, catalogue entry on "Columns, 1961," in Krens and Krauss, 90. Morris observed the importance of Forti's 1961 concert in a little-noted, unreprinted essay of 1965 (at which time Forti's name was Simone Whitman after her marriage to Robert Whitman); see Robert Morris, "Notes on Dance," *Tulane Dance Review* 10, no. 2 (Winter 1965): 179. Maurice Berger deserves credit for insisting on the significance of Forti to Morris's subsequent production, though he did so (without illustrating Forti's work) in a monographic context in which Morris necessarily remains the primary, and heroized, subject of investigation; see Berger, *Labyrinths: Robert Morris, Minimalism, and the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 26, 49, 83. In her catalogue entry on Morris's *Columns*, Paice relayed confirmation from Morris of the significance of Forti's 1961 concert but without mentioning, much less illustrating, "Platforms." Further, Paice claimed that Morris's first column was built in 1960 and dated the pair of columns 1961 (Paice, in Krens and Krauss, 90), whereas Edward Strickland's more meticulous chronology asserts that the column was conceived in 1960 or 1961, realized in 1961, used as a prop in 1962 (not 1961, contrary to Berger, *Labyrinths*), and first exhibited at the Green Gallery as sculpture in 1963, after which it acquired its twin; see Strickland, *Minimalism: Origins* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1993), 261–64.

48. Though the point cannot be elaborated in the present essay, there is another worthwhile argument to be made, namely, that certain earlier painting initiatives present a more logical site of origin for the phenomenon of interactivity in question; I refer not only to the Minimalist painting that antedates Minimalist sculpture but also to a vein of New York school painting that, by its calculated scale and relative blankness, impelled a certain self-consciousness on the part of the viewer. The folly of isolating any one site of origin for such a phenomenon emerges, however, when we consider that comparable arguments—about the opening of a new role for the spectator—can be made about some of Brancusi's sculptural production from decades earlier, including the works possessed of mirrorlike reflectivity. Numerous of the Minimalists, including Andre and Morris, have acknowledged the signal importance of Brancusi's example.

49. Forti, 39–46.

50. Colpitt (as in n. 19); Batchelor (as in n. 6); and Kenneth Baker, *Minimalism* (New York: Abbeville, 1988) neglect to discuss Forti's work, nor was it mentioned in Battcock or Foster. The exception is Strickland (as in n. 47).

51. Crow, 139. It bears underlining that the case for Morris as Minimalism's founder, on which current claims for his stature in part rest, depends on a narrowly selective notion of what qualifies as a Minimalist object, one that ignores not only monochrome painting and prop-based dance but also such initiatives as de Maria's 4-by-8-foot plywood box of 1961—the first three-dimensional Minimalist object to be exhibited in a gallery as sculpture, as Strickland (as in n. 47), 261, and Barbara Haskell have noted (Haskell, *Blam! The Explosion of Pop, Minimalism, and Performance, 1958–1964*, exh. cat., Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1984, 99); the Elements series that Andre conceived in 1960, without executing it until a later date; and Tony Smith's *Die*, conceived in 1961 or 1962 and realized in 1962. Truitt's Feb. 1963 show at the Andre Emmerich Gallery, reviewed by Judd and Michael Fried, is deemed "the first identifiably Minimal show" by Colpitt (as in n. 19), 1. The most comprehensive, interdisciplinary account of Minimalism's early history is Strickland's, which views sculpture in general as a relative latecomer in the evolution of a Minimalist aesthetic. In what is to my mind a wrongheaded strategem, however, Strickland attempts to distinguish a legitimate strain of Minimalism from those strains that are intermixed with Fluxus, conceptualism, and other putative impurities.

