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Cover photograph: Louise Lawler.
Arranged by Mera and Donald Rubell, New York, *1982*.

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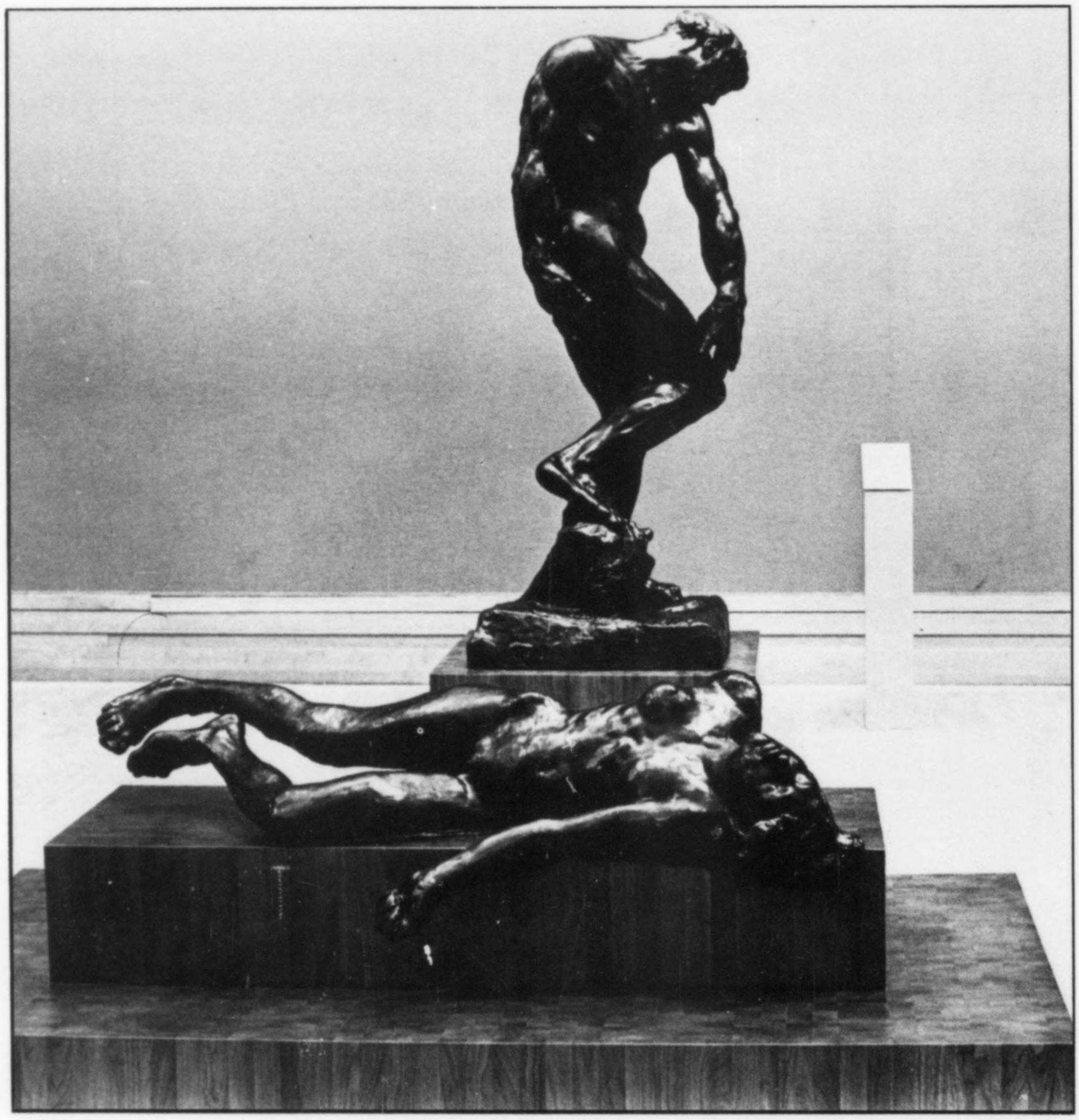
Arrangements of Pictures

LOUISE LAWLER

Statue before a painting, *Perseus with the Head of Medusa,* by Canova.



Rodin.

Arranged by Janelle Reiring.

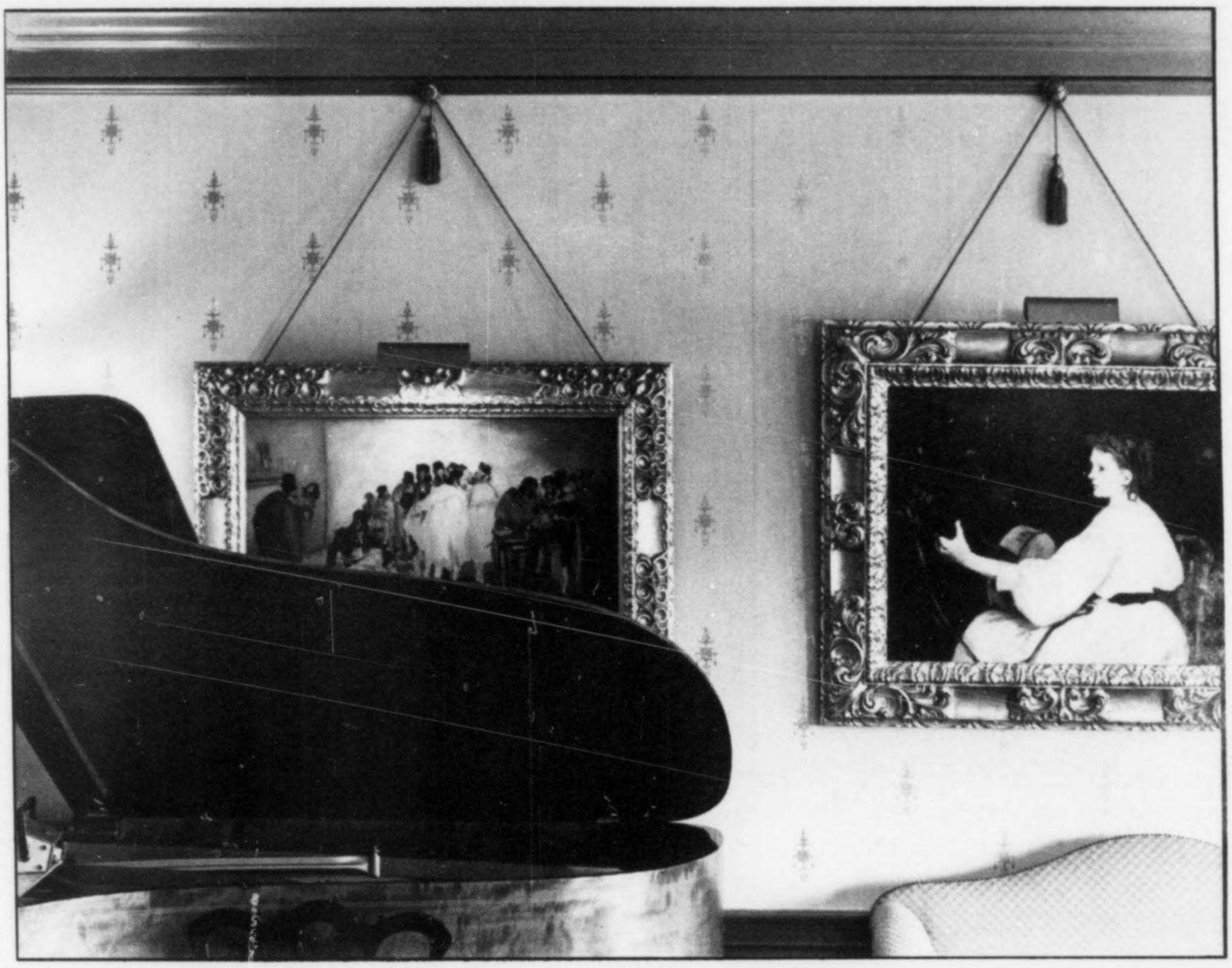
Arranged by Claire Vincent at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

Arranged by Carl Lobell at Weil, Gotshal, and Manges.

Arranged by Donald Marron, Susan Brundage, Cheryl Bishop at Paine Webber, Inc.

Peace by Pierre Puvis de Chavannes over Sheraton roll-top desk at the Hillstead Museum, Farmington, Connecticut.

Reception area.



The Hillstead Museum, Farmington, Connecticut, was formerly the home of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Atmore Pope and their daughter, Theodate. It was designed for them by Stanford White, with the acknowledged assistance of Theodate, in 1899.

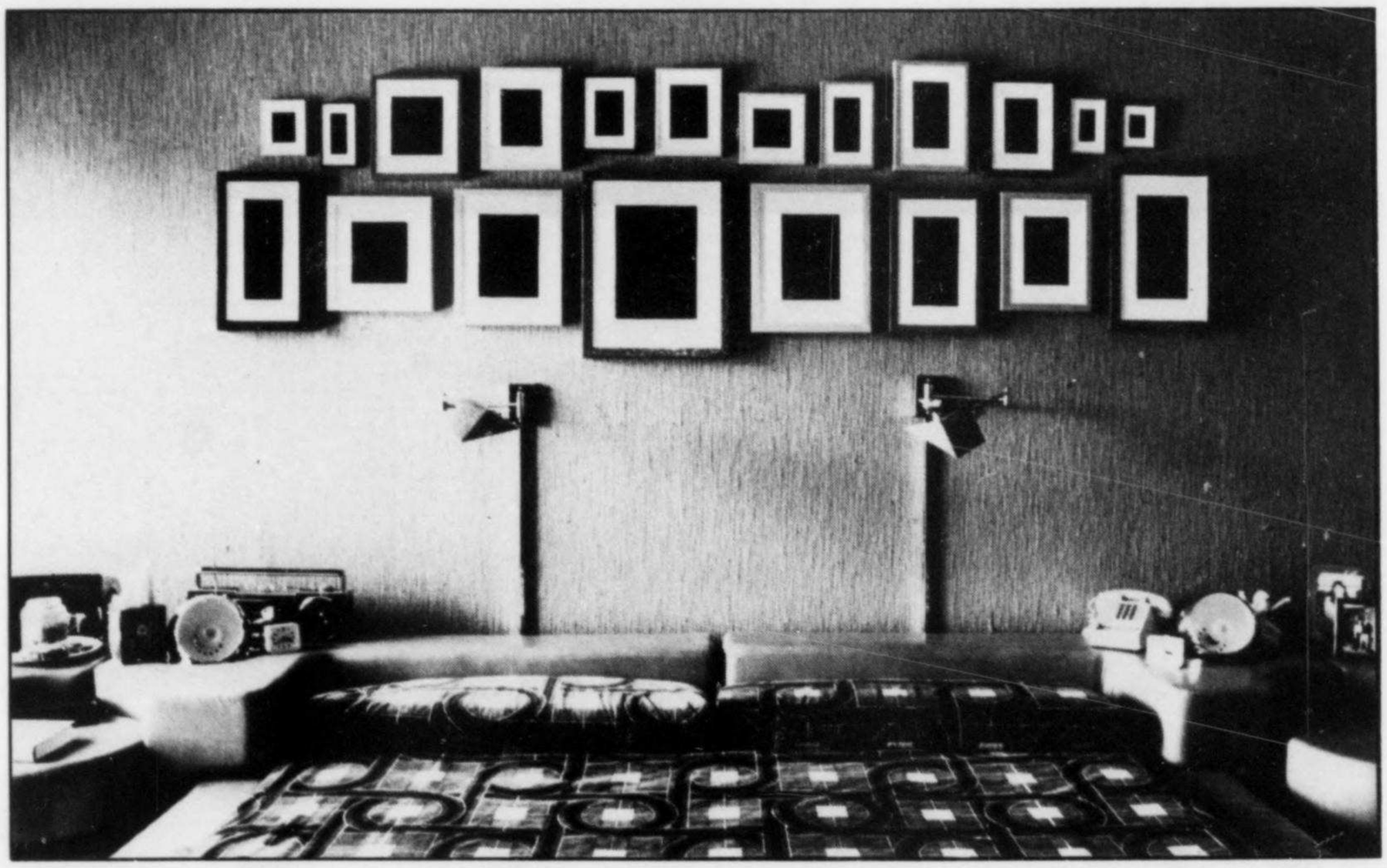
Mr. Pope was one of the first American collectors of European impressionism. He became acquainted with some of the artists and their work through Mary Cassatt, a friend of the family, and he purchased many paintings from the Parisian dealer, Durand Ruel. He also collected sculpture, prints, Ming vases, Majolica plates, Wedgwood services, but without exceeding his need to furnish his home.

