

The Insinuating Body

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Abstract:

The Insinuating Body investigates how pornography, sex work, and aberrant sexualities in the United States constitute an uncanny epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic condition of the in-between—an oscillation between the private and the public. My theoretical-visual work emerges from the intimacy of the “I” as profoundly collaborative. Sexual justice actively seeks connections that may be saturated with irreducible differences. My choice to unapologetically implicate the “I” is not a reaction to reductive vernacular, but a vital commitment to embodied thinking—an explicit integration of the private into the public. Protean sexualities, ranging from sex activism to female ejaculation, deconstruct patriarchal inscriptions on our bodies. In cultural production as in its reception, vulnerability becomes a vital intervention in public-private discourse. Since the private is construed as vulnerable and ambiguous, it “requires” unquestioned taxonomies of regulation and normalization. The sanctity of normalcy constitutes a hegemony of representation that colonizes our relationships with our own bodies. In contrast, an uncanny erotic politics reorients our cultural notions of pleasure and vulnerability, and ultimately who has power, imagination, and sovereignty over our bodies. Merging the private with the public—the ob-scene (off-stage) with the explicit—we can generate ethical individual and collective sexual justice.



plate 1

[V]oluptuous desire fragments and dissolves the unity and utility of the organic body and the stabilized body-image. (...) The voluptuous sense of disquiet engendered by and as lust disarrays and segments the resolve of a certain purposiveness, unhinging any determination of means and ends or goals. Carnal experience is uncertain non-teleological, undirected.ⁱ

Female Ejaculation as Social Emancipation

1994. Happy Valley. The first time I ejaculated I reveled in sharing the sensation. I felt free to inhabit my body's pleasures and excesses—no judgment, no fear—until my partner expressed his surprise. I had absolutely no idea it was considered abnormal for women to ejaculate. Only then did my mind intervene. Tragically, **as we witness through hegemonic sex education programs and institutionalized misinformation in popular media**, it is a cultural assumption that it is men, not women, who are capable of ejaculation. The physiological reality is that both men and women have active prostates, and millions of women do indeed ejaculate: in women, the prostate is identified as the

para- or periurethral glands. In 1998, I conducted the neurological research for an instructional and diaristic video produced by Sundahl (also known as FannyFatale), called *Tantric Journey to Female Orgasm: Unveiling the G-Spot & Female Ejaculation*—a sequel to her collaboration with CarolQueen and Bell on their original female ejaculation video *How to Female Ejaculate*.ⁱⁱ My reference to this phenomenon is not an attempt to replicate or usurp male tendencies or to degrade women's bodies as a systematic functionality, thereby reifying hierarchical power relationships in which sexuality is reduced to a generic hydraulic model: "The fantasy that binds sex to death so intimately is the fantasy of a hydraulic sexuality, a biologically regulated need or instinct, a compulsion, urge, or mode of physical release (the sneeze provides an analogue)."ⁱⁱⁱ Rather, my intention is to examine the political potency of male and female ejaculation as deterritorialized sexualities, sites for infrastructural transformation.

Grosz critiques the current reclamation of female ejaculation by some feminists (such as Bell) as an example of women being absorbed into toxic mimicry—the homogenizing, "transcendental" patriarchy. Grosz invokes Irigaray "for whom female sexuality is itself non-self-identical, non-enumerable, not made of distinct and separate parts, not one (but indeterminately more than one)."^{iv} If we do conceive of sexuality from within a dominant reference point, we maintain its invisibility—concretizing male sexuality as the model of normalcy. Grosz underscores that "[i]nstead of assuming an inherent mystery, an indecipherable enigma, female sexuality must be assumed to be knowable, even if it must wait for other forms of knowledge, different modes of discourse, to provide a framework and the broad parameters of its understanding."^v

Rather than refusing to call public attention to the reality of female ejaculation, I want to point out the dangers of seeking the knowable. I recognize that Grosz's call does not reflect Foucault's critique of *scientia sexualis*; she specifically seeks "other forms of knowledge." However, by focusing only on woman's corporeality, she may inadvertently be feeding into the historical elision of female sexual desires and pleasures—supporting the very psychological infrastructures she is determined to disentangle. I am proposing a shift from Grosz's entreaty for a "knowable" female sexuality by combining Bristow's challenge to form a political project rooted in Deleuze's rhizomatic and schizo-analytic lines with Grosz's search for a reconceptualization of female sexuality. Again, I am suggesting that we deterritorialize *both* sexes.^{vi}

