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***Erotic Transformations:***

***Repositioning Feminism with The Contemporary Female Artist***

Seeking a new body of thought with Joanna Frueh

Bernadette Manton





The National College of Art and Design

Fine Art : Painting

*Erotic Transformations:*

*Repositioning Feminism with The Contemporary Female Artist*

*Seeking a new body of thought with Joanna Frueh*

by

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# WALTON ZETA

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Introduction.

***Rethinking crisis.***

"Move me, surprise me, rend my heart, make me tremble, weep, shudder, outrage me: delight my eyes afterwards if you can", Diderot wrote in 1766. (Raven, Langer, Frueh, 1991, p. 153.) He believed that art criticism was "an empathetic occupation". Empathy is described as the power of understanding, imaginatively entering into another one's feelings, to experience a sense of association. Diderot "demanded passion from art". (Raven, Langer, Frueh, 1991, p. 153.) He sought connection with the artist through the artist's work, to arouse inner, unrecognised, power and feeling. He sought "erotic connection".

The art critic desires to know "truths" about art, about its meaning and function, and so wields *coition* between the "historic context and contemporary culture". The feminist art critic wants to know about difference and so will question art practice with difference in mind. Feminism has always questioned difference in terms of sexual difference and has used this not only to identify but to change the movement of history and culture. The term "Woman" has always provided grounds for changing difference, and feminism, in this way, has provided a space for the female artist to partake in "cultural production".

Today however the statement "I'm not a feminist but...", has become almost a creed to female art and critical practice. (f/m, 1997, p. 1.) Why? It is believed that feminism has caused its own *negation* because the terms of debate that have directed feminist thinking over the last two decades have proved inadequate to account for the reality of difference,





differences between the sexes and differences between women. The direction of feminist epistemology, it is believed, has actually centred on theoretical antagonisms (between sex and gender, nature and culture, theory and experience) that has resulted in creating divisions among social and cultural groups. These divisions are first and foremost based on exclusion. This has encouraged a disassociation from feminism in art and critical practice today. Identity is, rather, formed on a conscientious disassociation or removal from feminism, which many term as "postfeminism" or "postfeminist".

The interests however are still the same. Mary Mulholland expresses it, "everything has changed - and nothing has changed". (Smyth, 1996, p. 6.) The term "postfeminism" is problematic if it signifies a movement that has caused its own death or, on the other hand, if it suggests that problems feminism has addressed have been completely solved. Many theorists, of different cultural and geographical backgrounds, are not happy with either of these conclusions.

Joanna Frueh, a contemporary American performance artist and art critic, believes that "feminism has not proved itself", the term is not redundant, rather feminism is "just taking another turn". The nineties presents a critical assessment of the movement, and she believes the period of disassociation is short term. It has become a cross cultural objective to revive the term and redirect the movement. As Irish feminist writer and researcher Ailbhe Smith believes, the "naming of persistent inequalities between women, of political differences and of hurtful conflicts" should not "signify the collapse of feminism as a radical social movement" but "rather the reverse". (Smith, 1996, p. 7.) In "Feminism, Politics, Community" she also said:

"For as long as we continue to rigorously analyse and debate the issues, confront





divisions, failures and absences, and work to resolve conflict, we are at the very least affirming our commitment to feminism as a life-changing, life-enhancing politics and vision". (Smith, 1996, p. 7.)

This thesis sets out to identify if and where feminism and art practice *can meet again*. If one considers Susan Griffin's suggestion, that it is necessary to create "a theory of liberation" in order to articulate "the feeling of oppression", a turning point for feminist epistemology can be identified. (Frueh and Raven, 1991, p. 8.) For feminism to survive, it has to prove that it can basically embody difference as a collective movement. Frueh believes that the artist and the feminist can work together to redirect a new feminist art and critical practice that can speak difference. This can all happen through the erotic space under the representation of female sexuality. She believes in using that which has been excluded from feminist discourse, the body and the terms of debate that caused its exclusion, conflicts between deconstructionist theory and individual experience, she can recreate a space for female subjectivity that recognises and emerges from difference.

Frueh believes that body has not had a chance to speak for itself or rather feminism has not really respected or understood the body or what the body can do for female subjectivity. She also acknowledges that this has remained basically a white American feminist sensibility. The expression of experience and difference of female sexuality, that has caused a muting of the female body, in feminist art critical practice, remains a white American feminist project. In a sense, her voice has represented mainstream feminism and it has become difficult to accept as empathetic to differences among women.

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*Methodology:*

*Seeking (a) new body of thought.*

Chapter one assesses the terms of debate that have caused the exclusion of the body in feminism. It engages in a process of re-defining a space for the body to speak with feminism through the artist. Frueh's position and perspective as a feminist art critic directs this process. She engages with American feminist art critics in this project and with the piece "*Has The Body Lost Its Mind?*" she questions the ethics of recent past feminist epistemology. It is from here that conditions for the erotic space emerge. It is within the erotic space that the meaning of difference can be re-assessed and re-experienced, as a communicative project.

Frueh believes in bio-logic, where knowledge of our bodies is essential to our understanding of being. Like Irigaray, who has been accused of biological essentialism by Anglo/American feminists of the eighties, she believes that speaking with the body is the key to speaking difference about female sexuality. Frueh adopts a particular methodology: in bringing together antagonistic differences that represent each decade of feminist movement, seventies celebration of the female body and individual experience, and eighties rejection of the female body with deconstructionist theory, she believes that she can initiate a form of bio-logic that can, in turn, create a form of female subjectivity that is autoerotic. This becomes a collaborative process between her *performance art* and *art criticism*; art and criticism practice together on erotic terms.

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In chapter two and three auto-eroticism is orchestrated through a poesis of the body. In a process of speaking through the body, Irigaray, Gallop and Frueh bring body and word together to re-invent new meanings of femininity. Femininity is based on the idea of multiplicity. A poesis is basically a reconstruction of female sexuality that is based on the merging of nature and culture, logos and eros, theory and experience: it is femininity redefined from a female perspective. In chapter two this is brought about through Irigaray's *"This Sex Which Is Not One"*, and Gallop's *"Lip Service"*.

In chapter three Frueh believes the erotic space is the space from which one can fly. Through *"Mouth Piece"* Frueh uses the idea of the multiple body to express her experiences of female sexuality. Through her "Pornoerotic body" she deconstructs barriers that have rendered the body immobile to making a difference for feminist art and critical practice. *"Mouth Piece"* constructs the space for erotic connection between the female artist and her audience. Through the process of risk taking and pleasure seeking she believes she can recreate the body and experience as medium for re-thinking difference and in this re-connecting feminism.

Frueh believes that female subjectivity emerges from the multiplicity of being. Through the re-invention of language with the body, and with the reality of difference, she believes she can re-define femininity. Re-defining femininity in this way, and with the idea that re-inventions do not have to be paradigmatic, she is creating a route for multiple speaking. It is at this point, with difference in mind, that the artist and the feminist can begin to re-think and to transform the meaning of political.





This thesis engages in a critical analysis of this American performance artist and art critic's perspective of the relationship between feminism, body politics and art. It was necessary to discuss with Frueh feminism and her relationship with feminism, body politics, sexuality and difference and three telephone conversations with her accommodated this. We also discussed articles she contributed to and wrote on feminist art criticism, various figures that proved extremely influential for feminist re-movement, and past and contemporary readings on feminism and cultural studies.

The direction of the thesis moves from a theoretical discussion of the feminist movement and art practice to a close analysis of the video piece and the accompanying transcript of Frueh's work, "*Mouth Piece*". (Appendix 1.)



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## Chapter one

### *Defining a space for the contemporary female artist with feminism.*

#### Introduction.

#### *Woman and feminist epistemology, changing concepts.*

As an umbrella term feminist epistemology may be described as a theory of knowledge which centres on women's lived experiences. In Maggie Humm's Dictionary of Feminist Theory, feminism embodies an ideology to "create a world for women beyond simple social equality" and signifies a "knowledge of existing things in a new light". (Humm, 1989, p. 94.) She correlates these two ideologies to suggest that feminism centres its epistemology on de-establishing knowledge that misinterprets a woman's sense of self and knowledge that basically imprisons female sexuality.

It is from early enlightenment feminist writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft who declared in the eighteenth century the right of women to "freely engage in any social contract where their own natural aptitude will dictate their social standing" that feminist epistemologies emerge and progress. (Whelehan, 1995, p. 30.) Part of this progression involves questioning established epistemologies on ideas of the social contract and women's *place* or *role* in it.

In the eighteenth century enlightenment, feminists acknowledged that traditional liberalist philosophies on social being were prejudicial, that is when social basically meant white

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male eurocentric. Traditional liberal feminism introduced the question of sexual difference into male orientated studies and government of social being and Wollstonecraft, according to Imelda Whelehan, was one of the earliest feminist thinkers to challenge *essentialist* notions of femininity - the principle message demanding that biological or physical differences should not be used to augment perceived distinctions between the mental or rational capacities of men or women. ( Whelehan, 1995, pp. 30-33.)

Traditional liberal philosophy theorised that humanity naturally accepted subjugation and empiricism as the social contract where woman and any other being apart from the white middle class male remained the victim. From these positions, laws of social order and "truths" of "natural" differences would be established. *She*, because of her body, her anatomy, her ability to reproduce, was *placed* closer to nature and to the irrational. Liberal feminists explained that "woman" only existed to signify the superiority of man and simultaneously he could not exist without her *to raise himself from*. The terms woman and man signified socially constructed "truths" based on a binary system of opposition. These were the basic tenets that organised traditional Western philosophical discourse on the condition of "being", and difference essentially was considered only in relation to one central figure, the white western male. (Whelehan, 1995, pp 30-40.)

Since its inception feminism has centred theoretical discourse on deconstructing this binary system of opposition where sexual difference signified "woman" as man's other and inferior. Feminism has centred theory on reconstructing female sexuality literally *out* of the "sameness" category, that the French psychoanalyst and theorist Luce Irigaray has

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identified with traditional continental philosophies on being and difference, and that essentially coincides with this binary system. (Irigaray, 1981, pp. 91-106.)

Psychoanalysts like Irigaray have explained how continental philosophy on being has worked on principles which deliberately excluded the nature of woman's sexuality. In "*This Sex Which Is Not One*" Irigaray referred to a phallogentric logic of sexual difference which is described in terms of physical form and viewed from male parameters only. Phallogentric study of being basically centred on sexual difference in terms of anatomical difference, the sex act and the *function* of two parties, male and female, in this act. What Irigaray pointed out was that firstly this analysis existed within a system of thought which was based on *sight*, where the act of *seeing* physical differences between *male* and *female* created differences as sexual differences, and secondly in conjunction with the former, difference was anything that deviated from male and what was considered the norm. *She* therefore existed only within a "sameness category", and within this category she was conceptualised as the "other" and this "otherness" was negatively conceived. (Irigaray, 1981, pp 91-106.)

Irigaray for example described woman's sex organs as having no distinctive form of their own in comparison to the singular penis. Her sexual genitals or her orgasm cannot directly be *seen* in contrast to man's form of genital anatomy. Therefore her sexuality is "form-less" and to phallogentric logic this signified mental incoherence and irrationality.

For Irigaray "Occidental sexuality" placed her as a "more or less complacent facilitator for the working out of man's" desire. (Irigaray, 1981, p.100.) Shared erotic pleasure focused on sex, which centred on the penetrative act, which in turn focused on male

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stimulation and “erotic” satisfaction. According to such logic what is enacted physically is enacted mentally, *he injects into her and she passively accepts him*. Levinas’ theories of eros, and the relationship between lovers, centred on such parameters where shared erotic pleasure “plunges her” into the “abyss” “to raise him” to the “godly heights” to his communion with God, to his righteousness of responsibility. (Chanter, 1995, p. 115.) The concept of “two” in the act of making love basically meant “two working for the satisfaction of one” where she existed basically to precipitate his fantasies of authority.

*Feminism reconsidering woman and natural aptitude, the shift to contemporary debate.*

Since feminism has exposed the absurdity of such phallogentric logic, feminism has had problems redefining woman. Simone de Beauvoir pointed out in “*The Second Sex*” that in order to change her social role, from being the second sex, it was necessary to deconstruct and reconstruct meanings of gender. (Conboy, Medina and Stanbury, 1997, p. 1-15.) If she is not what tradition claims her to be then what is she? What is woman to be? Clarifying this concept of *her*, who she is, where she essentially comes from and who she is speaking for has organised feminist theoretical discourse of the sixties, seventies and eighties and continues to do so into the nineties.

Contemporary feminist theory and that of the recent past not only centres on deconstructing traditional meanings of gender, but the whole idea of using woman as a universal concept to re-represent “truths” of female sexuality is questioned. The concepts of woman, female sexuality and the feminine frame contemporary feminist



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debate when they coincide with the notion of the multiplicity of being. According to Griselda Pollock "there is neither Woman nor women" but instead and more appropriately "specific stories of particular experiences of class, race, gender, sexuality, family, country, displacement, alliance". ( Pollock, 1996, pp xv.)

Returning to Humm's idea of "lived experience", feminist epistemology must signify the diversity of lived experience when defining woman. This in turn means that if woman as a universal concept is to be used to represent feminist epistemology it must immediately be established that one voice of experience cannot speak for all. Experiences of female sexuality for example are intricately bound up with experiences of race, class, adolescence, family, nationality, displacement, alliances etc. and visa versa and no two experiences of such are the same.

In Imelda Whelehan's words, therefore, modern feminist thought speaks of equality as difference, based on the idea that it is not only necessary to define woman's lived experience away from her negative phallogentric relation to man but, in re-defining truths on woman's lived experience, it is essential to work from the diversity of experience of woman. Basically, contemporary feminist epistemology centres knowledge on redirecting knowledge of woman and feminist epistemology around differences not only between men and women but between women and around the idea that though differences between women are generally based on contradictory terms these should not be expressed antagonistically. (Whelehan, 1995, pp. 30-40.)

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Locating feminism with feminism and art from an American perspective.

*"Feminist Art Criticism".*

To define what exactly contemporary woman's lived experience may mean and how it can redirect feminist epistemology, a discussion on feminism and art focuses on the relationship between the representation of female sexuality and the use of the body in art, and feminism's criticisms of such, from the perspective of American performance artist and art critic Joanna Frueh. The title of this section represents an underlying theme of this thesis, to discuss the idea that particular locations represent particular perspectives on how feminism should perform as a critical theoretical practice. While the first part of this chapter focused on the changing concepts of feminist epistemology, bringing one up to date with the most recent changes that effect the feminist movement *universally*, this section focuses on how these changes are enacted and interpreted from a personal perspective and Joanna Frueh's concepts and work are discussed in the context of the most prominent issues that affect feminist art practice today.

Frueh represents, in Pollock's terms, a "specific story" of experience as a woman, feminist, artist and art critic, and one that Frueh believes is ever changing, according to changing ideas on the meaning of location, sexuality, gender, race, class, discipline and choice. In *"Erotic Faculties"* Frueh says that feminism is "about inscribing, de-scribing, and re-scribing the self, choices based on new information". (Frueh, 1996, p. 125.) In discussing with her the meaning of feminist as identity it transpired that Frueh considers herself feminist but not in the traditional sense. (Frueh, telephone conversation, Nov. 16





1996.) She wishes to be identified as feminist in a particular way, which exemplifies change from a past. It is possible therefore to relate Frueh's perspective to Maggie Humm's suggestion, in her *"Dictionary of Feminist Theory"*, that a feminist recognises herself "as a woman who has experienced consciousness-raising, a knowledge of women's oppression and a recognition of women's differences and communalities". (Humm, 1989, p. 95.)

Frueh expressed such ideas in discussions about the relationship between the feminist and the female artist in art practice in *"Feminist Art Criticism"*, which was published in *"American Art Journal, Vol. 50"*, in 1991, in *"Erotic Faculties"*, published in 1996, and in our telephone conversations in November and December of 1996. In *"Feminist Art Criticism"* she discussed the meaning of feminism in relation to contemporary female art practice and feminist art criticism in relation to its demise and resurrection. She suggested that in order to survive as an alternative epistemology on female sexuality and women's experience to phallogocentric knowledge, feminism must change its framework of reference.

This section discusses the areas of debate that Frueh identifies with the demise of feminism. There are numerous points to consider when discussing Frueh's perspective: first she is an American based performance artist, therefore second she is working from a particular location and third the problems she identifies and experiences with feminism are first and foremost American based.

*"Feminist Art Criticism"* basically presented a critical analysis of the movement of feminist discourse since its rebirth in the early sixties. It introduced a collaboration of critical writings on the position of feminism in art from the sixties to the early nineties.



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Joanna Frueh and Arlene Raven, the editors, characterised what they believed to be “the most pressing issues” for feminism in art at the beginning of the nineties decade ; the expression of female sexuality and of the diversity of female experience, the meaning of feminist art criticism and the of diversity of feminist voice, and the options open to the feminist artist in *post modernism* concerning the question of female subjectivity. (Frueh and Raven, 1991, pp. 2-10.)

Topics “*Sex Into Sexuality, A Feminist Agenda For the Nineties*”, by Joyce Fernandez, “*The Essential Representation of Women*”, by Flavio Rando, “*Where’s The Artist? Feminist Practice and Post structural Theories of Authorship*”, by “Linda S Klinger, and “*Feminist Art Criticism, Turning Points and Sticking Places*”, by Cassandra L Langer signified a changing consciousness for feminist epistemology in its relationship to art, particularly female art that focused on the body. Frueh and Raven described the process of this review as one of “self analysis” where “*Feminist Art Criticism*” would initiate a transition not only in feminism’s approach to art criticism but in the meaning and source of feminist epistemology.

What initiated this project was the expressed idea that feminism had come to represent a narrow bourgeois demand for egalitarianism by, for example, writers who though they have similar objectives to create spaces for women as cultural producers simultaneously seem to challenge the validity of feminism as a collective political movement. Frueh and Rando as critical insiders also recognised a feminism “drowning in a drab sea of insularity, academicism and doctrine”. (Frueh and Raven, 1991, pp. 6-10.) Why? Frueh

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identified the source of feminism's problems at the meeting of feminist epistemology and feminist art criticism, where body based art acted as the centre of study.

*"Has The Body Lost Its Mind?"*.

*"Has The Body Lost Its Mind?"* was published as part of a collection of essays in *"Erotic Faculties"* in 1996, but it is based on an earlier discussion *"The Way We Look, The Way We See; Art Criticism for Women in the '90s"* organised by the Women's Building in Los Angeles, in January 1988. A central theme to each discussion focused on the idea that if feminism is responsible for re-positioning the female body in art for purposes of re-defining cultural knowledge of female sexuality and subjectivity, feminists must be careful of their techniques of identification. That is, feminist art critics must be careful of how they identify with the use of the body in female art practice. (Frueh, 1996, pp. 113-121.)

This is where *"Feminist Art Criticism"* and *"Has The Body Lost Its Mind?"* meet. Frueh identifies problems for feminism in its theoretical sphere of the eighties because of the restrictions it imposed on body based art practice. *"Feminist Art Criticism"* and *"Has The Body Lost Its Mind?"* both identify a feminist critical theoretical practice based on antagonisms between experience and theory, essentialism and deconstruction, that effectively "literally writes out" the use of body in female art practice.

*"Has The Body Lost Its Mind?"* effectively questions the ethics of feminist discourse of the eighties. Frueh's paper seems to suggest that the basic principle that seemed to



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organise eighties theoretical practice was that in order to seriously conduct reconstructions of female experience, in efforts to re-invent ideologies of female sexuality, away from traditional representations of her, the female body must basically be excluded from female art practice. How did Frueh arrive at such a conception?

When philosophers like Beauvoir for example illuminated the fact that woman is a cultural construct and that "her gendered" meaning was the cause of all her problems, socially, economically and politically, feminist epistemology centred on changing gender. (Conboy, Medina and Stanbury, 1997.) Since her gender meant that she had always been *tied* to her body, in the negative way that Irigaray's philosophy has explained, the only way to use the body was to deconstruct it. One must understand that the central motivation behind feminist theoretical movement was to give female sexuality a voice, an independence from traditional conceptions of *what she was*. It was necessary then for feminists to identify how the female body had been used to construct false, in the sense of restrictive, ideas of female sexuality in the past.

