Trauma and Visuality in Modernity

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Dartmouth College Press
Hanover, New Hampshire

Published by University Press of New England
Hanover and London

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"Normal Ills":

On Embodiment, Victimization, and the Origins of Feminist Art[1]

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I met a happy man
a structuralist filmmaker[. . .]
he said we are fond of you
you are charming
but don't ask us
to look at your films
we cannot
there are certain films
we cannot look at
the personal clutter
the persistence of feelings
the hand-touch sensibility
the diaristic indulgence [. . .]

he said you can do as I do
take one clear process
follow its strictest
implications intellectually
establish a system of
permutations establish
their visual set. . . .

I said my film is concerned
with DIET AND DIGESTION[. . .]

he protested
you are unable to appreciate
the system the grid
the numerical rational
procedures—
the Pythagorean cues—

I saw my failings were worthy
of dismissal I'd be buried
alive my works lost. . . .

he said we can be friends
equally tho we are not artists
equally I said we cannot
be friends equally and we
cannot be artists equally.[2]

Performing the role of the embodied gender to pointedly excessive effect, in 1975 Carolee Schneemann seditiously traced the aesthetically ever-unseen, obscene vaginal canal by extracting a long scroll—like the rolls once handed to actors to unwind as they played their parts, but in this case nestled inside her like an attenuated tampon, or like so much contraband. She has since divulged that the individual whose dismissive attitude helped prompt the caustic exchange inscribed on that scroll was actually a woman, namely, the film critic Annette Michelson, in whose powerful sight Schneemann felt virtually invisible.[3] "PAY ATTENTION TO CRITICAL AND PRACTICAL FILM LANGUAGE," read some more lines on the scroll. "IT EXISTS FOR AND IN ONLY ONE GENDER." Assigning a male guise to her interlocutor allowed Schneemann to admit two genders, schematically opposing the obsessions of the corporeal female with those of the cerebral male. Embodiment has historically been at once tied to and used against women, of course, as an excuse for limiting their social and economic potential. And the coding of femininity as corporeal has generally permitted men, like the "structuralist filmmaker," "to inhabit what they (falsely) believe is a purely conceptual order while at the same time enabling them to satisfy their (sometimes disavowed) need for corporeal contact through

their access to women's bodies and services," as Elizabeth Grosz puts it.[4] The "structuralist filmmaker" patronizingly informs Schneemann, further, that she is appreciated only as a dancer, conferring on her voluptuous body a visibility denied to her actual creative work, in film- and object-making as well as performance. Prior to reading from her scroll then, Schneemann painted broad strokes along her body's contours while assuming "a series of life model 'action poses,'" ritualistically at once enacting and refuting the injustice that "I WAS PERMITTED TO BE AN IMAGE/ BUT NOT AN IMAGE-MAKER CREATING HER OWN SELF-IMAGE." Informed by the theories of Wilhelm Reich, as well as Simone de Beauvoir and Antonin Artaud, the self-image that Schneemann envisioned was a defiantly emancipatory one, and one aligned with what she termed an "ethic about knowledge itself—received from and in the body."[5]

In the misogynist worldview and vernacular that women artists mutinously set out to explode in the 1960s and '70s, to have a cunt was to be a cunt, a mere hole, naught. Efforts directed at reclaiming female corporeality were accordingly, at times, brashly genital. Take Judy Chicago's 1971 photolithograph of a blood-drenched tampon emerging from her vagina, an image titled *Red Flag* that offered itself as a radical Red Flag for the reborn women's movement, whose artists' contingent Chicago was spearheading as a studio art educator on the West Coast. Chicago's "flag" targeted then stringent menstrual taboos in part, perhaps, because the menses carried a liberatory charge in pre–*Roe v. Wade* days. As motherhood was then all but compulsory for sexually active women, the awful penalties—even death penalties—attaching to unwanted pregnancies proved the decisive factor in politicizing many women. Chicago's *Red Flag* would misfire, however, for initially even female viewers, alienated as they were from their own bodily processes, shockingly misrecognized the image as that of a partially severed penis—grisly signature of that dread caricature, the hysterical castrating feminist.[6]

Deploying menstrual blood, or a facsimile, as women's distinctive red ink or paint, equivalent to the vital juices legendarily fueling masculine creativity—as Chicago, Schneemann, Shigeko Kubota, and other women would do in the 1960s and '70s[7]—would serve in a way to demonstrate to the contrary that men and women "cannot be artists equally." A "menstrual" artwork cannot equal a "seminal" one, since menstruation betokens, besides a lack of virility, a lack or contravention of fertility—though bodies capable of menstruation remain withal the biological locus of creation. How to reconcile an ideal of equality with the facts and conse-

quences of difference remained, and remains, at issue. On legal grounds, "women's equality has depended on showing that they are *like* men before they can be allowed rights *equal* to men's," and it has taken some time to show how that requirement unjustly posits "*maleness as the norm*" or ideal.[8] Just such an assumption underwrites Rosalind Krauss's recent volume of essays on women artists, for instance. Declining to ask how her subjects might have inscribed their femininity in their work, Krauss confers on them the, to her, ultimate honor of viewing them as phallic women or (Duchampian) "*Bachelors*" even, namely, men explicitly unencumbered by women.[9] The rhetorical gambit of magnifying women by canceling and converting their sex ineluctably betrays a profound gynophobia, however, or what Emily Apter terms (in another context) "an aversion to the specters of femaleness and femininity that will not go away." Replying to some loaded questions circulated by *October* magazine in 1995 for a special "feminist issue," Apter joined with other respondents who refused the editorial cues to valorize more recent, theory-driven feminist initiatives over putatively archaic or recidivist, corporeally driven or "essentialist" feminisms. (Though none of the respondents made the case in quite these terms, the very act of constituting the feminine as a category, an act on which all feminisms are predicated, is endemically essentialist, after all.) While hoping for a moratorium on the term essentialism in the new millennium, Apter mused: "Nineties feminism seems to be worried about periodizing essentialism, worried, that is, about essentialism's periods (its shameless emissions of bodily fluids, menses, and tears). . . ."[10]

Notwithstanding the reproof faced by *October*'s editors, I take their somatophobic and superior attitude toward 1970s feminism and its legacies to be symptomatic, reinforcing in a way some general, current views of feminism as retrogressive or passé. Thus Anne Hollander feels free to state in *Art News,* for instance, that "because the feminist movement has accomplished what it set out to accomplish, . . . we're no longer forced to take a feminist agenda."[11] Happily, it is true that over the past several decades a growing corps of female artists has succeeded in landing on, and so strategically altering, an art historical map always practically devoid of women—a feat often abetted by an also growing corps of female art historians, critics, and curators. Whether a generation of women artists now coming of age may still be disadvantaged by their gender in the progress of their careers is perhaps debatable (and we will see if the market's present attentions to photogenic young female artists will lapse during

their later years). But so long as the feminist project may not be said to be concluded outside of an "art world" that has at last begun taking a full world of practitioners and audiences into its purview, neither can the feminist project be considered to be concluded within it: so I argue here.

"We have to keep on going until the whole of the female race is freed," Yoko Ono pronounced in 1971.