We cannot afford to reassert another hegemony to replace or mimic existing normative paternal tyrannies. Such toxic mimicry would reinforce dichotomous habitual behavior, while obliterating the potential for fertile vulnerability. In *The Temptation to Exist*, the Romanian philosopher, Cioran, enlists Beckett: "What is the good of passing from one untenable position to another, of seeking justification always on the same plane?"^{vii} Like Grosz, I propose we reexamine the generic terms of sexuality: "the relation *between* terms is what establishes a possibility of identity for each."^{viii} By reconceiving male sexuality as unknowable—we call into question the underpinnings of what it means to "understand" any sexuality at all—whether biologically male or female.

The philosophical congruencies of Duden's distinction among incompatible meanings of knowledge that produce "useful" citizenry, Spinoza's emphasis on questions not answers, and Arendt's embrace of herself as a "conscious pariah" point to the

urgency of vulnerability via uncertainty as a position of power. As a conscious pariah, Arendt chose to inhabit the liminality of openness: “an absolute determination to be herself, with the toughness to carry it through in the face of great vulnerability.”^{ix} We can exercise this receptivity when we begin to engage with a Spinozian ethological version of sexuality.^x Deleuze writes about Spinoza’s introduction of the concept of ethology—judging things as they relate to and with other things. Congruently, Grosz proposes an erotic politics: “I am not suggesting a necessary reciprocity here, but rather a co-implication. (. . .) There is always equivocation and ambiguity in passion (. . .) eroticism and sensuality tend to spread out over many things, infecting all sorts of other relations.”^{xi}

As stated above, I am not looking for a substitute for male sexuality or to, as “depict male sensibility in a female body”^{xii}—such as representations of hospitalized birth and rape in film and the stereotypical ways in which women are represented in mainstream porn. Rather, I am driven toward Ronell’s “feminine intensity”—a sexual ethic that reconfigures how we experience sex and the erotic in the context of radical citizenship—*how* we inhabit our bodies in our everyday lives. Ronell questions ways in which women and men might internalize phallogentric discourses and systems of representation:

Could there be a feminine intensity or force that would not be merely ‘subversive’? Because subversion is a problem—it implies a dependency on the program that is being critiqued—therefore it’s a parasite of that program. Is there a way to produce a force or an intensity that isn’t merely a reaction (and a very bad and allergic reaction) to what is?^{xiii}

By exaggerating, reorienting, and cultivating vulnerability, conventionally designated “private” expressions seep into the public and expose the potential for collaborative-intuitive hysteria. In this context, I am reappropriating this historically misogynistic concept. Hysteria, like female ejaculation, ruptures clean-cut categories and expectations. As a woman who ejaculates *without the need for specific physical stimulation*, the socio-political implications of what my body represents are vast: a rhizomatic, molecular sexuality, without an endpoint; no arrival, no derivation. The closest physiological term “representing” this experience is *psychogenic*—an emotionally induced physical disorder. It is not surprising that this ineffable experience is associated with a dis-ease. A third type of orgasm, psychologically stimulated (here I am not distinguishing between my orgasms and their corresponding ejaculations), “is through mental (cortical) stimulation, where the imagination stimulates the brain, which in turn stimulates the genital corpuscles of the glans [of the clitoris] to set off an orgasm.”^{xiv} My body inhabits and produces haecceities and affects in a chiasmic dissolution of binary codes and social expectations: “infinite, open, and unlimited in every direction; [they have] no top nor bottom nor center; [they do] not assign fixed and mobile elements but rather distribute a continuous variation.”^{xv} I am positioning myself within an intuitive reconfiguring of socialized sexuality. This Deleuze-Guattarian process of becoming-different animates a biopolitical economy of subjectivity. The chiasma of female ejaculation unfolds, thus “in a becoming, one is deterritorialized.”^{xvi} Massumi tells us, “[t]he heightening of energies is sustained long enough to leave a kind of afterimage of

its dynamism that can be reactivated or injected into other activities, creating a fabric of intensive states between which any number of connecting routes could exist.”^{xvii}