#### *Essentialism verses Anti-Essentialism.*

This is where the debate essentialism verses anti essentialism figures. Anti-essentialist feminists believe that because *sexuality is socially and culturally constructed there is no female essence*, that means there is none outside its cultural construct and there is none that predates culture. Beauvoir's creed that "one is not born a Woman but becomes one" influenced anti-essentialist theories. Since women have always been "held down"

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by their bodies in phallogentric culture, deconstructionist feminists of the eighties believed the only way forward was to deconstruct man-made images of femaleness and femininity. For anti-essentialists this did not allow for any body-based art that was believed to signify a separation from culture and a return to nature.

In "*Ethics of Eros*" Tina Chanter described that the purpose of the body in feminist art discourse of the eighties was essentially one that formed the meeting point of two feminist paradigms, the sex/gender ideology and the essentialist verses anti-essentialist debate. Feminist art criticism of the second wave centred ideological debates of female sexuality and female experience within these boundaries. Chanter explained that these two ideologies worked in such a way as to cause the antagonisms between feminists in the eighties. She suggested that the essentialist/anti-essentialist debate was superimposed on the sex/gender map, which resulted in sex, nature and essentialism forming one side of the divide and gender, culture and anti-essentialism forming the other.

Chanter explains that sex was seen as something that was biological, natural and relatively unchanging, that is one's anatomical make-up, whereas gender embodied the symbolic meaning of anatomical difference. As phallogentric logic considered her the inferior sex because of her anatomy and bodily functions, as explained in part one of this chapter (Beauvoir and Irigaray), anti-essentialists believed it was more appropriate to move away from the body, that is away from celebrating the biology of the female body. Feminist artists and critics of the eighties centred discourse and trajectories on proving that women are more than their reproductive organs, that women's sexuality does not just involve the ultimate destiny of motherhood, and that basically there is more to



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female sexuality. Anti-essentialists therefore could not see an advantage of celebrating motherhood and all the physicality's of being female, like menstruating and giving birth as seventies artists had done. Art based on such, it was believed, just re-inscribed phallocentric definitions of femininity. Eighties deconstructionist feminists labelled seventies body based art as essentialist. (Chanter, 1996, pp 1-44.)

### *Questioning essentialism.*

Frueh identifies body-consciousness with what deconstructionist feminist theorists of the eighties have labelled essentialist. She considers essentialism basically as a "misnomer". The term she describes has been applied to artists who used the female body "whole" or "part" to express ideas that direct experience of body, lived experience of the body, equals some sense of experience of female sexuality. According to "namers", she says, "essentialism is biological determinism", and a "glorification of a female essence", and it is believed that "such an essence is transhistorical and transcultural". (Frueh, 1996, p. 114.) Frueh signifies the dangers of labelling, that such categorisation leads to dismissal and seventies female and feminist body-based art was labelled, criticised, used as examples for deconstructionist theory, on how not to "make art".

In "*Sex into Sexuality*" Fernandez, delineating "*A Feminist Agenda for the 90's*", comments on what may be seen as the culmination of the eighties feminist discourse ; feminists basically have painted themselves "into a political corner" and this has occurred as a result of unrelenting "cultural trashing of women" in feminist art criticism.

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(Fernandez, 1991, p. 35.) Fernandez identifies a feminism dealing with a "hygienization" of cultural images of women that leaves very little room for manoeuvre. Visual artists find themselves faced with a feminist agenda of analyses that is based on a binary opposition framework that categorises images of woman into good and bad areas. This depends basically on what is considered anti-essentialist - good, and what is considered essentialist - bad. (Fernandez, 1991, pp. 35-38.)

This is where Frueh questions the purpose of feminist art criticism. Frueh identifies a feminism "grown frigid" with eighties consciousness-raising, and a feminism basically losing track of its position, with a discarding of the body and sex and the re-creation instead of "sexuality disciplines". Instead of "setting sexuality free" and the body free feminism has found itself trying to make sense of disciplines, self-employed, that have refused the body entry into serious discourse, apart from its purpose to be denied. (Frueh, 1991& 1996.)

Frueh seems to comment on the absurdity of the extreme positions that feminism of the eighties has adopted. The question "*Has the body lost its mind?*" asks: how can one combat absence with absence? Where can the female body go if it cannot take part in the expression of lived experience? How can feminism recreate female sexuality if the body is excluded from experience? Body, Frueh believes, provides a channel for discussion of ourselves, our real experiences of ourselves. "Body-consciousness comes from thinking about the body as a base of knowledge and using it as such", just like seventies artists have done. (Frueh, 1996, p. 114.)



1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It also mentions the results of the various investigations and the conclusions drawn from them.

2. The second part of the report deals with the results of the various investigations and the conclusions drawn from them. It also mentions the progress of the work during the year and the general situation of the country.

3. The third part of the report deals with the results of the various investigations and the conclusions drawn from them. It also mentions the progress of the work during the year and the general situation of the country.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the results of the various investigations and the conclusions drawn from them. It also mentions the progress of the work during the year and the general situation of the country.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the results of the various investigations and the conclusions drawn from them. It also mentions the progress of the work during the year and the general situation of the country.

The Erotic Space.

*Rediscovering beauty and pleasure.*

Seventies feminist artists and critics were aware that “ideas of identity” and “knowledge of what self might be” are socially constructed, of all the stigma attached to the female body and also of the dangers of using the body as medium for self expression. Hannah Wilke for example used the body as medium to explore her sexuality specifically through the knowledge that it is culturally inscribed with meaning. She played around traditional ideologies of “perfect female beauty” and “femininity”, for example the “Venus” ideology, which represented essentially traditional Western ideals, that is, “male ideas of beauty and femininity”. For S.O.S. Starification Object Series (1974-1975) she defaces her own body by covering her body with chewing gum twisted into shapes, representing female genitals, “vulva, womb, and tiny wounds”, assumes the Venus position and comments on the suffering endured by women to be “beautiful” (Figure 1). (Frueh, 1996, p. 142-143.) This would evoke the artificial process of beautification, the physical pain of plastic surgery and diseases such as anorexia that the modern female body endures to become an accepted body.

Seventies feminists like Wilke used the body in art as part of a deconstructionist process, in order to present the reality of experience of the body and present this experience as female. Wilke showed that the real female body deteriorates because of sickness and ageing and her essence is experiencing this. The body is a changing body, not the “static erotic myth” that the traditional canon constructed and true eroticism lay in transgressing the fear of this reality that the body grows old, the body experiences periods of sickness

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and “like it or not women menstruate, swell in pregnancy, give birth and go through menopause”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 117.)

According to Frueh, Wilke was a female artist who took control of the female body as she has been constructed, and then deconstructed and reconstructed her on her own terms. In this process she represented a deconstruction of the power of the traditional male canon, which centred much of its “art” on using the female body to represent male genius. (Frueh and Raven, 1991, p. 8.) Simultaneously she used this process to assert her sense of subjectivity, she converted the body as object of desire into a body as subject (Figure 2).

Wilke allows the body to speak through a process of change. She remodels Venus on female experience. In her early work her body related to the ideal of a Modigliani or a Renoir painting but as time passed the “whole-limbed”, slender and “well-proportioned” body became somewhat “looser”, fleshier, old(er). She called this process a “beauty to beast” transformation but the Venus at the end of her life represented an “*INTRA VENUS*” (Figure 3). (Frueh, 1996, p.148.) Wilke opens up beauty to experiencing sickness and decay. She repositions her cancerous body as the seated “dreamy” nude of a Renoir painting (Figure 4). She desired not only to exemplify that the body’s boundaries are basically erratic and insecure but also to show her acceptance of this, in facing death. She wanted this closeness to death to redefine beauty and pleasure. Subjective beauty emerges through the identification, experience and transgression of fear of what the changing body can do. In subjugating the erotic trophy of male genius, its exclusive powers, she creates a language for her *self* to speak. She does this with and through her body.



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Frueh believes that women artists and critics who “represent and write (about and from) the body are engaged in a reconstruction of reality, so that the body, loosened from the constraint of an absolutist cultural determination, can speak as an origin of experience, knowledge, and possibility”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 118.) She believes there is a way to work through the body that enables one to express a sense of self and subjectivity and that is by playing around with disciplines imposed upon the female body. It is only in facing body and its boundaries, as Wilke has done, can the female artist experience hidden pleasures with the body. Hidden, in this sense, signifies denied or unacknowledged pleasure that “Venus envy” or “fear of the flesh that moves” has effectuated for many women. Wilke has created an “*INTRA-VENUS*” subjectivity that emanates from subjugating disciplines that are imposed on erotic exploration through “Venus envy” and bodily insecurity.

In saying we can “alter reality by asserting our presence” Frueh means this presence to be bodily first and foremost. Through a flaunting of bodily insecurity, Frueh believes, that myths of what is considered “real beauty” can be deconstructed. When one recognises that Venus is a myth, an ideal created by male fantasy, one is re-creating a space for redefining erotic pleasure. Experiencing body, that means experiencing both mentally and physically the changes that the body endures, is the first step. Seeing and feeling this change positively is the next step. This is what Frueh means by body-consciousness and using bodily insecurity to create erotic social security. She believes that one must, in a certain sense, risk being vulnerable, by making a spectacle of oneself, as other than “ideal”, to really experience pleasure with the body.

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Frueh focuses on bringing the body back into art practice in ways that seventies artists did with the objective to disrupt disciplines imposed upon the body. She does this through the erotic, she affirms the erotic as both a "form of communication and transcendence and as a critical practice". (Frueh, 1996, pp. 1-24.) In "*Erotic Faculties*" she presents herself as "familiar erotic terrain" but through her own words, experiences and particularities of body gesture she invents new grounds for, or experiences what she believes is, female autoeroticism. (Frueh, 1996, *ibid.*) She does this through the idea of bodily insecurity.

Frueh agrees with feminism that "we all speak through the damage of male dominance" but unlike feminism so far she does not believe that "revolution" lies in a muting of the female body until a new body has been created. (Frueh, 1996, p. 115.) Rather to create a new body, that is, to re-conceive the body and its boundaries, it is necessary to work *through* boundaries first and foremost, not to avoid them, as deconstructionist feminists of the eighties have done. This for Frueh initiates a process of speaking through the body.



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## Chapter two

### *Reformations: The process of speaking through the body.*

#### Introduction.

#### *Irigaray and Gallop making (a) difference for Frueh.*

This chapter considers the idea and process of *reforming knowledge* on eroticism and female sexuality. Particular writings and performances centre methodologies on *recreating* theory on female eroticism and sexuality and orchestrate such through a process of deconstruction and reconstruction. These would include Irigaray's "*This Sex Which Is Not One*", Jane Gallop's "*Lip Service*" and Joanna Frueh's "*Mouth Piece*".

In chapter one Frueh has identified an area where the contemporary female artist can either bring feminism into her work or enter into feminism. This occurs at the conflict between two decades of feminist work. It is only when differences between generations of feminists can be viewed positively can the contemporary female artist seriously consider "keeping feminism alive". Frueh believes this can happen when one begins to think and work through the body. She performs this through "*Mouth Piece*".

Here she uses her body, her particular experiences of the body "to break tradition".

This not only involves deconstructing phallogentric notions of femininity but it also means breaking feminism's habitual performance of working from the victim position.

That is identifying a feminism for the future. The female artist uses the essentialist verses anti-essentialist debate to redirect feminism. Frueh considers this debate as a discipline, imposed on the female artist who desires to use her body in her work, but also as a space to work from. The only way to deconstruct this theoretical restriction is to work

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through and with the body. This therefore allows her to assess each argument of the divide and come to a resolution. The objective is to reconstruct a space for the body to speak with the artist and the critic. For Frueh the project becomes a collaborative process for the artist and the feminist to work together.

To speak through the body Frueh believes there is certain technical facility involved and that this occurs through the erotic space. I wish to consider three erotic spaces, that of Irigaray, Gallop and Frueh. I wish to analyse each one in this chronological fashion, Irigaray's text was first published in the late seventies, Gallop in the early eighties and with Frueh I concentrate on "*Mouth Piece*" that was published in 1996 in "*Erotic Faculties*". Irigaray bases her writing on a critique of a Western tradition of phallogentric philosophy on being and sexual difference, Gallop bases her writing and performance on Irigaray's philosophy and it is evident that Frueh directs her work through Irigaray and Gallop's thinking process.

This chapter concentrates more on Irigaray's and Gallop's work while chapter three dedicates discussion to Frueh's critical erotics. In discussing each work I wish to show not only the relationship between each "performer", but also the direction that the contemporary female artist is taking. The objective is to show how the process of speaking through the body has progressed to allow the feminist and the artist to work together to recreate female subjectivity.



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*Setting the parameters for re-defining female sexuality.*

The process of re-defining female sexuality occurs through the process of radically changing the feminine. (Braidotti, 1996, 209-263.) This is brought about through the merging of the spiritual with the political and nature with culture. This is particularly important to each project, Irigaray's, Gallop's and Frueh's, because this merging creates the space for the "new female feminist subject" to emerge. (Braidotti, *ibid.*) Multiplicity and decentering are the operative techniques. For Irigaray the recreation of the feminine occurs through "*L'écriture Feminine*", for Gallop through "*Lip Service*" and for Frueh through a "*Critical Erotics*".

These works consider the "spiritual" as that which phallogentric logic has not heard, or as Irigaray might say, has chosen to avoid: *her* (woman's) expression of desire and pleasure. The "political" aspect of their work embodies the mutual process of identifying and changing the function of language, literal and visual. This occurs through the process of speaking through the body. Gallop describes this as a "poiesis" of the body. (Gallop, 1988, p. 94.) This is where body and word become one, when body and word speak together. Irigaray, Gallop and Frueh call this a re-invention of the female body and it is the only channel through which female sexuality can be re-conceived. Each performance is basically a "poiesis" of the body.





Irigaray and Difference.

*Radically changing the feminine.*

Rosi Braidotti discusses Luce Irigaray's work as part of a movement to which she designates the identity "radical philosophies of sexual difference". For Irigaray difference exists on numerous levels : "difference between the sexes, differences among women, differences within the single individual woman". (Braidotti, 1991, p. 248.) Her theories of female sexuality and eroticism stem from these principles.

Irigaray is not only a writer but she performs through her writing. She intends not only to change the meaning of the feminine but through this process she aims to posit a "new female feminist subject". (Braidotti, 1991, pp. 249.) Braidotti describes her writing technique as one that performs a double movement : it acts as both a denunciation of traditional Western philosophies of being, unveiling the patriarchal character of traditional Western ontology, and in this process her writing creates a space for the female feminist subject to emerge. (Braidotti, 1991, pp. 248-263.) Her writing therefore acts as both a critique and a reinvention of a symbolic system. Irigaray identifies where the female has been placed in Western philosophies of being and sexual difference, she realises that such philosophy is basically a strategy for male power, and one that performs only on the silencing of another - *the female*, and she then uses this knowledge to reposition herself. This is brought about through the writing technique. She redefines sexual difference under new principles that involve *her* (woman's) particular perceptions on experience and being. This is where the "new female feminist subject" emerges.



1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country.

2. The second part of the report deals with the economic situation of the country.

3. The third part of the report deals with the social situation of the country.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the political situation of the country.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the cultural situation of the country.

6. The sixth part of the report deals with the environmental situation of the country.

7. The seventh part of the report deals with the international situation of the country.

8. The eighth part of the report deals with the future prospects of the country.

9. The ninth part of the report deals with the conclusion of the report.

10. The tenth part of the report deals with the annexes of the report.

11. The eleventh part of the report deals with the bibliography of the report.

12. The twelfth part of the report deals with the index of the report.

Irigaray's philosophy works on the premise that the female body has not had a chance to *speaking* for herself. She asks : "How can we speak, think and create, within structures that are misogynist and seem to feed off the exclusion and the appropriation of the feminine?" (Braidotti, 1991, p. 249.) She answers this with her body. Her desire to bring her body and writing together deconstructs the *masculine* character of traditional western discourse on sexual difference. Why? Because as soon as she begins to write with her body she begins to disrupt the mind and body split that has organised the procession of Western phallogentric thinking on being and sexual difference.

Irigaray begins "*This Sex Which Is Not One*" with the statement that "female sexuality has always been theorised within masculine parameters". (Irigaray, 1981, p. 98.) "Freud - and many others", Irigaray states, claim that the process of becoming a sexually normal woman depends on the change from "'virile' clitoral activity" to "'feminine' vaginal passivity", where basically a woman must give up her pleasure of clitoral and autoerotic stimulation to provide a "home" for the male penis in the sex act.

Irigaray speaks metaphorically, "the vagina derives its value from the "home" it offers the male penis when the now forbidden hand must find a substitute to take its place in giving pleasure. (Irigaray, 1981, pp. 98-106.) Woman's sexuality and the "act of becoming woman", according to these theorists, ("Freud-and many others") centres on the idea that she must renounce clitoral activity as a secondary sexual act for the act of coition where the vagina must perform as an "envelope", to basically "surround and rub the penis". In this way Irigaray has described woman's sexual organ as basically a "nonsex organ" or a "masculine sex organ that is turned inside out in order to caress itself". (Irigaray, 1981, pp. 99.) This epitomises the "sameness" category that has been





thought out through the mind and body split. "She is" basically for his pleasure and is so through her body.

This in turn has represented and shaped cultures view of female sexuality and womanhood. Her fate lies in the phallogocentric conception of "penis-envy" and "lacking" where her desire is to have a child, and is fulfilled only in having that child. (Irigaray, 1981, pp. 99.) This represents Freud's theories on female jouissance. He believed that female jouissance (female unconscious and desire) centred around striving to have what her body lacked, a penis and its subsequent power.

"Phallogocentrism is the theory" Braidotti explains and "patriarchy is the practice".

Theory and practice coincide to produce an economy, "material as well as libidinal", where "the law is upheld by a phallic symbol that operates by constructing differences and organising them hierarchically". (Braidotti, 1991, p 213.)

That which is written down has decided her(woman's) position in society. The writing hand and the thinking mind of Western philosophy has always privileged male according to the mind and body split. Society has placed woman "in the body", closer to nature, "to the physical, as matter to be tamed and domesticated". (Braidotti, 1991, p. 213.) In other words man is society, she represents the other. He has the power to transcend (his) body, his mind and his body allow him to do this. She, as Braidotti has described, represents "the borderline image, pointing to the outside of the cultural and the symbolic order". (Braidotti, 1991, p. 213.) Philosophy of sexuality, desire and pleasure, and the parameters of social life, that is, the symbolic order, are structured on her repression and exclusion. The symbolic order cannot function without her *positioned* this way.



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*Vulvomorphic logic or This Sex Which Is Not One.*

What Irigaray disagrees with, and calls as a result, phallogentric logic, is that which conceives *her* (the female) body so negatively. Her (woman's) closeness to her body and her form of sex, her physical multiplicity has been used in such a way so as to confine her. She basically asks : why should she (woman) renounce clitoral activity for vaginal activity in order to become a sexually mature woman? This "one or other" logic has resulted only in creating a logic of sexual difference where one (masculine) feeds on the exclusion and the fragmentation of the other (feminine).

Woman's pleasure does not centre on oneness, that privileges the penis, but it thrives rather in the form of multiplicity. Irigaray centres her philosophy on this conception, she is trying to repossess and recover a "positive" feminine. She says that woman finds pleasure in the incompleteness of the form of her sexuality : she has sex organs just about everywhere and she experiences pleasure everywhere. (Irigaray, 1981, p. 103.) This is further explained through the idea that pleasure for woman centres more so on touching and feeling rather than "seeing". She says that her pleasure is particularly foreign to the phallic economy which privileges sight over touch. She criticises phallogentric logic for placing value on sexual difference through the "act of seeing" the only definable form, the "erect penis" or the "hard-on". This excludes her form of sexuality because she is the "hole", that which cannot be seen. Irigaray basically implies that phallogentrism has centred on fearing the unknown, woman's internals. (Irigaray, 1981, pp. 101-104.)

When Freud said "anatomy is destiny" he based logic of sexuality on that which could be seen. That which could not be seen but always feared must be controlled, and so Freud





found the perfect solution. She must take pleasure only in seeking to grasp some definable form, child-penis, that will as a result *place* her in some way *in relation to* man. (Gallop, 1989, p. 250.)

Irigaray redefines female sexuality through the act of not being able to see but being able to feel and imagine. A woman touches herself without any need for mediation, she touches herself all the time, and no one can forbid her to do so “for her sex is composed of two lips which embrace continually”. (Irigaray, 1989, pp. 100-103.)