> How are we going to go about this? This society is the very society that killed female freedom: the society that was built on female slavery. . . . Some of us will succeed in moving into elitist jobs, kicking our sisters on the way up. . . . We can, of course, aim to play the same game that men have played for centuries. . . . But women will inevitably arrive at the next stage, and realize the futility of trying to be like men. . . . The aim of the female revolution will have to be a total one, eventually making it a revolution for the whole world.[12]

This is pie in the sky, no doubt, but a no less appetizing pie in 2003 than in 1971, and a perceptibly closer one. (As telling evidence of a kind, at once of the newfound reach of a globalized women's movement and of what still exceeds its grasp: in a case whose impact continues to unfold—a case "defin[ing] rape for the first time as a crime against humanity, one of the most heinous crimes" and as "an instrument of terror"—after Madeleine Albright helped press the United Nations to establish war crimes tribunals for the Balkans, specifically including the vicious crimes against women publicized by women's groups, in a trial presided over by Florence Mumba of Zambia in 2001, Carla del Ponte of Switzerland, aided by Peggy Kuo of the United States and others, successfully prosecuted three Bosnian Serb soldiers for raping, torturing, and enslaving women and girls as young as twelve—victims, it must be added, now irreparably stigmatized in Muslim society.)[13]

Besides arguing here for the continued viability and urgency of the feminist cause, I also espouse a feminism that would again or still privilege "an ethic about knowledge . . . received from and in the body," in Schneemann's words. Those who would disdain a corporealized, polemicized feminism generally fail to acknowledge that the widely held notion that feminism is not now an imperative for women, who after all are more fully lodged in the professional classes than ever before, is in itself a form of testimony to the formidable gains that were achieved precisely through

such unembarrassed and concerted feminist campaigns. No matter how indispensable optimism has been to feminism—including visions of a world where feminism truly could be extraneous—there is a difference between optimism and denial; and however women undertake to retheorize feminism, we must not deny its bedrock in the injuries done to women: wrongs and damage that, however socially or culturally manifest, were and are always also sustained bodily.

Looking ahead to the new millennium, back in 1975, Carolee Schneemann foresaw marvelous progress, foresaw the ascent of women artists. But she also justifiably worried that young women in the year 2000 would "never really believe that we in our desperate ground work, were so crippled and isolated." Having felt utterly demeaned, the "Cunt Mascot on the men's art team," she produced *Interior Scroll,* in fact, only a year after returning to New York following a self-imposed European exile precipitated by a 1969 breakdown.[14] Besides Schneemann, Yvonne Rainer, another principal of the influential Judson Dance Theatre cohort, has described suffering not one but several breakdowns and a suicide attempt around this time, and turning for aid to feminist theory, which would contribute to a shift in her practice.[15] Yoko Ono, another key figure in New York performance circles, conceived her subtly sadomasochistic demonstration of absolute (feminine) selflessness and its toll, *Cut Piece* of 1964—a work almost as iconic for the founding history of feminist art as *Interior Scroll*—close on the heels of an attempt at suicide, that ultimate act of masochistic self-erasure.[16] Ono asserted authorial control at the outset of *Cut Piece,* instructing audience members to take turns cutting off pieces of her clothing with a proffered pair of scissors; but then she strained visibly to remain impassive, kneeling, eyes averted, while enacting a state of total submission in a ritual inverting or deconstructing that of the striptease—though the body that slowly, quietly emerged from under her conservative attire was quite unstripperlike in its reserve and matronly averageness. At the culmination of a 1966 performance of *Cut Piece* in London, Ono held up a poster inscribed, "My body is the scar of my mind."[17] "Representation relieves us from the immediate 'real' of the body (and traumatic events)," observes Griselda Pollock.[18] Representation may equally return us to the "real" and even the real of the body, I would add, which helps explain why so many pioneers of feminist art were drawn to forms of performance and to "body art."

Recalling what she and other women of her cohort had to endure, Carolee Schneemann lamented, "WE WERE THE GUESTS IN OUR OWN WORLDS!"

But, she added, "We have come through together! (And lost many on the way—which was the patriarchal tradition.)"[19] Among those lost on the way was Francesca Woodman, the teenage author of some evocative self-portraits from 1975 and '76—photographs of herself vanishing behind the crumbling fabric of a house—that uncannily evince Charlotte Perkins Gilman's now canonical story "The Yellow Wallpaper." In that tale, a woman diagnosed as a hysteric is confined by her physician husband to a country home for a rest cure. She becomes so obsessed by the ugliness of the wallpaper there that she ultimately seems to merge with it, learning "madness as masochistic self-assertion," as Barbara Johnson put it in a paper she once delivered in Normal, Illinois. For the confined woman, Johnson adds, "The cost of . . . attaining a valued status in the world is to become an object in someone else's reality and, hence, to have, in fact, *no* status in the world." The symptom that her husband tried to obliterate, that of her hysteria, was "the mark of femininity itself as both more and less than what is required of women by patriarchal structures. Femininity, in other words," Johnson punned, "is by nature a 'normal ill.'"[20] In her lifetime, Woodman did attain a degree of status, crafting work that cast her body as a shape-shifter, subject to occlusion and display, isolated as alien artifact in strange, ruined realms. But she decisively signaled that she could see no livable place for herself in the world by stepping out a window at the age of twenty-two.

Work that challenged critical digestion in the 1960s and '70s—the aggressively embodied work of Ono, Kubota, Woodman, Schneemann, Hannah Wilke, Adrian Piper, Marina Abramovic, Valie Export, and others—has found a readier public in the 1990s and since, especially among some younger women artists to whom the potential for a corporeally based practice plainly outweighs the disincentives. A roundtable convened for the 1995 *October* issue mentioned above addressed this so-called return to the body in contemporary women's art, with Hal Foster, for one, discerning a "celebration of the body, but of *the body as symptom;* and a return of the real—but *the real as the traumatic.* . . . I see this celebration of Symptom and Trauma across the board," Foster added, "from high theory to 'Oprah' . . . our motto today is 'Enjoy your symptom!'"[21] Foster to the contrary, outside the general culture, the prevailing bias now is against white Western women, especially, occupying conspicuously the place of the traumatized or the victim. The case of Eva Hesse, another key protofeminist figure, makes a useful bellwether in this respect, I think: Alex Potts recently castigated critics' "*projections* of Hesse as a victim"

(emphasis added), as if the sculptor's truncated, Holocaust- and disease-scarred life were somehow contrived by sensationalizers rather than a matter of historical record.[22] If, as he and others imply, Hesse's traumatic life story cannot be critically investigated for the importance to her work that she knew it to have—if we cannot even recognize *her* as a victim—then perhaps no white woman can be so recognized for the time being.

