

The Feminist Art Project (TFAP)  
and Its Significance for Aesthetics

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*[You] say you want a revolution*

*Well, you know*

*We all want to change the world.*

*The Beatles*

In 1971, art critic Linda Nochlin articulated the radical question, “Where are all the great women artists?”<sup>1</sup> Along with causing an upheaval in traditional art historicizing and a revamping of conventional art criticism from the newly adopted perspective of gender, Nochlin’s question coincided with a veritable revolution of artistic creativity that quietly rocked the foundations of the artworld with the force of a raging river undercutting the solidity of a classical temple. Much of this innovation was the result of the newly self-identified mass of so-called ‘women artists’ who broke from the past to wrest control of their own stories, to tell them in their own voices, and to validate their own (female) experiences. Their artwork, new and original in ways that went beyond mere stylistic shifts or content changes, went virtually unnoticed by the patriarchal establishment except when the occasional power broker conveniently chose, in print, to belittle or condemn.<sup>2</sup> Some of this art was immediately self-identified as ‘feminist art’ and in spite of (or perhaps because of) the male art establishment’s process of marginalization, a movement was born. From the early 1970s on, scores of women latched on to feminist art--reveling in its familiarity, coveting its subversive nature--as representative of their newfound identity, ideology, and expression. They utilized its uniqueness as a potential vehicle for self-empowerment as well as increased visibility within the artworld even *as* they sought to subvert the power structure of the artworld and to defy its norms and goals.

This fact has been recently noted by various critics and theorists looking back over the past several decades, invoking the double-edged accolade of an art ‘revolution’. Think back to a similar situation in music. Not content with happy-go-lucky love songs, the Beatles introduced “Revolution” in 1968 when a threat of anarchy was in the air: infectious among young people who wanted change and wanted it now.<sup>3</sup> Nochlin’s question arose from a similar dissatisfaction within the world of art. Seeing her fellow artists and art historians grow impatient with elitist norms that privileged male creativity, male-only ‘genius’, a masculinist bias in art criticism, and the nearly-exclusive marketing of men’s work, Nochlin questioned the defensive and oft-repeated rationalizations for the low numbers of female achievers within the artworld. She challenged the entrenched

power structure with a little anarchy of her own, directing it against forces that for centuries had silenced women's voices and erased the visual record of their thoughts. The impact of her original challenge can still be felt today. Most recently, it has become the task of TFAP--The Feminist Art Project--to not only oversee continuing improvements to the artworld, but to coordinate those opportunities and to celebrate them as well. In this essay I hope to (1) outline some of the revolutionary aspects of feminist art, (2) consider the expanding scope of feminism/activism as orchestrated by TFAP, and (3) suggest some directions for an inevitably feminist future for philosophical aesthetics, facilitated through ongoing research and inquiry plus the functioning of the Feminist Caucus within the American Society for Aesthetics.

## **The Revolution and Post-Revolution**

*You tell me that it's evolution  
Well, you know  
We all want to change the world.  
The Beatles*

Perhaps it was simply time.

Sociologists might suggest that as the artworld<sup>4</sup> evolved, it was simply natural for a revolution to take place, one that truly disrupted the predictable patterns of creative cycles, the waxing and waning of styles, and the monotonous drumbeat of male artists. The women's movement--in what is now commonly considered its second incarnation or second wave--was in full ascension in the late 1960s. The dearth of information about its first phase, which culminated in women winning the right to vote in 1920, fed the ever-growing need on the part of women to know more about themselves, their history and past accomplishments. Women wanted a history of their own, a "herstory" as it came to be called, and by the end of the 1970s that project was more than amply accomplished by the extensive research and documentation of *The Dinner Party* created by Judy Chicago and several hundred volunteer workers (1974-1979).<sup>5</sup> The resulting three-sided table measuring thirty-nine feet on a side, hosting thirty-nine ceramic place settings representing female accomplishments of the past, placed upon a tiled floor inscribed with the names of nine hundred and ninety-nine women, most of whom were previously unknown to mainstream historians, scholars, and researchers, continues to impress and inspire viewers who see it and who consider its profound impact on resurrecting the (formerly forgotten) past. Many are still moved to tears in its presence and growing numbers of feminists--women and men--vow to never again allow half of humanity to be silenced into artistic anonymity.<sup>6</sup>

Thus the second wave of the women's movement was launched with increased consciousness raising that gave rise to the establishment of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966, state women's commissions created in every state by 1967, and the publication of inspirational texts by Germaine Greer, Gloria Steinem, and others.<sup>7</sup> The women's liberation movement quickly encompassed different groups formulated to represent various theoretical and political stands, none of which existed autonomously but rather benefited from (sometimes contentious) cross-fertilization and shared interests. The majority were middle-class white women who identified themselves as feminists of a

liberal, socialist, Marxist, radical, or cultural bent. Later, and somewhat reluctantly given their initial neglect of markers of difference with regard to race, ethnicity, and class, their ranks grew with the inclusion of women of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds who represented feminisms primarily identified as black, Chicana, Asian American, or Native American. Lesbians sought recognition as well as persons with physical disabilities: all unique and individual yet united by the common goal of seeking a shared identity. A resulting sense of sisterhood was born, even if approached via different paths and not always conciliatory. Regardless of differences, most identified themselves as ‘feminist’ and in the 1970s (though this may not necessarily be accurate now) ‘feminist art’ signified a common emphasis on women’s voice, creativity, power, autonomy (from men), and equality.<sup>8</sup> Looking back on the activist phenomenon of women uniting to demand fuller representation in the arts, politics, and other male-dominated professions, this movement may now seem like a natural step in the evolutionary process, but at the time it was neither easy for the women involved nor welcomed on the part of many men who were so challenged.<sup>9</sup> Within the closed and quirky subculture of the artworld, feminist art was often denounced or more routinely ignored, as if the latter stance would make the whole thing go away and everyone could return to the comfort and security of the status quo: a male-dominated power hierarchy where art, criticism, and philosophy were ‘naturally’ the products of the male mind.

In recounting the past several decades of feminist art, Linda Nochlin noted in 2003 that “Contemporary art and art criticism are unimaginable without feminism.”<sup>10</sup> With unequivocal emphasis, she highlighted its pervasive impact:

Feminism is not only overtly present but has over the past thirty years irrevocably changed the way we think about art, the body, the relationship between the viewer and the artwork, and the standing, the various media.<sup>11</sup>

In other words, she writes in 2006, “We have--as a community, working together--changed the discourse and the production of our field.”<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, this encompasses the many ways that feminism has influenced even male artists and critics, whether they acknowledge the influence or not.

Yes, in the beginning was Duchamp, but it seems to me that many of the most radical and interesting male artists working today have, in one way or another, felt the impact of that gender-bending, body-conscious wave of thought generated by women artists, overtly feminist or not.<sup>13</sup>

Even noted analytic philosopher, Arthur C. Danto, argued along similar lines. In 1987 he published a review of the artwork of Frank Stella, and like other critics attending to issues of gender, was struck by how ‘feminist’ the work looked:

With all due regard to the image of athletic machismo the artist projects through his obsession with fast cars and competitive sports, these extraordinary works suggest to me that a certain feminist sensibility has conquered artistic consciousness today.<sup>14</sup>

Whereas Nochlin rather humbly concludes that “Women artists, women art historians, and women critics have made a difference, then, over the past thirty years,”<sup>15</sup> journalist Richard Lacayo more strongly argues the case in a 2007 *Time* magazine article entitled, “What Women Have Done to Art,” by claiming that “feminist ideas were the force behind some of the smartest, most powerful art of the past century” as he places those achievements within their historical context:

Most people who remember the glory days of feminism in the 1970s think first of the consciousness-raising sessions, of Betty Friedan and Kate Millett and Jane Fonda. . . . But if you spend much time in galleries and museums, you know that feminist ideas roared through the art world too, at a time when it was even more of a boy's club than it is today. How much more? Until 1986, H.W. Janson's *History of Art*, the standard college text, did not include a single woman among the 2,300 artists mentioned in its pages. That year it was revised to admit 19.<sup>16</sup> Lacayo acknowledges several ways these changes occurred while admitting that much work still needs to be done in order for women to achieve parity.

Nobody is saying the word equality yet, but a lot has changed since then, a lot of it thanks to women artists and scholars in the '70s who proved that art was women's work too and could go places the guys hadn't taken it. Nudes with a woman's point of view, works that use household arts like weaving, video and photographs that ask what gender is all about in the first place--there's plenty of that around now, some of it even made by men, all of it indebted to the feminist explosion of three decades ago.<sup>17</sup>

Another voice that adds to the evidence of the import of feminist art is that of the art historian Richard Leppert who cited the influence of unique and innovative artworks by women and the resultant theoretical feminist studies on interpretative discourse on the male nude. Nudes were nearly always painted by and for men, given the social and artistic restrictions on female artists since the Renaissance. But once women took ownership of the myriad portrayals of their own bodies and radical changes took place in the way women confronted such representations in critical theory, uncomfortable male art historians began to discuss the male body in new and unprecedented ways:

The situation began to change only with the development of feminist studies in the human sciences, and most recently, with the appearance of gay and lesbian studies.<sup>18</sup>

So, for instance, historians began to offer a serious discussion of Michelangelo's homosexuality, a 'taboo' subject, off limits even in an analysis of the artist's seventeen-foot high marble statue of *David* which had previously been analyzed in purely formal or compositional terms. Leppert notes the narrowness of his art historical training as a grad student in the 1960s, which is probably inconceivable to today's average undergraduate:

. . . sexuality was seldom discussed even when it was the very subject of an artwork. And the sexuality of artists themselves was presumed, it seemed, to be irrelevant, or perhaps, as students, none of our business.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps the most explicit and forceful expression of the power of feminist art is encapsulated by a co-edited volume from 2007, *After the Revolution: Women Who Transformed Contemporary Art*.<sup>20</sup> In considering the implications of their title, the authors offer essays on twelve artists that include Louise Bourgeois, Nancy Spero, Cindy Sherman, and Shirin Neshat:

As its title suggests, our project was undertaken in a cultural moment heavily colored by a complicated kind of nostalgia. The *post-ness* of all things is now much remarked upon . . . . But we hardly believe the story to be over. Another way of looking at our title's implications is to note that this is not a book about a finished narrative, but a hopeful beginning.<sup>21</sup>

The authors chronicle the growing freedom women felt from the 1970s to create art that led in many different directions: challenges to ‘the tyranny’ of the male gaze, the resuscitation of crafts and applied arts traditionally previously dismissed as ‘women’s work,’ explorations of the traditional identification of women with nature and body, and numerous experimentations in artworld presentation venues that ushered in women’s cooperative galleries, organized exhibitions, and feminist publications.<sup>22</sup> Viewed with fresh eyes against the backdrop of what we now know took place after the feminist gains of the 1970s, namely, the backlash of the conservative Reagan era of the 1980s and the plurality and pronouncements of post-feminism of the 1990s, early feminist work was truly revolutionary in its scope and influence.<sup>23</sup>

That the revolution isn’t over is nicely captured by a clever remark from Nochlin in the foreword to the volume, in which she comments upon the work of artists who share “vitality, originality, malleability, [and] an incisive relationship to the present and all it implies;” she concludes, “It is in this sense that they are both revolutionaries and post-revolutionary at the same time.”<sup>24</sup> But how can one be both? By this she argues against the common sense notion that a revolution is an “historical episode, not a living event.”<sup>25</sup> Noting the temptation to grow nostalgic and wistful about the ‘70s upheaval in art, the authors contend that the revolution has not really ended but rather has expanded into a post-revolutionary stage in which artists continue to create, albeit in different and more complex ways. Consider, for instance, the image on the book cover by Kiki Smith entitled, *Lilith*, dating from 1994. Created of papier-mâché and glass, the falling figure of a woman (measuring 17 x 31½ x 32 inches)--pictured upside down in a fetal position—“clings to the wall, turning her head to survey the world out of startlingly realistic glass eyes.”<sup>26</sup> 1970s feminists sought to combat centuries of representations of women in demeaning and sexualized positions by male artists by challenging negative stereotypes and introducing positive images of celebration. In 1994 Smith is free to choose a representation of the body that veers “far from [1970s] conventional approaches” in order to represent “the ambiguous and contradictory condition of women throughout history,” thereby reworking the concept of Lilith, the legendary first wife of Adam, from a “demonic creature” into a “feminist icon.”<sup>27</sup> Gone are the simplistic binary dichotomies that narrowed the range of representations to one type of image or the other (good or evil, virgin or whore). Reflecting the broader culture at large and the subtleties of gendered analysis, feminist artists have moved beyond these constraints, inventing more nuanced conceptualizations that can provoke conflicting cognitive and emotional responses. In the late 1980s, Arthur Danto aptly referred to this type of work by feminists, among others, as ‘disturbatory art’, that is, art to which “traditional aesthetic categories [like beauty, symmetry, and composition] will not apply” but that is “intended, rather, to modify, through experiencing it, the mentality of those who do experience it.”<sup>28</sup>

The over-simplification of feminist art of the 1970s as a revolution complete in itself that is followed by a clearly demarcated phase of post-revolutionary creativity invites comparison to another and more contentious debate about whether feminism is dead and post-feminism reigns. Broaching this topic is like opening a Pandora’s box of unresolved disputes and submerged emotions for feminists of all types, but it must be confronted if for no other reason than to add evidence to the perception that the 1970s were a simpler and more harmonious time than today. Feminist theorists who agree about the revolution of the 1970s are not at all united in their assessment of the succeeding mid-

1980s and 1990s phases which were ushered in when Dan Cameron published a 1987 article in *Flashart* entitled, “Post-Feminism.”<sup>29</sup> Whether we are living in a post-feminist world--or even a post-postfeminist world--is perhaps less important than whether art that is produced now can be confidently labeled ‘feminist’ and if so, what that means given current definitions of the term.<sup>30</sup> Suffice it to say, this is a debate that cannot be adequately pursued here, but it is instrumental to note that revisiting the issue in 2003, Cameron--like Nochlin and the four editors of *After the Revolution*--suggests that the term ‘feminism’ not only shifts in meaning but does so inevitably--which is a healthy sign of life:

As a curator and writer, I still cannot imagine feminism in the past tense; I experience it as a constantly evolving phenomenon, one that reforms my responses to the ever-subtler shadings of value in contemporary art production. Since ‘Post-Feminism,’ I have tried to expand my own sense of feminism, so that not only are class, race, and sexual preference enmeshed in the discussion, but also war, poverty, and the environment.<sup>31</sup>

Thus Cameron signals a contrast between the past and the present without abandoning the terminology of feminism, allowing it permutations through various post-revolutionary phases. At this point in time, it is safe to say that most writers propounding feminist theoretical frameworks for artists’ works have long abandoned a monolithic concept of ‘feminist art’ in favor of a more subtle and multifaceted prism by which to view and interpret art. Interestingly, if one assesses the evolution *within* feminist art as being one that proceeds from simplicity towards complexity, one must acknowledge that ‘complex’ can itself host a variety of meanings ranging from more neutral-sounding ‘composite’ and ‘multipart’ to the more negatively weighted ‘complicated’, ‘difficult’, ‘convoluted’, ‘knotty’, and ‘thorny’. Taking a step back from the 1970s, we might find it entirely natural that early feminist artists would avoid ‘thorny’ art in favor of art that unites (and unites women against men), but now--in the twenty-first century--art that is knotty and thorny are not only welcome but expected. This leads us to consider two final exposés on feminist art that reveal its revolutionary nature within the historicization of the term ‘feminist art’, namely, two exhibits and accompanying catalogues: the first is entitled, *WACK! Art and The Feminist Revolution*; the second, more international and contemporary in scope, is entitled *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art*. These exhibits reflect Dan Cameron’s observation that feminist art has evolved from its original focus on class, race, and sexual preference into more recent international concerns and scope with pivotal political roles played by artists engaging in issues of war, poverty (what has long been called the feminization of poverty), oppression, suppression, and the environment.

Let us consider just a few of the artworks that surfaced in these two shows that exemplify the feminist revolution. A paradigm piece that signals the bold and brash premier of a new revolutionary feminist era is an immense and rich textile work from 1969 by Magdalena Abakanowicz entitled, *Abakan Red*, which consists of a sisal weaving on metal support, measuring 300 x 300 x 100 cm. The work’s title, “Abakan,” is taken from her own name, ‘Abakanowicz’, and reflects a series of large-scale woven structures she created in the late 1960s - mid-1970s. Receiving a significant amount of publicity for its part in the WACK! show, this work demonstrates the symbolic importance of women taking control of the ways their own bodies are depicted and the

affirmation of their own female agency. In the accompanying catalogue, authors Cornelia H. Butler and Lisa Gabrielle Mark offer the following interpretation:

The Abakans' tactility and scale suggest a relationship to the human body, while the form of *Abakan Red* (1969), a red circle roughly thirteen feet in diameter featuring a central vertical split that reveals protruding folds, has been compared to that of a vagina. At once enveloping and impenetrable--often embellished with buried openings, folds, and appendages--the Abakans are vast, forceful constructions.<sup>32</sup>

It is highly unlikely that a male artist in ages past, or in even in the experimental 1960s, would have deviated from the prototypically depicted nude female body in favor of this representation of a vagina, blown up to such a size, executed in fiber, and cast its redness in larger-than-life power for all to see and admire. *Abakan Red* becomes a representative standard for many other works in the show that similarly defy well-established male-defined conventions of creativity.

A total of one hundred and nineteen artists from twenty-one different countries were represented, marking the 2007 show as the first international survey of work that emerged from the early days of feminist art. Based in the turbulent 1960s when the push for women's rights, civil rights, gay and lesbian rights, and anti-Vietnam war protests all fed the ferment of creativity, the work in the exhibit aims to remind us, according to Cornelia Butler, its curator, of a time "when radical statements were possible."<sup>33</sup> One goal is to elevate these works to canonical status within the previously hierarchal and exclusive artworld of patriarchal norms and practices.<sup>34</sup> Toward that goal, Jeremy Strick, the gallery director of the exhibit's original 2007 venue at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (MOCA), notes the close ties between social movements and artistic rebellion, but laments the lack of visibility of the latter:

The feminist revolution in art was no less radical and transformative than the social movement from which it drew strength. The very terms of current artistic practice are made possible in numerous respects by the groundbreaking works produced by feminist artists in the 1960s and 1970s. However, while the social impact of the feminist movement is broadly recognized, the extraordinary contributions of feminism in art are considerably less understood and appreciated. 'WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution' seeks to redress that balance.<sup>35</sup>

Some of the artists in the show, for example Judy Chicago, Eva Hesse, Cindy Sherman, and Yvonne Rainer, are better known than others. One artist whose work spans seventy-five years, Parisian artist Louise Bourgeois, began depicting women trapped in self-defining domestic spaces as early as the 1940s in drawings and paintings as *Femme Maison (Woman House)* and proceeded to more fully challenge gender roles in the 1970s with performers wearing costumes made of body parts. Other performance artists are also featured, including those who work together in groups to foster participation from their neighborhood communities, such as Disband (1978-1982 in New York), the Lesbian Art Project (1977-1979, Los Angeles, founded by the late Arlene Raven), and "Where We At" Black Women Artists (1991-1997, New York City). Several of the artists were ground-breaking pioneers in the critique of established gender roles of sexual exhibitionism, including Lynda Benglis, Carolee Schneemann, Hannah Wilke, and Cosey Fanni Tutti, a British artist (under a pseudonym) whose critical exploration of female nudity and sex as a commercial product in magazines, films, and striptease began with

her performances in 1973. Artists of color like Adrian Piper, Faith Ringgold, and Howardena Pindell offered bold critiques of race relations alongside various video artists, film-makers, installation artists, conceptual performers, and other innovative mixed media artists. Several feminist theorists have described the boldness of these artists in expanding their identities as being engaged in reclaiming their female agency.<sup>36</sup>

The second exhibit took place at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 2007, alongside the opening of Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* in its first permanent installation--twenty-seven years after its inception--in the newly designated Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist art. An accompanying catalogue, edited by the show's curators Maura Reilly (then curator of the Center) and Linda Nochlin (guest curator), was entitled, *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art*. In Reilly's informative introduction, "Toward Transnational Feminisms," she explained their shared rationale:

The year 1990 was chosen as the starting point of the exhibition to designate the approximate historical moment when the linked issues of race, class, and gender were placed at the forefront of feminist theory and practice. That change marked a move away from the first world's domination of feminism and opened up the discourse to include women outside the limited geographic regions of Euro-America.