Instead of being a pleasurable sex object, an instrument for male stimulation, she can experience pleasure in or with herself. Irigaray creates an imaginary form of female *jouissance*. She rewrites logic of female sexuality and pleasure with and through her body, through her imaginary experiences with the body. She can take pleasure in *being* through her autoeroticism. Her autoeroticism gives her power like she never realised before. It allows her to write about her body as she desires. She has constructed a logic that comes from the body. Her body’s formlessness does not confine her anymore, rather this formlessness is seen in a new light. It is her badge of courage, her route to freedom. She can base her sexuality on this multiplicity of form and this in turn allows her to come up with her own logic of being.

This is where vulvomorphic logic of female pleasure succeeds phallomorphic logic of female pleasure. This is where female sexuality changes and this is where the female feminist subject emerges. Irigaray’s objective is to express this as it has not been expressed before.

The project for the female feminist subject is to write against all the principles of the phallic economy which privileges the penis and oneness over the lips and multiplicity and





rewrite female sexuality on that which is closer to her essence. She can base her subjectivity on this idea of multiplicity. She does not have to be one particular form or image. She does not have to choose between the clitoris or vagina but instead embody the lips and the multiplicity of form and with this renounce her passivity.

Gallop going through Irigaray.

*Ideology: erotic language "breaking the mind and body split".*

Gallop bases her theory on the "lips" and the "multiplicity of female form". She merges theory and experience to dissolve the mind and body split. Her methodological stance engages in an analyses of Irigaray's *"This Sex Which Is Not One"* and a critique of cultural representations of female sexuality. Her objective is to reconstruct a space for the feminist to speak through her body about female sexuality. Her analyses of Irigaray's writing enables her to deconstruct the essentialist verses the anti-essentialist parameters that she criticises (American) feminism of the eighties for engaging in. In a particular way she embodies Irigaray's multiple body when she experiments with the idea of multiplicity and metaphor.

*Practice: "Lip Service".*

*"Lip Service"* was published in Gallop's book piece *"Thinking Through The Body"* in 1988. It concentrates on bringing together ideas of the public and the private through

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the practice of writing and speaking as a woman cultural critic. Gallop disagrees with common "accusations", by American feminist critics, that Irigaray is trapped in the body, and therefore in biological essentialism. Dismissing Irigaray as trapped in biologism, Gallop believes, "bespeaks the mind and body split", which in turn re-occasions the removal of the body from engaging in the process of reconstructing theory on female sexuality. (Gallop, 1989, p. 8.) This is crucial to Gallop's position as a woman writer and a feminist speaker. Like Irigaray she believes that in order to write of female pleasure from a female perspective the female body is central to and for discussion. The female speaker must speak of erotic pleasures with the body, where redefinitions of the erotic centre on physical and mental connection.

Gallop directs her own practice in this way. She wishes to theorise on female sexuality but use her body actively in this process. When writing "*Lip Service*" Gallop expressed the desire "to speak where men were speaking", despite her body, but also in her body. (Gallop, 1989, p. 92.) What did she mean by this? On introducing "*Lip Service*" she said that she aspired to become a part of the realm of high literary theory that has traditionally been invented and controlled by male speakers, male theorists, male poets. In "*Thinking Through The Body*" she had referred to Freud, Sade and Barthes all of whom were engaged in a critical thinking that was connected to the body and sexuality. She wanted to theorise on female sexuality like it has never been done before: speaking from *her* experience of female sexuality while coinciding her perspectives with another *woman's* philosophies on female sexuality: Irigaray. Reformation of theory on female sexuality embodied therefore a collaborative project between Irigaray's theory and Gallop, her experiences of being a female body and her feminist perspective.

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She believed this was a precarious task because she could be accused of essentialism just like Irigaray has been. This is because she based her practice on and took seriously, Irigaray's metaphorisation of the body. To be accused of essentialism would mean that she, like Irigaray, cannot see outside the body. Being accused of essentialism means in more dismissive terms being trapped in the body. The question then in this case, still being asked by anti-essentialists, is why are we so stuck on(in) the body?

Gallop's answer to this may be that feminists need to get comfortable with the body, being a female body, before they can construct theories of female sexuality that are convincing. Irigaray offered her a way to reinvent female sexuality.

Gallop says that Irigaray does not propose a vulvomorphic logic of female sexuality that is analogous to the female body but rather a vulvomorphic language that is based on a symbolic interpretation of the female body and anatomy. What Gallop stresses is the fact that Irigaray creates an imaginary logic that says female sexuality can be multiple and formless and that this can be used to her advantage. With Irigaray's vulvomorphic logic the active/passive distinction that has been used to categorise female sexuality now becomes ineffectual. Irigaray has used this new theory to create new femininity that embodied multiplicity. This form of femininity is first and foremost autoerotic because she, woman, *any* woman, can initiate and conduct her own pleasure.

Gallop used this idea to deconstruct stylised forms of femininity that placed women in "either/or" categories. She *wore* a style of femininity - "spike heels, seamed hose, a black fitted forties dress and a large black hat", that recalled something of the femme fatale image of the forties and fifties film noir movie. She said that she had to "think a way that the body was already 'poetic', to dress in a manner that 'bespoke the body as style", that represented a form of stylised female sexuality. (Gallop, 1989, pp. 91-92.)

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When Gallop presented "*Lip Service*" to an audience, she believed that she moved the body from its object position to a subject position, "from an embarrassment to a source of power". (Gallop, 1989, p. 92.) According to the film noir script two examples of femininity existed, the good, the passive female who lead a relatively safe life, usually within the boundaries of motherhood, and the bad, the promiscuous woman whose life remained central to death and destruction of the criminal underworld. The latter supposedly represented a woman that was both alluring and dangerous and therefore not to be trusted (Figure 5). She was simultaneously the victim of the scopic economy because she always met with death. This was her punishment for crossing the haven, the maternal bounds, and for desiring a life other than motherhood.

Gallop set out to deconstruct this style, this fiction. Her objective was to cross the "screen" boundaries where she, the woman, would decide her own fate. She however wanted to allow the stereotype to deconstruct the script. She choose this particular stereotype for its unpredictable nature. She wanted to emphasise this unpredictability in female sexuality so she placed herself "in drag". She dressed as one woman, as her clothing bespoke an identification with a woman of another place, she spoke with another woman of another time, Irigaray, and through this became another. She embodied multiplicity.

The female feminist subject.

Poiesis is basically a critique and a reinvention of the symbolic order. Gallop says there is no body "unmediated by textuality". (Gallop, 1988, p. 93.) By this she means that

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bodies are given meaning through language. Irigaray has identified that the female and male body has been given meaning through phallogocentric language that bases its logic on oneness and form. This logic has created a system of subjugation where masculinity cannot exist without fragmenting the feminine. Irigaray's vulvomorphic logic represents a new form of textuality which represents a radically changed feminine, in the sense that this feminine is autoerotic. For the first time female can begin to see herself as the subject of being.

Jackie Brookner in "*Feminist Art Journal*" of 1991 in an article called "*Feminism and Students of the '80s and '90s*" says that feminists must begin to look at themselves as female subjects. While this would necessarily involve deconstructing patriarchal theories of femaleness she believes feminism has to do so much more. This involves taking a positive stance, a new perspective. She calls for a "conscious visionary feminism" that must "spark our utopian imaginations" and "embody our deepest knowledge with the idea of a total cultural critique". (Brookner, *Art Journal*, 1991, p. 11.) Irigaray and Gallop combine both a critique and a re-imagining of the feminine.

For Frueh it is necessary not only to write but to embody this change. She does this through "*Mouth Piece*". She defines the feminine on the principle mind-and-soul-inseparable-from-the-body. Her ideas are based on similar principles ; theory on female sexuality embodies the female expression of self that is based on the idea of multiplicity of form.

This is where Frueh emerges as the female feminist subject. She takes control of the female body and reinvents the poetic with her body and this for her is called a poesis of the body.



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## Chapter three

### *Frueh and a "critical erotics".*

#### Introduction.

#### *"Mouth Piece".*

Frueh engages in a process of redefining the erotic and female pleasure in *"Mouth Piece"*. *"Mouth Piece"* was first performed in February 1989 in the Columbia College Dance Centre, Chicago, Illinois and throughout the nineties in various places throughout the American state. My first engagement with this piece was as a reader in 1996 when I came across *"Erotic Faculties"* in NYU library in New York city. *"Erotic Faculties"* engages in a process of combining theory and autobiography to reconstruct, or what Frueh might say, to tell the truth about female sexuality, that is, as she experienced it. *"Mouth Piece"* is part of this project, *"Erotic Faculties"*, that engages in a process of redefining female sexuality, through a process of speaking through the body. It speaks about the pleasures and anxieties of being a woman in contemporary culture, acts as a critique of phallogentric language and logic, and represents a new or other cultural vision of female sexuality.

#### *Changing perceptions : working through theory and experience*

In *"Mouth Piece"* the contemporary, female, feminist artist works from a particular perspective : feminist analyses of female sexuality over the last decade have proved

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restrictive for a theoretical movement to re-create female sexuality. Feminism has caught itself up in a negative deconstructive approach, and this has caused the body to be excluded. The objective for the artist is to use the space that feminist theoretical discourse has already created. Joanna Frueh's idea for a feminist role centres on removing all disciplinary categories that eighties feminism has theorised from, first and foremost, the essentialism/anti-essentialism and the sex/gender grid. This necessarily provides a space where feminism can begin again to reform theories of female sexuality. Reformation can occur at the point where theory and experience meet, where feminism of the eighties and feminism of the seventies meet. The artist's role is to perform this objective. "*Mouth Piece*" is where the artist and the feminist can merge to form a female feminist subjective.

Re-defining the feminine for female subjectivity.

Helene Cixous said in "*The Laugh Of The Medusa*" that "your body must be heard". She also said "Write! Writing is for you, you are for you, your body is yours, take it". (Cixous, 1981, p. 246.) Frueh follows this in "*Mouth Piece*". She is the erotic scholar and her body is the erotic body and "erotic scholarship entails speaking "from, for, and about the body" (Figure 6). (Frueh, 1996, p. 9.) She adopts this terminology to identify her position in "*Mouth Piece*". She performs as if she is a student who is given an assignment to recreate female sexuality. She is faced with barriers that must be worked through in order to learn about herself, where she has come from and where she can go to. She says that to understand female sexuality she must talk about and work within the

1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject.

2. The second part is a detailed description of the methods used.

3. The third part is a discussion of the results obtained.

4. The fourth part is a conclusion and a list of references.

5. The fifth part is a summary of the main points of the report.

6. The sixth part is a list of the names of the authors.

7. The seventh part is a list of the titles of the papers.

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10. The tenth part is a list of the names of the reviewers.

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16. The sixteenth part is a list of the names of the manufacturers.

17. The seventeenth part is a list of the names of the suppliers.

18. The eighteenth part is a list of the names of the customers.

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21. The twenty-first part is a list of the names of the dealers.

22. The twenty-second part is a list of the names of the merchants.

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24. The twenty-fourth part is a list of the names of the exporters.

25. The twenty-fifth part is a list of the names of the importers.

“discipline of sex”. (Frueh, 1996 p. 16.) She believes this is where “women” must begin again to recreate themselves. If initially, there is “no body”, then there is no place to begin to speak, there is no “erotic muscle”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 10.)

“Erotic muscle” begins with her analysis of the victim position. Feminists who constantly criticise the idea of woman as pleasure icon represent the victim position. In

*“Polymorphous Perversities”* she says that “fear of the male gaze” has given “power of looking and of projecting desire only to men” and to “patriarchal pleasure disciplines, such as film and advertising”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 108.) Essays like Laura Mulvey’s

*“Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”*, Frueh specifies, rob women of their own bodies, the pleasure of looking at themselves and other women with “aroused, loving eyes”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 109.) Mulvey looks at the female body as an object and a spectacle not of female but of male sex and pleasure. She believes it is necessary to destroy this kind of spectacle and voyeurism to envisage a new language of desire, that is closer to “home”, to women’s desires. According to Mulvey we must “break with normal pleasurable expectations” in order to become subjects and not objects of desire. (Frueh, 1996, p. 108.) To do this “patriarchal” ideas of pleasure and beauty must be deconstructed.

Frueh believes that this kind of “destruction” has caused a muting of the female body and fear has directed feminism to theorise themselves into political corners. The continuous insistence on “waging war” in this way, against the male gaze, is not the answer to “freeing up” female sexuality or allowing one to develop her “erotic faculties”. The essentialist/anti-essentialist parameter of eighties deconstructionist feminist theory has inhibited the female artist from exploring fully the meaning of femininity because of the fear of being “re-trapped in the body”. (Gallop, 1988, p. 93.) Frueh basically asks : why



1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year, and the second section deals with the specific results of the work.

2. The second part of the report deals with the specific results of the work. It is divided into three main sections: the first section deals with the results of the work in the field of agriculture, the second section deals with the results of the work in the field of industry, and the third section deals with the results of the work in the field of commerce.

3. The third part of the report deals with the conclusions and recommendations. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the conclusions and the second section deals with the recommendations.

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4. The fourth part of the report deals with the appendix. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the appendix and the second section deals with the index.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the bibliography. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the bibliography and the second section deals with the index.

6. The sixth part of the report deals with the index. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the index and the second section deals with the index.

should one fear what the female body can do? Why should one fear the consequences of playing around with the concept of the sex object and objectification? (Frueh, telephone conversation, Dec. 6 1996.) In "*Mouth Piece*", she walks on stage wearing a "white leather strapless minidress, bright red high heels, and scarlet lipstick", her "heels clicking slowly on the floor". (Frueh, 1996, p. 51.) Just as Cixous advocates Frueh "takes" her body and with it experiments with a stylised form of femininity. She risks being the sex object in order to become a sex subject. (Frueh, telephone conversation, Dec. 6 1996.) Introducing "*Erotic Faculties*" she says:

"I am my own erotic object, to touch, to view, to experience life and to act in it". (Frueh, 1996, p. 4.)

Frueh relates significantly to Gallop in her ideas of thinking through the stylised body. Her performance desires to play around with stereotypical sexual imagery of the female body and place her in areas where she does not belong. In this respect the "she" imagery that Frueh presents does not belong at the critic's podium, especially the feminist critic's podium and speaking of "fucking with her lover" to an audience, as a format for theorising female sexuality, is crossing boundaries.

Essentially Frueh is a deconstructionist feminist in drag and feminist politics is her target. She engages in a process of "taking on" feminism by questioning feminist politics. The heterosexual identity she embodies in "*Mouth Piece*", through the intimacies she talks of with her lover and the imagery she takes on, through dress and stance, seem to satirise and repel what she believes to be "oversimplified gender and feminist politics". (Frueh, 1996, p. 4.) Frueh believes that "a woman's desire" to be attractive to and to enjoy sleeping with men in over simplified gender and feminist politics can be negative. (Frueh, 1996, p. 13.) By this she seems to imply that heterosexuality is not a favourable

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“position” to be part of it means that a woman is phallus-worshipping when engaged in “kissing a lover’s penis”. Why should she be phallus-worshipping in this event? Frueh believes that she could be accused not only of phallus worshipping in her costume but also in *her choice* of sexuality. She defends her actions with the response that the penis is not the phallus, but the “father’s law is”. This is law that “does not want women to be sexually aggressive or satisfied on their own behalf”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 15.) When sexual difference is described by the “phallus”, the father’s law, phallogocentric logic, she is the weaker sex. This happens when the penetrative act epitomises “the moment of sex” and constructs gender difference as hierarchical. (Braidotti, 1991, pp. 209-273.) Frueh’s costume supposedly represents stereotypical femininity that desires to please her male lover. “Weaker” then seems to infer that she wants to be desirable, and in this submissive to his pleasure. Frueh basically asks : Why should she be weak(er) in desiring to be desirable? Why is this being submissive? Irigaray says that she(woman) must “embody the lips”, be autoerotic. Frueh believes that woman must take responsibility for her own erotic pleasure. For her this would involve deconstructing first the disciplines of stereotypical heterosexuality.

“*Mouth Piece*” works on three ideologies :

1. A “woman’s actual or assumed sexual identification does not designate whether she is a lusting subject or a carnal agent”, essentially she can be both. (Frueh, 1996, pp. 15-16.)
2. There is more to heterosexuality than just, speaking metaphorically, the “penetrative act”.
3. There is more to female pleasure than meets the eye.

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Frueh brings her audience through the pleasure she gains from the intimacies with her lover (Figure 7). Her objective is to make connection between visual erotic pleasure and female pleasure and to bring this about through the merging of theory and experience. This represents the erotic space and through this space boundaries that limit female sexuality and femininity can be crossed.

*"Organs, surfaces and sensations"*

Frueh adopts a particular approach that relates to Irigaray's methodology with *"This Sex Which Is Not One"*. Irigaray "poeticises and analyses female pleasure as multiple, a "polyvocality of organs, surfaces, sensations". (Frueh, 1996 p. 87.) This approach gives Frueh the initiative to work from an "established terrain" of femininity, with visual female beauty, female pleasure and female sexuality. "Formulaic erotic terrain" has muted the female body but it is not feminism's responsibility or desire to continue this silence. Therefore she believes that it is important for feminists to stop working from the victim position. Feminist theory must not just be a continual prognosis of the female body as the object of the male gaze. The feminist must begin to consider female visual pleasure. Frueh initiates this process with the idea that "breasts, crotch, hips, and ass do not have to lead women into fucking, motherhood, and domestic labour - heterosexuality". (C.L.L, 1990, p. 125.) A "woman hustling beauty", she believes, must work through these "deliberate falsifications", these "cultural maps of conventional femininity" in order to re-inscribe her body with new meaning. The feminist or woman must take those erogenous zones and reconstruct their meaning according to her pleasure. (Frueh,



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telephone conversation, Dec. 6 1996.) (Frueh had previously discussed this with Christine Tamblyn in "*Duel Duet*", in 1989 and 1990, when they performed a mock debate over familiar feminist issues of identity and representation of the female body and femininity).

In "*Mouth Piece*" Frueh behaves as if she had been denied a voice to speak and experience pleasure in her "being". She refers to her image as a sex object image and the camera play is fetishist. Throughout the performance it alternates its focus from her entirety to parts of her body, breasts, legs, arm, shoes, etc. (Figure 8 and 9). Sometimes it focuses on her mouth and her lips as she speaks. This is intentional, it only happens when she wants to emphasise a word, a statement or an event. For example when she says "The mouth...is the exit from the body and the entry into the world, the opening at which the inner and outer breath are one and private and public can mix", the camera watches every lip movement. (Frueh, 1996, p. 52.) When she discusses the meaning of "speak" ... "speak : to exercise the voice; to loosen discourse; to deliver an address in an assembly; to disclose, reveal; to appeal to, touch, affect, or influence...I speak to desires...I am on speaking terms with you", the camera frames her mouth in motion. The objective is to emphasise her motive, which is to cross between the boundaries of what is considered public and private.

On stage she desires to "get intimate" with an audience and uses a sort of voyeurism to initiate the process. Her lips, her teeth, even the area around her mouth are a fetish. The image she presents is suppose to seduce an audience into engagement *with* her. Frueh wants the entire image to initially have "a stark and alluring impact", but not to remain distracting, that is, from her stories. As soon as she begins to tell and almost re-enact the moments and feelings she experienced with her lover, the image she hopes will somewhat

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“normalise”. (Frueh, 1996, p 24.) By this she means that her words, and visual impact, together with vocal modulations and bodily gesturing enhance her performance and enchant her audience into continuous engagement with her. Soon her voice and intonations will begin to work at a subconscious level. All of this creates an erotic relation that “turns the object into a subject who speaks and fucks in her own voice” (Figure 10). (Frueh, 1996, p. 24.)