Playfulness and humor were also vital to Hesse's work, it must be said (just as pleasure was to Schneemann's). That not only Hesse but *all* women are importantly many other things besides victims; that women can themselves be victimizers and men victims; that women have necessarily been complicit in maintaining patriarchy's victimizing structures: none of these things may go unsaid, of course. But neither can women be held predominately to account for the predicaments of their own victimhood, as if they, as a class, enjoyed an equal degree of agency—power, rights, and privilege—to that enjoyed by men as a class. Whereas a 1990 dictionary of feminist terms defined victimization too simply in terms of "the denigration of women by men as part of [a larger system of] segregation and subordination," a 1999 feminist and "postfeminist" dictionary has an entry only for "victim feminism," a term used to deride a form of feminism said to view women simplistically as the "helpless victims of patriarchal violence."[23] In a study widely bruited by the press (despite the author's questionable expertise), Katie Roiphe argued in 1992 that "'feminism engenders a victim culture whereby women expect men to assault them in sexual situations and in which they gain status by proclaiming themselves to be victims.'" "Feminism seems to have become reduced, in the public mind, to complaints about sexual victimization," Barbara Johnson observed. And to Roiphe's apparently tautological contention that "'proclaiming victimhood doesn't help project strength,'" Johnson retorted, "But doesn't it?" And if not, then, "Why are so many white men so eager to claim a share in the victimhood sweepstakes?" "To speak about female victimization," Johnson states plainly, "is to imply that there is such a thing as a model of male power and authority that is other than victimization." Moreover,

> Far from being the opposite of authority, victimhood would seem to be the most effective *model* for authority, particularly literary and cultural authority. . . . If feminism is so hotly resisted, it is perhaps less because it substitutes women's speech for women's silence than because, in doing so, it interferes with the official structures of self-pity that keep patriarchal power in place.[24]

Take the case of Agnes Merlet's 1998 film *Artemesia:* recently Caterina Pierre joined with Mary Garrard, Linda Nochlin, and others in protesting the film's egregious historical inaccuracies, while arguing that a more factual telling of the painter Artemesia Gentileschi's torrid seventeenth century saga would have yielded a more effectively feminist parable.[25] Merlet's film seems to me, however, precisely the feminist fable for our day. At a time when the real cannot but be a construction, Merlet felt free to spare us the specter of a "victim feminist"—the aspiring woman artist as the sorry rape victim of her supposed mentor, the notorious Agostino Tassi—instead treating us to an Artemesia both sexually and artistically ignited by her encounter with a newly benign Agostino, an Artemesia as "power feminist" whose power resides as much in her lubriciousness, her "grrrrrl power," as in her talent. Feminists had placed rape squarely on the docket of their social agenda in the 1970s, compelling new, more open, more complex discussions of this primordial yet enduring crime; but because rape sharply corporealizes and emblematizes the persistence of male dominance in an age of women's movements, it has become again, in a way, as unspeakable as ever.

"As man conquers the world so too he conquers the female. You're no different from Genghis Khan, one of the first guys to make a direct connection between manhood, achievement, conquest, and rape," charges Brenda, a character in Yvonne Rainer's 1990 film *Privilege*. "As women we are trained to be rape victims," Brenda adds. "At an early age we hear the whispers: *girls get raped*. Not boys."[26] Rainer's *Privilege* lingers coldly over rape statistics, interpolated (for instance, through intertitles) amidst the film's evident fictions. By contrast, the seamlessly factitious *Artemesia* is indeed insidious in its blithe obliviousness to the real of history. The central trope of Merlet's film, moreover—the trope of the woman infatuated with her rapist or exploiter—remains insidious too, a blatant instance of what Johnson calls "culture's investment in not being able to tell the difference between female victimization and female pleasure."[27]

In pondering what lies at stake in such confusions, consider—in a world largely apart from the worlds of film—that a UN undersecretary general estimates that, whereas "four centuries of slavery moved about 11.5 million people out of Africa, in the last decade [alone] more than 30 million women and children may have been trafficked within and from Southeast Asia [alone] for sexual purposes and sweatshop labor."[28] Since a 1993 UN World Conference officially recognized violence against women and girls as outright violations of their human rights (as opposed to in-

evitable, cultural custom), new attention has been paid to the fact that in many cultures women and girls lack the power to refuse unwanted and unsafe sex.[29] Less attention is now being paid to such matters here at home, however, where awful events remain ordinary, endemic, and, as such, often at a loss to horrify us. The United States has "the highest rate of reported rapes among Western industrialized nations."[30] Not a feminist extremist, but the surgeon general, reported in 2001 that 22 percent of all US women have been raped—one woman every ninety seconds, says the Justice Department, which also calculates that 52 percent of all women have been "assaulted at some point in their lives," whether as children or as adults.[31] Studies show that the great majority of sexual assaults, including "over 85 percent of completed rapes, are not reported to the police," states Deborah Rhode; significantly, "Women of color are most likely to be victimized, and least likely to make a formal complaint."[32] Laura S. Brown astutely observes that the received clinical definition of trauma as an event "'outside the range of human experience'" disallows the traumas to which women and girls are routinely subject on the grounds of that very routineness—a fact with serious legal repercussions. And even women who escape physical assault (escape often being the operative word) still face chronic exposure to such risks—a reality driven home by the quotidian acts of harassment all women endure, the more so the younger they are—and that exposure is in itself cumulatively insidious or traumatogenic: a normal ill.[33]

No matter how appalling, rape statistics remain social statistics, of course, and art and art history are not exactly social work, it might be said. Yet feminists (among others) have been arguing for several decades that art and art historical practices are indeed, in their ways, more or less pointed forms of social work; that visual culture and its attendant discourses are also social in their genesis and in their effects. Such inaugural acts of feminist art history as Linda Nochlin's "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" essay and Lucy Lippard's Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists exhibition, both of 1971, counted as pointed gestures of social as well as art critical activism (as would my own maiden feminist exercises two decades later: so I would claim).[34] But as feminism has increasingly become lodged, refined, and professionalized within the academy, dilating (with reason) over issues of discursivity, many feminists have become the more distanced from the exigencies of the street, where dreadful things still happen to women all the time, purely because they are women. What was once "feminism"—with all that term connotes of op-

positionality, advocacy, and activism—has widely been transmuted into "women's (or gender) studies," with all that construes of neutral intellectual endeavor (and, incidentally, of the academy's newfound accommodation of a feminine scholarly presence).[35]

No strangers to the street, women artists in the 1960s and '70s made some forceful, troubling works about rape. In Yoko Ono's *Rape* of 1969, a two-man camera crew accosted and tracked a strange young woman for over an hour, even following her into her home, registering pitilessly as she moved from a state of good-natured tolerance, to annoyance, to anger and distress.[36] In her 1972 *Rape Piece,* Ana Mendieta (who would notoriously die in 1985 in violent and ambiguous circumstances) responded to the rape-murder of a fellow University of Iowa student by performing the part of a bloodied victim lying nude in the woods for an invited but unprepared audience to discover.[37] Then as now, emblazoned in women's consciousness generally are cautionary, secret lists of victims: acquaintances, friends, family members, selves. The secretiveness makes for a belated shield from harm, of course, while it also insidiously compounds harm, through repression and tacit complicity. So I will divulge here in outline something of my own list—episodes from the making of a woman art historian that cannot be told, that I have not told: besides my own rape, and the gang rapes of a college roommate and, later, of a colleague, my list even more direly includes an art history classmate and a former art history student killed during rapes, and a graduate student who barely escaped with her life from a rape. Of course, the incentives not to name, not to assign or to enact the part of the rape victim, remain powerful: "women who experience violence are labeled, and their response to the violence is categorized as an illness that requires treatment. The violence itself becomes invisible," Susan Stefan points out. Moreover, "Psychiatric categories inherently describe abnormal or pathological symptoms or reactions. This delegitimizes the spectrum of personal reactions in these cases and makes the victim the sick one rather than the attacker."[38] African-American scholar Andrea Benton Rushing has told how her atypical openness about her rape so unnerved even those close to her that she had to keep reminding people, "But . . . I am the victim, not the criminal."[39]

Felly Nkweto Simmonds writes of the "privilege" enjoyed by the white male academic who can, and usually does, "opt for silence about 'private information,'" whereas the release of just such information, the act of bearing witness, has long been and remains crucial to the struggles of persons of color, such as herself, and of women generally.[40] Upholding the

wisdom of the 1970s feminist axiom that the personal is political, Elizabeth Grosz rightly contends that "feminism's major contribution to the production and structure of knowledges" stems from "its necessary reliance on lived experience," granting of course that experience is subject to construction, that it cannot be taken as "unproblematic given."[41] In the United States, the events of 9/11 (as they have come to be discursively sanitized) drove home all at once for an unusually broad public the realization that traumatic experience, especially, "demands—even as it defies and defers—remembrance."[42] The act of remembering can count among the more radical acts historians and artists can perform, for that matter, especially when the material salvaged is material a society aims to keep buried.