Global Feminisms is a curatorial response to this specific discourse, insofar as it recognizes that the conspicuous marginalization of large constituencies of women can no longer be ignored, and that an understanding of co-implicated histories, cultures, and identities is crucial to a rethinking of feminism and contemporary art in an age of increased globalization.<sup>37</sup>

Reviewer Eleanor Heartney concurs, describing the show as "the first effort to examine feminist art's global impact, in full recognition of the very different obstacles and circumstances women face in different cultures."<sup>38</sup> As previously mentioned by Dan Cameron, today's feminist art extends earlier themes by weaving in ideas about war, poverty, and the environment – and, not surprisingly, women's roles in these issues, particularly as victims of violence. Women in countries other than America and Europe are just realizing and accepting the consciousness of feminism after oppressive regimes and government restrictions. The curators of Global Feminisms, like the curators of WACK!, sought to expand their scope beyond attention to Euro-Americans to the broader network of artists in conversation on a worldwide scale working after 1990 to deliberately highlight the plurality of feminisms at work. This world view signals a deliberate and seismic shift beyond any unitary notion of feminism that may have persisted since the 1970s toward a multiplicity of feminisms (amidst multitudes of women), who are located across what is now a shrinking globe of personal connections, i.e., a *transnational* network. Heartney sums up the unstoppable, pervasive spread of feminism by calling attention to its evolutionary nature: "These essays indicate the different ways that feminism has evolved across the globe. . ."<sup>39</sup>

The exhibit included nearly ninety artists from fifty countries, working in a variety of media whose work was arranged thematically around the topics of life cycles, identity, politics, and emotions. Recognizable names include Mary Kelly, the Guerrilla Girls, Jenny Saville, and Catherine Opie. Lesser known artists, in contrast, have faced grave and dangerous situations of censorship, imprisonment, and exile. A video by Shirin Neshat collaborates with Shahrmush Parispur, an author once imprisoned in Iran (now living in exile in the United States) by the Ayatollah Khomeini for her feminist novel,

*Women Without Men: A Novel of Modern Iran.* The Indonesian artist Arahmaiani survived death threats and a period of exile in Australia before returning to her homeland. And the Iranian artist Parasou Forouhar was censored by the Iranian Cultural Ministry for a series of haunting photographs depicting a “gender-ambiguous human figure veiled from head to foot, its protruding head a whited-out or bulbous wooden form beneath a chador.”<sup>40</sup> As feminist consciousness-raising emerges as a worldwide phenomenon, women are emboldened to express themselves at costs to their personal lives that most privileged artists cannot imagine. It is a tribute to the Brooklyn Museum and the curators of this show that they brought these accomplishments to viewers’ attention.

Finally, there is a bit of sardonic humor in the show to lighten the mood and serve as a transition to the next section of our discussion. British artist Carey Young wryly undermines the way that corporate training programs seek to mold one’s identity in a 2001 video, *I Am a Revolutionary*, in which she attempts, unsuccessfully, “to repeat the words establishing her credentials as a revolutionary with sufficient conviction to please her male coach.”<sup>41</sup> The fact that the corporation and its hierarchy of power is represented by a man while the worker in need of coaching and conformity is a woman is mockingly underscored by the futile words, uttered so hopefully: “I am a revolutionary.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Even if saying made it so, the woman would still fail in any true sense of her aspiration. Symbolically, this video hints at the reality of many women who have not truly reached revolutionary status in their goals or any full sense of autonomy. In spite of some of their gains within the changing artworld--recognition, accolades, sales, and stature--women still have a long way to go toward equality.<sup>42</sup> The Feminist Art Project was created to address this very issue.

### **The Feminist Art Project**

*You say you got a real solution  
Well, you know  
We’d all love to see the plan.  
The Beatles*

The trend within feminist circles of the artworld in the late 1990s and early twenty-first century to organize various exhibitions, publications, and events devoted to the revolutionary nature of feminist art, encourages us to take a step back in order to survey the vast landscape of our history and feminism’s recent role in it. Even if it was inevitable at the turn of a millennium that we would take a collective look back, there is no under-estimating the strategic planning, coordinating, and political networking that went into shows like WACK! and Global Feminisms. Such labor has its roots in feminist politics and activism. It is not a coincidence that numerous artists, historians, and theorists have contributed to the resurgence of interest in feminist achievements in order to continually promote equal representation for women. But why such an intense interest? And why now?<sup>43</sup>

Feminist art is about female agency and regaining control, particularly of images of the female body; increasing the numbers of women in major museums, galleries, and especially career-defining one-person shows; gaining a presence in standard art history texts, art criticism, theory, and all aesthetic discourse; expressing a woman’s point of view by giving voice to women’s experiences; celebrating women’s achievements as well as highlighting women’s oppression, violence, and abuse; re-balancing the lack of

professional opportunities compared to those of male artists. Eventually, however, one must ask the inevitable question that lurks behind an activist agenda, namely, “Have our goals been met?” That is, has the revolution (and post-revolution) afforded sufficient opportunities for women so that we can now live happily ever after with our many feminisms, our freedom of expression, operating equally within a fair and just artworld (or is it now more appropriate to call the situation we are in: a plurality of artworlds)?

More than four decades following Nochlin’s energizing question--where are all the great women artists?--The Feminist Art Project is engaged in a multi-year, multi-media, national and international re-assessment of that question, complete with ongoing pressure on artworld institutions for the acknowledgement and celebration of women artists. Originally billed in 2006 as an organization intent on “recognizing the aesthetic and intellectual impact of women on the visual arts and culture,” this comprehensive effort of exhibitions, lectures, college courses, and symposia is coordinated by the Institute for Women and Art at Rutgers University primarily through a website and networked connections as well as volunteer regional representatives. Early in 2007, organizers recast the mission statement of TFAP more fully and more strongly than originally stated in order to put the artworld on notice:

The Feminist Art Project is a collaborative national initiative celebrating the Feminist Art Movement and the aesthetic, intellectual and political impact of women on the visual arts, art history, and art practice, past and present. *The project is a strategic intervention against the ongoing erasure of women from the cultural record.* It promotes diverse feminist art events and publications through its website calendar and facilitates networking and regional program development throughout the U.S.<sup>44</sup> [my emphasis]

This revised statement includes five changes enacted by the founding members and current directors of TFAP. The first is their change in verb from the original, “The Feminist Art Project is a collaborative national initiative *recognizing* the aesthetic and intellectual impact of women on the visual arts and culture,” to the more emphatic “*celebrating* the Feminist Art Movement and the aesthetic, intellectual and political impact of women on the visual arts, art history, and art practice, past and present.” “Celebrating” implies not merely an acknowledgement of feminist artists but more emphatically a positive commemoration and confirmation of their efforts--an explicit “hurrah!”--as if this had not yet happened in the artworld and the world at large. Indeed, most feminist artists believe it has *not* yet taken place and that not only feminists but more generally most women, *are* still discriminated against in the artworld and in the world at large.<sup>45</sup> One basic statistic cited in support of this claim is the fact that women in the U.S., working in the year 2012 in full-time jobs comparable to men, still earn only approximately seventy cents to a man’s dollar.<sup>46</sup> Within the artworld, the situation is even worse; women are routinely excluded from awards, monetary prizes, publicity, and one-person shows.<sup>47</sup> Since the 1970s, as cited in 2007 in *After the Revolution*, “women still have roughly one opportunity for every four of the opportunities open to men;” publications on women--whether one-person monographs or museum catalogues--grew steadily in number but the gain was from less than one-half of one percent to approximately 2.7 percent.<sup>48</sup> One goal for feminist artists, then, is to have equal opportunities available to them for inclusion in shows, publications, and sales.

Second, the word “political” has been added so that the resultant statement reads, “the aesthetic, intellectual and political impact of women on the visual arts, art history, and art practice, past and present.” A significant amount of feminist art is political but more importantly, if the point of a revolution is change, then the goal is not only more freedom to create but also more representation in the power structure within which one creates. The Beatles remind activists of all stripes who are intent on change, “*You say you got a real solution. . . Well, you know. . . We’d all love to see the plan.*” A plan, although not always fully formulated, articulated, or accepted by all feminists, has been--in one shape or another--to improve the demographics of the artworld: to make it more inclusive, more accepting of women, minorities, and other under-represented constituents. The rewording of the mission statement to include the political along with the basic aesthetic and intellectual impact of women on the visual arts signals the interconnectedness of feminist art with its political goals of equality and justice in the broader sphere. TFAP recognizes the scope of the impact of revolutionary feminist art to be practical, i.e., activist, as well as creative and theoretical.

