
Feminism in Context: A Role for Feminist Theory in Aesthetic Evaluation

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This paper will explore virgin territory: the role of recent feminist theory of art within the analytic philosophical tradition of aesthetics.¹ There is, I believe, a great deal to be gained—for both feminists and philosophers—from a meeting of the minds. Feminists may learn that the straw man they have constructed (in order to be deconstructed) of a phallogocentric father-figure of philosophy is not altogether accurate.² Philosophers may find that feminists are voicing interesting and legitimate challenges to traditional philosophical traditions: challenges that are failing to be heard only because they are expressed in unfamiliar jargon. Mutually beneficial dialogue is possible only if each side listens to the other.

Section I will present a sampling of two “traditional” analytic philosophers who claim that a work of art can be aesthetically appreciated in isolation from its context; contextual theories of criticism may be useful, but only within limits. Such theories, like Marxism, Freudianism, and (presumably) feminism, are considered useful only for interpretation and not evaluation because they utilize factual data which is *external* to the aesthetic object. Feminist theory, however, wants to push for that point forbidden by tradition; Section II presents their side. Feminist theory advocates evaluation of a work of art by means of reference to information *outside*

the work of art—including the artist’s intentions, the gender of artist and critic, and the level of awareness of gender issues of the sociohistorical framework surrounding the work of art and its reception. Section III is the voice of newly formulated philosophical contextual theories of art, such as those of Arthur Danto, George Dickie, and Marcia Eaton. This voice, though young and developing, is strong and dominating. It consistently fails, however, to take gender issues into account. My suggestion is that the feminist’s and the philosopher’s voices are in concert more so than either would like to admit. In Section IV, I will argue that feminist theory plays a role that is vital to contemporary discussions in aesthetics: As a second-order contextual theory of *criticism*, it is one type of contextual critical theory that naturally and necessarily follows upon current philosophical contextual theories of *art*.

I. TRADITIONAL AESTHETICS: STOLNITZ AND BEARDSLEY

Years ago Jerome Stolnitz provided an interesting analysis of art criticism in a text entitled *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism: An Introduction*.³ Stolnitz claimed that criticism—the talk about art—can have different, often interrelated functions; sometimes criticism is used to ascertain reasons for supporting value-judgments (evaluative criticism) and sometimes it is used simply to describe, explain, or clarify a work of art (inter-

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pretive criticism). Writing in the 1950s, during the heyday of Abstract Expressionism and Abstract Formalism, Stolnitz was perhaps little aware that he was focusing on an aspect of the artistic enterprise that would become so encompassing and animated. He naively commented on the need for interpretive criticism, explaining that some works of art are difficult to understand immediately or appreciate fully without recourse to the enlightening words of the critic. This was said at a time when John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, and the Minimalists were just beginning to gain and hold attention. He could hardly have predicted the role such criticism would play in the various arenas of literary criticism, art criticism, and aesthetics. Interpretive criticism, in the wake of New Criticism and formalist criticism, came to have a life of its own.

Stolnitz would hardly have approved of contemporary critics' emphasis on theory. He believed that one perceived a work aesthetically (grasping only what is immediately given in the work) while maintaining an aesthetic attitude: gratefully and submissively accepting and enjoying the work of art "for its own sake," "no questions asked," without challenge or criticism. Such is the substance of an aesthetic experience. Such experiences give rise to appreciation and aesthetic evaluation, embodied in statements like, "This is a good work of art," or "This work is uglier than that work of art." Only when a viewer has given up the aesthetic attitude to adopt a critical attitude does the work become something to be "probed, analyzed, and wrangled over":⁴ activities which give rise to the talk about art (i.e., art criticism). As stated earlier, one of the functions of criticism is to provide reasons that support aesthetic value-judgments. The interesting aspect to be investigated (for our purposes) is the *interaction* of these two types of activities: aesthetic valuing and the criticism used as reasons for those values. Stolnitz seems to be speaking inconsistently, at times, when he simultaneously holds that criticism can enhance the appreciation of a work of art and criticism is irrelevant to the appreciation of a work of art. Let us

review his ideas in order to become clear on this apparent inconsistency.

Stolnitz insists on two requirements for criticism, namely, that it illuminate (via interpretation) our understanding of the work of art and that it provide workable criteria of evaluation. Within the two basic types of criticism differentiated by *function* (interpretive and evaluative), several kinds of criticism are differentiated by means of their emphases on various aspects of the work. For example, some criticism might emphasize the origins of the work (what he calls contextual criticism and a subspecies, intentionalist criticism), some might emphasize the effects of the work (impressionist criticism), and some might emphasize the intrinsic structure of the work (New Criticism).

Among the several kinds of criticism analyzed by Stolnitz, one kind expanded on at length is collectively called contextual criticism. Included among the general category of contextual criticism are Marxian and Freudian criticism, which stress the origins and effects of the work: its social, historical, and psychological contexts. Contextual criticism, it should be noted at the outset, though praised as *sometimes* extremely helpful in providing interpretive criticism, is also highly suspect: "It should not be permitted to swamp or distort aesthetic evaluation."⁵ Stolnitz believes that contextual criticism can provide relevant and informative contextual-factual data with regard to subject matter and content but fails in attending to the purely artistic elements (aesthetic data) of form and medium.

Contextual criticism also fails to provide workable criteria of evaluation. Stolnitz takes issue with contextualist critics for failing to stop at the appropriate boundary (i.e., with the task of interpretation) and for presuming to be qualified to move from the activity of interpreting to the activity of evaluating. Here they commit the fallacy of transforming the concepts used to *describe* the work into concepts used to *judge* the work. In Stolnitz's words, "factual-contextual concepts are converted into criteria of evaluation."⁶ As a result, Stolnitz holds these judgments to be

moral and not aesthetic; thus they are useless in assessing the work aesthetically. Contextual criticism only sometimes fulfills Stolnitz's first requirement (that of illuminating our understanding of the work of art) and completely fails to fulfill the second (that of providing workable criteria of evaluation).

Here we come upon the resolution to the apparent inconsistency of Stolnitz's views on the role of critical evaluation: Stolnitz is really claiming that only *some* forms of criticism enhance aesthetic appreciation. Some interpretive criticism can provide knowledge that enables us to see more in a work of art, thereby enhancing one's aesthetic experience, and some can provide knowledge that causes us to devalue a work. Similarly, some evaluative criticism can sometimes enhance appreciation and, alternatively, some evaluative criticism distorts or obliterates aesthetic evaluation. One type of evaluative criticism that distorts or obliterates aesthetic evaluation is contextual criticism. Thus Stolnitz is arguing that only certain kinds of criticism are acceptable as evaluative criticism—namely, only noncontextual criticism. Stolnitz's argument can be reconstructed as follows:

1. Aesthetic judgments utilize knowledge of internal data.
2. Moral judgments utilize knowledge of external data.
3. Either aesthetic judgments or moral judgments determine aesthetic value.
4. Moral judgments determine only moral value (i.e., they are irrelevant for determining aesthetic value).
5. Therefore, only aesthetic judgments determine aesthetic value.