If a trauma is an event too painful to integrate or process all at once, then the essence of trauma is, in a sense, in its psychic effect and in its belatedness (as Freud observed). If a defensive numbness sets in early on, over a lifetime, trauma inhabits, haunts, and shapes its victims, and is in turn shaped by them, made over into (whether private or public) symptoms, metaphors, representations. Where trauma debilitates, it can also motivate, then. And what troubles me, in a time of some post-ness for feminism, is art writing that seems bent on banishing the troublesome specter of woman as victim by erasing signs of traumatic experience, or even of difference in general, from women's art production.[43] Returning to Johnson's notion of the "normal ill," I'm troubled also by the fact that nearly every woman artist and art historian I know well enough to know such things about them (and relatively few of the men) have endured serious, often persistent ailments: especially autoimmune diseases (nearly 80 percent of whose victims are women);[44] migraines and chronic pain (which disproportionately affect women);[45] debilitating anxiety and depression (about three-quarters of all psychotropic drug prescriptions are written for women);[46] gastrointestinal and eating disorders;[47] breast cancer; diseases or dis-eases of the reproductive systems, ranging from cancers and other growths, to infertility, to the sometimes extreme effects of PMS and menopause; and osteoporosis.[48] "If female illness was once interpreted as metaphor for hidden passion, it is now emerging as an otherwise suppressed sign of hidden overwork and personal implosion," Jody Berland argues.[49] Women typically bear their afflictions quietly, moreover, in part because "diagnoses carry a great many consequences for the people diagnosed," as Susan Stefan points out. Among other reasons, "This is because a diagnosis is by definition 'the process of identifying specific men-

tal or physical disorders.' There is no such thing as a diagnosis that the *situation* in which an individual finds herself is irrational, pathological, or disordered."[50]

That the body may be understood effectively as a site for the inscription of social and political power is now widely recognized. Besides being biochemical, illnesses are social and cultural, varying in kind and incidence from place to place and from one period and population to the next, in keeping with the "'prevailing conditions of life.'" With a nod to Michel Foucault, David B. Morris argues for supplanting "the modernist myth of private suffering" with a view to the sociopolitical dimensions of illness, such as AIDS activists have deftly shown.[51] Yet politicizing and so publicizing illness can entail punitive consequences, as those activists well know; and with their historically more tenuous hold in the workplace, compounded by stereotypes of women as illness-prone, women must often guard information that might be used to impugn their fitness for employment or advancement. Too, women are deeply acculturated to suffer in private anything coded, and so stigmatized, as a feminine disorder. Not all women repress their experience of illness, however, and just as rape can provide fodder for art, so can disease. Beyond admitting that "I'm sick every time I shoot a film," Yvonne Rainer incorporated certain effects of her gastrointestinal disease in some dances from the mid-1960s, and brazenly exhibited her mastectomy scar while performing in her quasi-autobiographical 1996 film, *MURDER and murder*.[52] Hannah Wilke unflinchingly addressed her mother's terminal struggle with breast cancer in photographic works of the late 1970s and early '80s and, in her mid-1990s *Intra-Venus* series, publicized in vampish, feisty, yet searing terms her own final battle with cancer. As a last, more ambiguous example, in 1971 Adrian Piper, in an extension of a strict dietary regimen she adopted after being hospitalized in 1968 for gastrointestinal illness, ingested only juice and water for two months while studying Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, in executing a private performance titled *Food for the Spirit* that entailed a series of photographic self-portraits documenting her dwindling nude body.[53]

Adrian Piper has written candidly of opting to forgo adding the responsibilities of motherhood to the overwhelming load of her dual careers as artist and academic philosopher. But the childlessness of many among the pioneering generations of female artists and academics both was and was not chosen. While some exercised in quiet relief their newfound rights to be child-free, for others there was simply the glaring incompatibility

between received models for maternity (all too identical with received models for parenting generally) and received models for establishing careers, in a world still deeply resistant to the ambitions of the "career woman." "Childcare is the most important issue for the future of our generation," declared Ono in 1971.[54] Amongst professionally ambitious women, maternity was often refused, or limited, or postponed. And infertility often followed from those postponed attempts at pregnancy, which became a hallmark of a world where the prime career-building years are identical to the prime childbearing years.[55] In a crueler twist, childlessness as well as delayed childbearing and fertility drugs have been identified as risk factors for breast and ovarian cancer respectively. More and more small Chinese girls, especially, find shelter in my infertile colleagues' and others' homes, refugees from a region where girls' lives are so devalued as to lead toward their obliteration.[56] The United States spares baby girls, of course, but its policies undermine the well-being of children generally, notably by compromising that of their mothers. In the United States, motherhood has been termed "the single biggest risk factor for poverty," as the nation stands "alone among 'industrialized' countries without some guarantee that the tasks of child-rearing will not be economically devastating."[57] Taking time off to raise children, then returning to work at a 25 percent discount vis-à-vis male employees, leads to women's destitution during their relatively longer old-ages, moreover, with the average annual income for women over sixty-five in the United States at $15,000, half that for men.[58] Those women who are fully employed, married, and childless are heavily penalized for it, meanwhile, by a tax code designed to favor the married but under- or unemployed and childed woman. The hard-won option to remain childless has become so tenuous, moreover, that "83% of US counties lack abortion providers," who perform their jobs under terrorist threat, at peril of their lives.[59] The point that I have been at pains to develop, in brief, is that far from occupying a reasonably level, communally human playing field—as some deluded postfeminists imagine—women still face huge and systemic problems, especially problems hinged to their corporeality, problems from which "bachelors" are ordinarily exempt.