Third, a deliberate encapsulation of the phrase “the Feminist Art Movement,” complete with capital letters, signals a specific body of work and the artists who created it, in spite of the difficulties that sometimes impede a precise definition of ‘feminism’ or ‘feminist art’. The conceptual analyses have ranged far and wide and as many feminists now say, there is no one feminism but rather multiple feminisms, reflecting differing content, intent, styles and contexts. The Feminist Art Movement can include works by women that vary considerably; compare *The Dinner Party*, for example, to the abstract sculptures of Lynda Benglis, the earth-related ritual performances of the late Ana Mendieta, the revisioning of racial identity by Adrian Piper, explorations of sexuality within lesbian relationships by Catherine Opie, and references to the brutality and the oppression of women in other parts of the world, such as the video work of Serbian artist Milica Tomic. What is most important here, in effect, is that feminists are long past defining terms like ‘feminism’ and ‘feminist art’ just as philosophers have moved beyond defining well-worn notions like ‘art’ and ‘work of art’, particularly in light of their obsession with Duchamp’s rule-breaking readymade, *Fountain*. (Allow me to be the first to pronounce us post-Urinal!) Critics and historians may never unanimously agree on what constitutes the Feminist Art Movement, but there will be a healthy and workable consensus given the growing bodies of art and literature, including the catalogues cited above and ongoing research that provide a valuable testament by which to study the movement’s foremothers, followers, and the diversity of the content of their work.

Fourth and most importantly, consider the language of the second sentence in which the project is cast as a strategic intervention against the ongoing erasure of women from the cultural record. This wording surpasses the act of going on record to merely recognize or celebrate. This puts the artworld on notice, in no uncertain terms, that something is still awry and that the attempts of power brokers to continue the past practice of deliberate erasure will be thwarted. The establishment of The Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum with its hiring of the first (ever) curator of feminist art who oversees exhibits and an educational center, traveling shows like WACK! and Global Feminisms, the publication of catalogues and monographs, the creation of videos like Joan Braderman’s *The Heretics* (about the feminist art collective Heresies, 2009) and Lynn Hershman Leeson’s *Women Art Revolution* (2007), along with

the dissemination of this information via TFAP and other venues all constitute a strategic and potent intervention to disrupt or diminish the normal flow of artworld activities that typically exclude the productivity of women and other under-represented groups.

Consider some specific numbers with regard to this artworld assessment cited in Maura Reilly's introduction to *Global Feminisms*, starting with the art scene in New York:

- In 2005, less than 3 percent of the artists in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's modern art section were women (as reported by the Guerrilla Girls) whereas sixteen years earlier it had been 5 percent.
- In 2005, 4 percent of artworks (16 out of 410) were by women at the new Museum of Modern Art, just after its massive expansion and reopening; this number was actually lower than the previous year.
- During 2000-2004, 30 percent of the solo exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art featured the work of white women artists; only 7 percent featured the work of women of color.
- During 2000-2004, 11 percent of the solos shows at the Guggenheim Museum featured the work of women artists.
- During 2000-2004, 8.5 percent of the solo exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art featured the work of women artists and only 1.5 percent presented the work of women of color.
- In fifty New York City galleries surveyed in Spring 2005, only 318 of the 990 artists were women.

Looking at the situation more broadly, including the most prestigious shows and the marketing of art,

- From 2000-2005, both the Tate Museum in London and Los Angeles County Museum of Art presented solo shows of women artists less than 2 percent of the time.
- Since 1984, the prestigious Turner Prize at the Tate Museum had been awarded to two women out of nineteen.
- During the 2005 Venice Biennale in Italy, a survey of local exhibitions concluded that of the 1,238 works on exhibit at the major art museums in Venice, fewer than 40 percent were by women.
- The 2005 Venice Biennale was the first in its 110-year history to be organized by (two) women; the 1997 Documenta (held every five years) in Kassel, Germany was the first to be organized by a woman in its fifty-year history.
- In the spring of 2005, contemporary art auction house catalogues at Christie's, Sotheby's, and Phillips offered 861 works for sale with a mere 13 percent by women; of the 61 pieces assigned an estimated price of \$1 million or more, only 6 were by women.<sup>49</sup>

More recent statistics reveal a "glaring bigotry," as described by art critic Brian Sherwin in 2011, whereby the average New York art gallery--including over 77% of the galleries in Chelsea which are expected to represent more diverse, younger artists--represents 76% to 96% male artists; only 5% of galleries represent males and females in equal numbers; and artworks found in public museums are 95% male.<sup>50</sup> Disappointing as this updated data are in their own right, they are even more astounding when one realizes that sixty percent of students in art programs within the United States are women; the average MFA program has up to 20% more female students than male; and seventy

percent of self-declared artists are female, yet they garner far fewer opportunities after leaving the academy and are still far less represented in the artworld. Often it is only when entry into an exhibit is done anonymously, does a woman have a fair chance of being included.<sup>51</sup> It should come as no surprise to art viewers who study these statistics that women continue to suffer a shortage of opportunities and that artists from countries where women are even less represented have encountered considerably greater obstacles and marginalization. It is no wonder that the imbalances between male and female artists in the artworld fuel the continuing political activism of feminist artists and that The Feminist Art Project was founded and continues to gain ground.<sup>52</sup>

Within the past few years, a fifth change has been made to the TFAP mission statement, namely, the inclusion of the terms “international” and “worldwide,” thus broadening their scope of attention, recognition and celebration. As of early 2013, the final statement on the homepage of [feministartproject.rutgers.edu](http://feministartproject.rutgers.edu) reads as follows:

The Feminist Art Project is an international collaborative initiative celebrating the Feminist Art Movement and the aesthetic, intellectual and political impact of women in the visual arts, art history, and art practice, past and present. The project is a strategic intervention against the ongoing erasure of women from the cultural record. The Feminist Art Project promotes diverse feminist art events, education and publications through its website and online calendar and facilitates networking and regional program development worldwide.

In honor of the fortieth anniversary of The Institute for Women and Art (IWA) at Rutgers University, the site boasts a link to the Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series Fortieth Anniversary Virtual Exhibit (1971-2011) that includes over 450 women artists who have exhibited with the Series over the years; the virtual nature of this venue, of course, permits greater exposure of women artists denied physical space in actual galleries. In addition, the site advertises a series of public, free events held annually in conjunction with the February College Art Association meetings that in 2013--organized by Catherine Morris, Curator of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum--focuses on the theme of accountability of gender inequality within artworld museums and galleries:

The symposium will focus on the intersections of feminist art and institutional practices, asking how institutions have integrated feminist perspectives into their long term curatorial, collections, and programmatic objectives. Sessions will examine how the museum as a quasi-public space has and continues to negotiate representations of sexuality and gender; how institutions can be ‘queered’ to become more inclusive and less normative, and how feminism may impact institutions in the long term through collection plans and mission statements. There will be a special focus on the role of the institutional archive as a platform particularly conducive to a feminist voice.

For those who teach art or aesthetics at the post-secondary level, this situation of various inequalities should eventually demand our attention in the classroom. Students deserve exposure to a full range of artworks for study and appreciation, particularly those originating in female experiences to which many can strongly relate. The art presented in class is closely linked to the texts chosen and the philosophical discourse that ensues. More art by women, and particularly feminist art, needs to be taught, primarily for two reasons: (a) nearly 60 percent of all undergraduates in the United States are female, and (b) feminist art represents a woman’s point of view, a woman’s voice, and a woman’s

experiences: all three of which have been noticeably absent from the annals of art history as well as the history of philosophy and need to be redressed (to be discussed further in the next section). To exclude these valuable artworks from the possibility of consideration when discussing artistic paradigms ignores the fullest context of the ever-expanding artistic canon of the twenty-first century. In fact, it can even lead to the embarrassing classroom situation of professors teaching the history of art and/or aesthetics who appear to have missed the revolution!

### **TFAP and its Significance for Post-Revolutionary Aesthetics**

*You tell me it's the institution  
Well, you know  
You better free your mind instead.  
The Beatles*

Given The Feminist Art Project's stated emphasis on recognizing the *aesthetic* impact of women on the visual arts and culture (in addition to the intellectual and political impact), a natural question within our own philosophical community might be, what is this impact and is it celebrated among philosophers, notably aestheticians? Given the history of the American Society for Aesthetics, for instance, how might we gauge the effect of its own Feminist Caucus, begun in 1990, upon the organization and its signature scholarship? Broadly speaking, what is the future of feminist art *and* aesthetics? More specifically, is there a(ny) significant future for feminism *within* aesthetics?

Recall that the mission statement of TFAP was strategically revised to reflect a decided urgency reflected in the call for "a strategic intervention against the ongoing erasure of women from the cultural record." Feminists are well past the point of arguing that women need to be heard: in the artworld and the world at large. Instead they have taken up activist strategies in order to *be* heard, to make a difference, and to create change in the existing social structure. But we have not really confronted this issue head on within the world of philosophical aesthetics, in spite of feminist scholarship begun in the early 1990s.<sup>53</sup> Are the feminist voices of thoughtful scholars being heard--in healthy numbers and with sufficient influence--within our field? Compare our situation to other areas of philosophy. For many decades, we have read the ground-breaking work of feminists in epistemology, history of philosophy, ethics, bioethics, philosophy of science, and social/political philosophy who have made a decided impact on the scholarship and teaching in those general fields. Is there a comparable impact from feminist philosophers within aesthetics? To measure the impact, let's ask ourselves, does every introductory aesthetics text include at least several essays from a feminist point of view: ones that also include consideration of race, sexuality, ethnicity, and disability? If not, why not? If students are not exposed to alternative points of view, particularly a careful critique and challenge from within philosophical aesthetics itself, how are we preparing them to deal with the diversity of art that has proliferated within the artworld and its intersection with the social issues of a culturally shrinking world in general? When only standard topics, traditional history, and the same limited canon deemed 'art' is replicated with no feminist critique and when new scholarship focuses on only the top few scholars in the field who ignore the revolution of feminist art and its ongoing concerns, the narrowness and bias of

the status quo is replicated for our students and for generations to come. As TFAP points out, the ongoing erasure of women continues.

In promoting a revolution, the Beatles expressed impatience and irritation when they echoed the phrase, “You tell me it’s the institution.” Refusing to look backwards toward institutional rigidity, they instead sang, “You better free your mind instead.” What would it mean for aesthetics to free its mind, look forward, and reject the old institutional ways? What might a feminist future within aesthetics look like?