Premises (1) and (2) list two types of value judgments, each of which requires support from evaluative criticism. They are distinguished by the type of data utilized by the person making the judgment and the function they serve. Stolnitz stipulates in (1) that only knowledge about the intrinsic, noncontextual aspects of the work is used in making an aesthetic judgment. The use of any other type of data (i.e., contextual-factual data that

are external to the work of art "on its own" and "for its own sake") is external or extrinsic to the work. He writes,

The "context" of the work of art includes the circumstances in which the work originated, its effects upon society, and, in general, all of the relations and interactions of the work with other things, apart from its aesthetic life . . . the work, considered nonaesthetically, exists in a context.⁷

Contextual criticism (e.g., Freudian criticism) focuses on extrinsic, external factors—"all the elements which point beyond the work to 'life'"⁸—and *excludes* the intrinsic, internal, purely aesthetic considerations. These aesthetic considerations are seen to be the major constituent of the aesthetic object (i.e., they are what give rise to the aesthetic experience and are not to be glossed over, belittled, or ignored by the limited concerns of contextual criticism). Though often providing relevant and necessary factual information, contextual theories help us to understand and appreciate more fully only part of the aesthetic object. The "aesthetic life" of the work of art, on the other hand, is necessarily approached through aesthetic perception: "Aesthetic perception focuses upon the work itself, taken in isolation."⁹ Similarly, the aesthetic attitude gives no thought to causes and consequences outside the object; in an aesthetic experience, the intrinsic aspects of the aesthetic object are experienced and appreciated "in isolation"—without recourse to any external considerations—in a vacuum devoid of any contextual air. Another traditionalist, Monroe C. Beardsley, contrasts the isolationist's approach to the contextualist's as follows:

Isolationism is the view that in order to appreciate a work of art, we need do nothing but look at it, hear it, or read it—sometimes again and again, with the most concentrated attention—and that we need not go outside it to consult the facts of history, biography, or anything else.

. . . contextualism holds that a work of art should be apprehended in its total context or setting, and that much historical and other knowledge "feeds into" the work of art, making the total experience of it richer than if it were approached without such knowledge.¹⁰

Beardsley, like Stolnitz, believes that moral judgments are judgments about the "side effects" of a work of art; they are not about a work's "immediate effect" (i.e., the aesthetic experience).¹¹

Premise (3) reflects Stolnitz's and Beardsley's traditional view that only one type of judgment is relevant to a work of art's aesthetic value. In other words, one *can* appreciate a work of art fully enough without recourse to any contextual data. Certain contextual data yield moral judgments which are totally irrelevant to the determination or justification of aesthetic value.

Premise (4) embodies the traditional isolationist's reason for excluding moral judgments from the realm of aesthetic valuing: They are judgments that determine so-called moral value only. A basic underlying assumption is that moral value and aesthetic value are totally separate types of value that a work might possess and that traditional aesthetics is concerned primarily with aesthetic value; moral value is a distraction that a conscientious art viewer and theorist can best do without.

The conclusion (5), which states that only aesthetic judgments determine aesthetic value, follows from (3) and (4); it implies by means of (2) that knowledge of external data is not utilized in determining aesthetic value. It is this claim, namely, the conclusion (5), that I wish to argue against. Feminist theory will be the primary contextual theory I will use to argue against (5), but first I would like to point out a weakness in the isolationist's argument, one that I think was anticipated by Stolnitz and Beardsley both. It resides in premise (4)—in the isolationists' claim that moral judgments are irrelevant for determining aesthetic value.

At one point in arguing for (4), Beardsley presents Aestheticism and Moralism as views that point up the dichotomy of the moral and aesthetic aspects of art. Interestingly, he rejects Aestheticism as a fanatical reaction of "those, who, in their eagerness to exalt the arts, forget that they are after all human products of human activities, and must find their value in the whole context of human life."¹²

He does not go on to explain the phrase "the whole context of human life." One is left guessing as to precisely what context of human life might be relevant to establishing value, as Beardsley proceeds to reject Moralism as well as Aestheticism.

Moralism is a point of view in which aesthetic objects are judged "solely, or chiefly, with respect to moral standards."¹³ Moralists utilize two forms of argument by which they judge works. The first is the Argument from Reduction in which all critical evaluation is reduced to moral evaluation:

And so the whole, apparently aesthetic, question whether a particular aesthetic object is a good one or not is reduced to the (moral) question whether the feelings it arouses are good or bad.¹⁴

This argument is rejected because it fails to assess the separate and independent aesthetic value of a work. The second, less severe, form of argument is the Argument from Correlation by which Moralists grant the existence of a separate form of aesthetic value but make it dependent upon or correlated to moral value. In this view, a work of low moral value is necessarily a work of low aesthetic value. Beardsley is quick to reject this approach with regard to music and nonrepresentational visual art but seems less sure for cases of representational visual art, literature, and film. He cites pornography as an example of visual art that is low in both moral value and aesthetic value. He sees neither a *causal* nor a *necessary* connection between moral value and aesthetic value but admits to some "common-sense evidence to support here, in a rough way, the Argument from Correlation."¹⁵

Beardsley's failure to dismiss the Argument from Correlation implies a weakness in premise (4). If there is a possibility that the Argument from Correlation is at all plausible and that there is a possibility that contextual factors that determine so-called moral value are relevant in assessing the aesthetic value of a work of art, then the repercussion for traditional theories of aesthetic value is obvious: It is false to claim that aesthetic value is

determined solely by internal/intrinsic factors by means of contemplation of the work in isolation.