"Why is it that women are more likely to somatize their conflicts than men?" Grosz inquires, while noting that "the two neuroses traversing the mind/body split, hysteria and hypochondria, which both involve a somatization of psychical conflicts, are sexually coded, are 'feminine' neuroses in which it is precisely the status of the female body that is causing psy-

chical conflict."[60] Psychiatrist Teresa Bernardez draws the following analogy: "if you put a normal healthy foot in a shoe that is one size too small, after a while your foot will eventually have actual, genuine, medical problems. This society is for many women one size too small for our energies and aspirations; violence constricts us on all sides. The answer is both to treat the foot and change the shoe. . . . [I]f you treat the foot without changing the shoe, no treatment will help the foot after awhile."[61] Given that biological categories are also social, it bodes well for the foot and the shoe that a National Academy of Sciences panel has at last affirmed that "Sex—that is, being male or female— . . . should be considered when designing and analyzing the results of studies in all areas and at all levels of biomedical and health-related research"; that "Sex does matter," as Mary-Lou Pardue, chair of the panel, put it: "It matters in ways that we did not expect. Undoubtedly, it also matters in ways that we have not begun to imagine."[62]

Parallel to the medical and scientific community, many younger and older female artists have lately been reimagining the terrain of the body. (The list is too long for me even to begin to name names.) The body, as women artists can now envision it, has become as much a new frontier as an old one, an entity that is "neither—while also being both—the private or the public, self or other, natural or cultural, psychical or social."[63] Women's art practices of the 1960s and '70s—including works such as *Cut Piece* and *Interior Scroll*—anticipated such complex views of the body to a greater extent than has generally been acknowledged, however, unless indirectly by younger artists who freely mine their elders' long-marginalized work. Numerous male artists have participated as well in such explorations of the body and of 1970s feminist art practices, it is true. As to the wisdom of segregating women artists, or separating women in general as a category for analysis, then—the very basis for feminism generally—I would contend that the critical consensus has all along been just what it is today, namely: we are damned if we do, and damned if we don't. Many or most women cherish their right to work outside the demands of feminist ideologies, sometimes viewing that freedom as precisely the deserved fruit of their predecessors' activism. Without disputing that there are ways in which feminism may, paradoxically, tie women's hands—that we are indeed damned if we *do* speak up as and for women—I have tried to stress here the more compelling truth of the latter formulation, that we are damned if we don't, while emphasizing that these discursive struggles continue to have momentous social and physical corollaries and consequences.

Given that my art history paper has by now revealed its mongrel stripes as, no less, a social history paper, drawing liberally from other disciplines as well as from the *New York Times*, let me conclude by extrapolating freely from one last medical finding. A recent study of hypertension, a sometimes lethal condition pandemic in the US black population, "found that black women who responded actively to unfair treatment were less likely to report high blood pressure than women who internalized their responses." Now, here is the eye-opening news: "the black women at highest risk [of all for hypertension] were those who reported *no* experiences of racial discrimination."[64] For women of color and not, for women artists, for women art historians: to make ourselves see affronts, and to find ways to address them, is to be not only socially minded but also, and vitally, self-interested.

NOTES

1. "Women Artists at the Millennium," a conference organized by Carol Armstrong at Princeton University in November 2002, provided the initial forum for this essay, which was conceived in part with a view to the identity of the other speakers—white women art historians and artists all, numerous of whom have published in *October* magazine, and numerous of whom I knew to have endured serious medical disorders, as have I (facts whose relevance emerges in what follows). Though I expanded the conference focus to encompass women art historians, my (now revised) essay addresses questions Armstrong posed as to the present advisability of constituting women artists as a category, and as to what has and what has not changed in the three decades since Linda Nochlin's "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?" (1971, rpt. in *Women, Art, Power, and Other Essays* [New York: Harper and Row, 1988]) helped inaugurate feminist art history. The *October* imprint of MIT Press agreed to publish the (revised) proceedings of the Princeton conference on the condition that my essay—and my essay alone—be excluded. I thank Lisa Saltzman and JoAnna Isaak for their astute critical readings of earlier drafts of this paper.
2. Carolee Schneemann, *More Than Meat Joy: Complete Performance Works and Selected Writings*, ed. Bruce McPherson (New Paltz, N.Y.: Documentext, 1979), 238–39. (Ellipses not in brackets are as in the original.)
3. *Interior Scroll* is "a double invention and transmutation: it's not to a man but to a woman. The projected quotes are from her [Michelson's] students," explained Schneemann in a 1988 interview with Scott MacDonald, cited in Dan Cameron et al., *Carolee Schneemann: Up To and Including Her Limits* (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1997), 28. Photographs of *Interior Scroll* can be found in ibid., 27–28.

4. Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 14.
5. Schneemann, *More Than Meat Joy,* 235, 194. Only in recent years has attention been paid to the theoretical underpinnings of Schneemann's art practice, which has too often been caricatured as an anti-intellectual, visceral, and "essentialist" feminist excrescence; see Carolee Schneemann, *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 155, 22.
6. Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower: My Struggle as a Woman Artist,* rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982), 135–37. A reproduction of *Red Flag* can be found in *Sexual Politics: Judy Chicago's Dinner Party in Feminist Art History,* ed. Amelia Jones (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 40.
7. A kind of anti-Pollock, Shigeko Kubota had to crouch and waddle to execute her *Vagina Painting* with red paint deployed on a horizontal support by a brush attached to the crotch of her underwear at the Perpetual Fluxfest in New York in 1965. For a photograph, see Simon Anderson et al., *In the Spirit of Fluxus* (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 1993), 82. As another witty example, Schneemann executed *Bloodwork,* with real menstrual blood erratically dotting a neat (minimalist) grid of toilet tissue squares, in 1972.
8. Ann Scales (with Wendy Chavkin), "Abortion, Law, and Public Health," in *Man-Made Medicine: Women's Health, Public Policy, and Reform,* ed. Kary L. Moss (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996), 236.
9. Rosalind E. Krauss, *Bachelors* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999). Krauss is a founding editor of *October* magazine.
10. Apter, "Essentialism's Period," *October* 71 (winter 1995): 8–9. "In retrospect, what Kristeva called 'women's time' and what might otherwise be referred to as 'essentialism's period,' appears to have been a rather good time for women," ibid., 9. Silvia Kolbowski and Mignon Nixon edited the "feminist issueS" [*sic*] of *October;* for the questions they posed to Apter and others, see *October* 71 (winter 1995): 5.
11. Cited in Valerie Steiker, "Goddesses, Heroines, and Wives," *Art News* 100, no. 8 (September 2001): 144.
12. Yoko Ono, "The Feminization of Society," 1972, rpt. in Alexandra Munroe (with John Hendricks), *Yes Yoko Ono* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2000), 299.
13. Marlise Simons, "Three Serbs Convicted in Wartime Rapes," *New York Times,* 23 February 2001. The "first-ever charge of rape as a crime against humanity" was made against Jean Paul Akayesu, a government official in Rwanda during the genocide, when torture, gang rapes, and rape-murders of Tutsi women were systematically practiced, not only by the Hutu military, but also by AIDS patients who were formed into battalions of rapists as an act of biological warfare. In 1998 Akayesu was convicted of genocide and crimes against humanity, including rape. See Peter Landesman, "A Woman's Work,"

New York Times Magazine, 15 September 2002, 116. What separates the Balkan case is that rape did not form an adjunct to other charges there.

14. Schneemann, *More Than Meat Joy,* 198–99, 196. (The "Cunt Mascot" phrase appeared in an unsent letter of June 1974 to Allan Kaprow.) Regarding Schneemann's breakdown, see ibid., 182, 191, 197.

15. Rainer described critic Jill Johnston's and her own simultaneous breakdowns in Rainer, *Work, 1961–73* (Halifax: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1974), 317. "I started reading *Sisterhood Is Powerful* in 1971 as a seven-year relationship blew up in my face, necessitating a long haul . . . out of the ashes of an almost-successful suicide attempt"; and, "after 1971 my work began to reflect with ever more confidence the details of daily life and implications of 'being a woman' in western culture," Yvonne Rainer, "Skirting," 1998, rpt. in *A Woman Who . . . : Essays, Interviews, Scripts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 122–23. To make my essay acceptable to *October*/MIT Press editors (see note 1), Armstrong instructed me to omit mention of Rainer's breakdowns (as well as references to *October* insiders Michelson and Hal Foster). That such information should be deemed inappropriate for discussion—the insistence, in effect, that Rainer be protected from her own longtime candor on such matters—evinces a bias that is central to the concerns of this essay.