*“To fuck in your own voice”, the particularities involved.*

Frueh toys with the idea of pun, “*Mouth Piece*” is a title, script and a performance. It is not a script that she just reads to an audience, of particular encounters with her lover, or ideas on how to experience pleasures as female. It has particular objectives. Firstly “*Mouth Piece*” cannot exist without audience interaction, she cannot perform mouthpiece without intimacy. Intimacy involves looking, hearing and experiencing sensation and this is brought about through physical and mental contact. She wants an erotic encounter with her audience, with each member. As she speaks she sometimes focusing intently on one person, which involves looking into their eyes. This is communicated back to her from the audience. She calls this “mutuality”, a “spectacle of self consciousness” and a “game that lovers play”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 24.) The intimacy makes both parties vulnerable to scrutiny, and both parties willingly take part. She says that in this mutuality lovers “whether they know it or not” try to expand their erotic faculties. (Frueh, 1996, p. 24.) This means that identities are exchanged... the object position is transferred to and back from the speaker to the looker in the audience. Both

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parties scrutinise and are the objects of scrutiny. Both parties become aware of their actions and positions. The subject emerges through this identification, aware of her / his simultaneous vulnerability and power. She also talks of this relationship between her and lover to an audience, "It's hard to describe how I scrutinised you. It's simply that I felt your vulnerability, and in that, your desire, so strongly... I felt absolutely drawn yet distant in scrutiny". (Frueh, 1996, p. 54.) She is also directing this to the audience. She is addressing each "lover" in the audience.

"*Mouth Piece*" shows that both lovers, Frueh and Russel, in this heterosexual relationship, are on mutual territory, both experience the active and passive relationship. "We sat on the hood of my car and you asked me to sleep with you, and I smelled your breath, your fragility...I touched your hair and cheek... You make the red wine speak when you pour it on and into me and sip it from my cunt and lips...we make our marks on each others skin." (Frueh, 1996, pp. 54-65.) Frueh says she wants to offer this "intimacy and passion of a sexual relationship as a *foundation* for theorising female pleasure". (Frueh, 1996, p. 14.) To move beyond this boundary is as important as challenging the symbolic meaning that feminism has associated with heterosexuality. She also says that while she transfers a form of sexual scrutiny to the stage performance, to interact with the audience, the interaction also transcends the boundaries of a sexual relationship. Therefore there is a double process happening here, Frueh wants to show the audience that her heterosexual identity does not embody submission and docility and to do this she must bring the relationship she has with her lover on stage and use it to interact with an audience. With this she intends to bring heterosexuality beyond conventional "fucking".





The approach Frueh takes orchestrates a form of *self and other* scrutiny that is necessary to locating her identity as a woman, artist and feminist. The relationship between her and the audience is initially sexual or sexually inspired but it leads to a self-other analysis that takes place within the speaker and each member of the audience and between the speaker and each member of the audience.

She uses "woman", the "familiar pleasure icon" to begin the process of scrutiny and as soon as she "takes on" an audience, with "fucking" and "fuck stories", the stereotype immediately transgresses the stereotypical role, to be the object of the conventional male gaze and for conventional male desire. It is not "fucking" that she wishes to emphasise, but rather the relationship that can exist around and through "fucking". What does this mean? Basically she wants to show that her relationship with her lover involves more than penetration and its associated meaning, where "she is only for his desires", and metaphorically speaking where she is "lying underneath". Secondly she wants "fucking" on a wider scale to mean more than "coition". This is where she believes she can transcend the active/passive dichotomies associated with the "het" relationship and this also provides ground for transgressing all sexual identities.

The "erotic" represents a sharing of stories, emotions, events, etc. that enable self connection and connection with another. This "other" does not have to be one's rival, whether it be in choice of sexuality, age, race, class or colour. In *"Erotic Faculties"* she discussed a response to her performance. A member of the audience felt that the content of her work was "just too het" and questioned Frueh's responsibility in this. "I just wondered what I was doing there listening to more fuck stories..all this men and women stuff just isn't my area...much of my response has to do with being a lesbian in a

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het-dominated culture and being without much representation in the media....” (Frueh, 1996, p. 15.)

Frueh’s erotic space is not meant to be exclusive. That is why she uses the idea of “fucking”. It does not have to be interpreted as penetrative and/or procreative sex. She believes that the terms lesbian, heterosexual and bisexual are “immediately over-determined and narrow”. “Words have no boundaries” and names or name-calling need not be colonising. She wants her stories, her words, her movements to enable an audience to transgress thinking boundaries that cause oppression. (Frueh, 1996, pp. 4-24.)

“Prickslide and cunt worship are two tongues we speak. Your prick is your tongue that finds and makes a language inside me. Your tongue becomes my tongue, our prick and our cunt, and we create a language of our own, but known in variations to all loving fuckers.” (Frueh, 1996 p. 70.)

She simultaneously liked the fact that her work could be used for erotic stimulation in sexual encounters, for example in a discussion about her Reno performance she mentioned how “*Mouth Piece*” has been used for erotic stimulation in gay male sexual encounters. (Frueh, telephone conversation, Dec. 6 1996.)

While this possibly signifies that her idea can work to transgress sexual stereotypical boundaries and sexual disciplines it may not appeal to everyone. She is aware of this as she said again in a discussion over audience reaction that one “cannot will an audience to agree” with one’s particular perspective. (Frueh, telephone conversation, Dec. 6 1996.) However as a feminist she believes it is her role to at least initiate a process of questioning sexuality, language and feminist politics and to re-establish a point of



intersection. In this process of reconstructing a space for a new or changing feminist consciousness she is creating her own identity.

To continue breaking boundaries.

Frueh embodies and speaks Polyvocally. Throughout the performance she alternates her tone of voice, and form of diction, playing between the soft romantic mood to verging on the “sexual language” of *hard* pornography to effectuate this polyvocality. This system of alternating positions supposedly creates the “sloppy” position to which the erotic scholar submits. First she says that “Woman has been conceptualised as the sloppy sex because she bleeds, fluid oozes from her vagina produces milk, and her body is softer than man’s”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 4.) She believes it is possible to use western culture’s idea of the sloppy position as a method to assert female subjectivity. The “sloppy” position allows her to redefine sexuality disciplines on her own terms. “Wetness”, she says, is one signal of woman’s lust and it can be used to analyse female pleasure. (Frueh, 1996, pp. 4-6.) According to the phallus this wetness signifies formlessness, inferiority and femininity. She however believes sloppiness can be used to her advantage. She calls sloppiness a position of centring. It can enable her (give her the licence) to confuse different forms of speech and diction, to recreate female sexuality and pleasure. She centres herself in “intersecting spheres of definition and derivation”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 4.) The pornoerotic position is an example of this polyvocality.





*The Pornoerotic body.*

The Pornoerotic body presents a "critical erotics" that puts an end to the tradition of disembodiment". (Frueh, 1996, p. 5.) This tradition of disembodiment refers to numerous positions. The first is the position of the female in the pornographic movie. A "critical erotics" is suppose to question the meaning and origin of female pleasure, sexual, visual and otherwise. Frueh analyses those areas where it is thought, especially by feminists, that female pleasure and female sexuality are misrepresented. These would involve practices that exclude female subjectivity. One of these enterprises includes the pornographic industry and unlike feminism she *considers* the relationship between pornographic pleasure and erotic pleasure. In this way Frueh is redefining grounds for feminist epistemology. Frueh wishes to take the pornographic body, the female as object, and the sexually graphic language that supposedly enhances this position and mix it with concepts of the erotic to deconstruct the boundaries between the two. In this way she believes she is recreating boundaries for the female body, woman, to define her own form of pleasure, to create female subjectivity. Frueh begins with a critique of Audre Lordes theory of the erotic.

In "*Uses of The Erotic: The Erotic as Power*" Lorde distinguishes a "real" and an "artificial" erotic. The real erotic is "firmly rooted in the power of our unexpressed or unrecognised feeling" that one can for example come to experience in connection with another person. (Trumansburg, 1984, p. 53.) Erotic connection can overcome, reconcile or lesson the threat of differences between people, of age, race, class and sex. For

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The second part of the report deals with the work done during the year and the results. It is divided into two main parts, the first of which deals with the work done during the year and the results, and the second of which deals with the work done during the year and the results.



example, Lorde says, the "sharing of joy" with another, whether "emotional, physical, psychic or intellectual" can "form a bridge" between sharers: it can be used as a "basis for understanding much of what is not shared between them" and so in this erotic connection lessons the "threat of difference". (Trumansberg, 1984, p. 57.)

To differentiate between the real and the artificial she says the real erotic is not that which is portrayed through pornography. In this terrain the erotic becomes the "plasticised sensation" because it is both false and objectifying. Lorde associates the artificial erotic with pornographic "sex" that places women as sex objects.

According to Mckinnon for example, in *"Pornography and violence. On sexuality, gender and power"* what is erotic in pornography is to tie, gag, torture, degrade, humiliate and defile women. (Nicholson, 1997, p. 116.) Whatever the "violation" done to women, it is made fun and sexy. This may mean rape, battery, prostitution or child sex abuse. This is violation made sexuality. (Nicholson, 1997, p. 166.) In this sense feminists like Mckinnon believe that pornographic "sexual fantasies" deny gender equality because it is "what men want", "it is their truth about sex". (Nicholson, 1997, p.168.) Sexuality again goes through the active/passive dichotomy when the only choice women have is "to desire to be the object" of male violation. (Nicholson, 1997, p. 168.)

Lorde believes that the real erotic has been suppressed within our consciousness because of its potential to provide energy for change. She is suggesting that the erotic is being used against women when women become objects of male sexual fantasies. It is also the case that men in general are being blamed, even if not all are responsible. Western society suspects this resource, not because it is more prominently associated with sex but because pornography abuses, devalues and falsifies its meaning with sex. That is,

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pornography uses the erotic to create "sex" that derives from violence against women and to create sexual difference as gender inequality. Mckinnon believes that pornography denies women the pleasure of experiencing erotic pleasure both in "sex" and in the voyeuristic aspect because in pornography it is a game constructed and controlled by the male gaze. To discover its "real" source Lorde believes we must begin to look outside not only the confines of this bedroom, as in the pornographic arena, but also outside the real bedroom. Criticism, however, must begin with pornography because the erotic here embodies the suppression of true feeling.

Frueh wishes to cross these boundaries. Her interest lies in the idea that the erotic can be "socially transformative". (Frueh, 1996, p. 91.) Like Mckinnon she believes that in order for women to experience and direct their own sexual pleasure it is necessary to identify and criticise those areas where female pleasure has been falsified. This is the only way that feminist theory of female sexuality can be reconstructed. Unlike Lorde however she believes that erotic pleasure need not be so delicate. In order to de-circumscribe theory of sexuality and sexual pleasure of both women and men she believes one must begin with the source of the problem. It is therefore not sufficient just to look outside pornography because that is avoiding the problem and limiting the opportunity for experimentation. Her objective is to conflate the erotic and the pornographic in a way so as to expand territory for defining and experiencing sexuality. "Erotic-for-women" must mean that women are producers and consumers and so in this they must take pleasure first and foremost in experiencing themselves as spectacles and objects of stimulation. (Frueh, 1994, p. 67.)



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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR, FBI

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

DATE: [Illegible]

TO: [Illegible]

FROM: [Illegible]

RE: [Illegible]

[The following text is illegible due to extreme fading and bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

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"I desire myself, am the dear one, the pornoerotic object for my own delectation, wishing, with lecherous intensity, for the world to be a whorehouse, full of people who define themselves as precious". (Frueh, 1996, p. 8.)

This is evident in and throughout "*Mouth Piece*". She looks to herself as an object of desire. She is the stimulus of her own erotic pleasure, her lovers and the audience through the continuous crossing of boundaries. She is aware that she is an object of the gaze but she is also the controller. She dresses in costume that calls attention to her body, the camera even focuses down "into her cleavage". She captures an audience attention. They look at her and continuously do so. They watch her feeling and embracing herself. She watches the audience watching her.

In a sense Frueh believes that feminist theory has allowed pornographic "sexualization" to stymie feminist exploration of sexuality. (Frueh, 1996, p. 109.) She believes that ideas of sexuality can be reconstructed by combining her experiences of female sexuality and the language of pornography. In this she sees a way to deconstruct the objectifying quality of pornographic sex and eroticism. Here she believes that *she* is orchestrating change in the meaning and function of language, both visual and verbal. In this she is deconstructing and reconstructing a form of symbolic order.

She takes the fetishist quality and "sexual language" of pornography and combines this with a kind of romantic and sentimental idea of love to implement a new form of language. She uses this language to express the lover's intimacy:

"Almost as soon as your prick was sliding in me, as we were sliding along your prick for the first time, you said, "I love you." (Frueh, 1996, p. 70.)

Her writing embodies a re-writing of the script of phallogentric logic of sexual difference:

SELF

The first of the three parts of the book is a history of the development of the theory of the structure of the atom. It begins with the discovery of the electron by Cathode ray experiments and the discovery of the nucleus by Rutherford's alpha particle experiments. It then discusses the development of the quantum theory of the atom, starting with Bohr's model and ending with the modern quantum mechanical theory. The second part of the book is a discussion of the properties of the atom, such as its size, mass, and energy levels. The third part of the book is a discussion of the applications of the theory of the structure of the atom, such as in the fields of spectroscopy, chemistry, and physics.

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SELF



“And it was written that He was excruciatingly close to coming. “And then He came”, She said. “For I drew out His semen, warm and slow, and I tasted His orgasm, I took Him wholly into Me...” (Frueh, 1996, p. 53.)

Instead of just surrounding and rubbing the penis during coition to satisfy his pleasure “they do it together”, she presents heterosexual intimacy as it really is. She writes metaphorically. What she is saying is that through interaction, mental and physical, they come to know one another as lovers first and foremost. In this they begin to question names, labels, “Am I a man?...As much as I’m a woman”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 177.) They transgress phallogentric boundaries. There is no more plunging of one(woman) into the abyss to raise another(man) to godly heights as Levinas philosophised, instead they exist in equilibrium.

She uses this language to suggest that they become one:

“When your tongue is in my cunt, I’m amazed I don’t know which are your lips and which are mine, that I can’t tell my cum from our saliva. (Frueh, 1996, p. 70.)

Frueh works this kind of lush language to suggest both a physical and mental synchronisation or unison between two people. This approach initiates a form of stereotypical gender transgression, that is not only experienced between the lovers, Frueh and Russell, but also between Frueh and her audience. In a sense her idea of the lover and the lovers embrace corresponds to Virginia Woolf’s idea of androgyny that is expressed in her idea of two coming together in a taxi in “*A Room of One’s Own*”. In response to this *physical* union between male and female, as they share one space, Woolf begins to contemplate transgressing distinguishing between two sexes.

“Perhaps to think, as I had been thinking these two days, of one sex as distinct from the other is an effort. *It interferes with the unity of the mind*”. (Woolf, 1992, p. 126.)

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She wonders if "there are really two sexes in the mind which correspond with two sexes in the body, and whether they also require to be united in order to get complete satisfaction and happiness". (Woolf, 1992, p. 128.)

*"Mouth Piece"* plays around with the idea of the "coming together" of lovers. It seems as if everyone, male and female, of diverse sexual choice, subjugates or transcends sexual identities to become a lover. Frueh says "speaker with audience, writer with reader: these are erotic relationships" and the "erotic scholar is a lover". Just as she and Russel have allowed themselves to think beyond stereotypical meanings of man and woman, the audience too are encouraged to move beyond the boundaries of stereotypical ideas of what it means to be heterosexual, lesbian, gay, etc. Frueh's pornoerotic body initiates this process.

With "lecherous intensity" *"Mouth Piece"* allows both the artist and the audience, the writer and the reader to experience, or at least think about what it would be like to become, a "pornoerotic body". Mckinnon believes that a feminist theory of sexuality must initially "identify and criticise the construct "sexuality" as a construct that has circumscribed and defined experience as well as theory". (Nicholson, 1997, p. 160.) Frueh's concept of the pornoerotic body and, in a sense, her "whorehouse world", as that created with *"Mouth Piece"*, encourages a rethinking of sexuality and desire, that in turn allows feminism to think beyond the boundaries of just recreating female sexuality. In other words *"Mouth Piece"* communicates to both male and female, and to transsexuals, to re-think the meaning of gender identity, not only concerning themselves but with each other. It creates the space where identities are exchanged and crossed. In this, the erotic scholar is, in a sense, learning to become a lover. Each lover recognises that identities are constructed and in this open to change.



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"*Mouth Piece*" wants the audience or the reader to experience this consciousness-raising as a new form of identity. Frueh says "I circumscribe myself", but only through interaction with an audience. (Frueh, 1996, p. 4.) This contradiction signifies that reconstructing sexuality must involve mutual participation between parties and the interaction between Frueh and her audience initiates the process of change.

*The Old(er) body.*

"*Mouth Piece*" exemplifies that identity formation is inconclusive and that sexual identities continually change. Frueh suggests this further with her eroticization of the old(er) female body (Figure 11). Instead of *embodying abjection*, the "other" to *ideal female sexuality*, she gives the old(er) body a new erotic identity and in this a new form of sexual identification.

In "*Mouth Piece*" Frueh engages in an exploration of the ageing body. She desires to use the "old(er) body" as a way to transcend a form of disembodied engagement that occurs as a result of rejection from society's erotic arena. Female ageing, as Susan Sontag says, "is a process of becoming obscene" a process of becoming repulsive. (Frueh, 1991, p. 269.) Frueh says that "old(er) women sometimes do not like to recognise themselves because ageing can be a process of adaptive repulsion". (Frueh, 1996, p. 82.) This initiates a form of mind and body split because the older body is not erotically explored.

She identifies menopausal and post menopausal old(er) bodies. Post menopausal bodies are rejected from patriarchy's love of young firmer fertile bodies. Older bodies are cast

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outside the erotic arena that desire reproductive ideals. This she associates with Freudian theories of "erotization" of castrated female models. She says that the womb is precious to Freudian theory because it provides the source to subjugating femininity. According to Freud the castrated woman begs for insemination to gain power. Without her child she is an even greater nothing in comparison to her "lover". He, always a he, will save her only if she can reproduce. The post-reproductive body leaves no room for male creativity. Instead he fears her, he fears even greater now the vagina dentata, the toothed vagina's sucking power. Confrontation may conjure a bloody massacre for myth tells us "A man who gets sucked in" may lose grasp of the phallus. What Frueh is stating here is that in Freudian theory a man is only that which can impregnate, if he sees beyond this line, if he ventures beyond this position, and desires to know woman beyond what she can only do for him, he will renounce his status. He will lose the phallus, he will lose his power... "will pine and die, will be no true man, in fact, nothing". (Frueh, 1996, p. 67.)

She sees menopause as a subversion of female reproductive organs as the origin of Freudian male desire and greed, and of erotic symbols and narratives that circumscribe femininity and womanhood. However the eye must be lured onto this platform before deconstruction can begin. The old(er) female body must embody beauty. This involves looking, seeing and thinking of the old(er) body as being something other than "inferior" to ideal beauty. Frueh desires to make the connection between visual and female pleasure from a position of difference, female ageing. (Frueh, 1996, p. 82.) She centres much of her work, theory and art on "aestheticising" the old(er) body. For her this embodies a physical and mental process, it involves visual and psychological acceptance. This can only begin in the body, with the source of all discomfort.



She says the old(er) woman does not seek pleasure in her beauty because she believes she is not "beautiful". She seeks pleasure outside her body. As she admires the firmer youthful body she de-aestheticises herself. She engages with society this way, she acknowledges that she is hyper-visible only because of the association of "decay". Frueh associates this perspective with patriarchal eroticism. Ageing according to Frueh is used to define "femininity" because it is other than ideal beauty. Femininity in this sense embodies the firmer younger "phallic" body, and its boundaries are extremely limited. In this sense old(er) women are not counted as "sexual" individuals because they are not "aesthetically" pleasing and their bodies no longer "reproduce".

Frueh wishes to overcome the "fear of the flesh that moves". (Frueh, 1994, p. 66.) She believes that the older body can represent "erotic freedom" through a process of "self-aestheticisation". What she means by this is that the non-reproductive woman's self-adornment, in the exploration of conventional feminine costume, as in "*Mouth Piece*", means that she refuses to accept the "exclusive canon of womanly beauty". She calls this process a de-aestheticisation of "Woman as socially constructed femininity" because in *her* defiance she both deconstructs and reconstructs meanings of feminine aesthetic and in this "opens up new meanings of woman". (Frueh, 1996, pp. 83-84.)

*"The costume can be worn and used to investigate and re-invent pleasure".*

Frueh basically engages in a process of "fetishizing" her ageing body. This is both a mental and physical performance for her. Bailey Doogan quotes "I feel more of a going inward as I get older" and "the older I get the more I stare at myself". (Frueh, 1996, p.





91.) Frueh also experiences this same self scrutiny. She analyses every mark, every line of time passing. I asked Frueh why she chose the particular imagery she did for "*Mouth Piece*" and she said she wanted to dress as the stereotype particularly because of her age. While she doesn't dress like this everyday she felt she had to perform something for the stage, in that she meant that she wanted to cross boundaries.