Stolnitz wavers in his support of premise (4) as well. In discussing an example of a moral judgment of Marxist criticism, he claims that the moral evaluation (that the work is poor due to its failure to inspire social revolt) "also has an aesthetic side to it":

Like some non-Marxist-critics, the Marxists contend that many of Ibsen's symbols are vague and unintelligible. This is a weakness in the aesthetic effectiveness of his plays. If this criticism can be shown to be sound, and if it is supported by the evidence of aesthetic experience, then it is, of course, aesthetically relevant. Again, however, the Marxist does not speak of "purely" aesthetic matters. He holds that Ibsen's symbolism illustrates the artist's "blurred and indefinite" social thinking.¹⁶

Stolnitz seems to be saying that the value judgment, "Ibsen's symbols are vague and unintelligible," is a value judgment which is based on legitimate internal data for the non-Marxist that becomes a *moral* value judgment when the Marxist extends the data utilized to noninternal, contextual data. Citing the mental state of the author as a reason for the evaluation automatically turns an aesthetic judgment into a moral judgment. But what can Stolnitz mean when he says that this moral judgment "also has an aesthetic side to it"? Could it possibly mean that moral judgments are not so strictly distinguishable from aesthetic judgments? If they are not, this weakens premise (4) in that the possibility is left open for a so-called moral judgment to determine aesthetic value as well as moral value.

In this section, the isolationist approach to a work of art was outlined as the approach of two recent traditional analytic aestheticians. This approach claims that all contextual data is irrelevant to aesthetic judgments of a work of art. In the next section, feminist theory will be presented as one example of a nontraditional approach; feminist theorists are contextualists who hold (contrary to the isola-

tionists' conclusion [5]) that knowledge of external data can be relevant to determining aesthetic value.

II. CONTEXTUAL FEMINIST THEORY

Feminists writing about the arts claim that although barely two decades have elapsed, we are well beyond the first phase of feminist theorizing about the arts.¹⁷ This first phase, labelled "the feminist critique" by Elaine Showalter,¹⁸ sought to recapture the past by exposing numerous denigrating stereotypes of women in works by males, whether works of the visual arts or the literary arts. Another aspect of recapturing the past, what Showalter called "gynocritics," involved (re)discovering female authors and artists previously excluded from the canon and seeking the commonalities of female culture in various artistic modes of expression. In this process of discovery, feminist theorists began to seriously question the dominating ideology of the past which both erected and sustained what feminists regarded as an exclusively male canon (the "Great Masters"). In the process of deconstructing the foundations and myths of this canon, many disciplines, including art history, literature, and philosophy, came under fire. Feminists demanded to know how purportedly universal and objective criteria of aesthetic value could yield such a biased, subjective set of paradigms. Hence the present phase, marked by an obsessive interest in metacriticism and metatheory in which feminists attempt to construct an unprecedented alternative to the dominating male criteria of interpreting and evaluating art. It is nothing less than fitting that aestheticians pay some attention to these challenges to traditional modes of evaluating art, for when feminists dismantle the canon by rejecting what we've come to know as the greatest *masterpieces* of all time, the entire notion of aesthetic value is at stake.

What is feminist theory? The answer is not always forthcoming from a feminist theorist since many hold that feminist theory, in vir-

tue of being feminist and consciously attempting to avoid the mistakes of its phallogocentric predecessors who thought defining a worthwhile and beneficial activity, is untheorizable. In spite of this push for open-endedness, feminists do fall into the old habit of characterizing—sometimes in intimate and laborious detail—the parameters and goals of a framework for interpreting and judging works of art in a new and unique way.

It might be helpful to piece together a characterization of feminist theory by first looking at the guiding principles of a feminist, in general. There is perhaps less hesitation to generalize what constitutes a feminist today in spite of the many factions that exist than there is in characterizing feminist theory; in 1980, one author proposed the following principles:

Feminists are, at the very least, supposed to have committed themselves to such things as participation in consciousness-raising groups and nonhierarchical organization, . . . the inherent equality of the sexes (or the superiority of the female) and the enslavement of women as the root of all oppression.¹⁹

In other words, a feminist consciously strives to undo the wrongs of previous oppression as well as to prevent similar occurrences from happening in the future. Most feminists believe in *active* promotion of these principles and also believe that works of art can be an expressive and effective means of actively communicating such principles. Along the lines suggested by one philosopher, this would make feminist theory (which is based on these principles) *more* than just a theory—a theory is a system of belief or world view shared by its adherents—but once theory goes beyond advancing a world view to *prescribing* a way of life or certain actions, theory becomes ideology.²⁰ Feminist theory, like Marxist theory or Christianity, is not merely descriptive but also directive. As Lucy Lippard, feminist art critic and theorist, writes, “Feminism is an ideology, a value system, a revolutionary strategy, a way of life.”²¹

Without reservation, some art created by women for other women or for men who need to learn the feminists’ message about

women, has been labelled “propaganda.”²² The term *propaganda* may ordinarily carry a negative connotation but it is defined rather neutrally as the propagation of ideas, doctrines, or practices. Women’s art (art created by women) differs from feminist art (art self-consciously created or interpreted along the lines of a feminist ideology), but both can be means of disseminating feminist propaganda by means of typical artistic media.²³

Feminist theory in its descriptive form, is similar to any other kind of theory; it is a world view or system of beliefs consisting of a formulation of apparent relationships or underlying principles of certain observed phenomena which has been confirmed to some degree. In its prescriptive form, it is not confirmable; ideologies are either practiced or not.

Basically, all works of art are subject to the dictum, “The personal is the political” (i.e., there is no nonpolitical, unbiased perspective). Beardsley might say (as he has said of Marxist principles of interpretation and evaluation) that feminists adhere to the Principle of Nonneutrality:

The Marxist . . . judges all behavior with respect to a single goal, the advancement of the revolutionary proletariat toward a classless society . . . considerations of aesthetic value are to be subordinated to political ones, for—and this is the basic Marxist principle—aesthetic objects cannot be politically neutral.²⁴

For feminists, the single goal might be the advancement of the revolutionary feminist toward a nonsexist, egalitarian, nonhierarchical society. Compare Beardsley’s summary of the Marxists’ adherence to the Principle of Nonneutrality to a (recent) suggestion by feminist theorist Gisela Ecker:

. . . feminist aesthetic theory must insist that all investigations into art have to be *thoroughly gendered*. . . . A truly gendered perspective would mean that the sex—male or female—of both the artist and the critic is taken into account. This also implies their relation to gender-values in the institutions and within the theories they apply.²⁵

This, in light of the picture sketched of contextual theories in Section I of this paper, is surely a contextual approach grounded in the belief that no work of art is appropriately assessed without paying attention to issues of gender. I will assume that the question of whether feminist *interpretive* criticism is an aesthetically relevant source of information is moot for both Stolnitz and Beardsley, since both have already acknowledged an acceptance of other types of contextual criticism, provided it meets their requirements. It is to the unresolved question of utilizing knowledge of contextual-factual data with regard to resultant *evaluative* criticism that we must now address ourselves.