Theodate Pope Riddle was the last resident of Hillstead. In her will she directed the executors to "maintain [it] the same forever as a museum in which the past would remain untouched and inviolate."

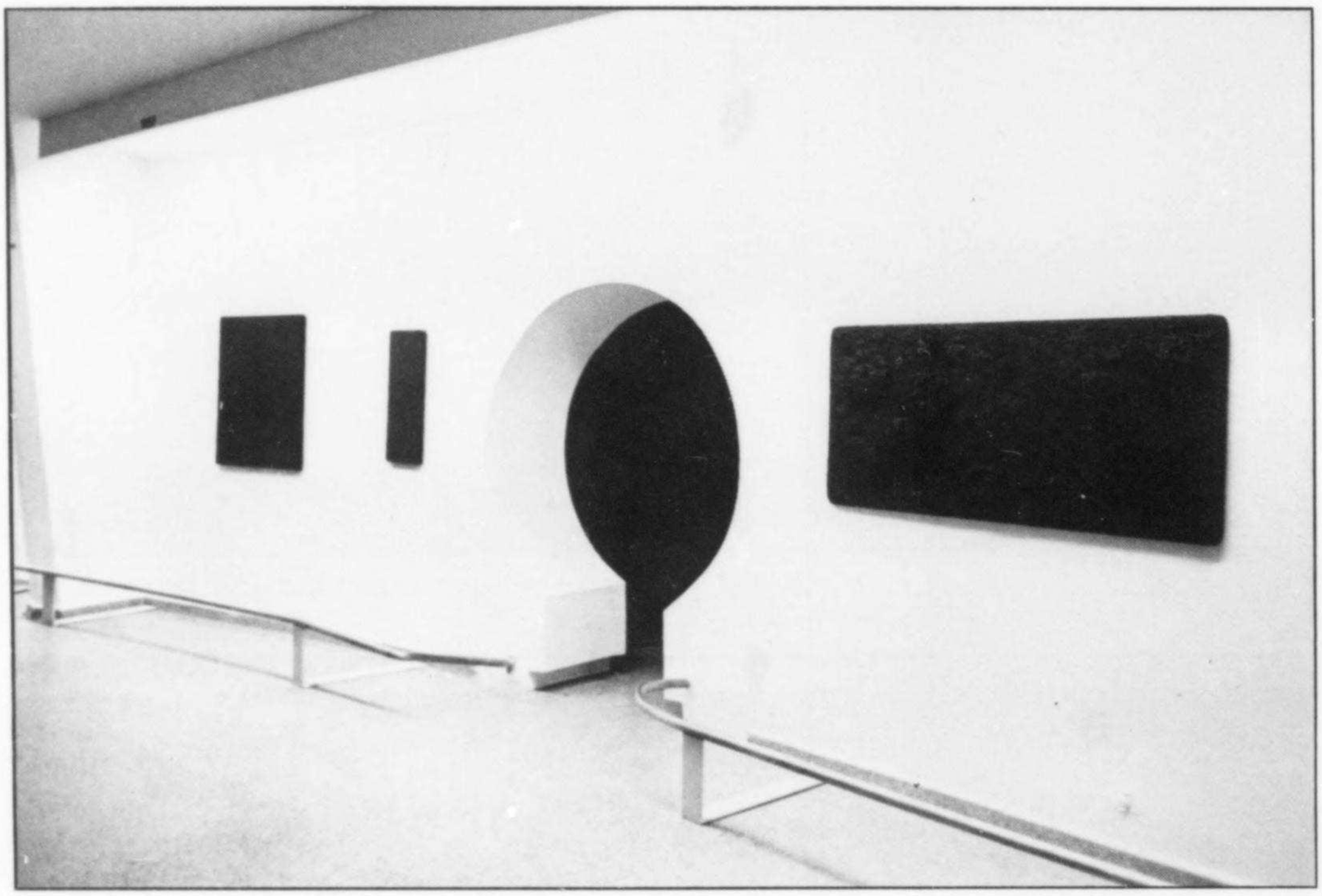
Photographs by August Sander, one by Ansel Adams, sculpture by Robert Smithson, desk light by Ernesto Gismondi; arranged by Barbara and Eugene Schwartz.

Sixteen etchings by Whistler, two by Seymour Hayden, three early impressions of engravings by Dürer, three scenes in Paris by Charles Meryon, and four views of Rome by Piranesi are hung in this entrance hall.

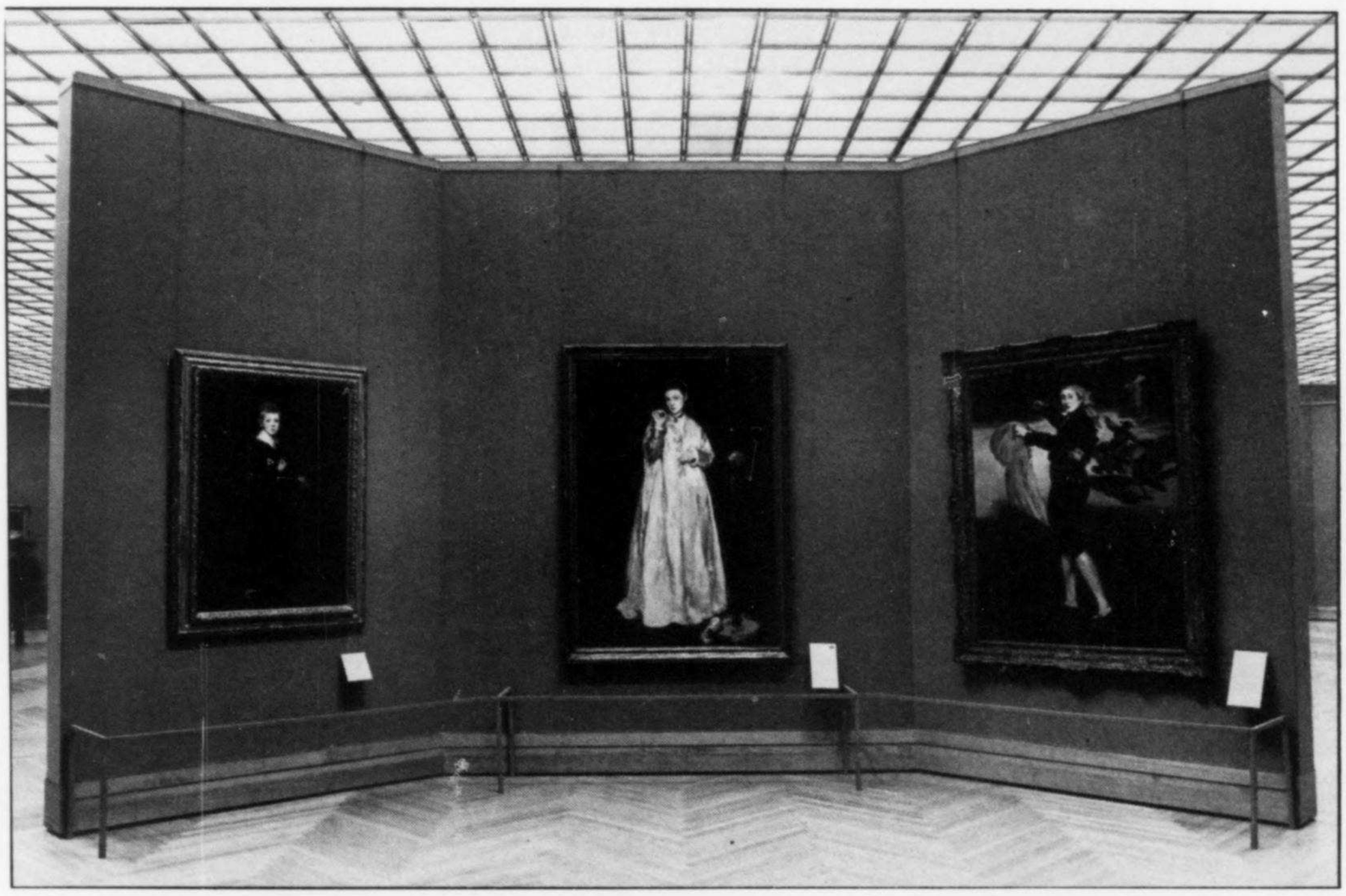
Vitrine.