This Taoist rhizome offers an irreducible difference among becomings. Both mindfulness and unpredictability play in perpetual disequilibrium—undergoing radical transformation that sheds the object while embracing the process. I am proposing a peripatetic sexual agency that engages sexual relations as both mobile and strategic positions—disrupting unchallenged assumptions of stratified, medicalized, and demonized sexual practices and expressions. Grosz distinguishes between an Oedipal conceptual system of the citizen-via-family economy and a libidinal economy of an erotics of the unknown: “Desire need not culminate in sexual intercourse, but may end in production. Not the production of a child or a relationship, but the production of sensations never felt, alignment never thought, energies never tapped, regions never known.”^{xviii} Whether I am exploring my own sexuality, a pedagogical imperative, or my photographic possibilities, my process incarnates a libidinal-somatic intensity. Such protean sexualities perform an erotics of the uncanny. My project both theorizes and metabolizes a conceptual shift away from a prescriptive project toward these deterritorialized sexualities. My performative practices and discursive self-portrait photographs and video pieces reconfigure patriarchal inscriptions on our bodies.



plate 2



plate 3 (video still)

Grosz similarly describes how Lingis revels in the continual non-arrival of orgasm as a manifestation of deterritorialization:

[Lingis] demonstrates that sexual passion is not reducible to the goal of sexual satiation, but lives and thrives on its own restless impetus. Orgasm need not be understood as the end of the sexual encounter, its final culmination and moment of conversion towards death and dissipation; instead it can be displaced to any and every region of the body, and in addition, seen as a mode of transubstantiation, a conversion from solid to liquid.^{xix}

Reinvention of the private ruptures the borders of the public. Using its own publicly designated excesses, my work eroticizes and celebrates the private as excess: the monstrous, hysteria, mutation. Congruently, surrealist women artists/writers such as Mansour, Carrington, Agar, Toyen, Kahlo, and Prassinós reorient the hybrid-monster-body: “all are depictions of a grotesque body which call into question canonic representations, particularly those of the female body (. . .) occupy either too much space or not enough, never just the right space. Their very disorganization defies the laws of anatomy and physics.”^{xx}



plate 4

I am compelled to explore the terrain where logic and fragment converge and transform one another's meanings. Throughout this terrain, excessive unexpected juxtapositions cultivate the grotesque. These “disorganized” relationships are nourished by an intuitive cohesive logic—the dreamworld of the discontinuous. “[I]n addition to

this interpenetration of the exterior and interior of the body, an exchange of sexuality and an exchange between animal and human [organic and inorganic] also can be used to effect the grotesque and its corresponding sense of interchange and disorder.”^{xxi}

Both the disorder of the human body and health “disorders” slip into the realm of the “grotesque.” This insinuating body becoming-the grotesque ruptures the order of official norms of representation. Similarly, I intend for my images to remind the viewer of shifting positions that require continual negotiations among expectations, desires, and fears. It is the possibility of the viewer’s visceral relationship to her/his interpretation of the images that titillates both the imagination and lived relations.

My visual and theoretical work is intended to evoke a sense of disorder and difference as potential erotic agency. I am critically interested in the corpo-social implications of an ejaculating woman. In contrast, the patriarchal fetishization of female ejaculation positioned as a mechanical goal-oriented “how to” creates a false hierarchy—an improvement or progression over non-ejaculatory orgasms. When physical proliferation gives way to theoretical excess and we delve into the embodied zone of *ars erotica*, *ars theoretica*, *ars politica*, we can disrupt such heteronormative binaries; we can learn how to imagine a more expansive possibility of politics as a collaborative public pedagogy—we become the insinuating body.