Let us return to the argument presented in Section I in order to pursue the task of arguing against the conclusion (5) by means of feminist theory. It is the belief of feminist art theorists that the concept of an isolationist approach to a work of art is not only ludicrous but more importantly, pernicious. Given the feminist approach to a work of art, grounded in what Beardsley calls the Principle of Non-neutrality, women see it as conceptually impossible for a work of art *ever* to be "objectively" created, interpreted, or evaluated. All aesthetic objects are "'marked' by gender."²⁶ Consider one summary of this view, as expressed by Janet Wolff in a text entitled, *The Social Production of Art*:

. . . the ideas, beliefs, attitudes and values expressed in cultural products are ideological, in the sense that they are always related in a systematic way to the social and economic structures in which the artist is situated. . . . Ideas and beliefs which are proposed as value-free or non-partisan are merely those ideas which have assumed the guise of universality, perceiving as natural social facts and relations which are in fact historically specific. To this extent, then, art as a product of consciousness is also permeated with ideology, although it is not reducible to ideology.²⁷

If all art is permeated with ideology and marked by gender, then there is no possible way to make aesthetic judgments that do not take contextual data, like ideology and gender, into account.²⁸ Let us look at an example of these claims.

This example could count as the feminists' paradigm demonstrating that male critics, theorists, and aestheticians do not, in actuality, practice what the traditional isolationists preach. Consider the controversial body of work by artist Judy Chicago, the most well-known examples being her massive mid-1970s work entitled *The Dinner Party* and, more recently, her equally ambitious *The Birth Project*.²⁹ They are a paradigm of neglect (a fate equivalent to low aesthetic evaluation) by the established male-dominated artworld precisely because they are impossible to interpret or evaluate *fully* without recourse to knowledge of external, contextual-factual data. Most male critics have failed to write about them at all, thereby refusing to legitimize them as art. Feminist works are rarely critiqued in the major art magazines (e.g., *Art in America*, *ARTnews*, or *Artforum*) and are rarely discussed in theoretical works written by men.³⁰ There are two possible reasons for this. A critic, maintaining an isolationist approach, might see Chicago's images simply as poor design, unaesthetically interesting, and not worth writing about. Another possibility is that a critic actually uses external, contextual-factual data to determine *low* aesthetic value, based on Beardsley's Argument from Correlation.

What is the contextual data that could possibly cause a critic to so harshly judge these works? Possibly Chicago's avowed claim that her works constitute a new form of imagery, a new genre of representation: what she and others call cunt imagery.³¹ According to Chicago, cunt imagery depicts, either literally or abstractly, the source of woman's power: female genitalia. According to Chicago and other feminist artists, only a woman can truly identify with a work of cunt imagery, thereby interpreting the color and form and cultural associations of the imagery as a symbol of female power and consolidation.

An isolationist, on the other hand, who experiences Chicago's work *can*, as Beardsley suggests, "do nothing but look at it . . . again and again, with the most concentrated attention," without consulting any facts outside the work itself. However, it is nearly impossi-

ble to fathom how an isolationist would be able to understand, interpret, or evaluate the work fairly or fully without knowing that the symmetrical, multicolored designs being viewed mean more than just symmetrical, multicolored designs. It is not that a contextualist would simply have a richer aesthetic experience of this work of art; it is that an isolationist's aesthetic judgments are seriously inadequate because they are a function of *only* those judgments which depend on internal, intrinsic, noncontextual data. Chicago's works end up undervalued much as a medieval allegorical altarpiece would be undervalued if no account was taken of its rich symbolic iconography. The conclusion (5), then, of the isolationist's argument is not only shown to be faulty in principle but is also conveniently ignored in practice when the critic's effect is to exclude certain works from aesthetic consideration.

It is appropriate at this point to ask the following two questions: (1) Is what the isolationist claims true, namely, that someone can experience a work of art fully if he or she experiences it solely for its own sake? and (2) If the answer to (1) is yes, how does one separate internal data from external data in order to ignore external data and experience an artwork solely for its own sake? The resolution of the isolationist-contextualist debate lies in the answer to these two questions, particularly the latter. But determining precisely which qualities or properties of an aesthetic object are internal and external and, hence, are relevant or irrelevant to aesthetic evaluation is hardly unproblematic in light of recent challenges to the very notions of aesthetic attitude, aesthetic experience, aesthetic quality, and aesthetic value.³²

Even Beardsley has changed his mind, at least in one case, on what counts as a property of the work (i.e., internal to the work), for example, in his eventual agreement with Stolnitz regarding the skill of an artist.³³ At first, Beardsley considered skill to be external to the artwork—a property of the artist—but later decided with Stolnitz that skill is an internal property of the work that is experienced (as part of the isolationist's aesthetic experi-

ence). Skill becomes "part of the expressiveness of the work" and thus relevant to aesthetic evaluation, without leading "away from the work to biographical inquiry."³⁴ Beardsley, of course, would not admit to allowing external evidence to be relevant to evaluative judgments; rather he turns what was previously considered external evidence into internal evidence.

Beardsley's conversion shows most tellingly the lack of clear lines of demarcation between those properties within the work that are allowed to yield judgments about aesthetic value and those properties external to the work that are irrelevant. Once we start asking if ideology or gender is internal or external to a work of art, serious problems arise. A clearly stipulated set of criteria is needed to separate the two types of properties (if there is a separation) and to explain when properties external to a work are allowed to "become" properties internal to a work. (Two spin-off questions might be, "Can internal properties become external?" and "How would internal properties become external?")

Beardsley's change of heart reflects an attempt to move away from the traditional isolationist's approach as argued in (1) through (5). He comes to admit (in 1980), in contrast to the traditional view (which he espoused in 1958), that aesthetic value is *underdetermined* by aesthetic experience. One implication of this is that aesthetic value is also underdetermined by aesthetic judgments. Beardsley's revised notion of aesthetic value is as follows: "the aesthetic value of anything is its capacity to impart—*through cognition of it*—a marked aesthetic character to experience."³⁵ This revision moves us closer to the type of contextual theories we will look at in Section III, namely, those that rely heavily on a complex cognitive process to determine whether something is art instead of relying on perceptual experience alone. Even though Beardsley anticipates problems as to what counts as "the receiver's cognitive grasp"³⁶ (i.e., the proper experience), he still claims that an experience with a marked aesthetic character still remains free "from concerns about matters outside that object."³⁷ Contem-

porary contextual theorists, we shall see, depend heavily on matters outside the object.