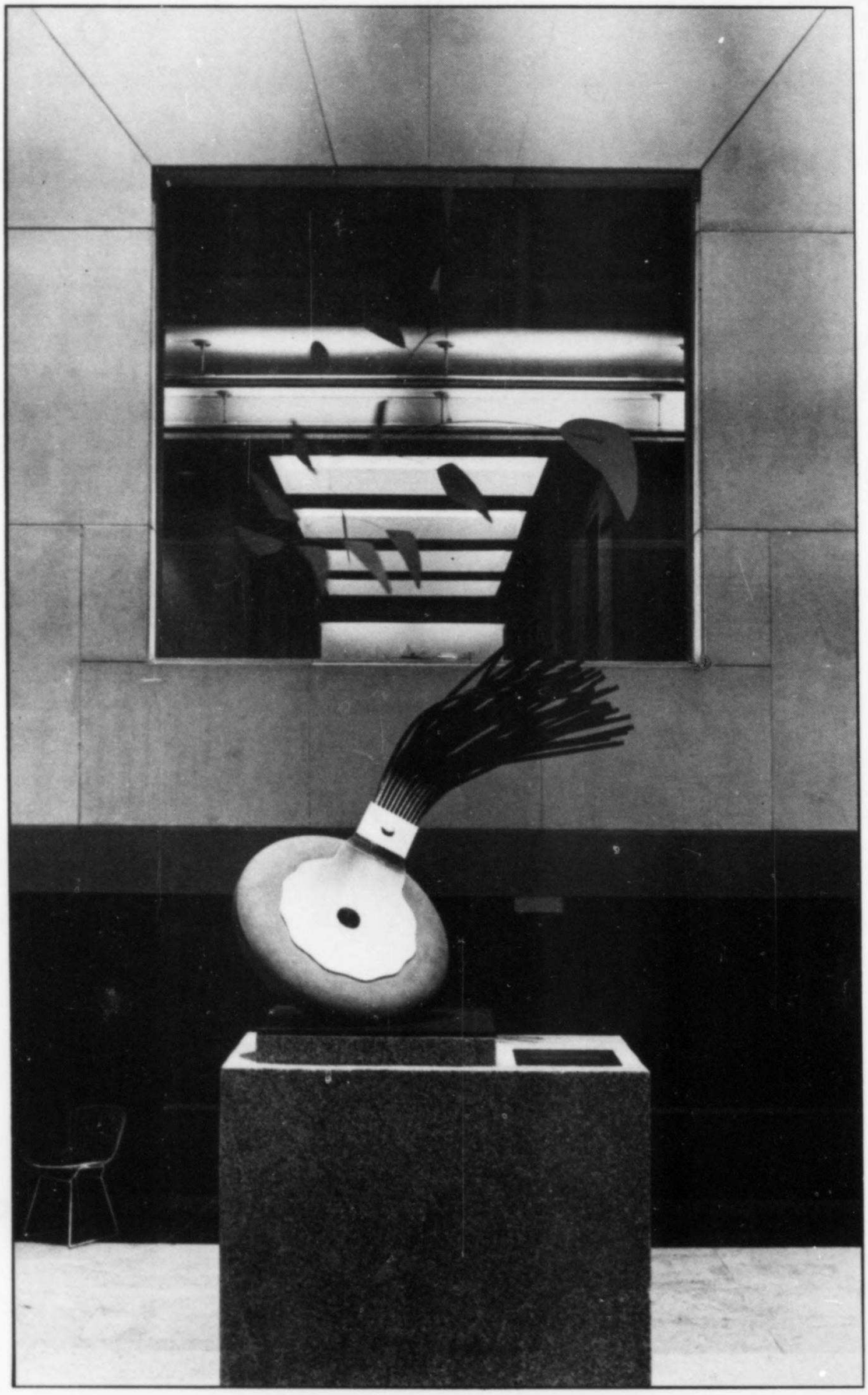
Work by Allan McCollum arranged by the artist at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kaye, Rumford, New Jersey; art consultant, Jack Boulton.



Wright, Meier, Klein.



Roche, Dinkeloo, & Assoc., Metropolitan Museum of Art, André Meyer Gallery.



Calder, Franzen, Oldenburg.

The *Dodécadédale,* or In Praise of Heuristics*

PIERRE ROSENSTIEHL

translated by THOMAS REPENSEK

The Saint Quentin Labyrinth

The labyrinth in the parish church of Saint Quentin is a configuration of black and white stones that covers the entire pavement of the nave of the church. Eleven concentric octagonal rows of white paving stones alternating with twelve octagonal rows of black stones constitute as many almost unbroken, almost circular parallel lines, but for the irregularities occurring along the two perpendicular axes: turnabouts in the black paving connect the octagons so that the black design appears to be a single line retraceable to the central black core. It reverses itself some thirty times; sometimes toward the center, sometimes toward the edge, appearing to trap itself in its own network of jaws, finally and amazingly escaping to the west on the side of the porch. This huge puzzling figure resists the intrusions of the eye (Figure 1). Whoever does stop to look is unsettled by its epileptic movement. Full of optical illusions, its apparent regularity baffles the eye, which, from a distance, sees the parallel lines as a magic thread, making it impossible to swear the labyrinth is not a circular trap. Tangible proof can be had easily enough by positioning oneself bodily in its more than seven hundred feet of unexpected turns. But even then, it's still amazing. One is uncertain of having covered all the terrain—an enclosed island could have been forgotten and gone unnoticed—and in one's long myopic trek one has not charted this Road to Jerusalem.

Neither Symbol, nor Myth, nor Metaphor

Is the Saint Quentin labyrinth an abbreviated sign? a symbol? Can a symbol contained within the church be as great as, or almost as great as, the entire church? The cross is there and so is the labyrinth. Of course the two

* This essay was originally published as "Le dodécadédale ou l'éloge de l'heuristique," in a special issue, devoted to Roland Barthes, of *Critique,* no. 425 (August-September 1982), 785–796. Rosenstiehl wrote it as a homage to Barthes, his friend and collaborator on a seminar on labyrinths at the Collège de France. In French, *daedal* means labyrinth.

Figure 1: Plan of the Saint Quentin and Amiens Dodécadédale.

symbols could be combined, since the labyrinth's turnabouts suggest the figure of a cross. Some also say that the labyrinth is a map of the stations of the cross. Yet the labyrinth is too charged a figure to be a symbol: there is too much there to interpret.

As far as we know, the cathedral builders left little written evidence of their intentions. Is the labyrinth a tribute to the *daedal* Daedalus—inventor of the maze—patron of skilled craftsmen, or is it a pure geometric invention of the Middle Ages? Is this an area of play, or of piety? We do know that at Auxerre the monks used it ritually, in the Easter dance of the Ball. And that at Reims children's hopscotch played on the labyrinth got so far out of hand that Canon Jaquemert had the infernal floor demolished.

For some, penetration of the labyrinth represents the spirit's arduous search for the heart of the universe. Others see it as a central prison, man hurdling the hopeless disorders of the world in flight. Is it a simple riddle or an unfathomable mystery? A game or a meditation? Is it a school for exploratory tactics in which we learn to retrace our steps to start again on better ground, to circumvent obstacles, to distance ourselves from our goal to make it easier to reach? Or is it an inlaid "black box," a mysterious scramble whose entrance and exit alone are recognizable? A machine that is only to be stared at, passed by, walked through, without allowing oneself to be taken in by it?

We may ask why the entire topic of labyrinths is generally broached with such extraordinary circumspection. Competent decoders that we are—passers-by, amateur imagers, or historians—saying little, we all make something sub-

jective of it. In the archeological catalogues that list labyrinths, they are hardly ever described, and nothing is ever said of their structure in detail. The body of writing on labyrinths passes over and above them, photographs them. "Right from the beginning," Barthes said, "the labyrinth is so well-conceived a form that what can be said about it easily falls short of the form itself. Which is to say that the case in point is finally richer than the generality, the denotation richer than the connotation, the letter richer than the symbol."

The labyrinth of Saint Quentin has no declared signification; it is dogma-free. Rather, it is the hypermalleable object on which everyone secretly projects, according to personal geometric structures and affective spatial codes, his or her own intimate questions on the operations of the mind. An image whose meaning is different for everyone who sees it cannot obviously serve an official function.

We could say that we have here the opposite of a myth, for no popular consensus spontaneously emerged to interpret or transpose the object into a problematic of universal import: the labyrinth is beyond the *doxa* (paradoxal). Its role is to provide a receptive geometry for the spatial visions of the workings of the mind. It is a place to which meaning is continually transmitted. Could the labyrinth then be a sort of idealized metaphor? Anyone can besiege it, yet it remains impregnable. In this case, one of the two terms of the metaphor is undetermined.

The Saint Quentin labyrinth then is neither symbol nor myth nor metaphor, but a form available to a horde of metaphors.

Stable Form

Suppose for a moment that we are geometricians only. Without negating the mystical value of the church's graphics, couldn't we examine the labyrinth from a purely geometric point of view, scrutinizing the seeming uniformity of the roselike form for its rare irregularities? These are found at the very ends of the three semi-axes, north, south, and east, along which the turnabouts systematically alternate with straight runs of the line, by virtue of what we will call the law of alternation. Then there is the throat of the labyrinth, the west semi-axis, where the two ends of the line are located. The throat is the labyrinth's operational center, with the twelve north ribs comprising the exterior side, and the twelve south ribs comprising the center side (Figure 2). On each side ribs are joined to form simple turnabouts that link two consecutive ribs, and turnabouts that straddle others. A pattern appears among the variations: a simple turnabout is always straddled by another larger turnabout, and only one. Therefore the measure of turnabouts is constant, two units each side, which constitutes a clear trace of the four black lines of the throat. We will call this the law of doubling of the throat.

Figure 2: In the throat of the labyrinth, ribs are matched according to the law of doubling.

We now know enough to memorize the labyrinth, and even to design others. But let us, rather, run through some labyrinths of the past.

One is amazed to discover that the Saint Quentin labyrinth (15th century) is not the only one of its kind. We know of twenty-three others that are similar and, from the point of view of geometric configuration, identical.[1] The similar pavement of Amiens cathedral (12th century), somewhat complicated by a black frame forming a thirteenth hexagon, appears to be its nearest ancestor. A charcoal drawing on the nave wall at Poitiers (12th century)—perhaps the record of a floor now disappeared—suggests the black contour of Saint Quentin. A circular mosaic, some five feet in diameter, at the center of the principal nave of Santa Maria in Aquiro in Rome (12th century), ingeniously revealed a yellow marble serpent—again with the same contour—paralleled on its right by a band of red marble and on its left by a band of green marble. It no longer exists, but a copy remains. The remains of the marble mosaic at San Michele Maggiore in Pavia (12th century) show traces of the same form. At Chartres (13th century), the angles are rounded, black and white reversed, and black squeezed out by white (reputedly three miles in length), but the configuration is the same. More recently, the same design, black and white reversed, is found

1. On the subject of labyrinths the following works can be consulted: W. H. Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths: Their History and Development,* London, 1922 (reprint New York, 1970); P. Santarcangeli, *Le livre des labyrinths: Histoire d'un mythe et d'un symbole,* Paris, Gallimard, 1974; H. Kern, *Labirinti, Forme et interpretazioni: 5000 anni di presenza di un archetipe,* Milan, Feltrinelli, 1981; A. R. Verbrugge, *Catalogue des labyrinthes,* Vieux-Moulins, Cuise-La-Motte.

in the floor of the nineteenth-century church of Sainte Foy de Sélestat. This magical figure is also faithfully reproduced in stone carvings, first at Lucca, on the famous column of the Duomo di San Martino (12th century), where the throat is facing right, then in the portico of the church at Alkborough (13th century), in the little church at Genainville (Seine-et-Oise) (14th century), and at Saint Lawrence of Rathmore (15th century) in Ireland. At Saint Mary Redcliffe (14th century) in Bristol, the inevitable form appears as a seal on a keystone. The same configuration appears outside churches in the hedgerow labyrinths of Lincolnshire, Hilton, and Wing (12th century). We also know of eight manuscripts containing exactly the same mysterious circling, the oldest of which, dating from the tenth century, are in Montpellier and Paris. Finally, the fifteenth-century Master of the Cassori Compana portrays a remarkable edifice of walls that is a three-dimensional version of the Saint Quentin scheme in a painting illustrating the adventures of Theseus in Crete.

We are dealing with a universal type of single-line labyrinth. We could call it the labyrinth of Lucca, or Montpellier, or Alkborough, or Rathmore. We introduced it in reference to the Saint Quentin pavement because the style of Saint Quentin is best suited to exemplifying the two topological laws.

Is there a twenty-fifth universal *dodécadédale* somewhere?[2]

What is behind the stability of its form? We do run across some rare variants, but many more were possible. Is there such a thing as the right labyrinth?

The Dodécadédale

The Saint Quentin labyrinth is in fact the one solution to a combinatory of possibilities which we will describe. This, in our view, certainly did not escape the master builders who chose to reproduce it through the centuries. By demonstrating—as they did—that every variant of the famous labyrinth fails to comply with the law of alternation or the law of doubling we will formulate a characteristic theorem in relation to this universal form.