Recall Richard Lacayo’s assertion that women artists and scholars in the ’70s “proved that art was women’s work too and could go places the guys hadn’t taken it.” Or Linda Nochlin’s claim that “Contemporary art and art criticism are unimaginable without feminism.” Both claims reveal that the artworld is no longer the same as it once was: as art production has changed, so has the resultant criticism, theorizing, and aesthetics. In fact, the artworld’s attendant practices and values have so significantly changed that most purveyors of art would probably agree that there is no going back and that antiquated artworld institutions should be safely entrenched in the annals of the past and *historicized* as previous incarnations. Innovative art, created by those within the Feminist Art Movement as well as other artists and movements from around the world, has steered the artworld through waves of postmodernism and post-feminism, bringing us to what can only be characterized as *post-revolutionary aesthetics*.

This is a world in which freeing our minds might include the following principles: (1) Kick the Canon. A fresh future for the analysis of artworks begins with the choices made by scholars and instructors. Instead of replaying the same old tune of Duchamp and Dada, Salle and Schnabel, embrace the new and teach a class on Nancy Spero, Cindy Sherman, and Renée Cox. Introduce students to the thinking of a disturbatory artist, such as performance artist Carolee Schneeman whom Danto described as “a priestess . . . a sorceress . . . [who] polemically . . . repudiates a tradition of aesthetically defined fine art widely institutionalized in our culture;” more recently, Keith Lehrer described the paradox of her work *Interior Scroll*--in which she extracts a scroll from her vagina--as “we come to know what we already know, but we know it in a new way, and that matters.”<sup>54</sup> Compare her to Manet’s *Olympia*--the much celebrated depiction of Victorine Meurant, the model who posed so ‘seductively’--according to male viewers, and epitomized their fantasies of beauty--to see what female agency truly means in representations of the sexualized female body.<sup>55</sup> Art historians and philosophers routinely fawn over this painting, while maintaining a closed eye to examples created by women that express very dissimilar lived experiences within their own bodies.<sup>56</sup> Teach the monumental bodies of Jenny Seville or Catherine Opie; you’ll never look at the male-defined Victorine Meurant, posed as Olympia, in quite the same way again.

(2) Revise your (Modes of) Reading. Consider Danto’s suggestion (from back in 1989) that much feminist art, unlike a painting by Matisse, for example, is not meant to be beautiful, symmetrical, composed, tasteful, let alone pretty or elegant or perfect. So it counts in its favor that it should be ugly, disordered, distorted and offensive: tacky, gross and raucous, jeering, painful, threatening.<sup>57</sup> In other words, don’t bring your standard aesthetic modes of perception and cognition to bear upon works of art that are intended to subvert and defy old habits and norms:

To attempt to apply the standard aesthetic categories, then, really does look like a form of male sensibility in that it will only be by injuring those sensibilities that the art can do its work.<sup>58</sup>

Traditional art history trains everyone, female and male alike, to adopt male--or masculinist--sensibilities. The new artworld, however, is much more diversified, multilingual, and complex. Art from the around the world is accessible online, bypassing the traditional institutions of gallery and museum representation; one needs fresh, new sensibilities to read these works and to develop connections to the artists from a wide variety of contexts.

(3) Dig for Deep Gender. Like an iceberg (and much conceptual art from the 1960s), much of what one sees in feminist art lies below the surface. Carolyn Korsmeyer suggests that the seemingly objective and neutral statements that philosophers make when using traditional approaches, concepts, and vocabulary actually reveal 'deep gender' beneath. Revealing deep gender helps when "investigating the conceptual frameworks that guide philosophy--including aesthetics and philosophy of art."<sup>59</sup> Looking for deep gender in actual artworks--in addition to the interpretations and judgments made about art--can infuse a sense of adventure, openness, and acceptance in an art viewer who confronts multiple and sometimes conflicting interpretations. Rather than dismiss difficult art that challenges one's identity and social privilege in the world, a post-revolutionary aesthician embraces and works through the challenge. In looking forward to the artistic possibilities that may be impossible to imagine at this time but are certain to build upon the past, Danto suggests:

. . . the question is whether . . . we stand at the beginning of a new era whose pioneers are the feminist artists who repudiate a tradition that, from a long perspective, we can now see that Van Gogh and Gauguin really were continuing rather than disrupting.<sup>60</sup>

The feminist revolution, he concludes, involves the charge "to end one form of history and to begin another,"

. . . in which art is put to some end more immediately human and important than to hang in the museum, ornament the brilliant collection, draw gasps in the dramatic auction space and be interred in the graphic tomb of the expensive art book and the real tomb of the Japanese bank vault.<sup>61</sup>

Consider, for example, the video by the Afghani artist Lida Abdul titled *White House* (2005-2006) which shows the artist "silently whitewashing two bombed-out structures near Kabul, Afghanistan."<sup>62</sup> In commenting upon the American invasions in Afghanistan and Iraq, the artist invokes the many-layers of meaning behind the act of white-washing: a fence, a lie, a crime. As she paints amidst the rubble of fallen stone, a goat ambles by, lending the only color--and life--to the monotonous, stultifying grey scene. But deeper gender implications lie below the scene the viewer sees on the surface; 'crushing' the Taliban has not necessarily made life better for women in the country, in spite of claims by U.S. First Lady, Laura Bush. In fact, in some ways, the situation has gravely worsened for women and girls, and the artist's act of white-washing implicates all Americans in the process of the physical destruction of the country and the impoverishment of its people.<sup>63</sup>

(4) Enjoy Multiple Feminisms. Integral to the process of feminist interpretation is a fluidity and range of meanings that may or may not have been intended by the artist but

definitely encourage multiple feminisms. The Wack! and Global Feminisms shows enriched the palette of possible viewpoints by which to understand artworks from cultures both alien and strikingly familiar; in viewing a Polish video by Anna Baumgart of a woman lying on a floor, screaming near pools of blood, an American woman may feel disconnected and perplexed, yet there is still some way she may identify and relate when she learns the title is “Ecstatic, Hysteric, and Other Sainly Ladies.”<sup>64</sup> Somehow transnational feminisms facilitate, i.e., orchestrate a connection; these feelings of *simpatico* exist because of the many varieties of feminisms.

(5) Finally, Ditch Disinterestedness. Disturbatory art “is not art one is intended to view across an aesthetic distance that serves as an insulating barrier, . . . but art intended instead to modify the consciousness and even change the lives of its ‘viewers’.”<sup>65</sup> Feminist theorists (epistemologists, aestheticians, and others) have extensively criticized the notion of the disinterested viewer, observer, knower, and scientist. Students who do not know this feminist critique, along with the artworks of the revolutionary Feminist Art Movement, are ill prepared to launch their own challenges to the artworld and its attendant practices. It is certainly necessary to learn the history of aesthetics, the methodology of philosophical analysis, but also to creatively challenge the past while one constructs a framework by which to think and explore the present. Today’s art requires new tools and today’s philosophers are perfectly poised to carry out the charge of TFAP to recognize the *aesthetic* impact of women on the visual arts and culture (in addition to the intellectual and political impact).

Several suggestions come to mind to ease the implementation of the above principles. First, philosophers need to study the discipline’s response to feminism in general, which has been similar to that of the artworld, namely, one of dismissal and denial. Some of the early pronouncements of Brian Leiter’s influential *Philosophical Gourmet Reports*, which quickly became the gauge of stature among philosophers and departments within the profession, dismissed feminist philosophy, along with race studies and other marginalized sub-disciplines, as fads. Such a judgment cannot but help to perpetuate a bias within philosophy that trickles down to sub-disciplines where students (and junior faculty) are discouraged from pursuing feminist interests. Second, there has always been a small number of women within philosophy (hovering around 21 percent of the overall number)<sup>66</sup> and since most feminists are women, they need to improve their numbers to stand up, be counted, and enact a noticeable influence on the discipline. This is true within aesthetics as well, although it should be noted that the number of women in the ASA has always seemed higher than the average within the profession, owing to higher numbers of women in the arts or perhaps, more women interested in the arts. Third, feminist scholars must undertake continued explanations of what they do and education of their peers since many aestheticians still remain ignorant about feminism, in the double sense of the term, i.e., both the unintentional neglect to learn anything about it as well as the more deliberate and hasty rejection of it. Major authors in the field of aesthetics are allowed to continually write about beauty, emotions, the environment, and everyday aesthetics in art without once mentioning an artwork created by a woman, the Feminist Art Movement, or any feminist critic/philosopher. Their works are studied, quoted, and critiqued with deference while they omit any reference at all to an entire body of feminist creativity and research. The opposite is hardly true. Feminists who work in aesthetics (or any other field of philosophy) find themselves doing double duty in their acquisition of

knowledge; like their counterparts in epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics, feminists who critique aesthetics must first learn traditional aesthetics and then keep abreast of ongoing research in order to launch a legitimate and scholarly attack. Feminists need to continually suggest, encourage, and enlighten their colleagues to a new world of art and interpretation that awaits them in post-revolutionary aesthetics.

Freeing one's mind is exactly what members of the American Society of Aesthetics did at the 1990 meeting when they spontaneously organized to proclaim the goals of the Feminist Caucus:

- A greater number of women participating in the ASA (conference, publications, administration);
- more feminist philosophy within aesthetics;
- more diversity among the members of the ASA;
- the mentoring of young women and men, particularly those writing feminist philosophy.<sup>67</sup>

The ASA Feminist Caucus mission statement was finalized, approved by the ASA Board of Trustees, and distributed at the 1993 meeting; in part it read:

The role of the caucus within the ASA is pedagogical, political, and theoretical. Its aim is to introduce the general membership to issues in feminist aesthetics and to give them an opportunity for deeper understanding of this area. . . . As these [feminist] topics become mainstream and the teaching of feminist aesthetics more widespread, the continued existence of the caucus may be submitted for review.