The main point of this section was to introduce feminist theory as a type of contextual theory, excluded from traditional philosophical discussion due to the longstanding belief that contextual theories are only helpful (sometimes) in determining critical, nonevaluative judgments. In contrast, feminist theory was used to demonstrate against the isolationists' premise (4) and conclusion (5) that aesthetic value need not be a function of only aesthetic judgments and that knowledge of external, contextual data can be relevant to determining the aesthetic value of an aesthetic object. Perhaps this is what Beardsley meant when he said that the value of a work of art must be found in the whole context of human life.

III. CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTUAL THEORIES: DANTO, DICKIE, AND EATON

The newest introductory text in aesthetics, Marcia Eaton's *Basic Issues in Aesthetics*, is a good place to start for an updated perspective on contextual theories within analytic aesthetics.³⁸ Eaton introduces contextual theories as one type of aesthetic theory which purports to separate the aesthetic from the nonaesthetic; contextual theories are usually at odds with traditional (i.e., formalist and isolationist) theories. Some contextual theories point to institutions as necessary for providing an account of the aesthetic; others point to historic, economic, or social conditions. Eaton briefly reviews Marxist aesthetics, George Dickie's institutional theory, Danto's historical theory, and her own theory, which is heavily dependent on the role of the traditions of art criticism and history.³⁹ Nowhere is feminist theory mentioned.⁴⁰

Eaton insists that formalist theories are insufficient; some kind of contextualist theory is needed to account for both the form and content of a work of art. However, she clearly

voices the prejudice of traditional aestheticians when she says,

One of the problems with Marxism (and other sociologies of art) is that it assumes a connection between art and social features that has yet to be shown to exist. That is, it presupposes the existence of lawlike connections between social factors and artistic creation.⁴¹

Until these connections are "empirically verified" and exceptions to the connections accounted for, Eaton dismisses any such approach as "aesthetic sociology":

Marxism identifies artworks with their contexts and hence does not allow us to see what is special about them. There is a sense in which Marxist aesthetics ceases to be aesthetics at all.⁴²

In his introduction to a special issue of *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* entitled "Analytic Aesthetics: Retrospect and Prospect," Richard Shusterman berates the analytic tradition as myopic and naive.⁴³ It is myopic in its attempt to define art in nonevaluative terms and naive in its assumption that art can be fully understood theoretically without taking its full social context into account. His condemnation even extends to contemporary contextual theories (presumably of Danto, Dickie, and Eaton):

Analytic philosophy's blindness to the complex and contested social context of art, criticism, and even its own aesthetic theorizing is paradoxically most striking . . . in its attempt to define art as a social institution.⁴⁴

Why does Shusterman fault contemporary contextual theories? Are they guilty of the same problems that befall other contextual theories like Marxism and Freudianism? And where does feminist theory fit into the picture? Is it more akin to Marxist theory, to be discounted as mere aesthetic sociology, or is it more like Danto's historical theory and Dickie's institutional theory, though more focused in its attentiveness to social context on issues of *gender*?

Theory is a terribly overused and abused term. In looking at the acceptance and rejection rates of contextual theories in aesthetics, it soon becomes apparent that not all contextual theories are theories in the same sense of the term. What we encounter in analyzing these theories is that although they all (in their descriptive, i.e., nonprescriptive form) are formulations of underlying principles of certain observed and verified phenomena, there are really two different levels or orders of theories operative. Let us first investigate the *differences* between these two levels or orders and then the *similarities*.

(i) There are first-order theories of *art* (e.g., those of Stolnitz, Beardsley, and Dickie, to name only a few) and there are second-order theories of *criticism* of art which depend on a first-order theory of art (again, e.g., Stolnitz, Beardsley, and now Dickie's new work, *Evaluating Art*).⁴⁵ Second-order theories of criticism depend on, follow on, or presuppose first-order theories of art since it makes no sense to utter the locution, "X is a good work of art" without first assuming some sort of criterion designating X to be a work of art. Thus, first-order theories separate art from nonart and second-order theories interpret and evaluate art.

Looking more closely at the range of first- and second-order theories available, it is appropriate to say that there are first-order *contextual* theories of art (e.g., those of Danto, Dickie, and Eaton) and second-order *contextual* theories of criticism of art (Marxism, Freudianism, and feminism). Let us designate the first-order contextual theories of art as contextual_a and the second-order contextual theories of criticism as contextual_c. The first-order theories of Danto, Dickie, and Eaton purport to separate art from nonart, while second-order theories like Marxism and feminism do not. They are used to interpret and evaluate art (among other things). Both utilize extrinsic, factual, contextual data by which to identify and evaluate art (more on this later). The functions of the different orders differ and do not overlap. Thus an important difference is established between con-

textual_c theories and contextual_a theories, which yields an interesting and important result: The evaluation of a work of art (i.e., the utilization of a contextual_c theory) presupposes a contextual_a theory.

(ii) Another difference between contextual_a theories and contextual_c theories is that contextual_c theories are more wide-ranging. That is, one can produce a Marxist or feminist critique of nonartworks as well as of works of art (i.e., of advertisements, the social structure of humankind, or the unusual antiquarian tradition of Chinese footbinding). Perhaps this is why Eaton and other philosophers are hesitant to call Marxist or feminist criteria "aesthetics." Eaton claimed that Marxism "does not allow us to see what is special" about works of art; they are simply one type of thing to be assessed according to contextualist_c criteria. To point out this contrast further, it makes no sense to say that one could do a Danto-like or Dickie-like critique or analysis of anything *but* a work of art. The criteria of contextualist theories of art are primarily used to designate "art"; they are used to pick out *only* works of art.

(iii) A third difference seems at first glance apparent, though it has been challenged by feminists and others. The third difference is that contextual_c theories, like Marxism and feminism, *can be* ideological (or prescriptive, in the sense outlined in Section II) whereas contextual_a theories *cannot* (it is this latter claim to which some feminists object). In other words, the difference would consist in contextual_c theories possibly containing a prescriptive element which contextual_a theories most definitely lack. Feminists see feminism as "a way of life" (to quote Lippard) that others ought to follow; Marxists see Marxism as a theory that ought to govern human action. Theory moves beyond description to prescription—to ideology—by issuing directives as to how one ought to follow the theory.

But does it make sense to say that Dickie's theory of art is a way of life that ought to be followed? Or that Danto's view of what constitutes an artwork should govern future action? Our most immediate response, of

course, is in the negative. It sounds counterintuitive to think of theories that define art in terms of anything other than in the role of analyzing the concept "art" in the most correct way, where correctness is a function of the way the concept is used in the world. Counterevidence, in the form of counterexamples, may motivate a change in the theory; that is, the description may change but it is never transformed into a guiding ideology or way of life.