These boundaries were self imposed as much as socially inscribed. As an ageing body she experienced a certain sense of fear of association. In this she acknowledged the structure she was feeding from: cultures grating eye. The stereotypical feminine image, as phallic sex icon, and the older body, as "old cunt", together could cross boundaries. She wanted to extend the meaning of visual pleasure but this meant risking her body and her mind. Would she be taken seriously as a woman and as an artist in her performance? How would her audience make the connection between these? How would her audience perceive her feminism and her ageing body, how would they relate the two? We discussed these questions. To answer these one must contemplate whether she is trapped in body because of her age: is her work a response to a *fear* of how she might be perceived as an ageing artist? Is she therefore risking everything with the stereotype: could she be taken seriously as a *feminist artist*?

Firstly these questions are asked because she may, through her work, be perceived as "reactionary". Frueh states in "Duel Duet" that a woman who uses her body in her art in a seductive manner, "to get herself up in an arousing way", through a male gaze system, may encourage some feminists "to perceive her as reactionary". (Frueh, 1996, p. 125.) Reactionary in this sense may be interpreted as backward-looking or dependant, in the fact that she is still working within the boundaries of the male gaze. Frueh acknowledges the risks involved, for she says, "...we risked being used". However she also believes

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that "surgery - cutting out the parts that seem traumatised, limiting the images, fashions, and fantasies that women can entertain - is unhealthy". (Frueh, 1996, p. 125.) Surgery of such kind leaves little room for the old(er) body to perform, except as the other, to the side of the privileged. Frueh "is getting herself up" in another way. On stage, in her "gear", Frueh believes that she experiences "a polyvocality of organs, surfaces and sensations". She gains erotic pleasure from aestheticising her ageing body and using it to play with other bodies in the audience. She interacts with a multitude of bodies, of colour, shape, age and sexuality. She encourages "self and other" scrutiny. She knows her position, others, the audience and the reader, try to imagine what it would be like to be in this particular position, making a spectacle of oneself on stage. How would one carry it off: use the body to communicate and use the body as a target? Frueh uses her performance to question what it means to be a woman, an artist, a feminist, ageing, American, white and middle class, and the relationship between all of these labels. She engages in a practice of re-inventing identity but the first and foremost task she must perform is to risk identity and risk stability.

Through "*Mouth Piece*" Frueh identifies that *her* position to redefine grounds for feminist epistemology must acknowledge that her voice, of experience, is just one voice among many. We have seen how Frueh has examined how feminism, as a movement so far, has not recognised or acknowledged the multiplicity of its own voice. The terms of debate that organised feminist theoretical discourse in the eighties, the essentialist verses the anti-essentialist debate that centred on redefining female sexuality, remained, essentially, white middle class feminist disputes that came to represent mainstream feminism.

1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general situation and the second section deals with the progress of the work.

2. The second part of the report deals with the results of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the results of the work in the field and the second section deals with the results of the work in the laboratory.

3. The third part of the report deals with the conclusions of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the conclusions of the work in the field and the second section deals with the conclusions of the work in the laboratory.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the recommendations of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the recommendations of the work in the field and the second section deals with the recommendations of the work in the laboratory.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the summary of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the summary of the work in the field and the second section deals with the summary of the work in the laboratory.

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In conversation she said that "you create from the position you are in". (Frueh, Nov. 16 1996.) In this she is saying that she, as a feminist artist, is taking responsibility for *her* position. In using that which is closest to her, the experience of ageing, and questioning its meaning, she is representing *her* lived experience. She believes that women's lived experience is diverse and feminism is multi-vocal. She is not representing *the* voice of feminism, but rather she represents a voice of feminism.

In conversation again she said "it is not necessary in every sentence to be dealing with every issue" and to her feminist involves what one wants or needs to bring into discussion, into question, into discourse. (Frueh, Dec. 21 1996.) This is what she is doing with the old(er) body. In "*Erotic Faculties*" under the heading "*The Other Side of Privilege*" she says that female pleasure has been theorised in terms of sexual difference with feminism but insufficiently so in terms of women's differences from women. One of these differences is that of ageing and she speaks about the older female body "being left out" of theory, for feminist epistemology. She experiences to an extent what it means to be on the other side of the privilege category, as an ageing artist. Rather than *being applauded for her efforts as an older female artist* she wants to use the old(er) body to disrupt this kind of thinking. Being an older female artist she does not want to be "second best", she wants a new voice for older female artists and the most boundary breaking way to do this is through the body. She presents that which makes her most vulnerable to this kind of categorisation. It may be perceived that she does not want to loose "her femininity", in that she is still conforming to the "ideal sexual stereotype". She is not loosing her femininity but rather re-defining it and opening up the boundaries for theorising sexual difference.





Frueh questions the idea of, and the relationship between, being forcibly sexy and the force of sociovisual conventions. She acknowledges how she once felt when she scrutinised an older woman "being forcedly sexy"... wearing a conservatively patterned miniskirt, running her fingers through her wheat-in-moonlight hair while leaning on a counter..." (Frueh, 1996, p. 83.) Frueh was embarrassed to witness this event and simultaneously ashamed for wishing that this woman's sexuality disappear and that her desire for visual pleasure not compel Frueh to look at her. She believes now that "acting one's age", means transgressing this immediacy to categorise and dismiss difference.

Frueh is using her body and voice as a channel to speak for the unheard. Luce Irigaray's philosophies encourages her to think all female bodies are erotic and she wants to make a connection between her transgressive erotic, art practice and feminism. She re-addresses the sex/gender split and deconstructs it with the theme of androgyny. The older body, is not firm or fertile, therefore she is not the stereotypical feminine. Rather she is the after body and the after life of "womanhood". Dressing in drag confuses conventional gender identity. As the "old-cunt Venus" she parodies the whole idea of gender as a performance. As Teresa de Lauretis may suggest she represents instead a "glamourously redundant a-woman" dressed as a Woman. (Frueh, Langer, Raven, 1994, p. 277.) In drag she embodies auto-eroticism, *she* decides performance. She confuses elements of masculinity and femininity to re-create a polymorphous perverse identity that overthrows submission.

1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work during the year, and the second section deals with the specific results of the work.

2. The second part of the report deals with the specific results of the work. It is divided into three main sections: the first section deals with the results of the work in the field of agriculture, the second section deals with the results of the work in the field of industry, and the third section deals with the results of the work in the field of commerce.

3. The third part of the report deals with the conclusions and recommendations. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the conclusions and the second section deals with the recommendations.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the appendix. It contains the following information:

- a. A list of the names of the members of the committee.
- b. A list of the names of the members of the sub-committee.
- c. A list of the names of the members of the working group.
- d. A list of the names of the members of the advisory committee.
- e. A list of the names of the members of the executive committee.
- f. A list of the names of the members of the secretariat.
- g. A list of the names of the members of the administrative staff.
- h. A list of the names of the members of the technical staff.
- i. A list of the names of the members of the financial staff.
- j. A list of the names of the members of the legal staff.
- k. A list of the names of the members of the medical staff.
- l. A list of the names of the members of the educational staff.
- m. A list of the names of the members of the cultural staff.
- n. A list of the names of the members of the sports staff.
- o. A list of the names of the members of the social staff.
- p. A list of the names of the members of the religious staff.
- q. A list of the names of the members of the political staff.
- r. A list of the names of the members of the military staff.
- s. A list of the names of the members of the naval staff.
- t. A list of the names of the members of the air staff.
- u. A list of the names of the members of the space staff.
- v. A list of the names of the members of the atomic staff.
- w. A list of the names of the members of the nuclear staff.
- x. A list of the names of the members of the biological staff.
- y. A list of the names of the members of the chemical staff.
- z. A list of the names of the members of the physical staff.

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Conclusion.

*Changing the symbolic.*

*Consciousness-raising and feminism.*

Bell Hooks believes that "it is first the potential oppressor within that we must resist - the potential victim within that we must rescue". (Peach, 1998, p.418.) Frueh says that "individual experience marks human beings...we choose our destinies to some extent, inscribe ourselves". (Frueh, 1996, p. 125.) For feminism "inscribing" must involve reassessing the meaning of rules, and this must begin, first and foremost, with individual experience. It is only then can one really understand what oppression means. One must consider rules in relation to self and in "connection with an 'other'" ; how does one perceive oneself with others; how does inter-relationship begin? One might begin by stating that it begins with consciousness : it is only when one can recognise the relationship between the oppressor and the victim within, can one attempt to speak to and with others about difference. This marks the process of consciousness-raising.

Frueh's "*Mouth Piece*" represents a space where differences can be re-addressed. The first most important task for her is to make this a mind and body act. She uses *her* body, and her relationship to *the* body as a channel for the fear of difference to be confronted, within oneself and between oneself and others.

The Pornoerotic body embodies the merging of culture and nature. It represents visual and physical pleasure redefined from an-"other" female perspective. Lorde states that the erotic derives from the Greek word Eros, which is "born of chaos", and "personifies

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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

1. [Illegible]

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4. [Illegible]

5. [Illegible]

6. [Illegible]

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9. [Illegible]

10. [Illegible]

Very truly yours,  
[Illegible Signature]

Special Agent in Charge

Enclosure

creative power and harmony.” She also describes the erotic as “a measure between the beginnings of our sense of selves and the chaos of our strongest feelings”. (Trumansburg, 1984, p. 54.) Frueh believes that this “coming to fully understand ourselves” can only occur through an analysis of how culture has shaped us, psychologically, emotionally and bodily. She channels her ideas through the idea of recreating the feminine and her efforts aim to reconstruct a space for the female artist to bring feminism through her work. In this she questions her position as an artist and as a cultural producer.

Where Frueh places her image, on the front cover of *“Erotic Faculties”*, is significant, like an advertisement (Figure 12). It leads to curiosity in the book. The reader becomes a viewer first and foremost because she/he is faced with *“Mouth Piece”*. Frueh’s erotic presence is meant to advertise her sense of power through the sexual, stereotypical imagery. It simultaneously questions the meaning of power. One immediately sees her older body. I admit to being lured into reading her words, exploring the text. Her image immediately encourages speculation, it suddenly recalls the late seventies decade when Sherman parodied the sexual stereotype with her black and white film stills (Figure 13 and figure 14). This incites further analysis of Sherman’s later coloured photographs of prosthetic mannequins which represent “old cunt” as disassembled abject horror (Figure 15 and figure 16). It leads one to question where exactly is the viewer, *the reader*, in relation to the artist, this image, the feminist, this woman, in all of these spaces.

What comes to mind is that from the beginning, from the time that the artist put on her lipstick, from the moment the “sexy bitch” catches the viewer’s eye, this performance is precipitating re-construction ; inventing new places for being. It is only when the viewer begins to question the performance that she/he begins to question her/himself ; the





performance becomes one of questioning spaces. This idea of inter-connection emanates from fluctuating between vulnerability and power.

*The active Voice: Re-inventing...*

Frueh wants the reader and the audience to use the active voice. She encourages this use of the personal in art and critical practice. In *"Erotic Faculties"* she sits with her legs crossed and stares, her mouth poised to speak. The severity of her black fringe cut, high up and straight across the forehead, seems so *hard*, so "un-feminine". It encourages a continuous return to a small soft black and white image inside the book (Figure 17).

Here Frueh stands with her arms outstretched, her ribs protruding, her breasts seem so adolescent-like, the hair under her arms is quite vivid and a pearl necklace, which belonged to her grandmother, decorates her bare chest. She has a Witch-like expression on her face and with raised "un-plucked" eyebrows, forehead scrunched, her fringe cut severely and her head tilted at an angle she appears as if she is ranting. It encourages one to imagine that she is in a trance or a ritual dance of some kind, perhaps a celebration of new "Womanhood".

The image suggests a visual representation of Frueh's psychological and emotional response to being a "Woman" in contemporary culture. The mere mention of the word "Woman" encourages immediate speculation. It is interesting to consider here Linda Klinger's idea of "'Woman as artist' and 'Woman as subject'" presented as "interrelated conditions". (Klinger, 1991, p.42.) With this image and *"Mouth Piece"* the artist is questioning Woman in her role as an artist. She does this with an audience. She

# WATTFOST

WATTFOST is a weekly newspaper published in the town of Watford, Vermont. It is owned and operated by the Watford News Company, which is a subsidiary of the Watford Publishing Company. The newspaper is published every week except on Sundays and public holidays. It is a general interest newspaper, covering local news, sports, and community events. The newspaper is known for its high quality journalism and its commitment to providing accurate and timely information to its readers. The Watford News Company is a family-owned business, and the newspaper has been published in Watford for over 100 years. The newspaper is a valuable resource for the community, and it is an important part of the town's history and culture.



performs this in a certain way: she conjures a spectacle to be questioned. In this process she engages with (her) body in transforming and re-inventing structures and boundaries: she performs a poiesis of the (her) body which critiques and re-invents symbolic orders.

To precipitate this consciousness-raising she places herself as the ultimate target, as an example to be assessed. "At the podium of critique" she discloses her experiences of sexuality and difference to the public. In this she initiates a dialogue of re-assessment. The first objective is to re-position cultural and historical terms that have categorised and objectified, "female conditions", the second is to render this practice as an empathetic one where the confluence of truth and fiction can recreate identity.

She begins this dialogue of re-assessment *with herself in herself*. With the ranting image she embodies the "hysteric" and in this questions its meaning. She experiences "extreme states of being" in being in control and being "a loose end", in being both powerful and vulnerable, and in being both fiction and reality. Bataille describes this state as one that "dislocates us and excludes calm reflection" and therefore "its essence being to put us 'beside ourselves'". (Bataille, 1987, p. 260.) Frueh acts out the hysteric in public. When she brings real events from her "private life" to further this process she confuses elements of "real being" and "acting out being". This allows her to transcend stereotypical being, in essence "being tied down", but it simultaneously questions her stability: what is *she* in this composition? This is an erotic experience because *she is* consistently displacing herself. She is using the active voice in this process of exploring female sexuality; as a mental and physical process it renders every position imaginable indefinite; the artist allows the woman to cross boundaries and visa versa.

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*"The Newly Born Woman."*

Bataille says that "as far as eroticism goes, celebrations are often a time of sexual licence." (Bataille, 1987, p. 257.) Here he is discussing crossing boundaries, for with eroticism "a matter difficult to discuss...there is a taboo in force" and "in the act of violating it we feel the anguish of mind without which the taboo could not exist".

(Bataille, 1987, p. 39.) He also affirms that, while "nothing is absolutely forbidden, for there are always transgressions", "eroticism must remain something exterior...as far as we are concerned..." (Bataille, 1987, p. 252.) What Bataille is essentially saying is that subjectivity emerges from the consistent transgression and re-invention of boundaries and concerning eroticism we consistently place it on new levels, we give it new meaning.

Subjectivity is based on risk-taking because there is a constant searching for new experience.

Helene Cixous' and Catherine Clement's "Newly Born Woman" pursues, in a sense, Bataille's conjecture: *she* is the point at where taboo and eroticism are brought together to invent subjectivity that is transgressive:

"There is a voice crying in the wilderness, the voice of a body dancing, laughing, shrieking, crying. Whose is it? It is, they say, the voice of a woman, newborn and yet archaic, a voice of milk and blood, a voice silenced but savage." (Wing, 1986, p ix.)

This "newly born Woman" is essentially a "hyperbolic body" that emerges from the merging of "autobiography and philosophy, literary analysis and utopian speculation".

(Cixous and Clement, 1986, pp x-xi.) The subjective involves returning to the history of



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female conditions: femininity as oppressed, to begin the process of change: rewriting the feminine. The Cixous and Clement objective is to write *her* into being again. They not only render the female body in chaos but as chaotic; she overturns language, theory and philosophy on difference. The feminine subject is the neurotic, ecstatic, outsider, carnie, drifter, juggler and acrobat, mother, daughter, artist, fucker, poet and philosopher rolled into one. (Cixous and Clement, 1975, pp. 6-8.)

In "*Mouth Piece*" Frueh is essentially a multiple body, a body in chaos and in this she is celebrating "new found" sexuality. She acts on the symbolic, she "takes up its form", and in this challenges its boundaries. She does this through merging states of femininity created by culture and history - the hysteric, the sorceress, the "sage", the bitch, the old crone, the passive lover, and inflecting these with personal experiences of womanhood. When she engages in an exploration of what it means to be a woman, female, sexual and sexy, she is essentially re-inventing. This is the point where truth and fiction merge; she explores taboo and ideal and confuses their separate meaning. This is her semiotic invention: she is Cixous' and Clement's "Newly Born Woman" emerging through "*Mouth Piece*" ranting herself into a plethora of existence.

Julia Kristeva believes that "the semiotic is 'revolutionary' because *"it acts on the symbolic* and allows a new vision of subjectivity." (Humm, 1995, p. 255.) The semiotic for Kristeva, that is Kristeva's coinage of "*la semiotique*", embodies the "organisation of instincts" that will change language. For her this begins with the pre-oedipal moment of contact between mother and infant. She says that "the oral sounds of infants and gestures and rhythms of mother and infant recur in the irregularities and musical rhythms

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1. The first part of the report is a general description of the project. It includes the title, the author's name, and the date of the report. It also includes a brief summary of the project's objectives and the methods used to collect and analyze the data.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the data collection process. It includes information about the location of the data collection site, the time of day, the weather conditions, and the methods used to collect the data. It also includes information about the equipment used to collect the data and the procedures used to ensure the accuracy of the data.

3. The third part of the report is a detailed description of the data analysis process. It includes information about the statistical methods used to analyze the data and the results of the analysis. It also includes information about the software used to perform the analysis and the procedures used to ensure the accuracy of the results.

4. The fourth part of the report is a discussion of the results of the study. It includes a summary of the findings and a discussion of their implications. It also includes a discussion of the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

5. The fifth part of the report is a conclusion. It includes a summary of the findings and a statement of the author's conclusions.

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of literature.” (Humm, 1995, p. 255.) Just like the oral sounds of infants, Frueh is “resonant” on stage. Through speech, sound, intonation, and dress Frueh creates a form of semiotic that exceeds rational being, that is according to phallogocentric logic. In behaving irrationally, chanting, raving and “fucking” in public, in challenging the fear of being an “old cunt”, she discovers otherness: she crosses the haven and opens up areas for re-thinking being.

Bataille says “In the orgy...the desirable object...does not stand out by itself, for sexual excitement occurs through an uncontrolled urge...It is objective but it is not perceived as the object; the person who perceives it is at the same time animated by it.” (Bataille, 1987, p.130.) Frueh renders herself the object of desire for the fusion of herself with her lovers. She is “not eroticism in its completeness” but rather *the event*, “*Mouth Piece*” is the erotic experience *in* the fusion of lovers.

Part of the erotic event involves Frueh questioning the function of language and her role *with* the text. This embodies a particular approach: she *gives the impression* of labouring on and over-emphasising control of the performance. For example, at intervals in the script “*Mouth Piece*” she defines her next objective: “Frueh lets the sentences sound like music, proclamation, chanting, and a voice making love.” (Frueh, 1996, p. 59.)

Then she performs this exactly with the following: “To utter words in musical tones, inflections, modulations. To proclaim in a clear or resonant manner. To chant, intone, to celebrate. To make love with words, make poetry. *To bring or accompany to a state by singing.*” (Frueh, 1996, pp. 59-60.)

She poeticises theory or theorises poetry: she conflates the two. She pursues this further with colour, it defines not only her appearance but her language too, and thus, creates

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narcissistic harmony. In this she parodies the role of the philosopher, theorist and poet; she confronts the "Sugar Daddy" through that which has been oppressed: sexual stereotype, repressed: hysteric, rejected: "old cunt", and destroyed: sorceress and the witch, and through the medium that has decimated the feminine: language. "*Mouth Piece*" becomes a case of "philosophy-theory-poetry" on being, emanating from "soul-and-mind-inseparable-from-the-body". (Frueh, 1996, pp. 61-91.)