To create the labyrinth, we make our first choice at the end of the east semi-axis: begin at the edge with a turnabout. Then alternate toward the center—turnabouts, straight runs, according to the law of alternation. We will show later that beginning with one or two straight runs is not a solution. On the north and south semi-axes, it is impossible to begin at the edge with a turnabout, since that would buckle the line. In fact, the north axis begins with a straight run, and the south, two consecutive runs. The other options (one or two straight runs on each side, or two on the north and one on the south) also

2. This survey does not take into account all the modern occurrences of the labyrinth. In the Hautes Études Commerciales building at Jouy-en-Josas, a noteworthy execution of the white orthogonal line in tile flooring, measuring forty feet on each side, goes generally unnoticed (the conclusion of our interviewing some of those who walk over it daily).

offer no solution. In this way, everything is determined on the three semi-axes —north, south, and east— where all possible alternatives are considered and rejected.

Letters are assigned in the throat to the eleven ribs NORTH and the eleven ribs SOUTH, α indicating the exterior rib, ω the center (rib), and the same letter is used to designate the two ends of the same line as defined by determinations made on the three other semi-axes. In this way we obtain the two rib lines of the throat:

α a b b c d d e f f g g for ribs NORTH,

h h i i a j j c k k e ω for ribs SOUTH.

The solution is a matter of parenthesizing the two above words, so that

(i) matching letters two by two in parentheses creates a single line running from α to ω;
(ii) the law of doubling is respected, which means that every parenthesis of the throat belongs to a complete parenthetical group exactly two greater, which confines us to one of the following patterns:

(.(..) (..) (..).) (.(..).) or (.(..) (..).) (.(..) (..).) or
(.(..).) (.(..).) (.(..).) or (.(..).) (.(..) (..) (..).) or
(.(..) (..) (..) (..) (..).)

A systematic analysis finally concludes that a unique parenthesis-solution exists for the above words, one in accord with both conditions (i) and (ii). It consists of the following parenthetics:

(α(ab) (bc)d) (d(ef) (fg)g)

(h(hi) (ia)j) (j(ck) (ke)ω)

which represent in fact none other than the Saint Quentin solution. With a little more effort we realize that the alternatives rejected on the three semi-axes sanction no other possible solution.

A priori, 675 variants were possible; only one gives a continuous line. We will call it the *dodécadédale,* or the twelve-part labyrinth.

A solution known as "Solomon's" labyrinth, found in a sixteenth-century manuscript in the Venice library, differs from the *dodécadédale* only in the pairings of the north ribs of the throat (Figure 3). The parentheses violate, as we shall see, condition (ii) for the letters *d* and *e,* which are contained in a single pair of parentheses instead of two. It is as follows:

(α(ab) (bc)α) (de) (f(fg)g)

(h(hi) (ia)j) (j(ck) (ke)ω)

At a glance we can see that the pattern does not conform to the law of doubling, and that the throat, therefore, does not have the correct aesthetical configuration.

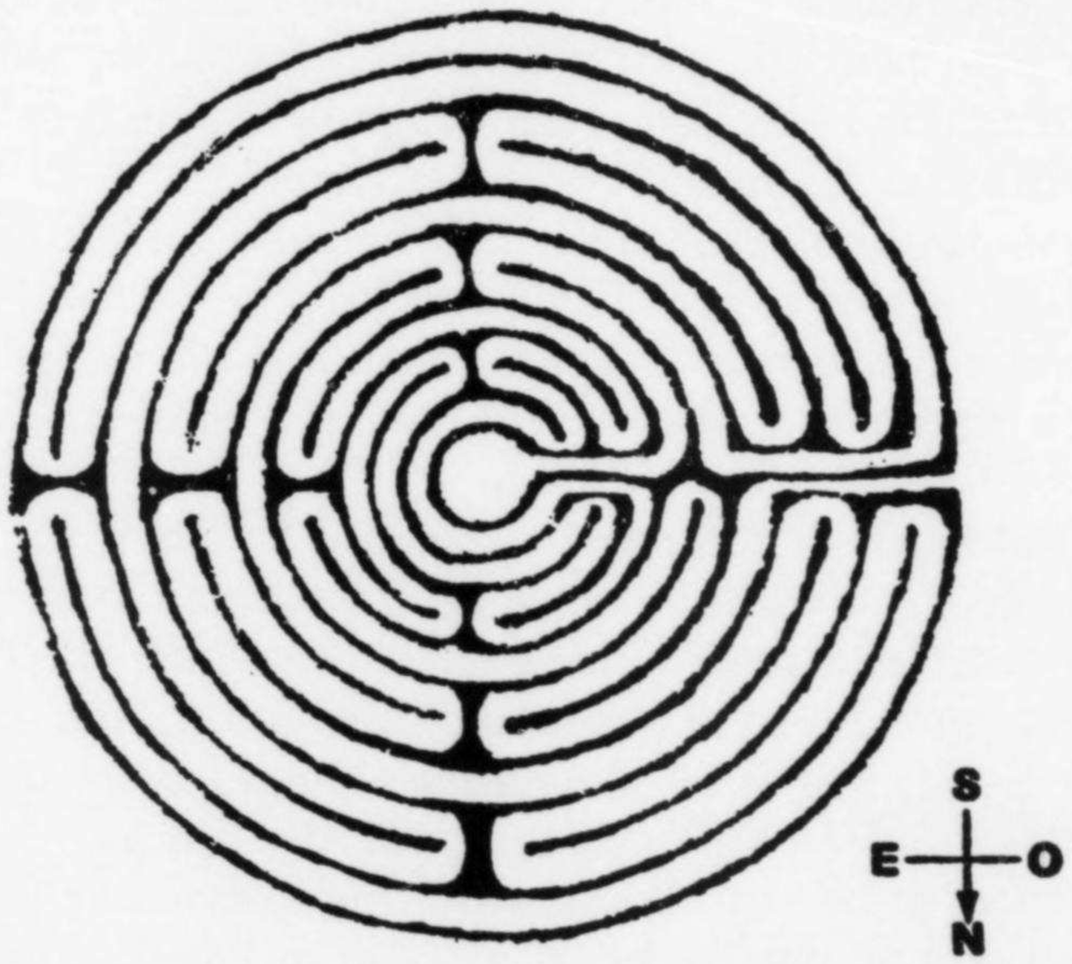


Figure 3: The Labyrinth of Solomon differs from the Dodécadédale in two parentheses of the throat on the north side.

Parenthesized writing allows us to represent circumvolutions without lines crossing. It allows us to state that only the rules of alternation and doubling are characteristic of the *dodécadédale*—the perfect labyrinth in twelve parts. It would be interesting to know whether the number twelve plays a significant role in arriving at a unique solution. A computer could be programmed to identify all the perfect labyrinths, from two to twenty parts, or more. And perhaps it could locate a mathematical law of perfect parentheses. (The geometrician isolates pure configurations and throws out questions that are quickly distanced from their objects. Problems—erratic, displaced, peripheral to the initial project, but more central to it—arise whence no one knows.)

To return to the mystery of church labyrinths—we believe it to be the responsibility of historians to pronounce upon the object's meaning and upon the reason for the builders' singular fidelity to the *dodécadédale,* upon their reluc-

tance even to invert it north and south. What message do they communicate by such devotion to canonic muddling?

Barthesian Heuristics

The goal of the seminar on the labyrinth, the last seminar,[3] which Barthes had twice postponed, was one we all shared: an attempt to isolate some aspects of a method of research. Nothing seemed better to suggest research than writing (in the act of being written) or Ariadne's thread (as it is unwound). Questioning our own heuristic proceedings is certainly an ambitious undertaking. The method adopted was that of allowing the imagination to speak freely about the metaphors that might convey the labyrinth.

The labyrinthine procedure has become an elementary part of basic information-gathering today. The calculating person finds economy of labor in near-sightedness; in unwinding and rewinding his thread through an abstract network, he gradually gains control over the combinatory he faces. The explored space is a network, and the method a unicursive line. In this sense, the Saint Quentin figure is not, strictly speaking, a labyrinth, although it evokes a labyrinthine progress within a network. The thread to be wound and unwound alternatively carries a stack-writing structure which is recognized today as an effective working concept of automatic calculation, that is, automatic research (*Depth-First Search*).[4] It is as if Ariadne's thread is an off-shoot of the young theory of the complexity of combinatorial algorithms.

The thread to be wound and unwound alternatively is a mode of writing, a form of automatic processing of a scientific quest. Yet the thread does not enunciate the goal of research. The instrumental thread says nothing about what great projects validate the thread; of that matter it is no longer a systematic undertaking. We might say that science is better prepared to answer questions than to ask them. There is an art—and it is a difficult one—in formulating the questions without which mathematics could not progress—the heuristic art. Is it not true that the social sciences—often lost in their description of the world—also progress only when confronted with serious, well-formulated problems?

Barthes, who in his critical enterprise sought to develop a rigorous ap-

3. Roland Barthes's seminar at the Collège de France for the year 1978–1979 was entitled "The Metaphor of the Labyrinth: Interdisciplinary Research." Those invited to "witness his words" included Marcel Détienne, Gilles Deleuze, Jean-Louis Bouttes, Hubert Damisch, Claude Bernard, Hélène Campan, Pascal Bonizer, Hervé Cassan, Françoise Choay, Pierre Rosenstiehl, and Octave Mannoni.

4. See P. Rosenstiehl, "Labyrinthologie mathématique," *Math. Sci. Hum.*, no. 33 (1971), 5–32; "Les mots du labyrinthe," in *Cartes et Figures de la Terre,* Centre Culturel Georges Pompidou, 1980, pp. 94–103; and "Preuve algébrique du Critère de Planarité de Wu-Liu," *Annals of Disc. Maths.*, 9 (1980), 67–78.

proach, careful of writing's smallest detail, proceeds step by step, scientifically, from well-defined problems. He states questions, traces their dimensions, and transforms them. And when he prepares to take a decisive step, to state a personal choice, he alerts his audience/reader with the oral locution: "It can be said that. . . ." The form is tactful,[5] it doesn't impose, it rejects all the arrogant accoutrements of scientific language ("We must. . . ," "and therefore necessarily. . . ," "conclusion: . . . ," "Q.E.D. . . ."). The heuristic prefex it-can-be-said-that is a sort of invitation to remember that there are other ways; but it is also a statement of an essential formula, a "brief-form," sufficient in itself, that will change your view of the unsettling subject it prefaces. Barthes's it-can-be-said-that is like the bolts that Andrei Tarkovski's Stalker slowly throws out, each time in a different direction, over forbidden unbroken ground.

Our frontier guide, and friend, without revealing final solutions, leads us to explore inaccessible terrain through a succession of it-can-be-said's, thereby carefully and incisively developing his *critical writing*.

Barthes does not claim to establish a science of semiotics, nor does he act as a conducting agent of anything that happens to qualify as a functioning system.[6] The product of research is actually less interesting than the continual questioning of the goal, the question that is the object of the research (*stochazomaï*). It can be said that his research progresses through the constant remodeling of his stochastics.

The seminar gathers all the delusions into a heap. The distillations of all the sciences are brought into the labyrinth. Yet Barthes remains dazzled by his stochastic anxiety: "The labyrinth is the typical form of the nightmare." The last seminar at the Collège is swathed in the labyrinth's deepest layers.