Coercion of the Real: Détournement and Unrepresentability

How we perceive and encounter sex and sexuality in self and other underlies one of the most virulent dysfunctions of U.S. culture. We are living in a body-phobic and difference-phobic culture-of-collusion. Ethnocentrism is rooted in an opaque

authoritarianism in which, as Weber reminds me, anxiety is utilized as fear. Internalized norms ranging from fear of germs, our own bodies, nature, “terrorists,” or anyone/anything outside of our zone of familiarity and habit operate as the scaffolding of our ironically both open-ended and violently restrictive period in contemporary history. Foucault declared that simultaneously, we are living in the most sex-saturated and body-phobic period in history.^{xxii} For example, in 1994 at the United Nations on World AIDS Day, Surgeon General Elders addressed the fact that at that time, half of all HIV infections occurred in people under the age of 25. One response she offered was to encourage masturbation as part of a safe-sex curriculum. One week later, President Clinton fired Elders for promoting values counter to the Administration. Although Elders did not explicitly say so, autoeroticism is a productive sexual agency that resists medical (STDs) and social diseases (body-phobia). Additionally, pornography videos became a substitute for public sex to avoid AIDS. Of course, conservatives and liberals were not pleased with this tactic. Equally, they could not rely on the myth of scarcity—the myth that porn undermines relationships (like sex toys detracting from masculinity in a heterosexual relationship). The “sex-drenched, sex-obsessed West”^{xxiii} proliferates both the ob-scene and the confession: “Today, sex is avoided as it has probably never been avoided before, in any culture. Why? Because this avoidance occurs under the cover of a diffuse sexualization of all the consumer objects (human beings included) of our society.”^{xxiv}

This hypocritical hyperbole is exacerbated as we enter the treachery of the Trump presidency. By operating strictly through the fantasy of the knowable or the real,

contemporary Western sexuality inhabits the very heart of binary oppositional thinking. The regulation and enforcement of what is considered real, predetermines the question of *how* and *where* in our bodies we read public forms of sexual exchange.^{xxv} Butler reminds us, “what pornography delivers is (...) a text of insistent and faulty imaginary relations that will not disappear with the abolition of the offending text, the text that remains for feminist criticism relentlessly to read.”^{xxvi} If we ignore pornographies’ multifarious relations, we constrain our own sexual potential, our libidinal plenum. We render ourselves impervious to our own capacities. My reference is to Deleuzian capacities as relational and open-ended. When examining what constitutes the real, this “feminist reading of pornography” too easily slips into the double bind entrained assumption that women who enjoy sex too much are sluts. Additionally, “[p]orn is too often expected to mirror the Real. As if it weren't cinema. For example, actresses are criticized for faking orgasms. That's what they are here for, and paid for, and have learned how to do.”^{xxvii} Similarly, one justification for my work being censored is the recrimination that my images constitute a reality. In response, I invoke Schirmacher’s insistence on the audience’s responsibility to determine the “truth” of material. Although my images have been categorized as pornographic, the censors understanding of how my images actually *are* pornographic missed the mark. They are not pornographic because they depict naked bodies or fragments of bodies engaged in illicit activities, but because, like pornography, my images fail to constitute a *familiar* reality.



plate 5

It is precisely the amplification of the beyond that invites the erotics of the uncanny to operate as pedagogical liberatory possibilities of pornographies. For example, Probst's black and white still analog photographs of often humorous, often surrealist behind the scenes gay porn reiterate pornography's failure to constitute reality. As scholars of freedom of speech, we must ask: Who is making the porn? and for which audience?

The cross-fertilization between art and pornography expands the creative and pedagogical boundaries of each. "The Operation," an infrared film that focuses on the temperature changes in the skin during a het-sex doctor scenario, won the 1995 Award for Best Underground Film at the Chicago Film Festival. In his *Melancholia and Moralism*,^{xviii} Crimp theorizes what I identify as one version of Kristeva's *carrefour*—the fluid intersection between art and sex. Crimp discusses the significance of the site, which is often more important than the act committed there; Escoffier observes that the setting

is as significant as the sex itself. Examples of the import of a public staging of porn material range from 1970s male gay porn set at the NYC piers to Genet's prison scene in "Un chant d'amour." Congruently, my photographs are "literary" texts in the sense of Weber's definition of the literary in contrast to the theoretical: "A text can be considered literary to the extent that its propositional, semantic, thematic *content* is *exceeded* or undermined by its syntactic movement. *What* it says is never separable from the *way* it says it."^{xxix}