Frueh transposes material from different sources to conduct her monologue. When she addresses her "Sugar Daddy" she does so through the confluence of alimentary symbolism and sexual symbolism for new sexual nourishment: "I love you daddy, let me be sweet enough for you. Tell me I'm sweet enough for you, so I don't have to eat as if there's no tomorrow for us. Oh, let the love, the words be sweet enough." (Frueh, 1996, p. 70.) Here she re-addresses her "Sugar Daddy" as her lover: "when your body and mine are vocal organs". Simultaneously she severs her sex and guts from him. Frueh is essentially seeking deconstruction of the sameness category that exists in phallogentric logic of sexual difference. She expresses excessive literal sweetness in a metaphorical and lyrical manner to poeticise new contact:

"the hot fudge sundaes I needed...melting my snowy heart into the...cream I share with men, my cum...my husband lover says is sweet. He eats to live, eats me to live." (Frueh, 1996, p. 69.)

In discussing the relationship between alimentary symbolism and sexual symbolism she has altered part of Eric Neumann's text on "*The Great Mother*". She brings together Chris Weedon's idea of the semiotic chora, from "*Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*", and Neumann's hypothesis of "being-outside-oneself" and the powers of the unconscious, to conduct her creation of the semiotic. The semiotic chora



1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject.

2. The second part is a detailed description of the methods used.

3. The third part is a discussion of the results obtained.

4. The fourth part is a conclusion and a summary of the findings.

5. The fifth part is a list of references.

6. The sixth part is a list of figures and tables.

7. The seventh part is a list of appendices.

8. The eighth part is a list of footnotes.

9. The ninth part is a list of acknowledgments.

10. The tenth part is a list of the author's address.

11. The eleventh part is a list of the author's other works.

12. The twelfth part is a list of the author's publications.

13. The thirteenth part is a list of the author's awards.

14. The fourteenth part is a list of the author's honors.

15. The fifteenth part is a list of the author's memberships.

16. The sixteenth part is a list of the author's affiliations.

17. The seventeenth part is a list of the author's contacts.

18. The eighteenth part is a list of the author's interests.

19. The nineteenth part is a list of the author's hobbies.

20. The twentieth part is a list of the author's family.

21. The twenty-first part is a list of the author's pets.

22. The twenty-second part is a list of the author's friends.

23. The twenty-third part is a list of the author's enemies.

24. The twenty-fourth part is a list of the author's admirers.

25. The twenty-fifth part is a list of the author's admirations.

is "at its strongest in nonrational discourses which threaten the organization of the symbolic order and the stability of its meanings, such as unorganized religion, art, and poetry." (Frueh, 1996, p. 60.) To her "Sugar Daddy" she says "the crime is in the lack of language". (Frueh, 1996, p. 69.) She believes the father-daughter relationship has suffered because of the organisation of language, a similar analysis made by Cixous. She speaks metaphorically, she is talking of masculinity and femininity, recalling Irigaray's hypothesis of how masculinity has nourished on the fragmentation of the feminine.

*The Feminine Re-born: speaking difference.*

Frueh critiques phallogentric logic, feminism, and the meaning of difference, through her integration of the private into the public arena. Artist and Woman are both reconstructed positions and they both represent a reconstructed feminine. Her construction represents a difference to Sherman's "counterfeit" realities of femininity, as does Wilke's "beauty to beast" transformation. In different ways, Frueh and Wilke sacrifice their personal lives to create art that communicates mutual strength and vulnerability. In this they are experiencing erotic subjectivity because they engage in a process of exploring what "potential oppressor" and "potential victim" means. They alternate between these positions.

Frueh believes that the "feminine can be deliberate and expansive without being paradigmatic". (Frueh, telephone conversation, Dec. 21 1996.) In "Mouth Piece" she speaks of masculine logic as both visual and theoretical. She criticises feminism for submitting to the father's law which she assumes to be masculine, and in this linear and

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authoritative, accepting “only one form”. She supports this statement with the idea that some feminists have tried to embody the masculine voice, to engage in “serious discourse”. In this, body has been excluded in feminist re-theorising of female sexuality. She introduces restriction to take on this “collusion of imperialism”. In *“Mouth Piece”* she alternates her body between standing and speaking miked and sitting and speaking miked. Physically and verbally she transgresses boundaries through pastiche and contradiction. The colours of her costume, red, black and white structure a long poem, or chant, which she uses metaphorically to embody multiplicity: “I speak goldilocks brunette and silver white and Redhead...I speak as bete noir... sound the red alert...I speak as black market...The bride in Ivory Soup...She is the bitch too wearing white...Red hot mama...”. (Frueh, 1996, pp. 57-60.)

In *“Erotic Faculties”* she says that her performances are “visually minimalist...because her words are paramount”. (Frueh, 1996, p. 23.) Positioning herself at a podium to speak about transformation, of sexuality and difference, in this costume, is obtrusive. She is forcing herself in a particular way into public life to encourage interrogation. She is also taking risks, she makes “a show” of her private life; her desires and her fears. She recognises the simultaneous power and vulnerability of this performance.

*Inter-connection: the text re-visited....*

In *“Red and bad and dangerous and free”* Ailbhe Smyth wrote:

“I dream now of laughing, spinning, dancing, glorying in the full nakedness of myself....I dream now of differences which have no meaning beyond their own tender uniqueness -

# ALL REPORTS

body, skin, sex, voice, heart, mind, spirit - each caressed and cherished - each neither more nor less than the other, each strong, whole and passionate, creative, vital... I dream of revolution, hope, freedom and love." ( Ailbhe Smyth, Gay Community News, 1997, p. 19.)

Frueh's work calls for such a celebration. She has been described as "Victorian" and "feminine" in her "sentimental" and "romantic" approach to writing. In one of our conversations she says that she is recalling nineteenth century writing, "masters of the purple prose". (Frueh, Dec. 21 1996.) This she incorporates into her identity. Her "Pornoerotic body", in this sense, has a calculated androgynous nature. In "*Erotic Faculties*" she speaks of Dante Gabrielle Rosetti's, "Astarte Syriaca". (Frueh, 1996, pp. 122-123.) She says that the image of this "Rosetti Woman" supposedly represents a late nineteenth century *goddess* of love and sex (Figure 18). If one looks closer at the image one sees that the beauty of *this object* lies in its androgynous character. The idealist and the idea cannot be separated; as Frueh says, both are "bruised and haunted by love and sex". Astarte, Frueh says, "is a power of flesh and thoughtfulness, and paradoxically but necessarily, vulnerability", and Rosetti himself believes, "betwixt between the sun and the moon" she is "a mystery". (Frueh, 1996, p. 123.) Frueh says she has identified with this image and simultaneously finds this image alluring: "Astarte's fingers at breast and crotch touch me - the sexual gesture is for me as well as for male eyes. I like the idea of female authority...as an unknown quantity that can change the construction of erotic postures, both mental and physical..." (Frueh, 1996, p. 123.) Like Astarte she is an active dreamer, "perhaps even a monster", a monstrous feminine. She dares to be a misfit through self-desire and self-worship (Figure 19).



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Frueh is white, American and middle class and much more. She represents a part of feminism. Through "*Mouth Piece*" she presents a system of domination questioned. "*Mouth Piece*" embodies a text that is analysed, deconstructed and reconstructed through communication. It could not be anything without an audience, the multiple audience, of different sex, sexual choice, race, class, age, story, geography and so on. Her work presents interesting questions about the meaning and the position of the text, and of the author and the reader in the text. The author and the reader are rotating positions within one person and they fluctuate to create *inter-connection* between "others". "*Mouth Piece*" is questioning with an "other": it represents a collaborative project to re-create with difference in mind.

Through the old(er) body Frueh acknowledges a potential victim within and in this she realises how an oppressor can be made. When she confronts "mainstream feminism", *she as the privileged voice*, she is questioning her position as a potential feminist artist. She initiates a transformational politic. To sustain movement towards eradicating patriarchal domination, both the author and the reader must consistently exchange roles, deviate from what is considered the norm and recognise, the full nakedness of being.

THE  
FEDERAL  
BUREAU OF  
INVESTIGATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR, FBI

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

DATE: [Illegible]

TO: [Illegible]

FROM: [Illegible]

RE: [Illegible]

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Figure 1: Hannah Wilke, S.O.S. Starification Object Series, 1974







Figure 2: Hannah Wilke, from "Hannah Wilke, A Retrospective",  
1989





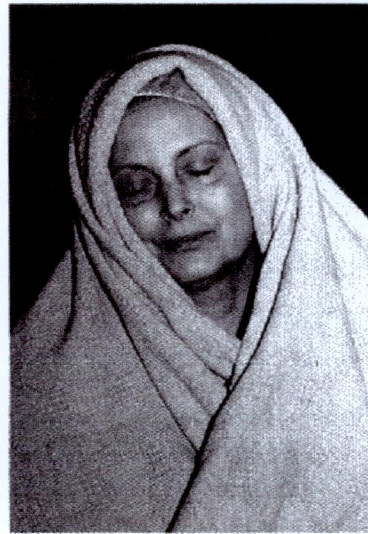
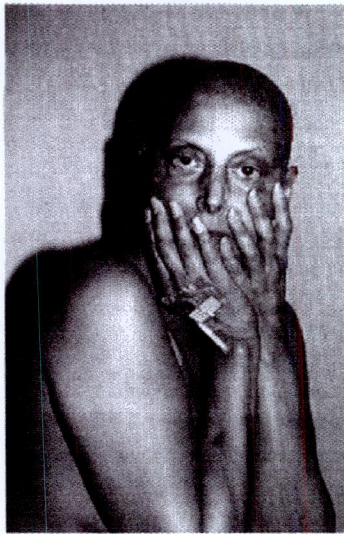


Figure 3: Hannah Wilke, INTRA-VENUS, 1992-1993

Figure 4: Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Bather Arranging her Hair, 1890







Figure 5: Lauren Bacall in "The Big Sleep", 1946





Figure 6: Joanna Frueh, Standing at mike, "Mouth Piece",  
1989



Source: *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1914, 17: 1000.



Figure 7: Joanna Frueh, Seated unmiked, "Mouth Piece",  
1989





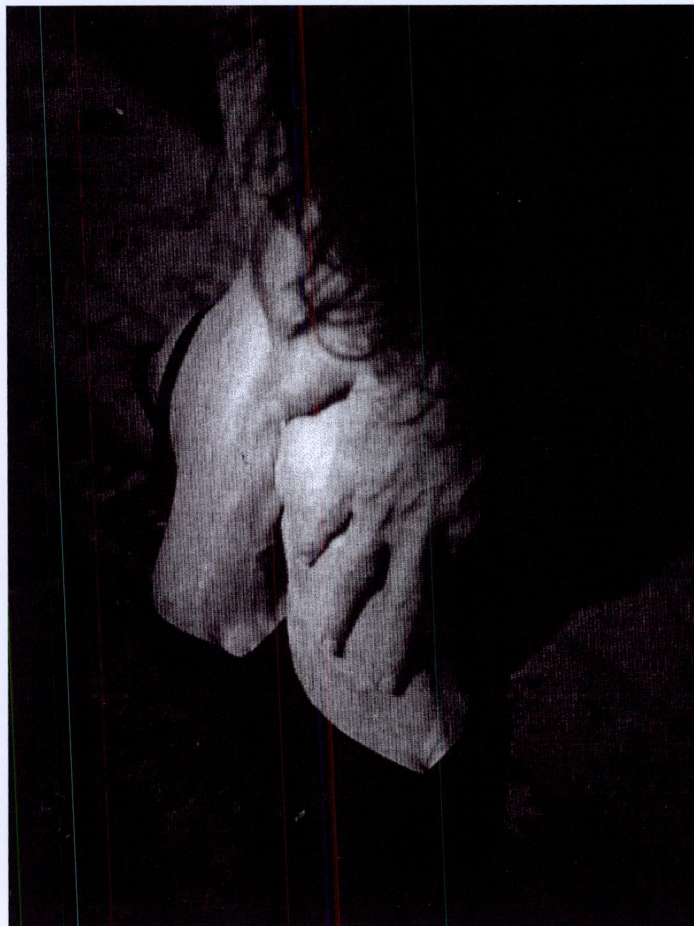
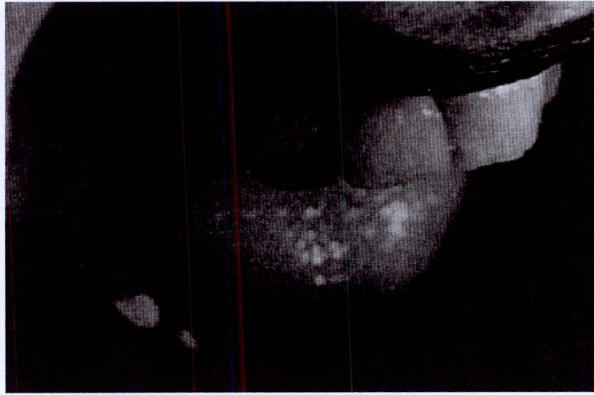


Figure 8: Joanna Frueh, Close-up of body parts,  
"Mouthpiece", 1989





Figure 9: Joanna Frueh, Close-up of thigh,  
"Mouth Piece", 1989



Notes : Journal Entry, Close-up of ship.

Notes : Journal Entry, Close-up of ship.



Figure 10: Joanna, "Mouth Piece", 1989





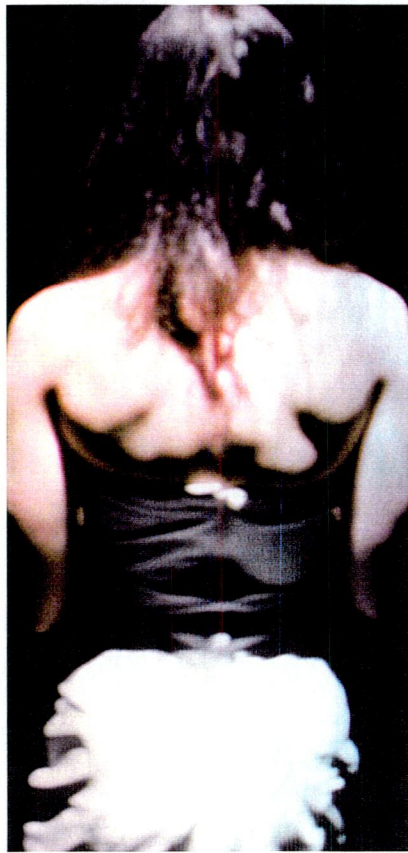


Figure 11: Joanna Frueh, Back to the audience,  
"Mouth Piece", 1989

Return to the house, back to the garden.

"The Garden", 1930

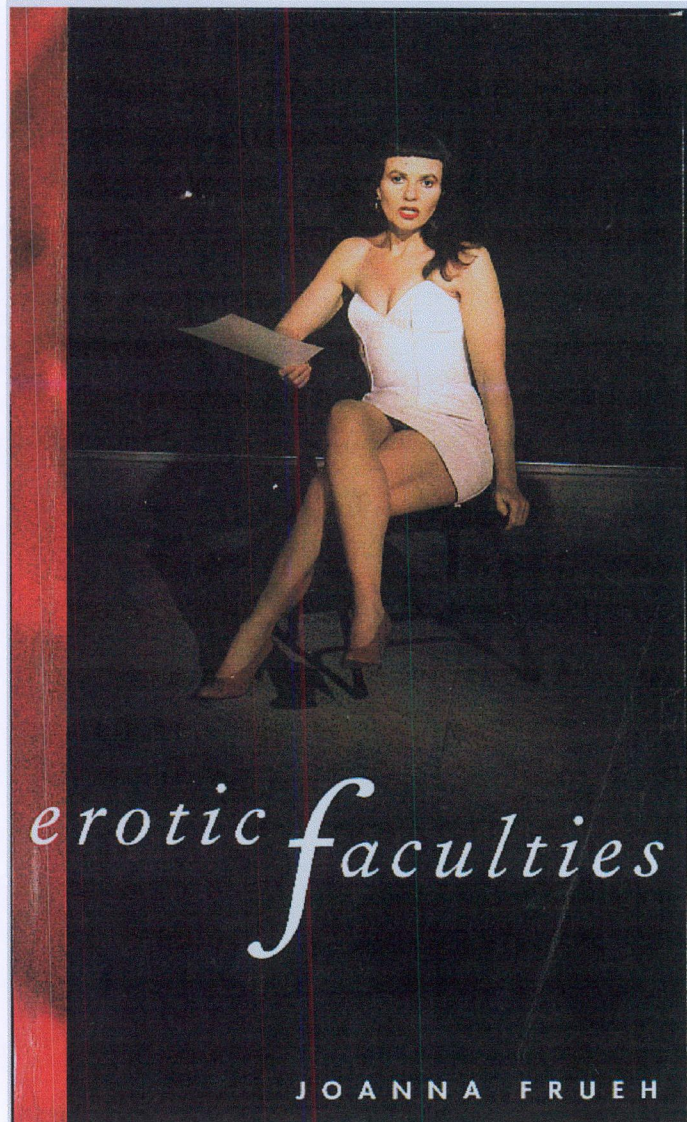


Figure 12: Joanna Frueh, "Mouth Piece" on front cover of "Erotic Faculties", 1996





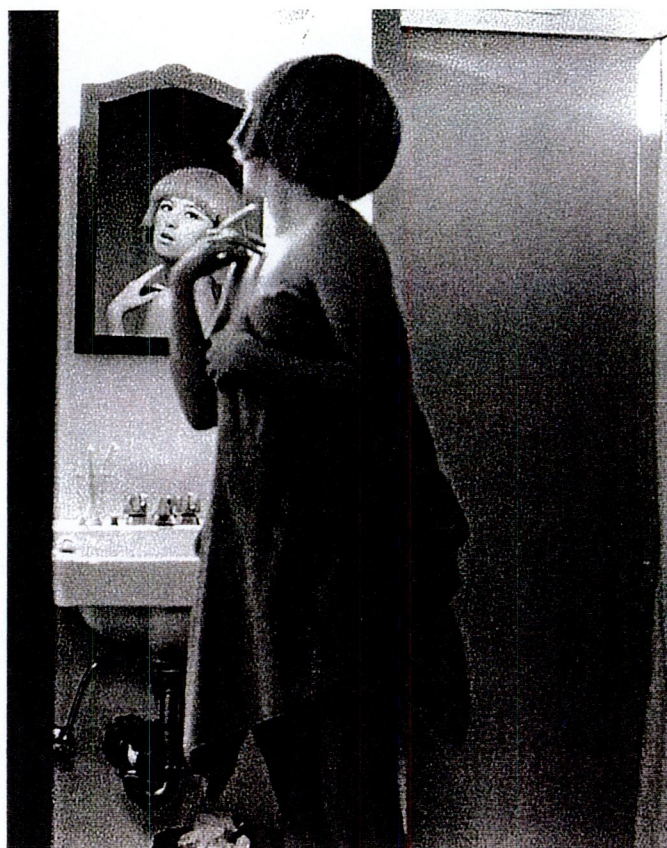


Figure 13: Cindy Sherman, Untitled Film Still,  
no. 2, 1977





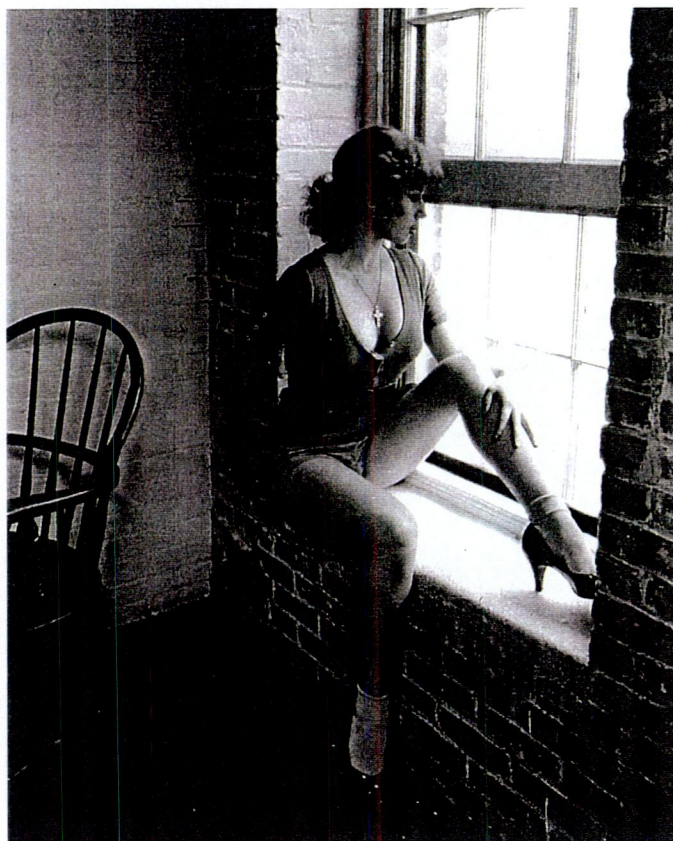


Figure 14: Cindy Sherman, Untitled Film Still,  
no. 15, 1978

Source: Linda Sherman, United Film Still.