Photograph of the Winter Garden

Barthes advances project by project. His talent is generous in its invitation to share his project. Perhaps he wants above all to preserve the social sense of the game of writing, and not to be swept up, alone, in the vortex of final achievements. When inventing words to be repeated, or discovering paths that will disappear from view, it is the resolution of a precise question that is proposed to his friends and readers. His critical writing is an appeal to share well-formulated problems, not to resolve them, to say what it is one does when one's goals are similar to his. ("Much of my writing has been done on order.") In his lecture, where he analyzes the assembling of the writer's materials and all of the conditions necessary for research to get under way, he does not lecture on Proust, but takes on the question of whether or not it will ever be allowed to him

5. Montaigne wrote, "J'ayme ces mots, qui amollissent et modèrent la témérité de nos propositions . . ." (III, XI).
6. See Roland Barthes, "Lecture in Inauguration of the Chair of Literary Semiology, Collège de France, January 7, 1977," trans. Richard Howard, *October,* no. 8 (Spring 1979), 3–16.

to undertake the writing of a great novel. And so he becomes suddenly torn between the pleasure of detailed analysis of wherever he happens to be in his thread of writing, and that paralyzing drama of the distant, general, inaccessible project—the thread in its entirety.

It would seem that he wrote *Camera Lucida* subject to this wrenching opposition:

> The photograph was very old. The corners were blunted from having been pasted into an album, the sepia print had faded, and the picture just managed to show two children standing together at the end of a little wooden bridge in a glassed-in conservatory, what was called a Winter Garden in those days. My mother was five at the time (1898), her brother seven. . . . At the end of her life, shortly before the moment when I looked through her pictures and discovered the Winter Garden Photograph, my mother was weak, very weak. . . . She had become my little girl, uniting for me with that essential child she was in her first photograph. . . . I therefore decided to "derive" all Photography (its "nature") from the only photograph which assuredly existed for me, and to take it somehow as a guide for my last investigation. All the world's photographs formed a Labyrinth. I knew that at the center of this Labyrinth I would find nothing but this sole picture, fulfilling Nietzsche's prophecy: "A labyrinthine man never seeks the truth, but only his Ariadne." The Winter Garden Photograph was my Adriadne, not because it would help me discover a secret thing (monster or treasure), but because it would tell me what constituted the thread which drew me toward Photography. I had understood that henceforth I must interrogate the evidence of Photography, not from the viewpoint of pleasure, but in relation to what we romantically call love and death.[7]

When research is invaded, subtended by a fundamental anxiety, does it still retain the sense of play? Can writing-research detach itself from play-research? If the thread is stretched too tight, isn't the word paralyzed?

But when, for Barthes, the communal project recurs, when the breath of friendship and the shared speech come again to the fore, then fragment by fragment there wells up—through the communicable effect of questioning—the love of writing.

7. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* trans. Richard Howard, New York, Hill and Wang, 1981, pp. 67–73.

Writer, Artisan, Narrator*

YVE-ALAIN BOIS

In looking back I can say this: one day I thought of his work as a tool. I didn't only want to quote it (for quotations may be used to no other purpose than affection or exhilaration), but to use his text in a sort of trusteeship, as a theoretical arsenal in the tangle of problems I was trying to solve at the time; to find in his writings the concepts, the vectors, and grid that would address my specific concerns, and make a new start possible.

It was just a few months after his death; enough time had finally passed for me to think clearly again about Roland Barthes, and of a whole area of my past that I would look back on as finished. Things had changed long before without my realizing it: I still often recalled his words while I worked (fragments of lectures, signal ideas that stubbornly lodged in my head); I would sometimes imagine his agreeing or disagreeing with what I was writing as I wrote it; it was his image that came to mind even through the distance of memory: that extreme concern for details in an unfocused background. His death ratified a departure that took place gradually, surreptitiously, and that was in no way a sign of infidelity. And it was undoubtedly this separation that made me want to make use of him in a way that before would have been unthinkable. Yet in this act of returning, in this recourse to Roland Barthes, two unexpected discoveries awaited me, and they were heartrending at first, inasmuch as they seemed beyond comprehension.

Almost immediately I realized that Barthes's text was no boon; that it would not serve as a guide to answer specific questions (even though it often broached a topic I wanted to debate, which isn't the same thing). Far from operating as a focusing mechanism or synthesizer, his text indolently dispersed the intertwined threads of my thought. It removed none of the obstacles, but always answered with indirection to point out another track in an already overly articulated labyrinth. For the first time it was not a trustworthy ally, but something useless and unuseable.

* This essay was originally published as "Écrivain, artisan, narrateur," in a special issue, devoted to Roland Barthes, of *Critique,* no. 425 (August-September 1982), 785–796.

My second realization was in direct response to being set in this first tailspin. What I had always loved in Roland Barthes was his very maternal, word-teaching presence. I had become so familiar with his language during my regular attendance in the seminars and lectures that I thought of it as a second mother tongue: The child learns, without reflection, to *speak* as well as understand the language spoken by his mother. Yet even if some of the atoms of language had succeeded in passing from the speech of the master to that of the pupil, they were still only idiosyncratic and caricatural. And so to a certain extent I simply forgot that language! As if to prove to myself the untruth of my fantasy. Inflections lost their precision; certain statements no longer found their echo in me. A gentle amnesia had transformed my reading, and that language sounded once more harsh to my ears.

I had returned in a certain way to my first discovery of Barthes, to my first astonishment in reading him; when he was neither thinker, giver of language, mother, nor father, still unknown to me, except as a writer. I realize that his death restored him to me in that form, reinstated his text, naked, free of imperfections and of his responsibility toward me.

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Then what? Had I been his pupil only to find myself suddenly confronted once again with his work as I had ten years earlier? If it isn't his "thought" (its structure, conclusions, and so forth); if it isn't his "language," what then is Roland Barthes's *bequest*? The same that it was to everyone—his text. But to me? What is there of his that will belong always only to me? What do I owe him in return?

The answer occurs immediately, and with it, the need to write it down: I am indebted to him for what painters call "studio techniques." No, not a method, but a thousand practical formulations, which may eventually become ideas, but are general enough to address all contexts; for example: "Always look behind Nature, for History." It could be called a meager inheritance. I would like, however, to demonstrate its greatness (not so much that of the actual precepts, as of the practical instruction that it inadvertently imparts). Using this approach, I am following what was for me Roland Barthes's "first" lesson: Nothing that seems trivial is meaningless. To begin with, we have to look at things very closely, *at the ends of our noses,* as materially as possible, because only this slight nearsightedness frees us at the outset from the myth of depth. (Questioned about his "working method," Barthes gives the make of his pen, mentioning his hatred for ball-points.)[1] The real flavor is found in the grain, on the surface of things.

1. "An almost obsessive concern with writing instruments," from remarks reported by J.-L. de Rambures, *Le Monde,* September 27, 1973.

There were other revelations. Rereading the seminar notes, I found it hard to believe that I really attended the lectures regularly for only three years, followed by a fourth year of irregular attendance, before quietly freeing myself from the group (*attended* might give the impression of active participation, while in fact I was as circumspectly mum as could be). I was also surprised to see that what I am speaking about here—work methods—Barthes had already, and often, spoken of; he called them work *protocols*. Even certain images that occur to me are to be rediscovered there, in these faded notebooks. What are these two additional lapses of memory worth? They tell me this: You thought you had been in thrall to his voice for a longer time than you actually had, because its resonance is stronger in you than you think. Why is this? Because it wasn't so much what his voice said that left its mark, as the way, thronged with images, that it was said.

In a text Barthes gave "in the seminar" (its title), he set forth a rule of instruction: "Let us write in the present; let us produce a book in view of everyone else and sometimes with them, as it's being written: Let us show ourselves *in a state of enunciation.*"[2] This is exactly what I was witness to during my long "stay" with Roland Barthes; in the many books and articles, and, yes, even this text, "In the Seminar," which was pieced together before us, and with us, at many sittings, several years running, before being set down on paper. Like everyone else I would measure the discrepancy between the feverish, groping, self-indulgently peripatetic research and the inevitably anticlimactic text; like everyone else I was able to appreciate the disproportion between the wayward work of writing and its discrete printed form. When I read "In the Seminar" at the time of its publication, I remembered very well how I had been disappointed at the appearance of certain texts that had issued directly from my first seminar. Whereas then that disappointment had served to teach me nothing, now, suddenly there was a rule, an approach: far from indulging the hackneyed idea (so uncharacteristic of Barthes) that the spoken language is richer than mute writing, the difference between "In the Seminar" and what I remembered of the sessions spent developing it as a text taught me this: Writing involves a great deal of wasted effort; you have to let go of everything and then, bit by bit, allow only the right things to surface.

In "In the Seminar," Roland Barthes suggests three rules of education: the first states the general idea that academic knowledge is transmitted through "oral or written discourse, enveloped in a declarative flux." It is the typical "teaching relationship": one distills the science, the other drinks it in. The second is *apprenticeship:* the master "works *for himself* in the apprentice's presence. . . . Competence is silently transmitted; a performance is given (that of doing), in which the apprentice, crossing from audience to stage, slowly presents himself." The third is *mothering*. "When a child learns to walk, the mother does not

2. Roland Barthes, "Au séminaire," *L'Arc,* special issue in honor of Barthes, no. 56 (1974), 54.

speak nor does she demonstrate. She doesn't teach the child how to walk; she doesn't represent it (she doesn't walk for the child). She supports, encourages, and calls out (draws back and calls)."[3]

Here again is an instance of the parental opposition that Barthes had discarded. Not wanting to be the father (the preceptor, authority), unable to be the mother, he chose the second way, the other way; and we were his happy apprentices (a little bit mothered even so). He who lamented a certain art of living that has now disappeared, he who often made the culture industry the target of his attacks, he belonged to the world of the artisan. But an artisan of a strange sort, one who was unfazed by the transformation of the means of production and the advent of the machine. He communicated not knowledge, but know-how: he taught us his experience. "What's different about me," he said, "is this, and nothing else: I have written."[4]

Barthes insists upon the silence of the master before his apprentices: "He doesn't speak, or at least he doesn't deliver a lecture; his words are purely deictic. 'Here,' he says, 'I do *this* to avoid *that.*'"[5] One could say that there is something paradoxical about wanting to make himself into such a master: didn't it ever leave us frustrated for his speech? In spite of his reserve, which was proverbial, wasn't he always generous? Of course, but Barthes's *silence* seconds his voice and amounts to the fact that he never gave us a set of commandments. The recipes I spoke of had to be deciphered by each of us, in our own way, between the lines of his discourse. Because he didn't show us how to write really, but how to put ourselves in a situation to write. His method was only partly deictic: Barthes didn't supply explanations; he gave us advice. Walter Benjamin writes that "giving advice isn't so much answering questions as it is making suggestions about the outcome of a story, as it's taking place."[6] The suggestions that Barthes made were nonviolent, since they so often lacked a precise formulation, but there was always a *moral* to what he said, an intimated morality.