16. Having left her New York base, and feeling the more isolated as a woman artist in Japan, in 1962 Ono repeatedly "got up unconsciously" at night and "attempted to jump down from the window" of her eleventh-floor apartment. Then she took an overdose of medication: "When I recovered consciousness, I found myself in a mental hospital," in Yoko Ono, "My Love, My Conflict," 1974, rpt. in *Just Me!* ed. Iimura Takahiko (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1990), 31–32, 84. This collection of Ono's writings has not been translated into English; for this information, and the translation, I gratefully acknowledge Midori Yamamura. Ono did not initially regard *Cut Piece* as a feminist exercise—and she indicated that the work could be performed by a man or a woman—but she has come to acknowledge its feminist valences. "Ono has described the still body as representing how she felt she had to behave in order to gain approval. If she became active, she encountered hostility, disapproval, and rejection," Chrissie Iles, "Erotic Conceptualism: The Films of Yoko Ono," in Munroe (with Hendricks), *Yes Yoko Ono,* 205. For photographs of *Cut Piece,* see ibid., 28, 159–61.

17. Brenda Jordan, "DIAS [Destruction in Art Symposium]," *Resurgence,* November/December 1966, 19 (I owe this reference too to Yamamura). The audiences in Kyoto and Tokyo where Ono first performed *Cut Piece,* in 1964, were more "discreet about cutting away her clothing" than those at the Carnegie Recital Hall in New York in 1965, or in London, though a man in Kyoto menaced Ono at length with the scissors, Kristine Stiles, "*Cut Piece,*" catalogue entry in Munroe (with Hendricks), *Yes Yoko Ono,* 158.

18. Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon: Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories* (London: Routledge, 1999), 109. (In context, Pollock seems to attribute this insight indirectly to psychoanalytic theorist Michèle Montrelay.)
19. Schneemann, *More Than Meat Joy,* 198. "I have gotten kicked out of the art world twice, the first time in 1970 when it became generally known that I was a woman; the second time in 1974 when . . . it became generally known that I was black," recalls Adrian Piper, "On Wearing Three Hats," 1996, unpublished conference paper; see *www.adrianpiper.com.*
20. Barbara Johnson, *The Feminist Difference: Literature, Psychoanalysis, Race, and Gender* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 27, 28. For reproductions of Woodman's work, see Hervé Chandès et al., *Francesca Woodman* (Paris: Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, 1998).
21. Silvia Kolbowski, Mignon Nixon, Hal Foster, et al., "A Conversation on Recent Feminist Art Practices," *October* 71 (Winter 1995): 65. Foster appropriated this "motto" from Slavoj Zizek's *Enjoy Your Symptom! Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
22. Alex Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), 407, n. 81. In context, Potts is endorsing a specific critique of such putative projections, namely that by Anne Wagner, "Another Hesse," *October* 69, which especially targeted my own analysis of Hesse's work in relation to her traumatic life story, Anna C. Chave, "Eva Hesse: A 'Girl Being a Sculpture,'" in Helen A. Cooper, *Eva Hesse: A Retrospective* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992)—an essay that also forms a target for some contributors to *Eva Hesse,* ed. Elisabeth Sussman (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2002). For my, abridged, response to Wagner, see Letter to the Editor, *October* 71 (winter 1995): 146–48. See also Anna C. Chave, "Striking Poses: The Absurdist Theatrics of Eva Hesse," in *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension,* ed. Geraldine A. Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), which addressed certain imbalances in emphasis in my prior essay.
23. Maggie Humm, *The Dictionary of Feminist Theory* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1990), 230; *The Routledge Critical Dictionary of Feminism and Postfeminism,* ed. Sarah Gamble (New York: Routledge, 2000), 331.
24. Johnson, *The Feminist Difference,* 151–53. Johnson cites from Katie Roiphe, *The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism on Campus* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993). "By even the most conservative estimates, the United States has the highest rate of reported rape in the Western industrial world. According to government and crime center research, between two-thirds and four-fifths of these rapes involve acquaintances. But the problem of 'date rape' is commonly dismissed as the 'mass psychosis' of feminist fanatics," observes Deborah L. Rhode, *Speaking of Sex: The Denial of Gender Inequality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 119.
25. Caterina Pierre, "(Mis)Representations of Historical Women in Film," delivered at "The Revolving Door: Interdisciplinary Practice in the Visual and Per-

forming Arts" symposium, The Graduate School and University Center, CUNY, spring 2001.

26. Yvonne Rainer, "Privilege," rpt. in *A Woman Who . . .*, 319.

27. Johnson, *The Feminist Difference,* 151.

28. Barbara Crossette, "UN Warns That Trafficking in Human Beings Is Growing," *New York Times,* 25 June 2000. (The UN official is Italian sociologist Pino Arlacchi.) Rates for such trafficking are also high in the countries of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. "Worldwide, 2 million girls ages 5 to 15 are brought into the commercial sex market every year," UN advertisement, *New York Times,* 8 May 2002. Nor is the United States exempt: federal investigators estimate that "45,000 to 50,000 women and children are brought to this country . . . each year by employers who . . . exploit them sexually or force them into servitude," Blaine Harden, "Case of Princess Accused of Pushing Maid Down Stairs," *New York Times,* 2 July 2002.

29. Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2000), 341. See also, e.g., "Rights Gains Are Preserved at UN Forum on Women," *New York Times,* 11 June 2000; "Working for Women's Sexual Rights," *New York Times,* 2 October 2000; "In India and Africa, Women's Low Status Worsens Their Risk of AIDS," *New York Times,* 26 February 2001, all by Barbara Crossette.

30. Rhode, *Speaking of Sex,* 10. Perhaps owing in part to increased reporting by victims emboldened by a reborn women's movement, FBI rape statistics (including completed and uncompleted attempts to rape, but not statutory rape offenses) swelled 62% between 1968 and '73, noted the pioneering study by Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape,* 1975 (rpt. New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1993), 175. In the 1980s reported rapes more than doubled, per Judith Rosser, "There's No Place Like Home," in *New Feminist Criticism: Art, Identity, Action,* ed. Joanna Frueh, Cassandra L. Langer, Arlene Raven (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 68. Also, "sex-related murders rose 160 percent, with at least one third of these murders committed by husbands or boyfriends," ibid. (though a stranger committed, for example, the rape-murder of thirty-one-year-old Korean-American artist and writer Theresa Hak Kyung Cha in New York City in 1982). "In June 1992, the American Medical Association published a report calling domestic violence 'a public health problem that has reached epidemic proportions,'" ibid.

31. Diana Jean Schemo, "Surgeon General's Report Calls for Sex Education beyond Abstinence Courses," *New York Times,* 29 June 2001; Bob Herbert, "Violence That Won't Let Go," *New York Times,* 27 August 2001.

32. Rhode, *Speaking of Sex,* 120. Further, "85 percent of reported rapes end up with no convictions, and almost 90 percent result in no incarceration. About half of convicted rapists receive probation or jail sentences of less than a year," ibid., 122. Women generally know what statistics confirm, of course: that men can rape almost with impunity. In the case of Theresa Cha (see note 30), "It took three trials and five years to convict" the rapist, according to

Amei Wallach, "Theresa Cha: In Death, Lost and Found," *New York Times,* 20 April 2003.