After seventeen years and fluctuating levels of enthusiasm on the part of Caucus attendees, the 2007 session of the Feminist Caucus at the national meeting in Los Angeles considered the future of feminism within the organization as well as the future of the Feminist Caucus itself. Perhaps, some wondered, it was time for the caucus to fold?

The audience response was a resounding “no” which insured the future of the caucus but gave rise to other questions regarding its ongoing role within the ASA. In assessing the progress made in its first seventeen years, it seemed true that a greater number of women had become involved in the organization, more women served on the board of trustees and as officers (for example, Marcia Eaton, Jennifer Robinson, and Carolyn Korsmeyer had served as president of the organization), more women were publishing in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, and more young women and men were being mentored into the profession. However, caucus goals were not just about numbers, and even with increasing numbers of women, it seemed obvious that feminist philosophy had not yet become mainstream; very few articles published in the journal are concerned with feminist topics and/or feminist art; efforts to increase racial diversity within the society have been a resounding failure; and young feminists report that they still feel pressured to refrain from feminist philosophizing because their home departments will not promote them on such work. (This was the situation twenty years ago and it still persists.) Moreover, it was also true that a number of senior women within aesthetics who had written from a feminist point of view, including some founding members of the Caucus, had left aesthetics for other areas of philosophy such as ethics, bioethics, or social/political philosophy--where feminist inquiry has grown very strong.

In considering the original goals of the Caucus, it seemed that at least three goals had not been met: feminist topics had not become mainstream in textbooks or within the main aesthetics journal, the teaching of feminist aesthetics had not really become

widespread, and any efforts toward diversity that may have taken place had undeniably failed (although it should be noted that hiring, like tenure and promotion, is up to home departments and not the ASA). Thus, when the continued existence of the caucus came up for review in the fall of 2007, members who were present still felt the need for the advancement of feminist goals and the monitoring of feminist philosophy within the ASA.

So, is it time for a strategic intervention? If so, TFAP presents a model. Those members interested in advancing feminism within the ASA cannot launch an effort as large as the one that has been undertaken at Rutgers University, of course, but can perhaps emulate some activities and infuse new effort. Most importantly, adopting a renewed sense of self-consciousness and encouraging others to raise the level of awareness about feminist achievements would go a long way toward not only bringing attention to feminist scholarship that has influenced philosophers--without being given its proper due--but also motivate (young) philosophers to adopt feminist perspectives. How interesting might it be to bring attention to feminist art, art criticism, and theory that has dealt with emotions (and gender differences in emotional responses) for the past several decades to those aestheticians who have lately come to value the role emotions play in art? How much more fully would a discussion of ethical issues in art benefit from a look at women's art that deals with war, violence, poverty, and the environment?<sup>68</sup> Imagine how much richer the discussion at the intersection of politics and aesthetics would be with an exploration of artworks by women from countries where they publicly face the social pressures regarding bodies, beauty and burqas.<sup>69</sup> One exciting trend that has come about is the new emphasis on pregnancy, childbirth, and mothering that has infused an interest in everyday aesthetics and the lived experiences of women with children.<sup>70</sup> Another is the discussion of the disabled body in art, as well as permutations of interest in the modified body, i.e., the medical body, and the persistent norms of (white) female beauty.<sup>71</sup>

Far from disinterested, feminist art is very interested in challenging the norm, the status quo, and the patriarchal power structure. To exclude it from the canon of paradigmatic art on which philosophers focus is to omit an entire political, artistic, and social movement of the second half of the twentieth century/beginning of the twenty-first century and to narrow one's vision of the future. Given the state of the world, the artworld, and art (and artifacts) in the world, it is inevitable that feminism will play a role within philosophical aesthetics. One member of the Feminist Caucus once invoked a call for "gender justice" within the ASA after she had become frustrated with the slow pace of progress for feminism within the society. Artist Faith Wilding expressed similar impatience while participating in a panel discussion on feminist art when she articulated, "I'm tired of being on the history panel. . . . I've been teaching feminism for the last 30 years, and our work is still so much at the beginning. . . . I'm on the endless wave, that's all I can say."<sup>72</sup> The public celebrations of feminist art in the exhibits organized in 2007, coast to coast within America and internationally, have prompted critics and TFAP to cast the Feminist Art Movement as a revolution of women who transformed contemporary art, criticism, theory, and aesthetics. More feminist research and pedagogy among aestheticians would re-focus our attention on these milestones of recent history, enlarge our scope to consider art all around us, and expand our evolving conceptual framework for analyzing art, once and for all.

One final rationale might motivate even the most reluctant philosophers toward an acceptance of both feminist philosophy and philosophers, namely, the success it brings to social endeavors. In a recently published book, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools and Societies*, Scott E. Page “uses mathematical modeling and case studies to show how variety in staffing produces organizational strength.”<sup>73</sup> This professor of complex systems, political science and economics is heralded as “a fresh voice” in a recent review by Claudia Dreifus:

Rather than ponder moral questions like, ‘Why can’t we all get along?’ Dr. Page asks practical ones like, ‘How can we all be more productive together?’ The answer, he suggests is in messy, creative organizations and environments with individuals from vastly different backgrounds and life experiences.<sup>74</sup>

I would suggest that Page’s argument for diversity within populations--“that diverse groups of people bring to organizations more and different ways of seeing a problem, and thus, faster/better ways of solving it”--carries over into academic scholarship as well as the corporate board room. He suggests that complicated problems, pondered by persons within organizations who think along similar lines, are less likely to be solved. When asked why organizations made up of different types of people are more productive than homogeneous ones, he responds:

People from different backgrounds have varying ways of looking at problems, what I call ‘tools’. The sum of these tools is far more powerful in organizations with diversity than in ones where everyone has gone to the same schools, been trained in the same mold and thinks in almost identical ways.<sup>75</sup>

Recall that future classrooms will consist of a majority of women; they will want to see art created by women and they will naturally identify with or be repelled by such work on the basis of their lived experiences (to date) as women. Professors who fail to see the merits of acknowledging and rewarding their points of view will fail to stay relevant. If successful organizations profit from diversity, the revolution of the Feminist Art Movement could greatly enhance both the classroom and aesthetic scholarship.

The Feminist Art Movement and feminist philosophy just might be the cure to what ails, or adds to the stagnation, of contemporary aesthetics today.<sup>76</sup> Using TFAP as a model for conceptual intervention, the future of aesthetics is bright and promising; it will become more feminist and more inclusive as we usher in a post-partisan, post-gender, post-racial, post-revolutionary phase. Given the 24/7 news cycle, the internet, the speed and facility with which events and accomplishments are shared nearly instantaneously around the world, these changes are inevitable, particularly among younger philosophers and those who are committed to working toward the original goals of the Feminist Caucus.

“I’ll be post-feminist in the post-patriarchy,” reads a well-known bumper sticker. Linda Nochlin has repeatedly stated in recent writings that her initial question, “Why have there been no great women artists?” is now quite irrelevant. She contends that the concept of greatness is no longer viable--that, unfortunately, art is more about marketing and investment value now--and that feminist art and theory have transformed the category of “woman artist” into a much more complex amalgam that moves beyond the binary couplings of male/female, active/passive, superior/inferior, good or bad art. Writing in *Women Artists at the Millenium*, Carol Armstrong concurs and offers a challenge to those of us who practice aesthetics with an ever-expanding frame of mind:

. . . the figure of the ‘woman artist,’ then, [is] a construction just as much as that of the ‘great artist.’ It is to see the ‘woman artist’ as a figure whose womanness is historically constructed, and to whom a set of historically disparaged (and often contradictory) values has been attached, such as smallness, domesticity, interiority, superficiality, artificiality, animality, mobility, incoherence, irrationality, particularity, plurality, supplementarity, and so on.<sup>77</sup>

I think for the figure of the ‘woman artist’ to matter at all now, her art must make some kind of difference, a difference that has to do with the ethics of and in aesthetics. . . . the purpose of the artist, whether man or woman, is not celebrity, either now, for posterity or in the millennial roll call – not greatness, that is – but art.<sup>78</sup>

To ponder the purpose of the artist and her art as they relate to making a difference in the larger world *is* to highlight the ethics *of* artistic creation conjoined with feminist activism. To value and study the differences made by these artists, alongside traditional aesthetics, is to do ethics *in* aesthetics. And isn’t this the starting place for all aesthetics after all?

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?” is reprinted in various texts including Linda Nochlin, *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988). For an updated commentary, see Linda Nochlin, “‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’ Thirty Years After” in *Women Artists at the Millennium*, ed. Carol Armstrong and Catherine De Zegher (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 2006), 21-32.

<sup>2</sup> Over the years, *The New Criterion* presented a conservative point of view; see Hilton Kramer, *The Triumph of Modernism: The Art World, 1987-2005* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 2006) (see also note 9). Artist/philosopher Adrian Piper would later complain of multiple forms of repression, “The Triple Negation of Colored Women Artists,” in *Next Generation: Southern Black Aesthetic*, ed. Devinis Szakas and Vicki Kopf (Winston-Salem, NC: South-Eastern Center for Contemporary Art, 1990): 15-22; reprinted in Hilary Robinson, ed., *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000* (New York and London: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 57-68.

<sup>3</sup> The first version of “Revolution” to be released was the B-side of the “Hey Jude” single, released in late August, 1968. . . . “Revolution” later appeared on the 1970 *Hey Jude* compilation album created for the United States market and other compilations ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolution\\_\(song\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolution_(song))).