The artisan who transmits his experience, who does not provide explanations but allows his audience to elaborate for themselves the moral of the story —he is the one who knows how to tell a story; he is the narrator whose portrait Benjamin drew with such skill. It seems that there has been very little thought given to how much Barthes borrowed from and brought to the great tradition of oral narrative (not only in his teaching, but in the very texture of his critical writing); yet everyone who heard him recognized and spoke of how extremely musical his voice was. There is clear evidence of it only in his later work (discovery of the biographeme, theme of "writers without books," and so forth), but

3. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
6. Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller," in *Illuminations,* trans. Harry Zohn, New York, Schocken, 1969, p. 86.

all his metaphorical verve, all the pleasure of incongruous lists, the contradictory example (the best, in his opinion),[7] his great love of the concrete, all this for me is a sign of how much a storyteller Barthes was. It also explains his preference for small, classroom-size spaces, and his discomfort at having to speak before large gatherings. A story cannot be told anonymously; first a group must be identified. Barthes liked the seminar because he could sense our listening to him, and rediscover it, even as it changed, week after week.[8]

The art of the narrator, linked to the repetitive, endless cycle of the craftsman, began to crumble, according to Benjamin, with the invention of the novel, for the novel takes on meaning only with the appearance of the words "the end." Certainly narration received its death blow from the rise of that modern demon, the news—indifferent and blind to the past, an assertionless assertion, the daily fatuity on which the world gorges itself: mass media. Barthes set the novelistic in opposition to the novel; and to the vast indifference of the news, the "blade of value." If he resisted the novel so stubbornly, it wasn't only because he knew it couldn't be written anymore, but also because a much earlier past existed within him that rebelled against the entire teleological structure of the novel, against what makes this art a story of the fall.[9] And if he devoted an entire book to the way the novel is written, it is undoubtedly because it is the purest form, the emptiest form, of the news; as if the only possible response to this second, definitive offensive against the art of storytelling was for him to analyze its structure in its most innocuous form.

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"Narration is, as it were, an artisanal form of communication," according to Benjamin. "It doesn't attempt to transmit the pure 'in itself' of something, as does a news story or a report; it locates something within the very life of the

7. *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes,* Éditions du Seuil, 1975, p. 84; English translation by Richard Howard, *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes,* New York, Hill and Wang, 1977.

8. Was he happy at the Collège de France? I don't think so. The seminar, as I had the good fortune to know it (a small group of people—approximately fifteen—seated around a table), was Barthes's response to a growing problem which finally reached crisis proportions. In the fall of 1971, attendance had increased to the point that the École Pratique des Hautes Études had to rent a large hall located near the Champs de Mars. It was actually a theater, with footlights, wings, a backstage, etc. The funny thing about it was that it belonged to the French Theosophical Society. But Barthes's agony can well be imagined, alone there on the stage, in the spotlight, forced to preside *ex cathedra* before those hundreds of shadowy faces. The inevitable happened. Using some pretext, one of those in the overcrowded hall—undoubtedly expressing the frustration of everyone there—suddenly lashed out at the speaker. After that anonymous attack, Barthes closed the session to all but officially enrolled students and instituted the actual seminar in a more suitable place. To facilitate a closer rapport, he divided the group into three subgroups, devoting to each an entire afternoon, two hours a week.

9. See *Prétexte Roland Barthes,* actes du colloque de Cerisy, UGE, 1978, pp. 251–252; and "Réponses," *Tel Quel,* no. 47 (Autumn 1971), 102: "The novel form appeals to me, but I know that the novel is dead: that, I believe, is what I am really saying."

narrator, and from that life later borrows it back. It imprints the narrator's sign on the story, as the potter leaves the trace of his hands on the clay." Beginning with the first seminar, Barthes started to relate the history of semiology, a subject with which his audience was already theoretically acquainted, an apparently neutral choice, and too much a current issue to hold any dark secrets. From the beginning it appeared that we would be listening to a very specific account: Roland Barthes's own "initiation" into semiological studies (Brecht rather than Saussure was the first writer to be considered). The story of that long passage was a delight: We were apprentices and we were being told a story of apprenticeship! (somewhat a special case, however, since the pupil had been almost entirely self-taught, and as he was himself informed by semiology, he contributed to its theoretical foundation). But what was interesting about the seminar was that as Barthes reeled off a critical survey of everything we were reading at the time, he himself was withdrawing from semiology. The narration (transmission) and the desire to pass on to other things were perfectly synchronized. So it was that very early on I was confronted with one of the great practical principles of Roland Barthes, which is undoubtedly the precept written with a capital P, and which I will call the Principle of Unbelief.

Explaining the point of view adopted for the history of science, Koyré said that "arriving at a theoretical formulation, even if it is false, represents an enormous advance over the pretheoretical state."[10] Barthes would certainly have added that no theory remains true forever: "Even the science of desire, psychoanalysis, will some day pass away," he wrote, "even though we are greatly indebted to it. . . , because desire is stronger than its interpretation."[11] His slight scepticism, his absence of extremism is not a sign of defeat, but a tactical maneuver that refurbishes and endlessly improves the condition of the critic's weapons. Two corollaries follow from the Principle of Unbelief: *the right to recant,* which is often asserted, but especially its contrapositive, *the right to safeguard.*[12] Critical ideas should not be let go of prematurely, he often told us; it's better to take it easy than to take one's distance. "Ease, the order of desire, is more subversive than distance, the order of censure."[13]

"I don't think he believed in that opposition or in many others," Derrida observed concerning the nature/history opposition in Barthes's writings;[14] and Derrida rightly extends this observation to other dualities (for example, to what Barthes had to say about connotation): "An idea that has always greatly inter-

10. A. Koyré, *Études d'histoire de la pensée scientifique,* Paris, Gallimard, 1973, p. 117.
11. Roland Barthes, *Leçon,* Éditions du Seuil, 1978, p. 29; English translation by Richard Howard, "Lecture in Inauguration of the Chair of Literary Semiology, Collège de France," *October,* no. 8 (Spring 1979).
12. Barthes, *Leçon,* p. 31; *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes,* pp. 75, 106.
13. Roland Barthes, "Digressions," *Promesse,* no. 29 (Spring 1971), 18.
14. Jacques Derrida, "Les morts de Roland Barthes," *Poétique,* special issue in honor of Barthes, no 47 (September 1981), 271.

ested me, and that I cannot dispense with, even though there is a certain risk involved in presenting denotation as a natural state, and connotation as a cultural state of language."[15] But what the effort to shore up crumbling oppositions teaches us, above all, is the necessity of those oppositions; we must "set up a paradigm to produce a meaning and then be able to derive some use from it."[16] This, as Barthes often showed us, is the way to begin.

Many more of Barthes's ideas remain alive for me—an endless resource which I gradually become conscious of during the course of my work. A substantial number of these precepts are simply the moral of the stories he told us; there are others that reflect the wordless influence he had over me, whatever it is that constitutes his entire craft. One of these indelible marks is what I shall call the *click*. Rereading the notebooks that I've kept from those apprentice years, I agree with his description of the notes taken in the seminar: harum-scarum,[17] equivalent transcriptions, perhaps, of the kind of listening psychoanalysts term "floating." Barthes applied this floating quality to the entire sphere of language, to reading, to every utterance, to all conversation. I was astounded, like everyone else, when I saw him take out a notebook from his pocket one day while I was speaking to him, and write down several lines before answering. Again a little later I observed the same action, but then realizing my mistake as I watched his scribbling hand, I knew that there was no apparent connection between the fragments of language that were circulating in the air and what he was consigning to his notebook: that was the click, that turning of the key that released the association of ideas.

"It's when you lift your head that you're really reading," Roland Barthes often said. That is what I had thought I would be able to forget, when I thought of his text as a tool. To my embarrassment, I realized I could not escape that click, even if I would ever want to. If Barthes's text didn't answer my questions, it was because I had been too clearly on his side, without feeling any compulsion from that sudden, insouciant turning of the key. It's not only the many flashes of insight that I remember from the seminar, but the way they were meant to be heard, at least that is my hope: unleash thought against something solid; let the signs deflect over and around an opposition, an analogy, before putting them in order.

15. Barthes, "Réponses," p. 98.
16. *Roland Barthes par Roland Barthes,* p. 96.
17. Barthes, "Au séminaire," p. 51.

E. Fragonard, Meditation before the Ruins of Jumièges, *from* Voyages Pittoresques, *1820.*

A Mnemonic Art?
Calotype Aesthetics at Princeton

The Art of French Calotype, *by André Jammes and Eugenia Parry Janis, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1983.*
Masterpieces of the French Calotype, *Princeton Art Museum, February 6–March 27, 1983.*
Selections from the Robert O. Dougan Collection of Historical Photographs and Photographic Literature, *Princeton Art Museum, February 6–March 27, 1983.*
Symposium on Nineteenth-Century Photography, *Princeton Art Museum, February 6, 1983.*

CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

> *Every passion borders on the chaotic, but the collector's passion borders on the chaos of memories.*
>
> —Walter Benjamin,
> "Unpacking My Library"

Photography's rapid revaluation is undoubtedly one of the most astonishing episodes in what has been called, sceptically, *le champ de l'esthétisable.*[1] The need for revaluation is not in question, nor is its primary impetus: the increasing awareness of photography as one of the most complex and heterogeneous systems of cultural production in the last century and a half. But when this contemporary effort to reorder photography's past begins by employing aesthetic categories and research methods hastily imported from the domain of art history, we would be wise to recognize it as an unduly Procrustean affair. And a belated one at that, coming as it does at a moment when the continuing usefulness of art history's venerable categories and methodologies has been pointedly challenged within the discipline itself.[2]

The method in question—that of selection, selective interpretation, and valorization—is hardly unfamiliar. Raymond Williams, for example, has provocatively charted the centuries-long redistribution of the "multiplicity of writing" into the academic compartments we encounter today in any study of "literature."[3] Walter Cahn has similarly traced the slow transformation of painting

1. Mikel Dufrenne, "Le champ de l'esthétisable," *Revue d'esthétique,* nos. 3–4 (1979), 131–143.

I am indebted to Abigail Solomon-Godeau for invaluable assistance in the preparation of this essay.

2. See the recent essays devoted to "The Crisis in the Discipline," in *Art Journal,* vol. 42, no. 4 (Winter 1982).
3. Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society,* New York, Harper and Row, 1958; *The Long Revolution,* London, Chatto and Windus, 1961; *Marxism and Literature,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977.

from a relatively diffuse medieval guild activity to a prestigious art form, one organized (and represented to the public) according to a complex hierarchy of schools and genres.[4] A very similar concern with segregating the essential from the peripheral informs many of the recent reassessments of photography and its past—only here the process has been astonishingly compressed into the span of a few decades. Last February a symposium on nineteenth-century photography was held at the Princeton Art Museum to mark the publication of *The Art of French Calotype* and the opening of two exhibitions, one from Jammes's celebrated collection of early French photography, the other of Princeton's recently acquired selection from the Robert O. Dougan collection. The symposium and exhibitions dramatically demonstrated the kinds of scholarly operations that must continue to be performed if photography is to be contained as a manageable object of academic specialists, of art-historical and museological discourse.