The primacy of context, the act of viewing that is always in flux and infinitely repetitive as the how rather than the what, parallels my photographs' censorship history—a history of the *extimate*. Nietzsche's theorization of the a-substantive^{xxx} is an example of the *extimate*; the non-local co-relations theory in quantum physics reflects this a-substantive field. **The *extimate* defies ethnocentricity—engendering the intimacy of the "I" as profoundly collaborative, as enfoldments of collective continual non-arrival—the embodied unknown.** The way we choose to experience our bodies can provide a framework of intersubjectivity that moves beyond the narrow limits of what we think we know—engaging contradiction and difference as inevitable and replete with collaborative potential. Erotic politics exert "libidinal zones [which] are continually in the process of being produced, renewed, transformed, through experimentation, practices, invocations, the accidents or contingencies of life itself, the coming together of surfaces, incisive practices, inscriptions."^{xxxi} Although my photographs are consciously constructed, the relationships are born out of an improvised collaboration, practicing this repetition of contiguities. My images offer a cathartic opening into the becoming-

vulnerable of *extimité*. Intensive differences drive this ever-expanding process.

Carnal activities proliferate the possibility of political agitation and social (ex)change. These libidinal intensities reorganize our social body's scopic drive. They provoke subversion and transgression in the workplace—conditions of production that when examined can no longer slip through the cracks of normalcy. **The Sex Workers Project Urban Justice/ Network of Sex Workers Projects (SWOP, a New York based sex workers' union)** participation in the Construction Workers' Rally (whose focus is middle class "made in America" unions), illuminated how the 9 to 5 laborer is engaged daily in officially sanctioned prostitution—the socially accepted and expected coercion of the worker's body **in domestic servitude, agricultural or construction labor, and service industries, as well as the hetero-married female body.**^{xxxii} Moral authorities decide what constitutes honest work. As a sex worker radical, El Saadawi explicitly chooses to inhabit her insinuating body—to be a "free prostitute, rather than an enslaved wife. (...) An employee (...) pays the price her illusory fears with her life, her health, her body, and her mind. She pays the highest price for things of the lowest value. (...) [M]en force women to sell their bodies at a price, and that the lowest paid body is that of a wife."^{xxxiii}

In a 1912 study of 647 prisoner women prostitutes living in New York, most "said they earned between \$5 and \$9 a week before turning to prostitution and from \$46 to \$72 a week after. This was at a time when high paid male workers earned under \$25 per week. Prostitutes were among the highest paid members of the Jewish community and their money must have contributed substantially to the upward mobility of their

families.”^{xxxiv} In contrast to unchallenged, institutionalized coercive labor, sex-positive activism (including sex work and public affirmations of uncanny eroticisms such as female ejaculation) shifts the focus from Bataille’s warning of production as inherent repetitive destruction to Goethe and Nietzsche’s consciousness of instinct:

As with Goethe, ‘all is redeemed and affirmed in the whole.’ Here is the affirmation of life, the essence of *Amor Fati*: we must learn the joy of perishing for the life of the species, of being sacrificed, as we have no choice but to be, for the continuance of life that both is ours and is not ours: not our individual lives but the life of the whole of which we are a part. We must learn to face with joy, with the Yes of affirmation, our part in a world that ‘lives on itself: its excrements are its food, and we are among what is consumed.’^{xxxv}

Echoing both Baudrillard’s challenge to consumer society and Glissant’s poetics of relation,^{xxxvi} I examine the potentially expansive/elastic dialectical nature of sex work in the context of *Amor Fati*. To cannibalize, to swallow the other, becomes a simultaneous self and other sacrifice and expansion (affirmation), a discursive negotiation among differences: “...women—and whores—do not exist to be sexually used by men ... any sexual interaction, including a paid one, benefits from *negotiation*.”^{xxxvii}

When we take into consideration the unintended consequences of negotiation, we can begin to play with the generative capacities/tendencies of co-implications.