Figure 15: Cindy Sherman, Untitled, no. 250, 1992





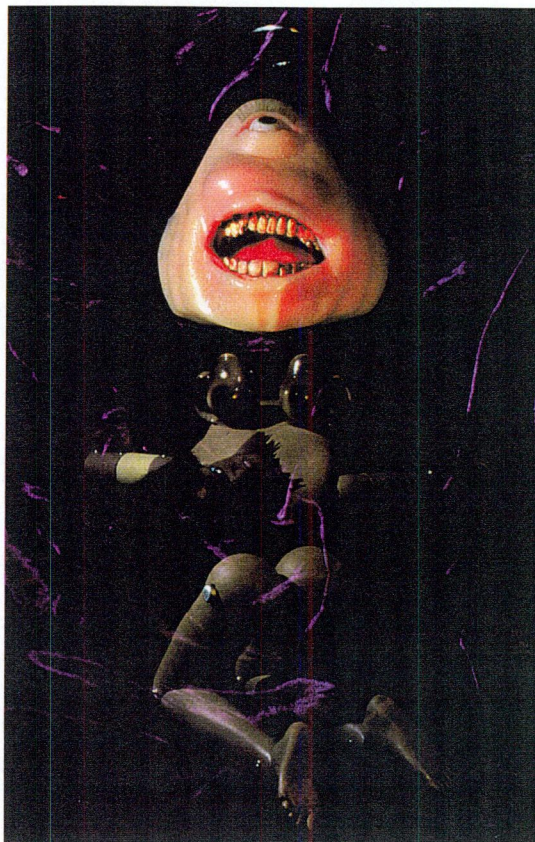


Figure 16: Cindy Sherman, Untitled, no. 308, 1994





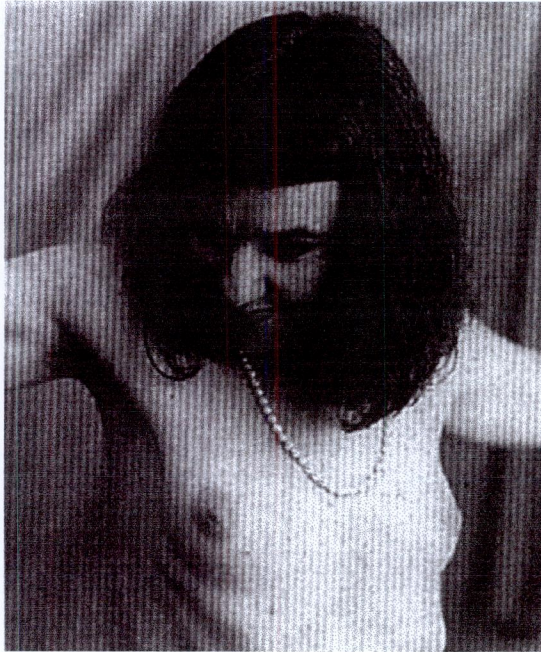


Figure 17: Joanna Frueh, "Erotic Faculties", 1996





Figure 18: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Astarte Syriaca*, 1877





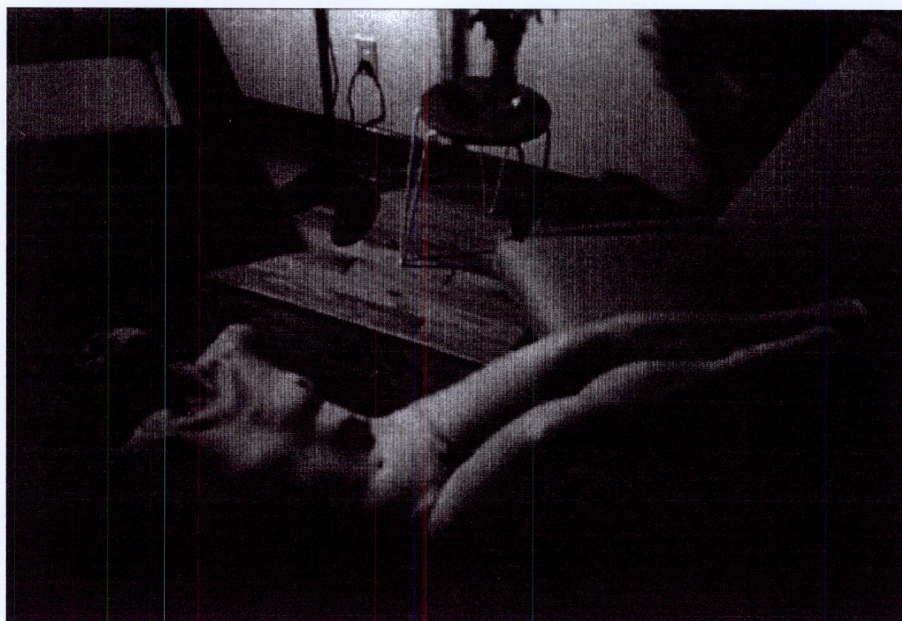
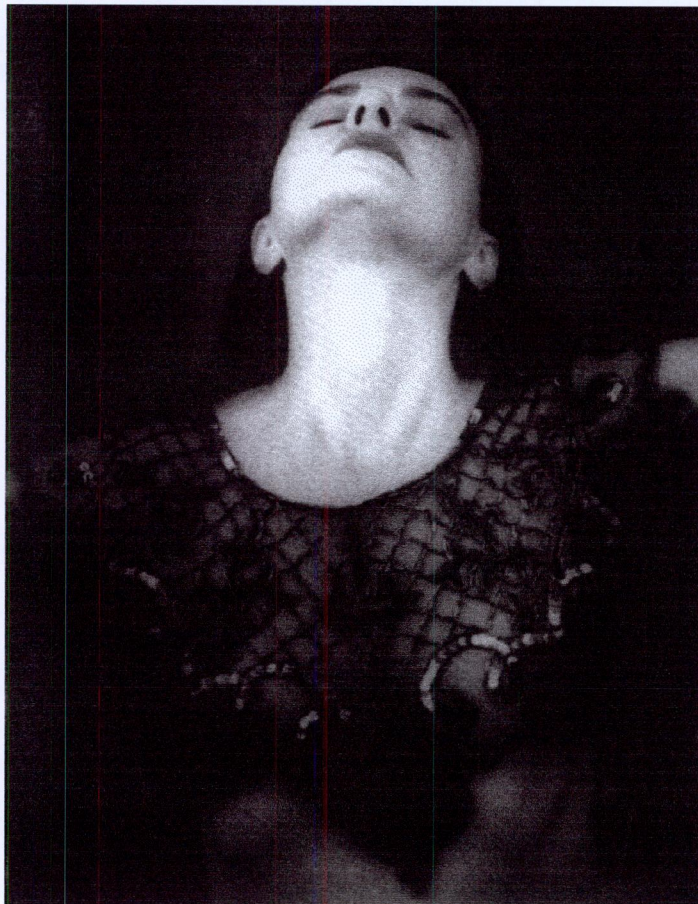


Figure 19: Joanna Frueh, "Erotic Faculties", 1996





Appendix.

*Transcription of "Mouth Piece" from "Erotic Faculties" by Joanna Frueh.*

*(A black folding chair and music and mike stands sit upstage center. The music stands hold the script. Frueh enters, wearing a white-leather, strapless mini-dress, bright red heels, and scarlet lipstick. The heels click slowly on the floor. She walks downstage center and speaks unmiked, her back to the audience.)*

When I was twenty-five, I began voice lessons. My teacher's name was Everett. Everhart, strong as a wild boar, your voice was rich and mellow. You had control and power, authority and beauty, seductive and compassion, a heart that came from the diaphragm, source of the column of breath that rises from the gut, from the vital organs, of which the mouth is one.

The mouth, your voice said to me, is the exit from the body and the entry into the world, the opening at which the inner and the outer breath are one and the private and the public air can mix.

Everett gave me satin dresses, red and white and black, bought at mansion sales. I was to perform in the gowns, for Everett wanted me to be a singer, a chanteuse, creating heat with torch songs.

On the night of his sixtieth birthday, Everett came to hear me at a club. He said my singing was the best gift he could receive. Once, early on, he told me, "You have a golden voice." Sometime later, I said, "I want to be a star."

He said, "You will be."

Not long after that, Everett became ill and lessons were cancelled week after week. When he began teaching again, I did not return. Another of his students told me, "Everett's asking about you. You're like a daughter to him." Still I did not return.

Everett, Everhart, the next time I heard about you, from a student, she told me you had died. Someone, a disgruntled lover, it was said, had knifed you in your studio, where you had moved my voice to sing and speak in ways I had not known before.

*(Frueh turns and faces the audience. From now on she alternates between standing and speaking miked and sitting and speaking miked.)*

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*Standing, miked.)*

Mouthpiece:

One who speaks on behalf of others; one who expresses another's sentiments and opinions; one who gives public circulation to the common soul.

Mouthpiece:

Something to put in the mouth. That part of a musical instrument in which the vibration of membranes sends forth harmonies that scholars throughout the ages have been unable to reduce into components and have therefore named aesthetics and poetics.

Examples include wood wind and flesh cock.

Wood wind and flesh cock speak. They announce, proclaim, both by sensation.

I speak in public.

Seas and rivers, desert prairie speak. They reverberate, emit the sounds that scholars cannot categorize.

I speak in private.

Baying hounds give tongue and firearms report.

I speak on, against, and for.

Speak: to exercise the voice; to loosen discourse; to deliver an address in an assembly; to disclose, reveal; to appeal to, touch, affect, or influence.

I speak to desires.

I am on speaking terms with you.

*(Frueh looks directly into an audience member's eyes.)*

I speak for those of you who don't yet know the words, who've lost your tongues, who have not found your voice, who are afraid to tell your stories, fearful they may be too telling.

I will be your mouth, speak out, so as to be heard distinctly.

I will speak up, testify to acts, emotions that exist in speechlessness because belief calls them unspeakable.

I just wanna testify 'bout the love you give to me, and so I have a foul mouth, trash mouth, big mouth for speaking on the streets and in the bedrooms.

With my big mouth I can eat your heart, swallow your pride, devour you if I desire.



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With my big mouth I speak in blood and shit, in cum, saliva, and orgasm, in wisdom gained through books and body.

And it was written that He was excruciatingly close to coming, "And then He came," She said. "For I drew out His semen, warm and slow, and I tasted His orgasm, I took him wholly into Me, into the body of the world."

I speak with a learned tongue, for I am the Spokeswoman, Woman-Who-Speaks.

Belief that the feminine nature could be coarsened by learning has been coupled in history with the idea that it is in woman's nature to say too much.

*(Frueh speaks the next sentence so lightly and with such delight that she smiles. He imagines that the smile is shared by the audience and that it exists within them if not on their faces. The smile indicated mutual knowledge and experience about men's sometimes absurd and infuriating behaviour.)*

Loquaciousness in the female sex has been remarked upon, not surprisingly by Aristotle, Aristophanes, Juvenal, the Babylonian Talmud, Swift, Ben Franklin, Shakespeare, and Milton. Her silence was counted a virtue by Sophocles, Plutarch, Saint Paul, and Samuel Johnson. Babblers, tattlers, gossips, chatterboxes, nags and scolds: the descriptions apply to one sex only and suggest a severe defect of character. It is said that women gush. (Ah! But men gush. Gushers.) We run on about insignificant matters. The din is infernal. What's a man to do? A popular pub in London, The Silent Woman, named for the Ben Johnson farce, has as its tavern sign a headless female torso, a final resort.<sup>1</sup>

"I am Wordswoman," She said, "Swordswoman, and I use wordplay as a weapon from the head and lips. I speak in leather, as an animal, in black hair. I speak in metaphor and emblem. I speak in legend and case history, as seer, goddess, scholar."

And it is said that all who feared and loved Her listened well, for otherwise they would die in sorrow, never knowing how to speak, from Greek *spharageisthai*, to crackle, from Sanskrit *sphurjati*, it roars, it crackles.

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

# ZETA MATIPOST



You speak of omens. I don't hear men doing that. My mother always has, and my women friends. You speak of the sexy black death snake you met on the mountain trail, on your approach to a rock you later climbed. You speak of white rabbit heads brought to you by your dogs. You speak of your own terror, and your terror speaks belief in magic, and your words themselves are speaking magic, spoken magic, the making of magic speech, the capacity to make magic speak.

*(Frueh's breath, from deep within her body, is soft. She feels as if she sighs this passage.)*

Your breath spoke to me. That was before we began to breathe hard with desire. We sat on the hood of my car and you asked me if I'd sleep with you, and I smelled your breath, your fragility. I touched your hair and cheek and you wanted to kiss me and you took my fingers in your mouth and had one hand at my wrist and tucked a finger between my sock and skin. It's hard to describe how I scrutinised you. It's simply that I felt your vulnerability and in that your desire, so strongly that I thought, How can I? How can I do this? Sleep with you? I felt a balmy breeze, an angel in your arms (the wind was speaking), and I has no idea what age I was.

We made love and the rocks

Spoke

We were moving through

The rocks

We moved and the rocks

Moved with us

We were moving rocks

Moving mountains

We speak in love letters. Love alters the order of our customary alphabet.

We speak in blood letters, imagine ripping each other apart when we make love, a re-creation of ancient ritual in which the male was sacrificed.

You speak: I am your lover, you can't kill me. But cut me. Make incisions in my back, suck my blood and I'll lick yours from between your legs.

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You speak in the wild, about wanting to know me in the mountain winterlands, in a  
sleeping bag  
bedded down  
my cold nose to your cheek  
to take me to the snows I've never seen  
so you can lace me in your love  
close to the earth  
my dark hair in our mouths  
when we kiss

You speak in the grocery store: I want a bloody wine.

You speak in the restaurant, to the waiter: Which wine is the bloodiest?

You make the red wine speak when you pour it on and into me and sip it from my  
cunt and lips and let it sink into my hair so that it mats and smells like flowering soil.

*(Frueh is almost breathless.)*

...

When you speak, in mild words, to your mother of the magic spoken from our blood and  
brains and bodies, she says she sees a red flag, waving darkly like her mother's visions,  
feared by the family, who do not understand the source or point of prophecy, in which, it  
seems, you share your grandma's gift.

But your mother need not worry, for in fifty years you and I will speak together, on  
our golden anniversary:

You are my goldsmith  
Goldmine filled with sunny dispositions  
Of my wealth

*(Standing, at mike. Frueh emphasizes her upright posture and speaks emphatically, as  
she imagines Hypatia or Cleopatra would have spoken to a crowd.)*

I speak in milky tongues



120911AM

WTX

And at the whites of eyes  
White water rafter  
I speak in the voice of worms  
And underground rivers  
I speak in dirty words in smut  
The black of soil and sex  
I speak goldilocks brunette and silver white and  
Redhead  
I White Buffalo Woman  
Grow flaming snakes that crown my scalp  
I speak as bete noire  
As the dark horse  
Running like a winner right beside you  
We are in the black  
Together  
Making profits with our love  
I speak black bear blackberry  
And black henbane hellebore and hemlock  
Plants of death  
I speak as queen of spades the nightshade  
Black lady with my black book  
Full of names of lovers young and old  
Flames burning still fires  
In my heart  
I sound the red alert  
I speak black market  
Violate  
The public regulations  
I speak in currency betrayed  
By the blackout of love  
(Which I foretold)  
The indecisions blind to candlelight and heavy breathing

ATK  
120414AM



Rhythms of the bedroom  
Spreading the sky's legs  
I speak white lightning  
Drink white ladies  
Flagrant red and drunk  
I speak in black tie  
Ready for a party  
I am lit and flushed  
Dyed bloodshot through and through  
Incited and redhanded  
Wanton nails turned into claws  
Red rover  
I speak rouged for action  
Queen of Hearts  
The ruby in your teeth  
The cherry on your tongue  
The wine you swallow  
I speak Red Cross  
Humanitarian  
Brain coral red  
And bleeding heart  
I speak red-footed falcon  
Who sees heartbeats of angels  
Flutter in white mist  
I speak black powder blasting  
My way into viscera  
Darkrooms  
Where pictures of a golden age develop  
When I speak  
When dove and raven robin redbreast  
I am speaking  
White sheep in my dreams

WALLBOST  
SEIV

And black sheep  
Straying from the fold  
The monochromes of cant  
Though I speak lily snow and milk  
The whitened head of age  
Speaks too in bridal dress  
The white nun orchid  
    showy  
        breathing in the tropics  
        bearing single icy flowers  
        suffused with rose  
Snow White enough  
The bride in Ivory Soap  
She is the bitch too wearing white as well  
As her unbridled passion  
Red hot mama  
    eating white and devil's food cake at my wedding  
I speak in gold stars  
Slice golden sections  
For a new gold standard  
For I am the black  
Remains after the fires have burnt out  
I am the white  
The ashes blown  
I am the red  
Mouth at your ear and belly  
    Telluric  
I speak pitch darkness  
Bloody tongues  
White magic  
See these lips?  
Look at my mouth move over every word



WALTON  
1137

And all I say is golden

Like the marigold and palomino

*(Frueh sings. Her eyes are closed most of the time.)*

Black black black is the colour of my true love's hair

His lips are like some rose so fair

His eyes speak gold when'er we talk

I love the ground whereon he walks

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

You sing to your dogs, Ananda, Pup Xia Wu, personalizing rock songs for their pleasure.

Ananda's got the snake

Pup's on the take

Xia Wu's on the make.

Then you choose a rap song, sing it deadpan:

Trick and magic

Magic trick

We're Mame and Joey

And we like it slick

You say you're not sure if you remember the woman's names right. I say it doesn't matter, they sound great and, besides, you know my name perfectly. You whisper it when we're fucking and I'm on top of you. Over and over, Joanna Joanna Joanna, and it becomes a soft cry, like Oh God or Jesus, which are sometimes louder, but not as loud as screams.

Often when I think about everything we do with sex, I want to scream, and I wonder, Are our sex sounds and words a song?

*(Standing, at mike.)*

Sing:

From Middle Welsh *deongl*, to explain, Greek *omphe*, voice, oracle, and probably Prakrit *samghai*, to say, teach.

Sing:

AT35

120911A



*(Frueh lets the sentences sound like music, proclamation, chanting, and a voice making love.)*

To utter words in musical tones, inflections, modulations.

To proclaim in a clear or resonant manner.

To chant, intone, to celebrate.

To make love with words, make poetry.

To bring or accompany to a state by singing.

*(Frueh crosses her arms and holds herself.)*

I will sing you to eternity and back

I will sing away your pain

O Goddesses

O Gods

Eros Astarte

Songsters

Songstars

It's the singer not the song

We come

To sing your praises

Tell us of the torch songs

Intoned at first for martyrs

Final songs for lover men aflame

Like saints and witches

Bound to twigs and branches

Sticks and flesh both named faggot

faggot faggot faggot faggot

Sing forgotten songstars

Sing Choir of Angels

Etymological relations among passion, fury, song, excitement, violently desiring, raving, burning with love, storm, to understand, possession, god-inspired singer, oracle, being-

ZETA  
WATTPOST

outside-oneself, and poetry characterise the creative aspect of the unconscious, whose activity sets human beings in motion, overpowers them, and makes them its instrument. Human beings are seized by these powers. But since its possession causes higher, supraconscious powers to appear in human beings, they methodically seek it in ritual, in art, religion, cult, in sex and poetry.<sup>2</sup>

The semiotic chora is the site of those meanings and modes of signification that cannot be reduced to the symbolic order and that exceed rational conscious subjectivity. The semiotic chora is manifest in symbolic discourse in such aspects of language as rhythm and intonation and is at its strongest in nonrational discourses which threaten the organization of the symbolic order and the stability of its meanings, such as unorganized religion, art, and poetry.<sup>3</sup>

Oracular priestesses, who were originally associated with sacred poetry, were each called *saga*, She Who Speaks. *Saga* literally meant female sage.

*(Seated, unmiked. rueh crosses her legs and leans forward with one arm along the back of the chair.)*

You tell me, "Never underestimate your voice." You say the first time you saw me you were taken by my voice, the sound, the words, the short and rose-red boots whose curving to my ankle you describe with lyric lust, my mouth which you presumed I lipsticked scarlet as a sign of vocal clarity, my entire being read by you as voice.