52. Crow, 124. Inappropriately for the kind of aesthetic at issue here, Crow thus effectually introduced the conventional authorial matter of who held the tools that produced a given object and, by the same stroke, tacitly underlined the fact that Forti lacked the master tool (or phallus), inasmuch as she lacked command of the requisite tools of the building trade—almost inevitably so, of course, since girls were routinely debarred from shop classes and their fathers' tool benches. Like theatrical props generally, the tacitly sculptural objects that anchored Forti's dance constructions were destroyed and rebuilt as needed for particular performances, but such was also the fate of Morris's earliest props, which came to assume more fixed versions and an institutional presence only because, and as, there came to exist a market for them and a history canonizing them. Forti in fact contemplated producing sculpture but could not envision finding an outlet for it; next to an undated sketch in a notebook, she remarked that she had "an idea for a sculpture but if I make it then what will I do with it . . . ?"; Forti, 49.

53. Crow, 142.

54. Haskell (as in n. 51) was perhaps the first to argue for a broadened view of Minimalism as integral from the outset with performance art. Berger has also consistently framed Minimalism in such terms, most recently in *Minimal Politics: Performativity and Minimalism in Recent American Art*, exh. cat., Fine Arts Gallery, University of Maryland, Baltimore, 1997. Crow's account of the 1960s also encompasses a wide range of media and practices.

55. See Chave, 1998.

56. Framing her own reading of Hesse as a counter to those readings that would ascribe to her work a "purely personal range of meanings," Anne Wagner proclaims, in the concluding sentences of her essay on Hesse, that her art "can never be only or simply personal"; Wagner, 1996 (as in n. 26), 272, 282. Indeed, no substantive reading of Hesse's work has ever claimed otherwise, and concerns about an excessively biographical approach to the artist have marked the Hesse literature since her death, but it remains telling that such a narrowly personalized account of her art should continue to be regarded as a threat to her attaining her full, due stature as an artist. The extent of Hesse's impact on her own and succeeding generations of sculptors is far too large a subject to address here, though mention may be made of a show organized to help demonstrate her legacy's particular importance to women artists: Barry A. Rosenberg, Marc J. Strauss, et al., *In the Lineage of Eva Hesse*, exh. cat., Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Conn., 1994.

57. See Chave (as in n. 3). Though I would modify some of its arguments were I to write it today, this much discussed, but not closely read essay does not caricature or categorically condemn Minimalism as a "macho" enterprise, as some critics have complained and some others have applauded. Rather, it suggests that the insistent visual rhetoric of power that typifies the art of the Minimalist canon, and which is more suggestively, subtly, or constructively deployed by some of its members in certain works than in others, may be understood as a form of decompensation bespeaking a "sense of impotence visited on the once sovereign (read: male) subject by the ascendency of technology"; ibid., 45. Flavin's seminal *Diagonal of May 25, 1963*, a white fluorescent tube (or hot rod) poised at what he suggestively called the "angle of ecstasy" (forty-five degrees) was subject to burning out and having its plug pulled, after all, and Andre's *Lever* (Fig. 1)—that "34 1/2-foot erection," as Bourdon styled it at the time (see n. 6 above)—comprises at best an atomized phallus, with the integrity of the line of unjoined bricks vulnerable to the least nudge of a passing foot. An argument has recently been made for the deceptive fragility of Judd's work—an argument wrongly framed as if it were decisively in opposition to my own views; see Briony Fer, *On Abstract Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), chap. 7, 131–51, esp. 151.

58. Foster, 247 n. 37, 43. "To ask minimalism for a full critique of the subject may be anachronistic. . . ." Foster continues, "it may be to read it too much in terms of subsequent art and theory," ibid., 43–44. There is logic here, no doubt, but contemporary identity politics are rooted in 1960s activism and discourses. Betty Friedan's widely discussed *The Feminine Mystique* was published in 1963, for instance, while the first English edition of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, which appeared in 1953, had been reprinted twenty times by 1970.

59. See Chave, 1992, for one reading of Hesse's work (including *Accession II*) as protofeminist. Feminism's crucial role in the broaching of postmodern visual strategies was outlined in Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism," in *Beyond Recognition: Representation, Power, and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 166–90.