33. Laura S. Brown, "Not Outside the Range: One Feminist Perspective on Psychic Trauma," in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory,* ed. Cathy Caruth (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 107 and passim. Brown credits the concept of "insidious trauma" to Maria Root.

34. Nochlin, "No Great Women Artists?"; Lucy Lippard, *Twenty-six Contemporary Women Artists* (Ridgefield, Conn.: Aldrich Museum, 1971); Anna C. Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power," *Arts* (January 1990): 44–63; id., "O'Keeffe and the Masculine Gaze," *Art in America* (January 1990): 114–25.

35. "Feminism has flourished in the poststructuralist universe of textuality, positionality, subjectivity, process, play, and difference. For many this reads as a betrayal of the politics that seem so much more palpable in the discourse and practice of oppositional feminism. Rather politics is critically reframed in another form of the move to challenge the character of existing discursive and institutional definitions of art and, as importantly, of artist by situating politics at the level of representation, cultural institution, signs, and their subjects," argues Griselda Pollock, "Inscriptions in the Feminine," in *Inside the Visible: An Elliptical Traverse of 20th Century Art in, of, and from the Feminine,* ed. M. Catherine deZegher (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), 71.

36. Conceived by Ono, directed in collaboration with John Lennon, *Rape* was a 16 mm film, commissioned for Austrian television—the hapless subject (whose sister colluded with the camera crew) was Viennese—and made in London. "Depending on the budget," Ono wrote, "the chase"—her alternate name for the film—"should be made with girls of different age, etc. May chase boys and men as well," cited in Munroe (with Hendricks), *Yes Yoko Ono,* 216.

37. For a reproduction, see Jane Blocker, *Where Is Ana Mendieta? Identity, Performativity, and Exile* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), 16. Regarding Mendieta's death, see Robert Katz, *Naked by the Window: The Fatal Marriage of Carl Andre and Ana Mendieta* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1990).

38. Susan Stefan, "Reforming the Provision of Mental Health Treatment," in *Man-Made Medicine,* ed. Moss, 201.

39. Andrea Benton Rushing, "Surviving Rape: A Morning/Mourning Ritual," in *Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader,* ed. Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick (New York: Routledge, 1999), 374. "Our tendency to fault women is apparent in virtually every systematic study of rape," notes Rhode, *Speaking of Sex,* 11.

40. Felly Nkweto Simmonds, "My Body, Myself: How Does a Black Woman Do Sociology," in *Feminist Theory,* ed. Price and Shildrick, 53. Simmonds adds, "As [Sue] Scott and [David] Morgan have observed, theory 'may admit the body,' but demand that 'the theorist remains disembodied,'" ibid. "The proclamation of a position outside, beyond, sexual difference is a luxury that

only male arrogance allows. It is only men who can afford the belief that their perspective is an outside, disinterested, or objective position," Grosz, *Volatile Bodies,* 191. Regarding the dilemmas feminists face over the use of biographical material in the analysis of women's art, see also Anna C. Chave, "Minimalism and Biography," *Art Bulletin* 82, no. 1 (March 2000), 149–63, which addresses Hesse's and Rainer's cases among others.

41. Grosz, *Volatile Bodies,* 94.

42. I take this formulation of a core precept of trauma studies (together with bibliographic assistance) from Lisa Saltzman, in conversation, fall 2001. Relevant studies include *Trauma,* ed. Caruth; Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); and Ruth Leys, *Trauma: A Genealogy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

43. What troubles me further is art writing that deploys feminist vocabularies while diminishing feminist aims; art writing that would downplay or refute signs of misogyny in men's art production; and writing that seems more intent on alleviating the anxieties of a male readership than on the female reader.

44. Natalie Angier, "Researchers Piecing Together Autoimmune Disease Puzzle," *New York Times,* 19 June 2001. "In all but a few autoimmune disorders, the sex ratio is wildly skewed toward women," ibid.

45. "A wide range of studies has shown that women, on average, tend to feel pain (in particular, acute pain, the sort caused by direct injury) more intensely than men do, while they are also more vulnerable to a variety of painful conditions that include migraines, arthritis, the muscle disorder known as fibromyalgia, temporo-mandibular disorders (a type of jaw problem), pelvic pain and abdominal pain of various kinds." Excepting back pain, which afflicts men and women equally, "'Women are at higher risk than men for experiencing almost every type of pain that's been studied' . . . [and] 'They're more likely to have multiple pain conditions. They're more likely to be disabled by the pain than men are,'" according to epidemiologist Linda LeResche. Yet "'women's pain reports are taken less seriously than men's, and women receive less aggressive treatment than men for their pain'": so it was argued recently in "The Girl Who Cried Pain: A Bias against Women in the Treatment of Pain," in the *Journal of Law, Medicine, and and Ethics.* In a 1996 study of AIDS-related pain in patients at Memorial Sloan-Kettering in New York, "'Gender turned out to be the most powerful predictor of undertreatment,'" according to William S. Breitbart, chief of psychiatry there. "Confronted with the same symptoms in a man and a woman, doctors lean toward attributing a man's problems to physical illness or pain, a woman's to psychological issues," Nancy Wartik, "Hurting More, Helped Less?" *New York Times,* 23 June 2002 (Women's Health section).

46. "While the literature is somewhat problematic, because the definition of 'psychotropic' drugs varies from study to study, the figures are still staggering. For example, one study showed that 73 percent of psychotropic drug

prescriptions written by doctors are written for women. . . . Another noted that, although women made up 58 percent of all outpatient doctor visits, they received 78 percent of all psychotropic drug prescriptions. Women also get the majority of electric shock treatments," Stefan, "Reforming the Provision," 203. "Understanding women's mental illness almost always leads back to variations on the theme of violence in our society," argues Stefan further; "A recent survey of female psychiatric inpatients in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* revealed that 72 percent reported a history of physical or sexual abuse," ibid., 199–200, and passim. "Men are overwhelmingly responsible for violent crime. They commit 90 percent of the murders, 80 percent of the muggings, nearly 100 percent of the rapes," observes Natalie Angier, *Woman: An Intimate Geography* (New York: Random House, 2000), 263.

47. Mostly afflicting young, white, middle- and upper-class women in Western industrial societies (though their incidence has spread), the sometimes lethal disorders anorexia, bulimia, or both afflict an estimated 1% to 4% of high school and college women in the United States, percentages that have quadrupled since the 1970s; recent analyses of the disorders have focused especially on social causes; see David B. Morris, *Illness and Culture in the Postmodern Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 153. For an interestingly complex—historicized, psychoanalytic, and feminist—account, see Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Subject to Biography: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Writing Women's Lives* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 195–224.

48. In short, though women tend to outlive men, at those times of life when people generally expect to enjoy sound health, "women are impelled to seek help for a greatly disproportionate share of physical . . . and emotional illnesses," as I outlined in Chave, "Letter to the Editor," 147. Another instance: contrary to the initial profile of AIDS as predominately a gay men's disease, given women's greater sexual vulnerability in tandem with the fact that HIV is "transmitted more 'efficiently' from men to women than from women to men," the United Nations "reports that women now make up about half of HIV-positive adults worldwide, mainly because of the large numbers of HIV-positive women in sub-Saharan Africa," Lawrence K. Altman, "Women with HIV Reach Half of Global Cases," *New York Times,* 27 November 2002. Crucial to politicizing the gender biases in medicine have been the burgeoning of the women's medical community (between 1960 and 1990 the number of women doctors increased more than tenfold, where formerly women had been all but banned from medical schools); that revolution-in-a-book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (1973, with many rev. eds. and translations) and its offspring; and the Society for Women's Health Research in Washington, D.C., founded in 1990 by Florence P. Haseltine, MD, PhD (editor in chief of the *Journal of Women's Health & Gender-Based Medicine*)—a figure who has been calculatedly transparent about her own trying history of mental and physical illness.