*(Frueh leans back.)*

And I think, We speak with each other in the voices of angels. Your body and mine are vocal organs.

*(Standing miked.)*

The celestial voice exists in every human being and can be expressed individually or by vox populi. Communities are vocal organs composed of people who know they have a voice. (They listen to their inner voices and to the voice of winds.)

We can pinpoint a major hindrance to the development of the celestial public voice in the psychological evidence manifested in high school student's English essays. Recent





studies reaffirm older data: only the rare student consistently uses the active voice. Ideas in both logic and poetry suffer from passive sentence structure. Our conclusion is that people who do not feel they are agents in their own lives have difficulty understanding the active voice, in sentences and in society.

Unfortunately, many teachers are no exception. They have memorized the principle, but they have no voice.

*(Frueh speaks deliberately and gently.)*

Words and their content may expand the abstract, intellectual portion of consciousness, but ideas alone do not and cannot cause change. The teachers voice vibration can augment the experience of learning, and it is the sound, which could as well be gibberish or chanting, that brings the change. The control and mastery of sound waves is part of the path of a teacher. Thus the teacher can talk about anything at all, can sing, moan, cry, or laugh and still achieve results.<sup>4</sup>

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

When we are miles apart, one of the things I miss most about you is your laugh, your many laughs. They are contagious. You infect me with your love.

*(Frueh is excruciatingly aware of walking across the stage.)*

*(Standing, at mike.)*

The mouth is the gateway of infection. We share food and blood and air, drink and cum and kisses.

What follows is part of the case history of a contemporary Don Juan, whom I refer to as X.

As X entered his twenties he became sexually hyperactive. At twenty-five he began to use heroin regularly, and often he shared needles. Both practices put him in danger of contracting AIDS. A new sex partner said to him, "I'll kiss you anyway." Then she performed fellatio. She pulled back, which angered X, and he said, "If you're afraid, you don't have to finish me off. Watch me do it." When X ejaculated in his hand, the woman said, "What a narcissist." X smiled.





The Black Death scourged Europe six centuries ago, and Edgar Allan Poe has written of the Red Death. But I will tell you a story from the nightmare days of the White Death, when milky-coloured pustules signaled someone's end.

One town built a wall around its borders before the plague struck. A woman named Head of My Heart and Hope in One Eye were best friends. The mayor and all his deputies would not listen to Head of My Heart, nor would they let her leave. Did she want her town to die for the love of one man? Would she die for love? She could not answer, did not know if love of one was worth the death of many.

Three years passed. The gate flew open, as if it knew the plague itself had died, and Head of My Heart left to look for her friend. She did not find him anywhere, in her twelve months of searching. Mass death does not leave single graves, nor do the unwanted stay close to home.

Head of My Heart sat on the ground, the hardest she had walked since leaving the walled town, and cried. "If only love were of epidemic proportion," she said, clearly through her tears. And then she smiled, not knowing why.

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

I have two pictures of you grinning, which I took. You look like a friendly Marlboro Man. Your little teeth are very white. When you grabbed my hair with those teeth, on the hood of my car, I could feel what a bunch of it you held. You were sitting behind me, then leaning into my back, and you pressed your teeth against my neck, maybe letting go of many strands, and bit it through my hair. I moaned and knew from then on that I held you fast, as if I had bitten into your heart before that night.

So I say, Bite me

Make me smart

With love.

And you request my bite below your nipple, as hard as I will dare.

*(Frueh uncrosses and recrosses her legs.)*

WATIPOSI

ZEJA

We make our marks on each other's skin. I see bruises left from my teeth in your upper arm. You bite my head, leaving a sign on my scalp that only I can see, for it is hidden under my hair.

We make our marks inside the skin. We bite each other to the core, where Eve bit into the red apple, into Adam's center too, beneath the grip of a lonely and hardbitten tyrant god.

You say when I suck your cock the second morning that we're lovers, "You're very conscious of teeth. I've never been with someone so conscious of teeth."

"Do you want more teeth?" I ask.

"No. Not now."

Then you pause and say, "Sometimes more, sometimes less."

...

*(Standing, at mike.)*

"Philosophers have said some crazy things about the real world. Aristotle insisted, for reasons I can only guess at, that women have fewer teeth than men. In medieval representations of him, Aristotle is often depicted on all fours, being ridden by a woman with a whip in her hand. This was Phyllis, the mistress of Aristotle's pupil, Alexander. One might suppose, from his posture of erotic domination by a woman he was mad about, that Aristotle would have believed she had more teeth than men; thus even masochists can be sexist. In any case, one need only look into the nearest female mouth to refute that mighty thinker."<sup>5</sup>

Armed to the teeth

Wordswoman never bites her tongue

Tooth-gnashing

She bites off what she can chew

And sits, teeth set

While tooth-winged butterflies

Circle her head like halos



WATKINS

1912

*(Frueh's lips are set in a snarl.)*

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

I put my tongue against my teeth

To speak

I put my tongue to your teeth

Rub it along them

Your lips yielding

Our compliant hearts

You've worn lipstick when we fuck. The first time, you asked, after we'd been naked and in bed already for a while, "Where's your lipstick?"

I answered, "In my purse."

I turned over, on my stomach, aware of my ass in the air, to your eyes. I found my lipstick, pulled the top off, twisted the crimson stalk up, to paint your lips. Then I said, "Put it on me," and you covered my mouth with pressures like your kisses. I reddened one of your nipples and slid the lipstick over your prick, and then we kissed until I saw that the color had disappeared from your mouth.

Months before we're lovers, you see my lips imprinted on a letter. You remember them to me and say how soft and warm my lips seemed on the paper, how jealous you were of their receiver. Our second day as lovers, I kiss your chest with lipsticked mouth, not realizing anyone could see my love between the sides of your unbuttoned shirt.

Unexpectedly you meet our friend Mercedes, who laughs and says, "You have big red lips on your chest." And you tell her, "Everything is different. My life has changed."

You want your own page filled with kisses. You say it will make you feel secure. I reapply the colour several times for you. I lick the paper like I'm tracing veins, remembering tendons and your creamy ass and back. I drag my tongue along the dryness-only paper. My mouth forms patterns, puckered, heavy, light, and open.

Two old lovers give you grief about wearing what you call your "snazzy lipstick" in public. One asks, "Do you want to get beat up? I'd feel safer walking alone at night

Handwritten text, mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through. The text appears to be organized into several paragraphs, with some lines starting with capital letters. The handwriting is cursive and somewhat slanted.

MAINTENANCE  
ZETA

Handwritten text at the bottom of the page, continuing the notes or list. It includes several lines of cursive script, some of which are partially cut off at the bottom edge of the page.



than with you.” The other calls you a little fuck, a term I find endearing that you call yourself.

You tell me that your lipstick threatens them, because you’ve taken on femininity and, in that, freedom.

*(Standing, at mike. Frueh touches the mike stand with the fingertips of both hands.)*

In a garden

Judas passed the Kiss of Death

With flowers all around called Kiss-Me

(Known by another name, Wild Pansy)

Christ speaking

lip-love

lip-homage

in lip-lusciousness

or was it simply lip-deep

could have said

Just kiss my ass

I would have

She Who Speaks

With kiss-curl on the cheek

might have said

Had I been asked

Oh, honey, I will give you Great Lip Service

All you need forever

“A woman ‘touches herself’ constantly without anyone being able to forbid her to do so, for her sex is composed of two lips which embrace continually.”<sup>6</sup>

Lip:

Probably related to Latin *labium*, *labrum*, lip, and to latin *labi*, to slide, glide.

MAINTENANCE  
ZETA

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

Almost as soon as your prick was sliding in me, as we were sliding along your prick the first time, you said, "I love you."

Prickslide: this is your word.

You call me Joanna the Slippery. I like this, my cunt wet for you, for our smooth talking.

Joanna the Slippery, the unclassifiable.

I put my finger in my cunt, in and out, slowly, as we're talking on the bed, then into my mouth, and taste, lick it, almost as if I'm not aware of what's happening, as if we do and don't know what I'm doing. But you groan.

I put my finger in my cunt, then to my mouth, and taste. Lips to lips.

*(Standing, at mike.)*

The positive femininity of the womb appears as a mouth; that is why "lips" are attributed to the female genitals, and on the basis of this positive symbolic equation the mouth, as "upper womb," is the birthplace of the breath and the word, the Logos.

Even today sexual symbolism is still coloured by alimentary symbolism. Hunger and satiety, desire and satisfaction, thirst and its slaking are symbolic concepts that are equally valid for sex and for nourishment.

...

Magic began no doubt as "food magic" and developed by way of fertility magic into sexual or "love magic."

The goddesses of love, the hunt, and death are grouped together in Egypt as in Greece, in Mesopotamia as in Mexico. Symbols of the womb-as-underworld include the gate and gully, the door, ravine, abyss, and, of course, the gullet. All are numinous sites. The mouth with bristling teeth and the gullet actively rend, swallow, devour, and kill. The toothed vagina's sucking power is mythologically symbolized by its attraction for man,



MAILBOX

26th

for life and consciousness and the individual male, who can evade it only if he is a hero, and even then not always.<sup>7</sup>

It is said, "When Woman Who Speaks says, 'Eat me,' those who listen receive oracles from her mouth."

Yet others say, "A man who gets sucked into female ways will pine and die, will be no true man, in fact nothing....Our myths illuminate the facets of this stereotype."<sup>8</sup>

Woman Who Speaks says, "The hero enters to be devoured. If he survives with true desire, he returns, at once diminished and engorged."

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

You tell me, "I was talking to you, out loud, in my bed."

"What did you say?" I ask.

"I want your cunt to devour me. I want your mouth around my dick when it's nonexistent."

*(Frueh wants to pause a long time - thirty seconds - because the previous statement amazes her.)*

I'm astonished that someone called a man would say this.

Later you send me a letter. All it says is, Gorge-us.

Part of a story I wrote scares you. You say the heroine eats up young men. Still, you taste my menstrual blood. It is your red badge of courage.

*(Standing, at mike.)*

"Love is not blind," the Buddha says. "Indeed, only the Lover is fully aware of the beautiful."

...

AT-35  
20-RTAA



Wordswoman says, "The Lover sees with the mouth. The seer tastes the lover, for sight is simply another tongue, another language of the senses. The Lover sees the Beautiful, sees beautifully, has the best, the most beautiful of taste."

The appetite fails when we fall in love. The food is the lover, the lover is the food. This has to do with eating the lover, cum, sweat, tears, saliva, blood and soul-inseparable-from-the-body, the lover who is the object of appetite, desire. This has to do with wanting the smells of the lover's body. (Aroma increases appetite.) But also the lover is full of the beloved, full of love, so full that she requires no other sustenance.

Lovers eat together in public in order for everyone to see their lust, their taste, their devouring of sex.

The appetite fails because lovers have consumed each other.

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

On our first date, our first dinner out, the waiter waits, for over an hour, till we order.

You suck my fingers later

On the hood of my car

My four fingers

All but my thumb

In your mouth

It was deep wet

Saliva on each one

And you say that

You are wet

And you say that when you drink you are in my mouth.

And on the city streets we stuff food into each other's mouths and suck it out in kisses, drink liquids too this way.

And we are fucking, you on top of me. Sweat from your forehead is raining in my mouth. I lick the salt from your cheeks.

You write to me about vanilla pain. It is the taste of desire for an object out of reach.

WATPOST  
ZETA

I am eating breakfast at a cafe, where I like the coffee and the blueberry muffins. The coffee is rich, the muffin flesh melts in my mouth. I remember winter and the coffee's heat, its creamy denseness. I think of you in another climate. I am far away from you in miles. I just wrote a postcard, words I'd rather speak in your presence. I say to you, We could eat here together. We could stare at each other full of lust, and you would put your finger to my mouth, a little between my lips, wanting entry.

You like to look at me in public as though you're ready to fuck me. I say to you, People look boring here. This is the dead place. My mouth is on yours when I say this. Do you feel it?

The food goes tasteless in my mouth. And I'm aware of the saliva. There seems to be more than usual, a displacement of tears?

*(Standing, at mike. Frueh speaks matter-of-factly.)*

What follows is my transcription, from a tape-recorded session, of the patient's poetic mania regarding her father.

*(Frueh fingers the edge of the music stand, on either side of her script.)*

I eat to live. But how can I live if I feel sugared to the bone? I had no Sugar Daddy who'd feed me with phrases of honor for my beauty, sex, or girl-childishness. Oh, Daddy, I sever my sex and guts from you. I sever the connections, cords, and filaments between our vital organs, the places from neck to crotch that just can't cover our insecurities. Still we speak and eat together.

I eat to live. I eat sweet to live well. I eat sweet to live at all, Oh, Sugar Daddy God My Father. I transcend the grief of stunted love by eating

cakes and cookies

ice creams

toast with butter and raspberry preserves

(your favorite fruit)

muffins, mousse, and chocolate kisses.

Where were yours? There would have been no incest in the meeting of love. The crime is in the lack of language

melting over hearts

the hot fudge sundaes I needed



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melting my snowy heart into the  
cream I share with men, my cum  
my husband lover says is sweet.

He eats to live, eats me to live.

I eat to live. I gain no weight. I'm neither fat nor ugly, but I worry for my health, all that sugar coating me inside like silken death. I am too sweet, not sweet enough. Was I not sweet enough for you? Am I, I wonder over twenty years, a poison in men's veins as soon as their eyed taste me?

*(Frueh embraces herself and caresses her upper arms.)*

I eat to live. But I'm so sick of sweets, for every day cannot be Valentine's, plump hearts and flowers candied for supposed lovers. I eat to live. I try to make myself sweet, but there's no cure for hunger like this, the rotting sweet tooth of a daughter, except to say, Dad, I love you and I must let go, cut our umbilical cords. To let go we embrace anew. In letting go we come together cleansed of all the saccharine father-daughter feelings and others falsified as ugly lust, too true to publicize, destigmatize into the necessary passion of simple nurturance and occasional feast.

I eat to live. I love you, Daddy, let me be sweet enough for you. Tell me I'm sweet enough for you, so I don't have to eat as if there's no tomorrow for us. Oh, let the love, the words be sweet enough.

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

During our first dinner, we take the words out of each other's mouths, we eat each other's words and know we're gifted in each other's tongues. When your tongue is in my cunt, I'm amazed I don't know which are your lips and which are mine, that I can't tell my cum from your saliva.

Prickslide and cunt worship are two tongues we speak. Your prick is your tongue that finds and makes a language inside me. Your tongue becomes my tongue, our prick and our cunt, and we create a language of our own, but known in variations to all loving fuckers.

*(Frueh feels lightheaded, afraid she may sway and fall over, so she makes a point, to herself, of renewing her commanding posture.)*





*(Standing, at mike.)*

With her legs outspread legs, the Gorgon takes the same posture as the exhibitionistic goddesses. Her outstretched tongue is always phallic. In New Zealand the outstretched tongue is a sign of power, and in Lifu, one of the Loyalty Islands, the male sexual organ is known as "his word," an expression that gives the phallus meaning as the originating force of language.<sup>9</sup>

...

Tongueman and Woman Who Speaks chose one another as consorts. In the ancient days of their love, Tongueman meant speaker, orator, and Woman Who Speaks herself far and wide and wet and deep and hard. On their wedding day, she moaned in beauty through the world that worshipped her and Tongueman,

Let the organ in your mouth

Resonate in the cathedral with no walls

*(Frueh pictures her mouth as a cave, reverberating with sound.)*

The center of me my voice my being

Nexus

Confluence of the wordstreams

*(Seated, unmiked.)*

You were talking about us, and then the river. You were talking about yourself and your work, and then the river, being like the river. And you were crying, kayaking, underwater, almost drowning. As you begin to burn, to look as though iris petals growing underneath your skin were surfacing. The petals looked like tongues, and I remembered the name of irises in the botanical garden. Scarlet Showman. Maybe this is you.

Showman

Shaman

She-Man

I go to the gardens

150011A

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In my red lipstick  
I come to know the language of the irises  
I begin by listening to their posture  
Here they stand  
Some almost to my waist  
Like you kneeling,  
Head up, tongue offered to me,  
Like you in the shower  
At my cunt with your tongue.  
I call them by their names  
Which also sound the meaning  
Of our love

Occult

Sun Fire

Gift of Dreams

True Bliss

Serene

Bride's Halo

Danger

Sorceress

Allegiance

Limpid Harmony

Star Walker

Morning Thunder

Gypsy Magic

Sable Night

Cherie

Clearfire

Spun Gold

Truly Yours

Star Queen

Royal Magician



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Black Madonna  
Blood Dance  
Heat Pump  
This I Love  
Black Gamecock  
Beaver Lass  
Trice Blessed  
Red Echo  
Bridal Passion  
One Accord  
Sweet Deal  
Star Studded  
Coral Chalice  
Marvelous Style  
New Kinda Love  
Toujours  
Exhilarations  
Rosy Wings  
Black Flag  
Night Lady  
Piping Hot  
Embraceable  
Infinite Grace  
Crystal Cathedral  
Cameo Wine  
Enchanting  
Whispering Breeze  
Deep Fire  
Rosecraft  
Mulled Wine  
Precious Moments  
Majestic Beauty

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Divine Guidance  
Venus Rising  
Jeweled Starlight  
Sheer Poetry

*(Seated, holding mike.)*

We sat outside with your dog, Xia Wu, between us. We were watching for shooting stars. Word said there would be many. The wind blew up as we were sitting.

I lifted Xia Wu's ear, bent close so that my lips touched velvet skin, and asked if she saw shooting stars.

You lifted her other ear and said, "Xia Wu, I see one. Over there."

And as we softly talked into her ears, the wind embraced the three of us and stars shot and showered on every side.

"The stars aren't falling," I said to Xia Wu, "they're finding new homes."

Then we heard the voice, of Everett, Everhart, encircling us, for just a moment, in the wind.

"Golden voices," Everett said, "my stars."

*(Frueh lays down the mike on the music stand and walks offstage, high heels clicking slowly on the floor.)*

#### Notes.

1. From Susan Brownmiller, Frueh has altered the passage, *Femininity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984, p. 111.), in two ways: from Brownmiller she quotes the end of the first sentence, "It is in woman's nature to talk too much.", and adds, "Ah! But men gush. Gushers."
2. Frueh has altered and condensed four paragraphs from Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*, trans. Ralph Manheim. (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1972, pp. 297-298.)

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3. Frueh has altered one paragraph from Chris Weedon, *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987, p. 89.)
4. Frueh has transposed and paraphrased W. Joy Brugh, *Joy's Way: A Map for the Transformational Journey*. (Los Angeles: Tarcher, J.P, 1979, p. 70.)
5. A direct quote from Arthur C. Danto, "Approaching the End of Art," *The State of the Art*. (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1987, p.210.)
6. A direct quote from Luce Irigaray, "This Sex Which Is Not One," trans. Claudia Reeder, in Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron, eds., *New French Feminism: An Anthology*. (New York: Schocken, 1981, p. 100.)
7. In this section, Frueh has transposed and altered the preceding paragraphs of material in Neumann, *The Great Mother*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972, p. 170-172.)
8. A direct quote from Robin Tolmach Lakoff and Raquel L. Scherr, *Face Value: The Politics of Beauty*. (Boston, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984, p. 212.)
9. In this paragraph Frueh has altered Neumann, *The Great Mother*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972, p. 170.)

"Mouth Piece" as the video performance piece was performed at the Massachusetts College of Art, Boston, Massachusetts in 1992, and received from Joanna Frueh on November 25, 1996.



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2. The second part of the report deals with the results of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the results of the work in the field and the second section deals with the results of the work in the laboratory.

3. The third part of the report deals with the conclusions of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the conclusions of the work in the field and the second section deals with the conclusions of the work in the laboratory.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the recommendations of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the recommendations of the work in the field and the second section deals with the recommendations of the work in the laboratory.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the summary of the work during the year. It is divided into two main sections: the first section deals with the summary of the work in the field and the second section deals with the summary of the work in the laboratory.



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1800 Thomas Jefferson  
1804 James Madison  
1808 James Monroe  
1812 James Monroe  
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2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the study area. It includes information about the location of the study area, the population of the study area, and the characteristics of the study area. It also discusses the data sources used in the study.

3. The third part of the report is a detailed description of the study results. It includes information about the findings of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings, and the implications of the findings. It also discusses the limitations of the study and the need for further research.

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