It was only a half century ago, during the 1930s, that the task of ordering and valuing photographic artifacts began decisively to pass from the hands of technical historians—such as the German photochemist J. E. Eder—and antiquarians—like the indefatigable French collector Gabriel Cromer—to those of university-trained art historians. This change was promptly reflected in the writing and construction of photographic history; the earlier chronicles of the medium's technical evolution presented in terms of inventors, inventions, processes, and applications gave way to a new concern with identifying what Beaumont Newhall called "masters of photography." This shift in perspective not only required the reconfiguration of existing historical facts, but also opened the way for other orders of facts—typically of a biographical or stylistic nature—to emerge.[5]

Ultimately, and perhaps most importantly, it also required a new ordering of photography's physical artifacts. One such instance can be found in the kind of organization imposed on the vast Eastman House collection during Newhall's term as curator and director of that museum (1949–69). Elsewhere I have noted Newhall's attempts in the late 1930s, under the aegis of the Museum of Modern Art, to superimpose upon the existing categories of technical process the traditional evaluative standards of print connoisseurship.[6] Such a procedure enabled Newhall to begin to mark off a canonical line of photographic "masters" whose accomplishments could advantageously be compared to those in the established branches of the fine arts. This reconceptualizing of photography in terms of aesthetic categories and a creator-centered lineage inevitably required a physical analogue, immediately visible in the internal distribution of

4. Walter Cahn, *Masterpieces: Chapters on the History of an Idea,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977.
5. See Jean Starobinski's remarks on "factual truths and their selection" in "The Meaning of Literary History," *New Literary History,* vol. 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1975), 83–88.
6. "The Judgment Seat of Photography," *October,* no. 22 (Fall 1982), 27–63.

the Eastman House collection. Incorporating (thanks to the largesse of the Eastman Kodak company) such variegated earlier collections as those of Eder and Cromer, the new collection was divided along the lines of a rudimentary class structure. An "A" collection, kept in protective cases in a study room, held the prized works of artist-photographers like Stieglitz, Strand, and Weston. In a separate room, a "B" collection in upright filing cabinets contained documentary photographs such as those of the Western expeditionary photographers, T. H. O'Sullivan and William Henry Jackson. Finally, an uninventoried "C" collection in the museum's basement consigned to temporary oblivion the remainder of photography; provisionally grouped according to technical processes —like the large number of calotypes from the Cromer collection— these classes of images could only hope for some future rehabilitation.[7]

It can easily be grasped how far such an archival division, which is essentially that underlying Newhall's *History of Photography,* preselects one's view of the field, effectively limits the range of research questions that may be profitably formulated, and powerfully indicates those avenues deemed worthy of further exploration. By proclaiming the centrality of "masters" whose creative feats distanced them from the more prosaic aspects of the medium, Newhall introduced the institutional rationale for elevating at least one stratum of photographic practice to the status of fine art. It seems clear that the subsequent pressures brought to bear on the study of photography have, until recently, had as much to do with institutional legitimation as with critical investigation. To indicate the shifts these pressures inevitably entail we need only compare the very different receptions accorded the work of the nineteenth-century Western photographer T. H. O'Sullivan during the last two decades.

Newhall, for example, invariably appropriated O'Sullivan's work to construct a photographic heritage for the "straight" approach championed by Ansel Adams, a leading figure in Newhall's pantheon. Invoking the idea of the lost but subsequently recovered origin, Newhall wrote in 1966, "Photographers, like painters, often discover, through chance or serendipity, the immense importance of predecessors who may have long lain forgotten."[8] Although today, for reasons to which we shall quickly turn, it has become nearly impossible to associate O'Sullivan's laconic topographical views with Adams's flamboyant visual rhetoric, it should be kept in mind that Adams was one of the principal subscribers to this association. In an "Appreciation" published in Newhall's 1966 monograph on the earlier photographer, Adams found neatly prefigured

7. According to Robert Bretz, former librarian of the George Eastman House, to whom I am grateful for information regarding the organization of the museum's collection, Newhall himself was not involved in the day-to-day activities of cataloguing and archival organization. It should, however, be evident to what degree the collection's organization coincided with Newhall's own research priorities.

8. Beaumont and Nancy Newhall, *Timothy O'Sullivan, Photographer,* Rochester, George Eastman House, 1966, np.

in O'Sullivan's work his own photographic concerns: "majestic tonalities," "the impression of blazing light," "excellent craftsmanship," and "respect for the medium."[9] With the help of such convenient characterizations, Newhall could authoritatively draw a line from Adams directly back to O'Sullivan, and point to a tradition of common attitudes and shared photographic practices—obvious prerequisites if one is to construct a genealogy of "masters" of those practices.

But in the 1960s, when younger curators and academic historians of photography sought to create institutional spaces for themselves within existing art museums and art-history departments, more decisive strategies than Newhall's were required. On the one hand, Newhall's canonical principle of parsimony might be refined still further in an order of authenticated photographic "geniuses" to whom one might serenely attach one's own professional reputation. Thus in a 1967 review of Newhall's O'Sullivan monograph, we find Peter Bunnell, then assistant curator of MoMA's photography department, taking anxious exception to Newhall's estimation of the photographer's importance.

> O'Sullivan's photographs taken in breadth either as objects of utility or quality—history or style—are weak. In spite of their clarity and notwithstanding their basic American propensity for clearness and fact, they are not monumental. That is, there is no sense of order or containment of chaos. . . . Poignant subjects in some cases, but his pictures were not sustained by the greater vision of the imaginative artist or conceptual genius in photography. . . . Limited in his vision, not trained in some of the elemental relationships of seeing, his photographs in these books show a record of missed opportunity to make of his often unique experience a significant photograph.[10]

This was not pique, however, but principle, a disagreement having less to do with O'Sullivan's place in photographic history than with the perspective from which to begin to construct that history. In 1975 Bunnell (by then Princeton's David Hunter McAlpin Professor of the History of Photography) could pronounce himself still "not convinced" of the claims advanced for O'Sullivan, at least in terms of his own notion of a rigorously policed approach to canon-formation. This view emphasized the supposedly pivotal role played by undisputed "masterpieces" and their makers in the history of photography. While allowing that the standards by which one might recognize such masterworks had yet to be adequately formulated, Bunnell felt compelled to insist that "clearly, the function of the historian is to determine such masterpieces."[11]

9. Ansel Adams, "An Appreciation," *ibid.*
10. Peter C. Bunnell, untitled review of Beaumont and Nancy Newhall, *Timothy O'Sullivan, Photographer,* and James D. Horan, *Timothy O'Sullivan: America's Forgotten Photographer,* New York, Doubleday, 1966, in *Aperture,* vol. 13, no. 6 (1967), np.
11. Peter C. Bunnell, "Can There Ever Again Be a History of Photography?" *Print Collectors Newsletter,* vol. 5, no. 6 (January-February 1975), 144–145.

From such a viewpoint, O'Sullivan's lack of artistic pedigree or manifest "conceptual genius" condemned him to historical marginality.

To understand why the recent Princeton symposium over which Bunnell presided could unblinkingly accept Joel Snyder's presentation of O'Sullivan's work as henceforth canonical—and, indeed, "ineffable"—we must turn to MoMA Director of Photography John Szarkowski's more ambitious departure from Newhall's schema since the 1960s. Dropping Newhall's emphasis on the "unmistakable authority of genius," Szarkowski applied the techniques of a Wolfflinian "history of occidental seeing" to analyze the formal development of the modes of "photographic seeing." He initially proposed a set of formal characteristics he found common to all photographs—visual elements present not only, say, in *The Steerage,* but in press photographs, snapshots, or automatic-camera photographs of bank robberies as well. This method of analysis led Szarkowski, in his critical writing, to place a new value on those nineteenth-century photographers who could, like O'Sullivan, be described as blessed with "a fairly thorough-going ignorance of the grand tradition of painting."[12] Such "primitives" (as Szarkowski styled them), working "as if no precedent existed," could explore the new medium's potentials unencumbered by prior pictorial tradition, and in this way produce images that were "radically photographic."

Again, the question of how best to characterize O'Sullivan's photographs took on its importance in relation to larger issues. Szarkowski's enterprise might have aimed at some form of *Fotogeschichte ohne Namen;* by largely bracketing out consideration of the photographic referent, as well as the original settings of production and reception, his method seemed to promise access to the inner workings of an ostensibly pure photographic syntax. But more importantly, by supplying a language which could redescribe photography *as such* in categories akin to those of formalist modernism, Szarkowski (and MoMA) furnished institutional sanction for photography's triumphant entry, during the 1970s, as a "great undifferentiated whole" into the museum, the art market, and the art-history curriculum. The savoring of the formal "carpentry" of photographs provided an influential—and, as I have argued, powerfully reductive—model for the aestheticized rereading of virtually any photograph, and for the deducing of a privileged authorial "voice" behind the most diverse images. Parsimony, at this point, gave way to plethora.

But in that moment of rapturous institutional embrace, questions of no mean critical and historiographic import were often elided. On precisely what critical grounds, for example, could one judge the seemingly offhand, self-effacing photographs of Lee Friedlander or William Eggleston—exemplars of

12. John Szarkowski, "American Photography and the Frontier Tradition," in *Symposion über Fotografie,* Graz, Forum Stadtpark, 1979, pp. 98–107. See also an earlier statement of the same theme in John Szarkowski, *The Photographer and the American Landscape,* New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1963, p. 3: "With no academic authority looking over his shoulder, the photographer was free to give the camera its head, free to discover how it could see most clearly."

untainted "photographic seeing"—superior to those of earlier modernists like Stieglitz or Weston, or even to postmodernists like Cindy Sherman or Richard Prince? It seems increasingly clear that a fully articulated answer on the part of Szarkowski or his followers would involve extending the critical line, introduced by Eliot and I. A. Richards, that complex works, by holding contending elements under tension in a self-enclosed, "difficult" whole, are best suited metaphorically to suggest the infinitely complex textures and dynamics of reality, and thereby attain the status of a laudably "mature" art.[13] But since the mid-1970s, of course, the premises and persuasiveness of that argument, and its Greenbergian offshoots in the visual arts, have been substantially eroded by postmodernist challenges across virtually the entire cultural field.[14] Even within the realm of historical scholarship, an attempt by Peter Galassi, in his *Before Photography,* to project Szarkowski's critical intuitions onto the historiographic plane fell far short of accomplishing the task that it set itself. Could one provide photography with a prestigious institutional origin within the arts —within painting—while at the same time maintaining that the medium was "born whole," equipped from the outset with a unique "visual syntax" guaranteeing its aesthetic autonomy? To judge from Galassi's slim essay: not convincingly.

Because they acknowledged the difficulties arising from this attempt to reposition photography as a medium of inherently modernist bent, several of the presentations at Princeton took on a decidedly provocative tone. Continuing his recent investigations of O'Sullivan's work, Joel Snyder took sharp issue with the notion of O'Sullivan as modernist "primitive," and with what he described as the "contextualist" view that contests the aesthetic rereading of O'Sullivan's photographs because of their original status as documents. Attacking what he obviously considered the latter's hopelessly naive account of the nature of a photographic "document," Snyder asked, "Why should it seem odd to us that a documentary photographer should be concerned with issues of pictorial coherence, perspicuity, integrity, with the range of tonal values, with issues of placement within and relative to a frame, and so on?" Finding no reason to separate "documentary" from "aesthetic" motivation within a category he designated *functional illustration,* Snyder grouped O'Sullivan's work with that of other artist-illustrators working in other media. Because in the early 1870s photography was unable to offer the geologist mathematically precise, quantifiable information, Snyder argued, the photographer necessarily depicted the landscape in

13. See Szarkowski's remarks on the importance of the example of photographers such as Jackson and O'Sullivan in forging a "mature and responsible language" of photography, in *The Face of Minnesota,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota, 1958, pp. 301–302.
14. With regard to the modernist position in photography, see, for example, Douglas Crimp, "The Museum's Old/The Library's New Subject," *Parachute,* no. 22 (Spring 1981), 32–37; and Victor Burgin, "Photography, Phantasy, Function," in Burgin, ed., *Thinking Photography,* London and Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, 1982, pp. 177–216.

relation to the visual figures and tropes of the vernacular landscape tradition—not necessarily according to those conventions, but perhaps in opposition to them. Snyder found O'Sullivan's photographs not aconventional—and thus revelatory of some inherent photographic syntax—but stubbornly unconventional, a significant refusal of the existing norms of the picturesque sublime. In O'Sullivan's case, this departure was made possible in part by the prevalence among the leaders of the geological survey of a "catastrophist" theory of geological evolution.