60. Of the first version of the work by Hesse illustrated here (Fig. 2), with its 1960s shag rug–like interior, she stated, "I don't ask that Accession be participated with other than thought. There is no option in arrangement in Accession," quoted in Bill Barrette, *Eva Hesse: Sculpture* (New York: Timken, 1989), 140. The public defied her, however, and soon destroyed the work by handling it excessively and clambering into it; its successor, shown here, has had to be placed under protective glass to fend off similar treatment by present-day museum patrons. In some cases, Hesse explicitly accepted that viewers would participate with her work and, given the unfixed arrangement of much of her sculpture, collectors and curators engage with it of necessity simply in the act of installing it; see Chave, 1998.

61. Beveridge and Burn (as in n. 32), 132.

62. Rainer, 7. Without truly retiring, Forti would dedicate herself for some years to the performance work of her second husband, Robert Whitman, before returning to dance. There is scant literature on Forti, but her 1974 *Handbook in Motion*, besides providing descriptions of her various choreographic projects, incorporates diary entries, personal reminiscences and reflections, autobiographical vignettes, sketches, poems, and koanlike formulations.

63. Rainer, 5, 7. Both Forti and Rainer have in turn acknowledged the example set by the pioneering San Francisco–based choreographer Ann Halprin. Rainer and Morris began to live together early in 1964, but the following year, stung by some favoritism shown his work by the press, she urged him to renounce either his dance experiments or her (he chose the former); ibid., 9–10.

64. Lippard, 265.

65. Yvonne Rainer, "A Quasi Survey of Some 'Minimalist' Tendencies in the Quantitively Minimal Dance Activity Midst the Plethora, or an Analysis of Trio A" (1966), in Battcock, 263–73.

66. Andre, Castoro, Julie Judd, and others participated in a 1966 Rainer dance, "Carriage Discreteness," that involved many props, including "Andre's styrofoam beam." A 1969 performance of a 1966 Rainer work ("Trio A, or, The Mind Is a Muscle") included Castoro and Julie Judd. "Rose Fractions," on the same program, garnered Rainer an affectionate fan letter from Andre; ibid., 303–5, 117, 158. (Andre was married to Castoro by 1964, according to Robert Katz, *Naked by the Window: The Fatal Marriage of Carl Andre and Ana Mendieta* [New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990], 78, 104; it is unclear when the marriage dissolved.)

67. "Formalism had always run neck and neck with dramatic elements in my work, which is what distinguished me from the Minimalists, I suppose. I never wanted to be restricted to Minimalism's anti-metaphorical strategies. In fact, as a dancer I knew it was impossible: the body speaks no matter how you try to suppress it," observed Rainer, in Thyrza Nichols Goodeve, "Rainer Talking Pictures," *Art in America* 85, no. 7 (July 1997): 58.

68. In another 1967 performance, of "Mat," Rainer incorporated "a tape of my voice reading a letter from a Denver doctor to a New York surgeon describing in technical medical terms the details of the gastro-intestinal illness with which I was hospitalized at the time of this performance. It was one of many attempts to deal—via my profession—with the natural catastrophe that had befallen my body." Rainer told of experiencing "three official 'dissolutions' . . . I have come to consider . . . break*downs*," in the 1960s, including a stay on "the critical ward of St. Vincent Hospital," and alluded to undergoing multiple surgeries, in Rainer, 79, 317. Regarding Hesse's identity and self-identity as an ill woman, see Chave, 1992. Bochner has also underlined "the metaphor of the hospital" at play in Hesse's sculpture and "the side of her work that alludes to the body as a sewer system"; Bochner, quoted in Simon (as in n. 40), 93.