As already noted, feminists and others have raised objections to past theorists who *claim* to be objective, neutral, and free of ideology. As already indicated (Section II) by Janet Wolff, some feminists believe that principles and theories which are promoted as "value-free" or "non-partisan" are merely those principles and theories which have assumed the "guise of universality." It is really the case, they believe, that phallogocentric ideology, existing for centuries, masquerades as neutrality and universality, only recently exposed for what it really is. Whether or not these objections are to be taken seriously is controversial; the problem cannot be resolved in brief discussion here. I mention it only to point out a difference that seems to have at least implicitly caused the analytic tradition to consign certain contextual_c theories, like Marxism and feminism, to the fringes of "objectively neutral" philosophical aesthetics. Recall Stolnitz's claim that Marxist theory is a social-political theory and Eaton's claim that Marxism is aesthetic sociology. One might surmise that it is feminist theory's prescriptive, ideological character that is at least one reason for its absence from recent analytic philosophical literature.

At this point I would like to break with feminist tradition and propose an explanation for the third difference (iii) listed, namely, why I claimed (only) that feminist contextual_c theory *can be* ideological. This is a weakening of the basic strong feminist prescriptive line, such as Gisela Ecker's, that all aesthetic inquiry *must be* or *ought to be* genderized. I am proposing that the strong feminist claim can be stripped of its prescriptive import, leaving behind the following weaker claim: Works

of art *can be* assessed in terms of the sex of the artist, viewer, and critic and attending sociological framework *but need not be*. For the purpose at hand, that of assessing contextual_c theories, it is a more workable and marketable approach. Thus, contextual_c theories can be prescriptive but need not be; this avoids the problem of feminist theory as ideology and reduces it to just theory.

Let us now focus on some *similarities* between contextual_a theories and contextual_c theories utilizing the theories of Danto, Dickie, and Eaton as examples of the former and feminist theory as an example of the latter.

(i') One similarity is that both types of contextual theories stress a work of art's *nonexhibited* properties. Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* and Andy Warhol's *Brillo Box* motivated contextualists to look beyond the (aesthetic) perception of the visible, discernible, exhibited properties of the object to its nonexhibited, relational properties in delineating a work of art from its perceptually indiscernible counterpart. Contextual_a theorists believed it impossible for isolationists to distinguish a work of art from its perceptually indiscernible counterpart by simply looking at each of the two objects "as a work of art" in isolation from its invisible, imperceptible framework. Hence, Stolnitz's suggestion to aesthetically experience only what is immediately given *in* the work and Beardsley's proposal to "do nothing but look at it . . . again and again" prove to be totally inadequate. Contextual_c theorists believe it is impossible to correctly or fully understand or appreciate the object designated a work of art without recourse to some invisible, imperceptible framework that it is integrally tied to the nonexhibited properties of the object. This brings us to the second similarity.

(ii') In addition to contextual_a theorists emphasizing nonexhibited properties of an object, those same properties are ones that tie the object to things or persons outside the object *by virtue of which* it counts as a work of art. For Danto, it is the appropriate causal history; for Dickie, it is the institution of the artworld; for Eaton, it is the information con-

cerning its history of production. External, extrinsic data become essential (both necessary and sufficient) to an object's identity as a work of art; the object in question is constituted art via these relational properties. This is in stark contrast to noncontextual theories of art, like Stolnitz's, that relies only on internal, intrinsic data. What "external, extrinsic data" translates into is (to use Eaton's phrase) "social factors" or (to use Dickie's or Danto's terms) "context" or "framework." All contextual theories reject a purely formalist, isolationist approach: the traditional approach of Stolnitz and Beardsley. In Danto's words, being a work of art has "little to do with any intrinsic features of the object."⁴⁶ A work of art is inextricable from its historical and causal connections—the Artworld; "an ahistorical theory of art can have no philosophical defense."⁴⁷ For Danto, the connection is between the work of art and the social factors of its causal history, a knowing audience, and an interpretation of that work within the history of art, by which one grasps the content and form of the metaphorical nature of art. For Dickie, the connection is between the work of art and the social factors of artists' intentions, a "prepared" public, and artworld systems which make up the institutional framework known as the artworld.⁴⁸ For Eaton, criticism of the object and history of its production—both external factors—are essential in bringing us to value the traditionally appreciated intrinsic properties.⁴⁹

An obvious conclusion to be drawn from just this brief sketch of contextual_a theories is that they do in fact assume some type of essential "lawlike" connection between aesthetic and "social features." Recall that this was precisely Eaton's criticism of Marxist theories. Eaton concludes her section on contextual theories by stating that all of the theories discussed hold that "outside the context of social and cultural practices and conventions, 'art' does not make sense."⁵⁰ Not only do all three contextual_a theories presuppose the existence of lawlike connections between social factors and the work of art, they flaunt those connections.⁵¹ For it is in virtue of those connections that these theories seek to

separate themselves from purely formalist, isolationist theories of art.

Returning to point (ii'), feminist theory also looks to external, extrinsic social factors as essential to the tasks of interpretation and evaluation. Recall Gisela Ecker's suggestion that no work of art *ought* to be assessed without utilizing a "genderized" perspective: taking into account the *external* data of the sex of the artist, the sex of the viewer and critic, and the relationship between those persons and the "gender-values" of the institutional framework (of the artworld) in which they find themselves. ("Gender-value" is meant to convey the feminists' skepticism about the supposed neutrality of this framework and the theories it employs.) Stripping her claim of its prescriptive import, we might restate it as follows: Works of art *can be* assessed by means of a genderized perspective. Feminist critical theory, therefore, is consistent with Danto's notion of theory and history of the artworld but warns the appraiser of the work of art to beware of the hidden sexist and oppressive nature of this essential theoretical context.⁵² Nevertheless, external factors are essential and it is probably no coincidence that the contextual_a theorists and the contextual_c theorists have focused on the same sorts of external data.

This section reviewed several popular contextual theories of art, outlined the distinction between theories of art and theories of criticism, and focused on the differences and similarities of contextual_a and contextual_c theories. Let us now move beyond differences and similarities and take our earlier discussion of first-order and second-order contextual theories one step further.

IV. A ROLE FOR FEMINIST THEORY IN PHILOSOPHICAL AESTHETICS

Since second-order theories of art criticism depend on or presuppose a first-order theory of art, could it also be the case that second-order contextual theories of art criticism presuppose a first-order contextual theory of art?