<sup>4</sup> Arthur C. Danto, “The Artworld,” *Journal of Philosophy* 61 (1964), 571-584. I rely upon Danto’s notion of the artworld throughout the essay, which is the one typically referenced by analytic aestheticians. This concept may overlap but conceptually differs from that of Hilton Kramer (see note 10) and Howard Becker, *Art Worlds*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (25<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition)(University of California Press, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> See [www.throughtheflower.org](http://www.throughtheflower.org) or [www.judychicago.com](http://www.judychicago.com) for more information, including numerous books authored by Chicago over the past several decades, a DVD of the making of the artwork entitled *Right Out of History: Judy Chicago* (2008), and the location of its permanent installation in 2007 in the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art at the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York. Recent volumes include *Setting the Table: Preparing Judy Chicago’s The Dinner Party; 30 Year Anniversary Exhibition at the University of Houston, Clear Lake* (University of Houston, Clear Lake, TX: 2011); *The Dinner Party: Webster’s Timeline History, 1784-2007* (San Diego, CA: ICON Group International, Inc., 2009); Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party: From Creation to Preservation* (London and New York: Merrell, 2007). Judy Chicago is a founding member of The Feminist Art Project (begun in 2006) and serves on its National Committee.

<sup>6</sup> Mirra Bank published *Anonymous Was a Woman: A Celebration in Words and Images of Traditional American Art and the Women Who Made It* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1995), invoking the Virginia Woolf quote, “For most of history, anonymous was a woman.”

<sup>7</sup> See Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1971) and Gloria Steinem’s collection of essays, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983).

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<sup>8</sup> One can easily over-romanticize this along the lines of “Things were simpler then.” One example that contrasts art of the twenty-first century with the 1970s is Eleanor Heartney’s, *Defending Complexity: Art, Politics and the New World Order* (Lenox, Mass.: Hard Press Editions, 2006) which seeks to reflect the growing density of overlapping issues that now pervade the artworld.

<sup>9</sup> For instance, *The Dinner Party* was denounced by well-known art critic Hilton Kramer, in “Does Feminism Conflict with Artistic Standards?” (*New York Times*, Jan. 27, 1980), D1 and later (1990) denounced as pornography on the floor of the United States Congress; for a record of the proceedings, see Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party* (New York: Penguin Books, 1996), 220.

<sup>10</sup> (Panel Discussion), “Feminism & Art [9 Views],” *Artforum International* 42, i2 (October 2003), 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>12</sup> Nochlin, “‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’ Thirty Years After,” 28.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* Filmmaker Matthew Barney and painter John Currin are two artists often mentioned as examples.

<sup>14</sup> Arthur C. Danto, “Frank Stella,” in *Encounters and Reflections: Art in the Historical Present* (University of California Press, 1997), 147. The review was originally published in *The Nation* in 1987.

<sup>15</sup> Nochlin, “‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’ Thirty Years After,” 28.

<sup>16</sup> Richard Lacayo, “What Women Have Done to Art,” *Time* (April 2, 2007), 66-67.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Richard Leppert, “The Male Nude: Identity and Denial,” in *Critical Perspectives of Art History*, ed. John C. McEnroe and Deborah F. Pokinski (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001), 137.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Eleanor Heartney, Helaine Posner, Nancy Princenthal, and Sue Scott, *After the Revolution: Women Who Transformed Contemporary Art* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2007).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Recall Susan Faludi’s award-winning *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, originally published in 1992 and re-printed in a Fifteenth Anniversary Edition that contains a special preface as well as the familiar, “Introduction: Blame It on Feminism” (Westminster, MD: Bantam Books, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Nochlin in Heartney, Posner, Princenthal, and Scott, 8.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>26</sup> Eleanor Heartney, “Kiki Smith: A View from the Inside Out,” in *After the Revolution: Women Who Transformed Contemporary Art*, 201.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 199, 201.

<sup>28</sup> Arthur C. Danto, “‘Bad Aesthetic Times,’” in *Encounters and Reflections: Art in the Historical Present* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 297--312. The essay was originally published in *Modern Painters* (Summer, 1989).

<sup>29</sup> Dan Cameron, “Post-Feminism,” *Flashart* 132 (February/March 1987): 80-83. For a commentary admonishing what the author perceived to be Cameron’s announcement of the “termination” of feminism, see Amelia Jones, “‘Post-Feminism’: A Remasculinization of Culture?” *M/E/A/N/I/N/G*, 7 (1990): 29-40 reprinted in Hilary Robinson, ed., *Feminism-Art-Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000* (New York and London: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 496-506.

<sup>30</sup> Michelle Meagher and other feminist theorists argue that to construe the narrative of the evolution of feminist art in terms of 1970s essentialism followed by anti-essentialist 1980s poststructuralism is to perpetuate misleading, mythical stories that serve to disidentify feminists from their predecessors and cause generational divides; see “Telling Stories About Feminist Art,” *Feminist Theory* 12 (2011): 297-317.

<sup>31</sup> Dan Cameron, in (Panel Discussion), “Feminism & Art [9 Views],” *Artforum International* 42, i2 (October 2003), 7.

<sup>32</sup> Cornelia H. Butler and Lisa Gabrielle Mark, *WACK! Art and The Feminist Revolution* (Cambridge, MA and London, UK: The MIT Press, 2007), 209. The exhibit opened at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles (March 4-July 16, 2007), then traveled (in slightly reduced form) to the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. (September 21-December 16, 2007), P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York City (February – June, 2008) and finally Vancouver Art Gallery, British Columbia (October 4, 2008 – January 14, 2009). For a review of the show by Nancy Princenthal, see “Feminism Unbound,” in *Art in America* (June/July 2007): 142-152, 221.

<sup>33</sup> Butler and Mark, 142.

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<sup>34</sup> The goal of mainstream acceptance and inclusion in the canon for feminist art is not without its detractors. As Dan Cameron suggests, “I have always believed that it is semi-delusional to seek reward from the very system you have set out to reform” (Cameron, 7). Arthur Danto suggests, “To be a feminist, after all, is not just to want to paint some pictures that will get accepted and get you accepted as a woman artist: it is to want to change the world in ways that matter to you most, politically and in ways we hardly can imagine from where we are now.” See Danto, “Bad Aesthetic Times,” 300.

<sup>35</sup> Butler and Mark, 7.

<sup>36</sup> Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, *Reclaiming Female Agency: Feminist Art History after Postmodernism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

<sup>37</sup> Maura Reilly, “Introduction: Toward Transnational Feminisms,” in *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art*, ed. Maura Reilly and Linda Nochlin (New York: Merrell and the Brooklyn Museum, 2007), 17. The show opened at the Brooklyn Museum of Art (March 23 – July 1, 2007) and then traveled to Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts (September 12 – December 9, 2007).

<sup>38</sup> Eleanor Heartney, “Worldwide Women,” in *Art in America* (June/July 2007): 156. The essay is reprinted in *Beauty Unlimited*, Peg Zeglin Brand, ed. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 126-134.

<sup>39</sup> Heartney, *Art in America*, 156.

<sup>40</sup> Reilly, 41.

<sup>41</sup> Linda Nochlin, “Women Artists Then and Now: Painting, Sculpture, and the Image of the Self,” in *Global Feminisms*, 69.

<sup>42</sup> Compare the record prices acquired for the sale of artworks by the auction houses of Sotheby’s and Christie’s in May, 2008. Louise Bourgeois, at age 96, sold a four-foot-high metal and fabric sculpture of a spider for \$4.5 million, a record price for the artist and for a woman artist until surpassed by Marlene Dumas who sold a 1995 oil painting for \$6.3 million ([www.nytimes.com/2008/06/15/magazine/15dumas-t.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/15/magazine/15dumas-t.html)). However, a painting of a large female nude (1995) by Lucian Freud set a record at \$33,641,000 ([www.nytimes.com/2008/05/14/nyregion/14auction.html?scp=1&sq=t%20christie's,%20bidding%20is%20strong%20for%20paintings,%20sculptures,%20and%20even%20a%201946%20house&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/14/nyregion/14auction.html?scp=1&sq=t%20christie's,%20bidding%20is%20strong%20for%20paintings,%20sculptures,%20and%20even%20a%201946%20house&st=cse)) and *Triptych* (1976) by Francis Bacon sold for \$86,281,000: the highest price ever paid for a work of art at auction ([www.nytimes.com/2008/07/02/arts/design/02auct.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/02/arts/design/02auct.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)). Works by men routinely outsell those by women; in November 2012, a single auction brought in \$412.2 million--the highest total ever for a contemporary art auction at Christie’s--while Sotheby’s sale of contemporary art made the highest total for any sale in its history--\$375.1 million ([www.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/arts/design/record-breaking-prices-at-christies-auction.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/arts/design/record-breaking-prices-at-christies-auction.html)). Record-selling artists in 2012 included Franz Kline (\$36 million for a 1957 untitled work), Jeff Koons (\$33.6 million for “Tulips”--a stainless-steel sculpture of flowers from 1995-2004), and 80-year old Gerhard Richter--highest price paid for an artwork by a living artist (\$34.2 million for “Abstraktes Bild (809-4)” from 1994) ([artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/10/15/gerhard-richter-painting-sets-record-auction-price-for-a-living-artist/](http://artsbeat.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/10/15/gerhard-richter-painting-sets-record-auction-price-for-a-living-artist/)).

<sup>43</sup> Coincidentally, MAWSA (Mid-Atlantic Region Women’s Studies Association) sponsored a conference in 2009 entitled “Taking Stock: Transformative Scholarship, Transforming Practices,” to mark the fortieth anniversary of the beginnings of Women’s Studies curricula and programs within colleges and universities across the United States.

<sup>44</sup> From The Feminist Art Project website at [feministartproject.rutgers.edu](http://feministartproject.rutgers.edu), where the full information is listed as follows: “The Feminist Art Project is a program of the Institute for Women and Art (IWA), Rutgers University. The IWA is a unit of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and a center of the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic & Public Partnerships in the Arts & Humanities. IWA is a consortium member of the Institute for Women’s Leadership.”

<sup>45</sup> Even in 2005 with improvements chronicled, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals for women and children have not been met whereby “in many parts of the world [they] are dying from causes which are treatable and preventable, and where half of the developing world lacks access to simple sanitation.” Finfacts Team, “UN sees gains on poverty worldwide, but huge gaps remain” (June 9, 2005) ([www.finfacts.com/irelandbusinessnews/publish/printer\\_10002168.shtml](http://www.finfacts.com/irelandbusinessnews/publish/printer_10002168.shtml)).