69. The stereotype in question, though it contravenes ways in which women's bodies tend to prove hardier than men's, also correlates importantly with certain realities—namely, that women are more susceptible to illness during the years when relative youthfulness would seem to warrant good health, and that women are differently, often more, susceptible to certain illnesses throughout their lives, which nevertheless typically outlast men's. The discrepancies in question do not devolve only from the relative complexities of women's reproductive processes; for instance, women are three times as likely to develop autoimmune diseases and two to three times as likely to be chronically depressed, according to recent findings of the Society for the Advancement of Women's Health Research; see Jane E. Brody, "Some Ailments Found Guilty of Sex Bias," *New York Times*, Nov. 10, 1998, F12. Since stress is implicated as a contributing or compounding factor in disease generally, acting as it does to compromise the immune system, the immense stresses endured by women forging new roles in society may reasonably be considered as factors relevant to their state of health.

70. Beckett's line serves as the epigraph to Berger, "Wayward Landscapes," in Krens and Krauss, 86. Berger discerned a shift in Morris's work of the mid-1970s, at which point the artist's "I" becomes "decidedly autobiographical"; ibid., 29.

71. Krens and Krauss, 142.

72. Rainer, 79; Goodeve (as in n. 67), 58.

73. Rainer, 275; Rainer, cited in Lippard, 279; Rainer, 276.

74. Berger (as in n. 47), 43.

75. For Morris's strongest statement on this issue, see "Robert Morris Replies to Roger Denson (Or Is That a Mouse in My *Paragone*?)," in Morris (as in n. 39), 312–13, and passim.

76. Carl Andre, quoted in Paul Cummings, *Artists in Their Own Words: Conversations with 12 American Artists* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 183; the interview in question was conducted in 1972. "Art has to do with early sexual traumas and weaning and toilet training and reading," Andre added, ibid., 194. In 1962, Andre produced a series of "dog-shit" works in cement, and he elaborated on his engrossment with "shit" in conversation with Peter Fuller in 1974. In response to the question, "What would you say to the view that your obsession with materials which have been 'digested' into similar units, but not fully refined by industrial production, can be correlated with a fascination with shit?" Andre replied, "Yes, of course. Absolutely." His father, who designed sanitary plumbing for ships, had hoped he would "grow up to be a sanitary engineer," Andre explained. Further, the Andre family home was positioned between "two gigantic dykes" containing the "municipal sewer of Boston. . . . My boyhood experience with these great earthworks, and the idea that the excrement of the whole metropolis of Boston was pulsing by my house, was undoubtedly important"; Fuller (as in n. 6), 10–11. As for the canonical Minimalists not discussed in the present essay, de Maria, Judd, and LeWitt have generally been closemouthed about their personal histories, while Flavin was prone to autobiographical reflections.

77. Besides Cummings (as in n. 76), see Bourdon, 1978 (as in n. 3); Fuller (as in n. 6); and Diane Waldman, *Carl Andre*, exh. cat., Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 1970, 15, 13.

78. Carl Andre, "Artist Interviews Himself," in *Carl Andre*, exh. cat., Städtisches Museum Mönchengladbach, 1968, cited (in capital letters) in Phyllis Tuchman, "Background of a Minimalist: Carl Andre," *Artforum* 16, no. 7 (Mar. 1978): 30; Dan Graham, "Carl Andre," *Arts* 42, no. 3 (Dec. 1967–Jan. 1968): 34. In 1973, Andre would publish his *Quincy Book*, forty-eight pages of uncaptioned photographs of Quincy's cemetery, quarry, scrap yard, and so forth, taken by a photographer under Andre's direction.

79. Eva Meyer-Hermann, *Carl Andre / Sculptor 1996*, exh. cat., Haus Lange und Haus Esters Krefeld and Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, 1996, 33. Also, "The importance of Quincy in his work is hard to overestimate"; ibid., 32.