Negotiation as a multilogue (an expansion of dialogue) of promiscuous crossings reposition Grosz’s concern. Grosz is wary of sex workers who describe themselves as “health workers:” “they justify their roles in terms of maintaining the ‘health’ of their clients. (...) It is a model of sexuality based upon the equation of sexual desire with orgasmic release, with instrumental or functional relief of the body (...)”^{xxxviii} —literally buying into heteronormative sexuality. Why must Grosz dichotomize the “purposes” of

orgasmic release? Particularly, within a simultaneously sex-drenched, body-phobic culture such as ours, orgasm breeds and serves multiple “functions.” Although Grosz exhorts the “formlessness of sexual pleasure, the indeterminacy of the objectives of desire,”^{xxxix} it appears as though she is denying the importance of fucking—for any given reason. Whether “using” the oxytocin hormone that is released during orgasm to help calm an agitated nervous system or to help realign someone’s psyche who has internalized too many sex-negative messages, sex with orgasm can be healthful without replicating the repressive **heteropatriarchal** status-quo that Grosz condemns.

Given our **market-driven consumer** culture’s stigmatization of sexual pleasure for its own sake, Grosz’s assertion is eerily reminiscent of right wing censors. Again, we are caught in the enfoldments of the *détournement*. I am reminded of Keating Jr. During Reagan’s administration, Keating served on the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography: “Any form of sexual activity which is impersonal, which uses the body alone for pleasure, violates the integrity of the person and thereby reduces him [sic] to the level of an irrational and irresponsible animal.”^{xl} Clearly, Grosz is a pro-pleasure feminist. Perhaps her argument would be better served if she would distinguish amongst the sexual variations of sexual activities—examining why this kind of “health-care” may be a crucial need within our somatically impoverished culture that continuously reproduces the sanctity of normalcy.

Feminists who fight for the right to have an abortion, but simultaneously condemn sex work as shameful are caught in a hypocritical boomerang. “Rather than take it upon themselves to tell other women which professions to choose, feminists should defend

every woman's work-place rights."^{xli} If anti-sex-work demagogues would de-stigmatize sex-work as a profession, it would no longer be an outlet for men and women who have internalized their victim-status and seek dehumanizing forms of interaction: "Again the answer lies not in abolition or extreme regulation but in confronting the various fabrications about [sex work]."^{xlii} Bataille reminds us that historically prostitution was not initially perceived as degrading for women (or men). It began as a sacred exchange—a religious prostitution. Only with the onset of servile poverty did prostitutes become monsters.^{xliii} Economics and new social divisions between the public and private reconfigured the public role of women "using" their bodies.

Hierarchical ethnocentric attitudes, differing very little from humanitarian imperialist tendencies, perceive sex-workers as devoid of agency. The image of the prostitute stripped of her rights, independence, and capacity to make positive decisions about her own body functions as a political strategy to victimize all sex-workers.^{xliv} Rescue-missionary tactics of sex industry abolitionists concretize homogenous concepts of equality emblazoned in the fantasy of neutrality. Both mainstream and "alternative" media position the dirty sex worker through a lens of shame and lack. The myth that most sex-workers have been sexually assaulted feeds both the invisibility of sexism and misinformed feminists: one out of four women in our culture have been sexually assaulted in some capacity. It is assumed that the sex-worker is forced into her role of prostitution: "The worry isn't that the women won't survive; quite the contrary. The worry is that they might come and say that it isn't such a dreadful job after all. And not only because all work is degrading, difficult, and demanding—but because plenty of men are

never as affectionate as when they are with a whore.”^{xlv}

Additionally, laws and the media conflate sex trafficking with sex work—criminalizing any and all sex work. The gendered stigma of a “whore”^{xlvi} extends to all sexuality becoming implicitly degrading to women; sex is essentially constructed as inherently abusive (implicit in the unchallenged assumptions of what sex is “supposed to be”). Despuentes cites Pheterson: “What is transgressive for women is neither providing services to men nor is it receiving money or goods for sexual service: women's transgression is in asking for and taking money for sexual services.”^{xlvii}