<sup>46</sup> See Meghan Casserly, “The Global Gender Gap Is Closing, But The U.S. Is Still Failing Its Women” for data that shows the United States ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> on a list of 135 nations ranked in 2011 and 2012 by the World Economic Forum (WEF) ([www.forbes.com/sites/meghancasserly/2012/10/24/the-global-gender-gap-is-closing-but-the-u-s-is-still-failing-its-women/](http://www.forbes.com/sites/meghancasserly/2012/10/24/the-global-gender-gap-is-closing-but-the-u-s-is-still-failing-its-women/)). An AAUW (American Association of University

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Women) 2012 study reveals that educated women who graduated in 2008 were found to be earning only eighty-two percent compared to their male counterparts in 2009 indicating that the gender gap in pay starts within the first year of working; see [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org).

<sup>47</sup> Even an artist's choice of subject matter can be severely affected. For instance, Beate C. Minkovski, the Executive Director of the cooperative Woman Made Gallery in Chicago, Illinois, suggested in 2007 that certain subject matter--such as artworks on breast cancer--would probably never be exhibited by a commercial gallery. She argued that women's galleries, particularly co-ops, would *always* be necessary in the artworld. The advisory board of Woman Made Gallery deliberately alternates showings of political work with less controversial options in order to prevent critics from dismissing the gallery. (Personal interview, August 31, 2007.)

<sup>48</sup> Heartney, Posner, Princenthal, and Scott, 24-25.

<sup>49</sup> Reilly, 18-21.

<sup>50</sup> Brian Sherwin, "Art & Prejudice: Dealing with Sexism, Racism, and Ageism in the Art World," *Fine Art Views* (2/19/2011) at <http://faso.com/fineartviews/27887>.

<sup>51</sup> See Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Feminism's Long March," *Art in America* (June/July 2007), 65; Danielle J. Lindemann and Steven J. Tepper, "Painting with Broader Strokes: Reassessing the Value of an Arts Degree," Special Report 1 of the strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP), 202, at [http://snaap.indiana.edu/pdf/SNAAP\\_Special%20Report\\_1.pdf](http://snaap.indiana.edu/pdf/SNAAP_Special%20Report_1.pdf).

<sup>52</sup> I am fully aware that I have glossed over the tension between women who call themselves feminist and those who do not. It is well-known that many young women today shun the term 'feminist' and have moved beyond third-wave feminism into something else of their own making. Consider the arguments of Kistin Rowe-Finkbeiner, *The F-Word: Women, Politics, and the Future* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2004) and Ariel Levy, *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2005). Many female artists have shunned the F-word as well, some for years. Could it be that well-known and highly successful artists like Cindy Sherman and Vanessa Beecroft who refuse to be labeled 'feminist' increase the interest of male buyers (still the dominant investors in art) and the resulting monetary value and resale value of their work (as with the major auction houses)?

<sup>53</sup> For a highly recommended text, see Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Gender and Aesthetics: An Introduction* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004) and her entry, "Feminist Aesthetics," in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2012) at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-aesthetics/>.

<sup>54</sup> Danto, "Bad Aesthetic Times," 301. Keith Lehrer, "Feminist Art, Content, and Beauty," in *Beauty Unlimited*, Peg Zeglin Brand, ed. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013) as well as Chapter 3, "Aesthetic Theory, Feminist Art, and Autonomy," *Art, Self and Knowledge* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>55</sup> For a substantive analysis of the lack of agency on the part of Meurant as model, see Diana Tietjens Meyers, "Jenny Saville Remakes the Female Nude: Feminist Reflections on the State of the Art," in *Beauty Unlimited*, Peg Zeglin Brand, ed., (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013).

<sup>56</sup> Two examples comes to mind; see my reviews of Charles Harrison, *Painting the Difference: Sex and Spectator in Modern Art* (University of Chicago Press, 2005) in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 65, 2 (Spring 2007), 245-246 and Alexander Nehemas, *Only a Promise of Happiness: The Place of Beauty in a World of Art* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007) at [www.caareviews.org](http://www.caareviews.org).

<sup>57</sup> Danto, "Bad Aesthetic Times," 301.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Korsmeyer, *Gender and Aesthetics*, 3.

<sup>60</sup> Danto, "Bad Aesthetic Times," 302.

<sup>61</sup> Danto, "Bad Aesthetic Times," 302-303. Danto was writing at a time (1997) when prosperity enabled many Japanese buyers to outbid others and purchase expensive works of art.

<sup>62</sup> Reilly and Nochlin, 40.

<sup>63</sup> For instance, see Dexter Filkins, "Afghan Girls, Scarred by Acid, Defy Terror, Embracing School," [www.nytimes.com/2009/01/14/world/asia/14kandahar.html?\\_r=0&pagewanted=print](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/14/world/asia/14kandahar.html?_r=0&pagewanted=print).

<sup>64</sup> Reilly and Nochlin, 178.

<sup>65</sup> Danto, "Bad Aesthetic Times," 299.

<sup>66</sup> Julie C. Van Camp has tracked statistics from Leiter's 2004-2006 and 2006-2008 *Philosophical Gourmet Reports* in an essay originally published on November 19, 2004 entitled, "Female-Friendly Departments: A Modest Proposal for Picking Graduate Programs in Philosophy;" in 2004, female faculty made up 18.31%

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of the tenured/tenure-track faculty at the Top 50 doctoral programs and the top five departments on the Top 50 list were all less than 20% female; in 2006, the number of tenured/tenure-track female faculty improved to 19.15% and the top five departments on the Top 50 list were all less than 18% female. She also cites the percentage of women receiving Ph.D.s in philosophy in the United States between the years of 1997-2005 at 25.1% in 2005, down from 33.3% in 2004 and 27.1% in 2003 ([www.csulb.edu/~7Ejvancamp/Female\\_Friendly.html](http://www.csulb.edu/~7Ejvancamp/Female_Friendly.html)). Her 2011 update lists the percentage of female faculty at 98 U.S. doctoral programs in philosophy; the top five departments have 21% or less female representation ([www.csulb.edu/~jvancamp/doctoral\\_2004.html](http://www.csulb.edu/~jvancamp/doctoral_2004.html)). The American Philosophical Association Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession also continues to address the lower numbers of female philosophers employed in philosophy in comparison to the number receiving Ph.D.s; approximately 21% are professionally employed philosophers compared to 25.1% of Ph.D. recipients in 2005. See the 2006 Status of Women in the Profession Report from at [www.apa.udel.edu/apa/governance/committees/women/](http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/governance/committees/women/) and a 2011 update by Kathryn Nolock confirming that women are roughly 21% of postsecondary philosophy instructors (available as a pdf online at [www.apaonlinecs.org/home/](http://www.apaonlinecs.org/home/)).

<sup>67</sup> Taken from my notes at the time, the meeting was held in Austin, Texas, and the initial minutes of the meeting were sent to Phil Alperson, Annette Barnes, Arnold Berleant, Joyce Brodsky, Renée Cox, Mary Devereaux, Sarah Fowler, Judith Genova, Lydia Goehr, Tim Gould, Gregg Horowitz, Tom Huhn, Michael Krausz, Jo Ellen Jacobs, Carolyn Korsmeyer, Flo Leibowitz, Paul Mattick, the late Mary Mothersill, Daniel Nathan, Monique Roelofs, Yuriko Saito, Barbara Sandriss, Richard Shusterman, Anita Silvers, and Mary Wiseman. It is not surprising that these goals are similar to those of the APA Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession.

<sup>68</sup> See, for instance, Sheila Lintott, "Feminist Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty," in *Environmental Values* 19 (2010): 315-333.

<sup>69</sup> Art critic Eleanor Heartney, contributing editor at *Art in America*, spoke on this topic at the Feminist Caucus session at the 2002 ASA conference.

<sup>70</sup> See Sheila Lintott and Maureen Sander-Staudt, *Philosophical Inquiries into Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Mothering: Maternal Subjects* (New York and London: Routledge, 2012) and Andrea Liss, *Feminist Art and the Maternal* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

<sup>71</sup> See Anita Silvers, "From the Crooked timber of Humanity, Something Beautiful Should Be Made!" in *APA Newsletter on Philosophy and Medicine* 10 (2011): 1-5 and Ann Millett-Gallant, *The Disabled Body in Contemporary Art* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) as well as Mary Devereaux, "Is Medical Aesthetics Really Medical?" and other essays in *Beauty Unlimited* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013). An earlier collection of essays on beauty can be found in a special issue edited by Rita Felski, of *Feminist Theory* 7 (2006).

<sup>72</sup> *Ms. Magazine* (Spring 2007), 10. I have a similar feeling when asked to review book manuscripts for presses that offer the same authors, on the same topics, again and again. I offer the following form letter for the reader's use: "Dear [Insert-Name-of-Press here], You ask for my comments on the 'new and exciting' collection of essays in aesthetics co-edited by [Insert-Name-of-Co-Editor(s) here]. I'm happy to share the same comments I've been writing for the past 15 years, namely, 'No, I would not use this text in a course; No, I do not find the range of topics 'new and exciting'. In other words, you have omitted diverse points of view, e.g., by women, feminists, race theorists, disability theorists, etc. that reflect an interest in issues of gender, race, disability, or sexual orientation; There is no reference to feminist art, feminist philosophy, and/or the Revolution of the Feminist Art Movement that has taken place in the artworld over the past four decades. But, thanks for asking; I look forward to a more diversified volume next time!' [Insert Your Name Here.]"

<sup>73</sup> See Claudia Dreifus, "In Professor's Model, Diversity = Productivity," *The New York Times* (January 8, 2008), D2. The book under review is Scott E. Page, *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools and Societies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>74</sup> Dreifus, D2.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> The Board of the society has noted over the past several years the declining numbers of members.

<sup>77</sup> Armstrong and De Zegher, vii.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., xiv.