We might want to suggest that they match up better, or work together better, for the purposes of assessing a work of art than a contextual theory of criticism and a noncontextual theory of art, but are we authorized to conclude something stronger: that a contextual theory of criticism necessarily presupposes a contextual theory of art? If so, we may have found the answer to determining the role—or at least one role—of feminist theory; feminist theory is one form of contextual criticism that necessarily follows on a contextual theory of art. Feminist theory offers a set of criteria to interpret and evaluate a work of art that has achieved its ontological status by means of social factors deemed by traditional, isolationist aestheticians as external and irrelevant. Feminist theory is one type of contextual criticism that assesses a work's social factors as (1) essential to the work's being art in the first place, and (2) determinants in judging the work to be good, valuable, etc. Let us pursue this proposal by means of some examples.

At one point, Danto proposes one criterion of evaluating a work of art by means of its metaphorical nature:

. . . the greatest metaphors . . . [are] those in which the spectator sees his or her life in terms of the life depicted: it is oneself as Anna Karenina, or Isabelle Archer, or Elizabeth Bennett, or O: . . . where the artwork becomes a metaphor for life and life is transfigured.⁵³

This is precisely the type of criterion of evaluation that feminists have been proposing, namely, that of identifying with the characters or images or personae in a work of art. It was the rationale behind Judy Chicago's notion of cunt imagery: that such imagery expressed the previously oppressed power of all females and that all women would positively identify with their new-found symbol, thus enhancing the transfigurative power of that symbol or metaphor. It is the same rationale used by feminists to critique the male, "old masters" tradition of "The Reclining Venus" by arguing that women will negatively identify with the reclining nude Venus

who is on display solely for the male artist and fellow male voyeuristic viewers. It is the same rationale used by some feminists to condemn pornographic images. The notion of "body identification" explains the female's negative reaction of shared oppression and exploitation with the victim in the image which the male does not feel; he does not identify with the passive female body but rather enjoys his position as the active looker, in control of the passive female.

The point is that it is reliance on factual-contextual data and external social factors that determines the interpretation and evaluation of a work previously judged to be art by means of those same external factors. Warhol's *Brillo Box* is deemed art (versus its perceptually indistinguishable counterpart) in virtue of its theoretical and historical framework that includes the intentions of the artist and the audience's knowledge of those intentions. Chicago's *Dinner Party* is deemed art (versus an imaginable perceptually indistinguishable counterpart in a typical hardcore porn magazine) in the same way. Only one of each pair exists in the artworld framework; only one of each pair becomes art in virtue of external, social factors. It is only fitting that a natural extension of the process of the object-become-art-in-virtue-of-external-factors is object-judged-art-in-virtue-of-external-factors. The most effective way to proceed to interpret and evaluate such a work is also by means of external, contextual data (e.g., the sex of the artist, viewer, critic). Thus, the most natural fit between first- and second-order levels of theories is the one proposed: Contextual_c theories necessarily presuppose contextual_a theories, and feminist theory is one type of contextual_c theory.

To sum up this section, let us return one last time to the argument presented in Section I. Contrary to the isolationists' stance that only so-called aesthetic judgments determine aesthetic value, embodied in (5), I argued that aesthetic value need not be a function of only aesthetic judgments. It seems plain enough that aesthetic judgments that look only to internal, intrinsic factors are insufficient to fairly assess works such as War-

hol's and Chicago's. What were previously called "moral" judgments are really crucial in assessing works of art, especially those whose status as art depends on external data previously held irrelevant. Not only has the isolationists' conclusion (5) been refuted, but I have also claimed something stronger: Knowledge of external, contextual data is necessarily required to assess a work of art that has been deemed a work of art by means of external, contextual data. In other words, a contextual_a theory of art requires a contextual_c theory of art to follow through with a thorough and fair assessment of a work of art. Feminist theory is one type of contextual_c theory available.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In order to argue for the role of feminist critical theory, the traditional isolationist approach to evaluating was outlined and criticized in Section I. Feminist theory itself was introduced in Section II and assessed in light of the backdrop of traditional isolationist views. Contemporary contextual theories of art were differentiated from contextual theories of criticism in Section III and their relationship explored. In Section IV, the role of feminist theory as a natural extension of recent contextual theories of art was advocated, securing the role of feminist theory in future discussions. In arguing that knowledge of external, contextual data (like that stressed by feminist theory) is relevant to the aesthetic value of a work of art, I have hoped to accomplish two things: to make feminists and philosophers aware of the commonalities of their views and to point out that more work needs to be done in both camps. Shusterman's blanket disapproval for even recent contextual_a theories calls for more openness toward other, previously neglected social aspects of art. I am suggesting that gender is one aspect of contextual theories that needs to be investigated. With such changes afoot, it may not be long until feminist theory is rightfully considered an essential part of aesthetic inquiry.

NOTES

1. The territory is still virgin in spite of forthcoming ground-breaking publications such as special issues of *Hypatia*, *The Feminist Newsletter*, and *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, all of which are devoted to topics in feminist aesthetics.
2. Derrida's term "phallogocentric" has been borrowed by feminist theorists; it is a compilation of "phallogocentric" (phallus-centered, i.e., a mode of representation in which the phallus is taken to be the principal signifier of the male) and "logocentric" (logic-centered, as is analytic philosophy). See Derrida's "The Purveyor of Truth," *Yale French Studies*, LII (1975), 95-97. Christie V. McDonald defines the term as "the complicity of Western metaphysics with a notion of male firstness" in "Choreographies," *Diacritics*, XII (Summer, 1982), 69.
3. Jerome Stolnitz, *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism: An Introduction* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960). My main focus will be on pp. 441-92.
4. Stolnitz, *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism*, 369. Stolnitz, foretellingly, added the following: "Indeed, there are some people who, if the truth be told, get more fun out of this sort of thing than from aesthetic perception itself."
5. *Ibid.*, 461.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, 449-50.
8. *Ibid.*, 495.
9. *Ibid.*, 450.
10. Monroe C. Beardsley, "Problems in Aesthetics," *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards, I-II (1972), p. 44.
11. Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (2nd ed.; Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1981), pp. 558-71.
12. Beardsley, *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*, 563.
13. *Ibid.*, 564.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, 566.
16. Stolnitz, *Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art Criticism*, 457.
17. We are either in the second or third phase, depending on how one counts. Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Patricia Mathews believe we are in the second generation—see "The Feminist Critique of Art History," *The*