Within the rhizomatic detours of internalized fascistic tendencies (habituated norms), the boundaries between collusion and agency become even more unstable and circuitous. Whether sex-workers,^{xlviii} who straddle the private-public corporeal construction of desire, or myself as photographer (mother, teacher, writer), who consciously deploys a radical perversity of subject-object interplay in order to illuminate the how of what we do not know, I believe it is possible to mobilize contradictory possibilities for creativity and vulnerability as personal and cultural healing. The conscious choice to decriminalize prostitution extends into a denaturalization of the suburban (coerced) body. **Jiddu Krishnamurti**’s warning, “It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society,”^{xlix} characterizes *both* our global **humanitarian, educational, economic, environmental** crises and *our* potential to intervene in **hegemonic** convenience-culture—becoming the insinuating body. Such promiscuous crossings underscore the interlocking mechanisms among multiple infrastructures that enable *both* collusion (perpetuating apathy and its concomitant loss of

agency) *and* emancipation (allowing creativity and connectivity to flourish).



plate 6

1997-2001. San Francisco. During the years I reviewed pornographic films and erotic literature for the Good Vibrations sales team, I focused on how my affective psyche could slip into interstitial corporeal narratives. I was interested in getting lost, not knowing my way as I migrated through each labyrinth of sexual alterity. My only compass was my body. Its affective antennae located my desire as I traversed polyvalent visual, textual materials. Embodying the radical potential of vulnerability—the fertile directionlessness of **quantum unfamiliarity, uncertainty**—we can take on AnnieSprinkle’s challenge: “Pornography is like a mirror through which we can take a look at ourselves. And sometimes what we see doesn't look pretty, and it can make us feel *very* uncomfortable. But how beautiful to take that look, to see (truth), and to learn. The answer to bad porn is not no porn, but to make better porn!”¹ **Straddling the private and**

the public, our collaborative insinuating body incites deterritorialized embodied thought. When we recognize the value of re-“discovering” our innate capacities to think and act beyond the habitual, we can expand a transformative corporeal politics; explicitly making our private public, we can generate ethical individual and collective sexual justice.

- ⁱ. Elizabeth Grosz, *space, time, perversion* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 249.
- ⁱⁱ. *Tantric Journey to Female Orgasm: Unveiling the G-Spot & Female Ejaculation*, directed by Deborah Sundahl, (Sante Fe: Desaro Isis Media, 1998); *How to Female Ejaculate*, directed by Carol Queen and Shannon Bell, Baja, and Deborah Sundahl, (Sante Fe: Desaro Isis Media, 1992).
- ⁱⁱⁱ. This citation, along with the following four references, comes from Grosz, *space, time, perversion*, 204, 222, 223, 223.
- ^{iv}. Ibid., 222.
- ^v. Ibid., 223.
- ^{vi}. I recognize the limitations of assuming a two gender social structure. Trans-gender identity is not specifically part of my discussion.
- ^{vii}. E. M. Cioran, *The Temptation to Exist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956).
- ^{viii}. Elizabeth Grosz, "Of Bugs and Women: Deleuze and Irigaray on the Becoming Woman," in *Engaging with Irigaray: feminist philosophy and modern European thought*, eds. Carolyn Burke, Naomi Schor, Margaret Whitford (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 343 *my italics*.
- ^{ix}. Barbara Duden, *The Women Beneath the Skin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); Wolfgang Schirmacher, *Spinoza seminar*, NYU, 2009; Derwent May, *Hannah Arendt* (Ann Arbor: Penguin Books at the University of Michigan, 1986), 26.
- ^x. Gilles Deleuze, *Masochism* (New York: zone books, 1989), 125.
- ^{xi}. Grosz, *space, time, perversion*, 204.
- ^{xii}. Virgine Despientes, *King Kong Theory: A Manifesto for Women Who Can't or Won't Obey the Rules*, trans. Stephanie Benson (New York: The Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2010), 124. Despientes is the writer/director of the film "Baise Moi," which was banned in her home country of France.
- ^{xiii}. Avital Ronell, *Angry Women*, ed. Andrea Juno (San Francisco: Re/Search. 1991), 128.
- ^{xiv}. Mary Ellman, *Thinking About Women* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), 330.
- ^{xv}. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Vol. 2 of Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (London and New York: Continuum, (1980) 2004), 476.
- ^{xvi}. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 291.
- ^{xvii}. Ibid., xiv, Massumi's Forward.
- ^{xviii}. Grosz, *space, time, perversion*, 250.
- ^{xix}. Ibid., 203.