80. Andre was tried for and acquitted of the murder of his wife. According to Katz's account, the evidence in the case was bungled by the police. The judge who decided to acquit Andre, Alvin Schlesinger, reflected afterward in an interview with Katz, paraphrased by the latter: "Odd sort of person, Carl. He probably did it. Fifteen years was the least he would have to serve, if found guilty. Interesting case. Very close call"; Katz (as in n. 66), 370. In 1959, Andre had fixated on a news item about an unsuccessful artist who murdered two women; that artist's name, Ponell Johnson, which Andre proposed as a title for one of Frank Stella's paintings, reportedly became "a kind of code phrase between Stella and himself—a private allusion to," as Andre phrased it, "the 'contradictions which arise from using art as a means of solving psychological problems,' " in Brenda Richardson, *Frank Stella: The Black Paintings*, exh. cat., Baltimore Museum of Art, 1976, 10. Castoro (a former wife of Andre's; see n. 66 above) is among those many women whose careers have remained under a kind of historical erasure, but that her work was once in a reciprocal relation with Andre's is suggested by the photographs of a project from 1969 by each artist published side by side in Lippard (as in n. 12), 100. Katz reported that Andre had a liaison with Lippard during the 1960s, and with Westwater—who went from being managing editor of *Artforum* to being for a time Andre's dealer—during the 1970s; the marriage to Mendieta occurred in 1985; Katz (as in n. 66), 127, 78, 163.

81. Katz (as in n. 66), 381–82.

82. Specifically, the Morris show came under attack in Roberta Smith, "A Robert Morris Tour of Contemporary History," *New York Times*, Feb. 4, 1994, C24; and in Peter Schjeldahl, "The Smartass Problem," *Village Voice*, Mar. 1, 1994.

83. Dennis Hollier, quoted in "The Reception of the Sixties," *October* 69 (Summer 1994): 3, 13, 20–21.

84. Meyer-Hermann (as in n. 79), 38.

85. Owens (as in n. 59), 149.

86. Rainer would come to acquire her present identity as a feminist by fits and starts. In a 1975 interview with Lippard, Rainer reasoned, "I didn't come to be an artist or an independent person directly dealing with this female experience through the women's movement, so somehow I'm reluctant for that reason to proclaim myself." When Lippard remarked that her shift from treating the body as an object to treating it as possessed of private experience coincided with an early peak in the women's movement, around 1971, Rainer responded that the shift in question "wasn't directly related to the women's movement but I don't know exactly how to account for it other than by a process of osmosis or coincidence"; Lippard, 269.

87. Homi K. Bhabha, "A Good Judge of Character: Men, Metaphors, and the Common Culture," in *Race-ing, Justice, En-gendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas, and the Construction of Social Reality*, ed. Toni Morrison (New York: Pantheon, 1992), 242.

88. See Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" in *Textual Strategies*, ed. Josue V. Harari (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979), 141, and the last line of that essay ("What difference does it make who is speaking?"), 160.

89. Mary Kelly, "Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through," in *Imaging Desire* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), xxiii.

90. Lucy Lippard, "10 Structurists in 20 Paragraphs" (1968), in *Theories of Contemporary Art*, ed. Richard Hertz (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985), 214. Also: just as Reinhardt "made of impersonality one of the most easily recognized styles in New York, so the new blandness is likely to result in similarly easy identification, despite all the use of standard units and programmatic suppression of individuality," remarked another insider (married in 1961 to Stella), critic Barbara Rose, "A B C Art" (1965), in Battcock, 286.

91. See Chave (as in n. 3). "The technologization of work and war . . . has diminished the importance of the male body as a productive or heroic figure and thereby undermined traditional male identities. . . . Not surprisingly, much of the present cultural anxiety about the erosion of masculinity (really, the erosion of patriarchy) focuses on the male body," observed Harry Brod, "Masculinity as Masquerade," in *The Masculine Masquerade: Masculinity and Representation*, ed. Andrew Perchuk and Helaine Posner, exh. cat., MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Mass., 1995, 19.

92. The phrase comes from Michel Foucault, "The Order of Discourse" (1970), in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).