49. Jody Berland, "Bodies of Theory, Bodies of Pain: Some Silences," in *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology, 1968–2000,* ed. Hilary Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 80.

50. Stefan, "Reforming the Provision," 211. (Though Stefan's analysis concentrates on mental health disorders, her point has larger ramifications.) "Because women tend to be more likely than men to seek treatment when they are under heavy strain, the weight of the problem of stigmatizing diagnoses rests more heavily upon them," ibid.

51. Historian Thomas McKeown cited in Morris, *Illness and Culture,* 51; ibid., 201.

52. "Interview by Scott MacDonald," 1992, rpt. in Rainer, *A Woman Who . . .*, 253. A 1967 performance of Rainer's *Mat* at the New School in New York was "preceded by 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"; also in 1967, Rainer staged *Convalescent Dance,* a.k.a. *Trio A,* "performed by me in a convalescent condition"; and in choreographing *Stairs,* she had two dancers "'learn' my watery-legged movement as I shakily negotiated running, crawling, getting from a chair to a high stool and back down again" upon release from the hospital, Rainer, *Work, 1961–73,* 79, 307, 81. Breast cancer, together with menopause (and lesbianism) are key topics of Rainer, "MURDER and murder," script rpt. in *A Woman Who . . .*, 352–423. Rainer's history of being ill each time she made a film has telling parallels in some other pioneers: "I have had a guilt complex about pushing my art, so much so that every time I was about to show I would have some sort of attack," noted Louise Bourgeois in 1979; "It was just that I had the feeling the art scene belonged to the men, and that I was in some way invading their domain," rpt. in *Louise Bourgeois: Destruction of the Father/ Reconstruction of the Father: Writings and Interviews, 1923–1997,* ed. Marie-Laure Bernadac and Hans-Ulrich Obrist (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1998), 112. Georgia O'Keeffe's biographers have also described how she became ill regularly on the occasion of her shows.

53. Piper has become politicized about her own grueling history of illness rather recently. In a personal chronology at *www.adrianpiper.com* she details, besides the 1968 episode, her 1981 contracting of a "chronic fatigue syndrome-like illness," repeated incidents of physical collapse, and diagnoses of ankylosing spondylitis and of liver damage, much of which she links with the profound strains of life lived as a black female artist and academic. I thank Rhea Anastas for alerting me to Piper's case. Other cases recently made public by prominent, contemporary artists include Rosemarie Trockel's description of being kept virtually housebound by a case of agoraphobia (which especially afflicts women), in "Rosemarie Trockel Talks to Isabelle Graw," *Artforum* 41, no. 7 (March 2003), 224, and Vanessa Beecroft's bulimia, described in disturbing detail in Judith Thurman, "The Wolf at the Door," *New Yorker,* 17 March 2003, 114–23.

54. Ono, "The Feminization of Society," 299.

55. The problem is exacerbated in the academy by its inflexible "tenure clock." Since "the median age for receiving a PhD is 34, . . . by the time a woman is

up for tenure, she is 40 and confronting higher infertility rates. . . . A forthcoming study by the University of California at Berkeley found that among tenured humanities and social science professors in their 40's, only 38 percent of the women have children, compared with 61 percent of men; in the sciences, it was 50 percent compared with 70 percent of the men," Hal Cohen, "The Baby Bias," *New York Times,* 4 August 2002 (Education Life section). Nor can academic women afford complacency about the beachhead they have lately attained: "although the percentage of female full professors has increased substantially, women still hold only 16 percent of full professorships at doctoral institutions, compared to 40 percent at two-year colleges. The more prestigious the institutions, the higher the proportion of male faculty overall . . . (i.e., nearly one-half of male faculty members at doctoral institutions are full professors—*five times* the representation of women . . .) [T]he proportion of women with tenure lags the rate for men by 20 to 27 percentage points across all types of institutions with the greatest imbalance at universities"—where the next generation gets trained and so the future of fields is shaped; further, "*At all ranks—across disciplines and institutional types—female faculty members earn lower salaries than men do,*" Cathy A. Trower and Richard P. Chait, "Faculty Diversity: Too Little for Too Long," *Harvard Magazine* 104, no. 4 (March–April 2002): 35.

56. Celia W. Dugger, "Modern Asia's Anomaly: The Girls Who Don't Get Born," *New York Times,* 6 May 2001. "Discrimination faced by girls both before and after birth has contributed to the fact that 50 million to 80 million more girls and women might have been alive today in India and China, according to demographers and economists, had they received treatment equal to that of boys and men," ibid.

57. "Love's Labor's Lost," *Elle,* April 2001, 156, interview with Ann Crittenden, author of *The Price of Motherhood: Why Motherhood Is the Most Important—and Least Valued—Job in America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000); Scales (with Chavkin), "Abortion, Law, and Public Health," 232.

58. "Almost a quarter century after the enactment of the Equal Pay Act, women still earn only 75 percent of what men do. Insofar as that statistic results from discrimination against women *because* they bear children, it is already illegal, pursuant to the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978," Scales (with Chavkin), "Abortion, Law, and Public Health," 231; Louis Uchitelle, "Lacking Pensions, Older Divorced Women Remain at Work," *New York Times,* 26 June 2001. "Historical, cross-cultural, and clinical research makes clear that jobs done by women often are undervalued *because* they are done by women. In controlled studies, individuals give lower ratings to the same résumés, scholarly articles, or artistic works when they carry a female rather than a male name. So too, when women are asked how much pay they deserve for performing a certain task, they select lower amounts than men," Rhode, *Speaking of Sex,* 10.

59. Scales (with Chavkin), "Abortion, Law, and Public Health," 221, 226–27. (Statistics as of 1992.) Also, "the right to abortion was already long-lost for

most low-income women. As of 1980, upholding ever more restrictive versions of the Hyde Amendment, the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that the federal government and states could, consistent with the U.S. Constitution, refuse Medicaid funding for abortion," ibid., 229.

60. Grosz, *Volatile Bodies,* 38.
61. Cited in Stefan, "Reforming the Provision," 199.
62. Robert Pear, "Sex Differences Called Key in Medical Studies," *New York Times,* 25 April 2001. "The categories we traditionally treat as simply biological are in fact largely social," Nancy Krieger and Elizabeth Fee have pointed out, while arguing that in contemporary times "the lack of research on white women and on men and women in nonwhite racial/ethnic groups resulted" less from "a perception of white men as the norm," as is generally assumed, than from the fact that "most researchers and physicians were interested only in the health status of whites and, in the case of women, only in their reproductive health," Krieger and Fee, "Man-Made Medicine and Women's Health: The Biopolitics of Sex/Gender and Race/Ethnicity," in *Man-Made Medicine,* ed. Moss, 21.
63. Grosz, *Volatile Bodies,* 23.
64. Krieger and Fee, "Man-Made Medicine," 23.