- Art Bulletin*, LXIX (September, 1987), pp. 326–57—as does Toril Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 1985). Another analyst of literature, K. K. Ruthven, believes feminists are in the third phase; see *Feminist Literary Studies: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
18. Elaine Showalter, "Toward a Feminist Poetics," in Showalter, ed., *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985).
 19. In spite of the date of this reference from Janet Radcliffe Richards, *The Sceptical Feminist: A Philosophical Enquiry* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1980), p. 2, these basic tenets still seem to hold now, even in light of recent polls in which women prefer not to be identified as feminists. See "Onward, Women!" *Time*, Dec. 4, 1989, pp. 80–89.
 20. Leslie Stevenson, *Seven Theories of Human Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 8–9.
 21. Lucy R. Lippard, "Sweeping Exchanges: The Contribution of Feminism to the Art of the 1970s," *Get the Message? A Decade of Art for Social Change* (New York: E. P. Dutton, Inc., 1984), p. 150.
 22. Lucy R. Lippard, "Some Propaganda for Propaganda," *Get the Message? A Decade of Art for Social Change* (New York: E. P. Dutton, Inc., 1984), p. 116.
 23. The exceptions to this claim are feminist music and feminist architecture (in contrast to producing blatantly feminist visual art, literature, performances, films, etc.) although The Women's Building designed by architect Sophia G. Hayden for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago is one possible example of feminist architecture.
 24. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, 567.
 25. Gisela Ecker, *Feminist Aesthetics*, trans. Harriet Anderson (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), p. 22.
 26. This is Ruthven's phrase, p. 14 of K. K. Ruthven, *Feminist Literary Studies: An Introduction*. For other versions of this claim, straight from original feminist sources, see Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock's *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), as well as Deborah Cherry's review of this text, "Feminist Interventions: Feminist Imperatives," *Art History*, V (1982), 503.
 27. Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1981), p. 119.
 28. Actually, some feminists are not claiming simply that knowledge of external, contextual-factual data is relevant to determining the aesthetic value of an aesthetic object, but rather they are claiming something stronger (i.e., that knowledge of external data must be considered in determining aesthetic value or is the only thing to be considered in determining aesthetic value). Feminist theory is on shaky ground, I fear, with these stronger versions. In opposition to their views, I only wish to argue what *some* feminists and other contextualist theorists argue, that knowledge of external, contextual data can be relevant to determining aesthetic value.
 29. For texts by Chicago chronicling and explaining these works, see *The Dinner Party: A Symbol of Our Heritage* (New York: Anchor Books, 1979), *Embroidering Our Heritage: The Dinner Party Needlework* (New York: Anchor Books, 1980), and *The Birth Project* (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1985). For commentary on *The Dinner Party*, see Lippard's article in *Art in America* (April, 1980), pp. 114–25, entitled, "Judy Chicago's 'Dinner Party.'" For a discussion of Chicago's early work, see Lippard's "Judy Chicago, Talking to Lucy R. Lippard," *Artforum* 13, No. 1 (September, 1974).
 30. One qualification is in order here: Both Lawrence Alloway and Donald Kuspit have ventured to discuss feminist works of art in contextualist terms. Alloway has discussed Chicago's works as well as Lippard's criticisms of them; he has been both applauded and castigated for his venture. See the following: Lawrence Alloway, "Women's Art in the Seventies," and "Women's Art and the Failure of Art Criticism," both of which can be found in *Network: Art and the Complex Present* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1984), pp. 273–95. The former was originally published in *Art in America* (May–June, 1976). For the feminists' responses, plus a final comment from Alloway, see "More on Women's Art: An Exchange," *Art in America* (November–December, 1976), p. 11–23.
 31. As Lippard reports, Chicago and fellow artist, Miriam Schapiro, invented the phrase "cunt imagery" to describe their work of the early 1970s. It is well documented in feminist art

- criticism and discussed by Alloway (see footnote 30).
32. For a brief overview, consult Sections 3, 9, and 10 in Beardsley's "Postscript 1980—Some Old Problems in New Perspectives," in *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism*.
 33. The Stolnitz article that gave rise to the discussion was the 1973 article, "The Artistic Values in Aesthetic Experience," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XXXII (1973), pp. 5–15.
 34. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, lxiii.
 35. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, lix. This is a revised Beardsley view in light of the date of Beardsley's 1980 "Postscript" to his 1958 text.
 36. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, lx.
 37. Beardsley, *Aesthetics*, lxii.
 38. Marcia Muelder Eaton, *Basic Issues in Aesthetics* (California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988), pp. 5–6, 84–96.
 39. The main philosophical theories I will be discussing are found in Arthur C. Danto's *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: A Philosophy of Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), George Dickie's *The Art Circle* (New York: Haven Publications, 1984), and Marcia Muelder Eaton's *Basic Issues in Aesthetics* (California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1988). An expanded version of the latter is found in Eaton's *Art and Nonart* (New Jersey: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1983).
 40. In spite of its unpardonable lack of mention of feminist theory as a contextualist theory (even though Eaton mentions feminist works of art intermittently in the text), this is a worthwhile and useful introductory text, as it even includes a brief discussion of structuralism and deconstruction, topics usually not included in texts by analytic philosophers. For a brief review, see Patricia H. Werhane's review in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XLVI (Spring, 1988), pp. 424–25. Unfortunately, Werhane also fails to note the glaring absence of any mention of feminist theory.
 41. Eaton, *Basic Issues*, 87–88.
 42. *Ibid.*, 88.
 43. Richard Shusterman, "Analytic Aesthetics: Retrospect and Prospect," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, XLVI (Special Issue, 1987), pp. 115–245. An expanded version can be found in Richard Shusterman, ed., *Analytic Aesthetics* (New York: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1989), pp. 1–19.
 44. Shusterman, "Analytic Aesthetics," 120.
 45. George Dickie, *Evaluating Art* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988).
 46. Danto, *The Transfiguration*, 28.
 47. *Ibid.*, 175.
 48. See Dickie's *The Art Circle* (New York: Haven Publications, 1984).
 49. See Eaton's *Art and Nonart* (East Brunswick, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1983).
 50. Eaton, *Basic Issues*, 96.
 51. Dickie, in fact, argues against Beardsley's theory of art evaluation based on art's detachedness from the world, by claiming that works of art are tied to the world (they have cognitive properties) of which we are immediately aware upon experiencing the work. "The most basic is the awareness that the objects we are involved with are works of art . . . [and] that the object is art of a particular kind." Dickie, *Evaluating Art*, p. 79.
 52. Again, the Parker and Pollock text, *Old Mistresses*, lays out the rationale for this skepticism (known as the feminist critique) in detail (see Footnote 26) as well as the Gouma-Peterson and Mathews article (see Footnote 17). These theorists, it must be noted, do not discuss philosophical contextual theories of art like Danto's, Dickie's, or Eaton's but rather have concentrated their criticisms on the underlying principles of the "canon" of art history and of the critics of art. I have taken the liberty of extending the feminist critique to these three contextual theories; I feel this was Shusterman's point as well.
 53. Danto, *The Transfiguration*, 172.

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