- ^{xx}. Mary Ann Caws, “Ladies Shot and Painted: Female Embodiment in Surrealist Art,” in *The Expanding Discourse: Feminism and Art History*, eds. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrad (New York: Harper Collins Icon Editions, 1990), 392.
- ^{xxi}. Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 105.
- ^{xxii}. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1, An Introduction* (New York: Random House, 1978), 78.
- ^{xxiii}. Ed Hall, “Sex Works,” *Hungry Mind Review* (Spring 11, 1995): 11.
- ^{xxiv}. Anne Dufourmantelle, *Blind Date: Sex and Philosophy*, intro. Avital Ronell, trans. Catherine Porter (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 82.
- ^{xxv}. For a Deleuze-Reichian integration of politics and pornography see *The Feminist Porn Awards and Madison Young Feminists for Facials Manifesto*.
- ^{xxvi}. Butler, *Excitable Speech*, 69.
- ^{xxvii}. Despuentes, *King Kong Theory*, 86.
- ^{xxviii}. See Douglas Crimp, *Melancholia and Moralism: Essays on AIDS and Queer Politics* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press), 2002.
- ^{xxix}. Samuel Weber, *Legend of Freud* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 1.
- ^{xxx}. See Fred Ulfers, *Nietzsche in Contemporary Thought* seminar (Saas-Fee: European Graduate School, 2008).
- ^{xxxi}. Alphonso Lingis, *Excesses: Eros and Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 198.
- ^{xxxii}. See the civic rights lawyer and previous labor lawyer, Andrea Ritchie’s activism addressing workers’ compensation claims in the context of the connection between conventional labor abuses and sex workers’ rights: “People experience harm—including sexual violence and workplace injuries in many industries where we exchange our labor and bodies for wages, but society only seems to be concerned with the actual and perceived harms of trading sex for money or basic needs, and doesn’t seem concerned with economic factors driving both workplace abuses and involvement in and vulnerability to violence in the sex trades, and that heteropatriarchal marriage can be based on meeting economic needs” (Email exchange with Ritchie, May 10, 2017).
- ^{xxxiii}. Nawal El Saadawi, *Woman at Point Zero* (New York: Zed Books, 1990), 75, 76, 91.
- ^{xxxiv}. Sarah Schulman, “When We Were Very Young: A Walking Tour Through Radical Jewish Women’s History on the Lower East Side, 1879-1919,” in *The Tribe of Dina: A Jewish Women’s Anthology*, eds. Melanie Kantrowitz and Irena Klepfisz (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 273.
- ^{xxxv}. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, (1886) 1968), § 1066, 548.

^{xxxvi}. Edouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997); Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983).

^{xxxvii}. Queen, "Sex Radical Politics," 129.

^{xxxviii}. Grosz, *space, time, perversion*, 204.

^{xxxix}. Ibid., 248 n. 18.

^{xl}. The Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography, September 1970, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office 516.

^{xli}. Ibid., 186.

^{xlii}. Ibid., 182.

^{xliii}. See George Bataille, *Tears of Eros*, trans. Peter Conner, (San Francisco: City Lights Books, (1961) 1989.

^{xliv}. Ibid., 75.

^{xlv}. Ibid., 63.

^{xlvi}. Gail Pheterson, "The Social Consequences of Unchastity," http://biblioteca-alternativa.noblogs.org/files/2010/10/social_consequences_unchastity.pdf.

^{xlvii}. Despuentes, *King Kong Theory*, 73.

^{xlviii}. See Beatriz Preciado's critique of pharmaco-pornographic capitalist postporn politics and the decolonization of sexual representations. Beatriz Preciado, *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era*, trans. Bruce Benderson (New York: Feminist Press, 2013).

^{xlix}. Krishnamurti, *Freedom from the Known*, 120.

¹. Annie Sprinkle, *Hardcore From the Heart: The Pleasures, Profits, and Politics of Sex in Performance* (New York: Continuum, 2001), quoted in Despuentes, *King Kong Theory*, 81.