Snyder's willingness to cross the hitherto sacrosanct border of the picture frame to explore the transaction of image and text points to an area of inquiry beginning to receive considerable attention. But while Snyder plainly relished his scuttling of what he termed the "commonplaces of photographic criticism," his own practice seems to have brought him back to precisely the spot from which Szarkowski started two decades ago: cultural historian John Kouwenhoven's opposition of the energetic technological forms of the American vernacular to the debilitating conventions of the European pictorial tradition. Moreover, despite his call for more imaginative "thinking about the documentary *use* of pictures in general," Snyder's own apparent fascination with the photographer himself guaranteed that his undeniably valuable research would be organized from the monographic position of "the artist and his milieu." His provisional placement of O'Sullivan's photographs within the families of functional illustration and vernacular landscape served primarily as a prelude to their dramatic elevation to another category—the "ineffable." Snyder's construction of a "sympathetic resonance" between O'Sullivan's images and Clarence King's catastrophist geological writings (taking the form, in his O'Sullivan monograph, of a juxtaposition of the photographs with snippets from King's prose) is ultimately founded upon a familiar and revealing motif—a meditation on the mystery of creation.[15]

It was however in the presentations of André Jammes and Eugenia Parry

15. Joel Snyder, *American Frontiers: The Photographs of Timothy O'Sullivan, 1867–1874,* Millerton, N.Y., Aperture, 1981. O'Sullivan's work figures in two recent contributions to the debate over photographic history. Rosalind Krauss seeks to situate O'Sullivan's photographs in relation to the "discourse of the survey" in "Photography's Discursive Spaces: Landscape/View," *Art Journal,* vol. 42, no. 4 (Winter 1982), 311–319; and Allan Sekula criticizes both Snyder and Krauss as insufficiently attentive to the instrumental use of such photographs in "Photography between Labor and Capital," in Benjamin H. D. Buchloh and Robert Wilkie, eds., *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures: A Selection from the Negative Archives of Shedden Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton, 1948–1968,* Halifax, The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1983, pp. 193–268. Finally, John Kouwenhoven discusses the competing demands of connoisseurship and history with regard to photography in Jan Zita Grover, "Interview with John Kouwenhoven," *Exposure,* vol. 20, no. 4 (1982), 21–24.

For a critique (ca. 1950) of traditional historiography from the standpoint of the Annales school, see Fernand Braudel, "Les temps de l'histoire" (c. 1950), in *Écrits sur l'histoire,* Paris, Flammarion, 1969, pp. 11–38. For an example of the extension of these ideas to cultural history, see the concluding chapter of Roland Barthes's *Sur Racine,* Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1963.

Janis—the publication of whose study *The Art of French Calotype* provided the occasion for the symposium—that one could find the most systematic departure from the notion of what Peter Galassi has termed early photography's "disruptive character" among the visual arts, and its "fierce independence" of preexisting traditions.[16] Abandoning as useless the attempt to isolate a bare-bones visual syntax unique to photography, Jammes and Janis argued for a striking continuity between one segment of early photography—French paper-negative photography of the 1840s–'50s—and an earlier romantic tradition of lithography centered around the multi-volume *Voyages Pittoresques*. By advancing the idea that the practice of French calotype photography was saturated with the attitudes of late romanticism, they opened the way to a more important proposal: that calotype photography played a crucial (if here largely undefined) role in negotiating the transition from romantic to realist painting in mid-century France.

The broaching of the topic of romanticism in regard to early photography should no doubt be seen in light of the larger postmodern reappraisal of premodernist, as well as antimodernist, art practices in the nineteenth century. This movement has been underway in the field of literary studies for well over two decades, a frequently remarked symptom of the demise of New Critical orthodoxy. But if the dispersal of the modernist impulse has ushered in today's notorious critical and historiographic pluralism, certain distinctions must nevertheless continue to be made among the resulting practices. Critics such as Paul de Man and Harold Bloom have found literary romanticism an unexpectedly promising ground on which to engage the thorniest questions raised by contemporary theory and criticism.[17] But in *The Art of French Calotype* the investigation of the putative links between early photography and the romantic tradition in the French graphic arts is accompanied by a surprisingly enthusiastic revival of critical concepts themselves issuing from the romantic period. Beginning from the customary starting points of print connoisseurship—print surface characteristics, stylistic analysis, artistic biography—Jammes and Janis pass directly into an art-historical *mode rétro* that assumes the sufficient explanatory power of concepts such as creative genius, artistic originality, and national style.

Their book can perhaps most interestingly be taken as an appeal for the belated exemption of the "primitives" of calotype photography from Baudelaire's famous diatribe against the medium in his 1859 *Salon*. Jammes and Janis propose that the calotype, which they dub an art of the "happy few," should properly be set among what Baudelaire called the mnemonic arts—the idealizing

16. Peter Galassi, *Before Photography,* New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1980.
17. De Man indicates the place held by romanticism in recent literary studies in his introduction to the issue, "The Rhetoric of Romanticism," *Studies in Romanticism,* vol. 18, no. 4 (1979), 495–499.

Victor Regnault, Mme. Regnault, near a Window, *c. 1850.*

arts of rememoration and imaginative transformation. The logic behind this particular recuperation deserves our closer attention.

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By aptly cataloguing calotype photography as a "bookish" art, Jammes and Janis not only direct attention to its kinship to other graphic illustrative media, but also inadvertently recall the idiosyncratic path by which early photography was led into the modern art market. Since both Princeton exhibitions were drawn from the collections of men who discovered photography through their activities in the rare-book trade, our recollection of that process is not entirely amiss. During the 1920s–'30s, in the same years that a handful of art historians began to turn their attention to photography, a number of antiquarian booksellers in Europe sought (without notable success) to create a regular clien-

tele for early photographs. These booksellers included E. P. Goldschmidt in England, with whose firm Robert O. Dougan was associated; Pierre Lambert in France; and Nicolas Rauch in Geneva, with whom André Jammes later enjoyed close ties. This provisional link between early photographs and antiquarian books remained firm for a number of years, during which Sotheby's London auction house, for example, regularly delegated the handling of photographs to its book department. Only in 1961, with the famous Rauch auction devoted exclusively to nineteenth-century photographs and apparatuses, did photography finally come to figure as an independent entity in the art market.[18] The Rauch auction catalogue featured a preface and commentary by the young André Jammes, a Parisian rare-book seller who had already begun to acquire the photographic holdings of the previous generation of collectors.

Jammes's own aims in collecting photography represent a notable departure from those of his predecessors. Following Nietzsche's terminology in "The Use and Abuse of History," we might call it a movement from infatuated antiquarianism toward a more methodical ordering of historical artifacts in a "monumental" series leading from past to present. Jammes has claimed that when he began collecting in the early 1950s no other course was open, if one wished to study the history of photography, than to assemble one's own archive. But this should properly be understood to mean that in those existing collections in which photography prominently figured, photographs were more likely to be found distributed according to their subject matter than organized as the *oeuvres* of individual photographers.[19] Jammes's own working assumptions, on the other hand, were those of the enthusiast-connoisseur, and he candidly noted that his hope was to see photography furnished with what he called "titles of nobility, its masters, its classics."[20] Such ends guided his own collecting practices, summed up in his estimate that "thousands of documents of uneven aesthetic value were necessary in order to establish the framework in which the masters had evolved."[21] Through his own modest scholarly publications, his selective opening of his collection to researchers, and his frequent exhibition of

18. Not until 1967 did Sotheby's New York auction house offer a major photographic collection for sale; and not until 1975 did Sotheby's begin to schedule regular photographic auctions.

19. For a brief account of the development of French institutional attitudes toward photography, see Jean Adhémar's editorial "La photographie en France, l'opinion et l'état depuis 1939," in the Supplement to the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts,* no. 1292 (September 1976), 1–4.

For a sense of Jammes's departure from the concerns of earlier French antiquarian collectors, compare Gabriel Cromer's 1925 proposal for a Musée de la Photographie, in the *Bulletin de la Société française de photographie,* January 7, 1925, pp. 14–19. Cromer's proposal alloted the "art" of photography a footing comparable but not superior to that of scientific photography, photomechanical reproduction, apparatuses, cinematography, etc.

20. André Jammes, introduction to *Un siècle de photographie; de Nièpce à Man Ray,* Paris, Musée des arts décoratifs, 1965, p. 11.

21. André Jammes, preface to *The First Century of Photography: Nièpce to Atget, from the Collection of André Jammes,* Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, 1977, p. 10.

selected works, Jammes has patiently sought during the course of three decades —and not without success—to stimulate a taste among like-minded connoisseurs for these "masters" of early French photography.

The central role assigned to French paper-negative photography in Jammes's enterprise could already be discerned in his remarks at the time of the 1961 Rauch auction—an occasion that he enthusiastically characterized as "this official recognition accorded to objects of art, this distinction conferred by our tradition upon things of the past."[22] In addition to extending significantly the use of the term *calotype* to refer not simply to Fox Talbot's second negative process of 1840, but generically to *all* prints from later paper-negative processes, Jammes insisted on the great rarity and beauty of French calotypes, their desirability for the discerning collector, and the fact that the French calotypists were "all painters" who had immediately brought their artistic preoccupations to bear on the "new art."[23]

Two decades later Jammes's initial promotional theses concerning early French photography have passed into *The Art of French Calotype* virtually unchanged. Although the text was written by his collaborator, the American art

22. André Jammes, preface to the catalogue of the Nicolas Rauch auction *Photographies anciennes, appareils de photographie, 1839–1900,* Geneva, June 13, 1961, p. 6.

23. Catalogue commentary, *ibid.,* pp. 22–23. At last year's "Paper and Light" symposium at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, the assembled panelists seemed at a loss when James Borocomon of the National Gallery of Canada asked "when the term *calotype* came to be applied to the whole photographic process from the paper negative through to the paper print." What might seem a scholarly quibble in fact points up a classic instance of the pressures that can reorganize heterogeneous historical materials around unexamined principles of unity.

Fox Talbot's 1841 announcement of the calotype process—an improvement of his 1839 process called *photogenic drawing*—dealt only with the production of a paper negative; positive prints, it was assumed, could then be obtained via the existing salted paper technique. The important modifications of Talbot's negative process in the middle and late 1840s by the French entrepreneur Blanquart-Evrard were greeted by Talbot as a "glaring act of scientific piracy"; yet the French found Blanquart-Evrard's process sufficiently distinct to warrant disregarding Talbot's charges. In France, thereafter, Blanquard-Evrard's processes, along with Gustave LeGray's waxed-paper-negative process, were customarily referred to as *photographie en papier*—decidedly *not* as calotype. As Jammes and Janis point out, over forty variants of the paper-negative process came into existence in France during the 1850s. In addition to these, there were equally diverse alternatives available for preparing positive prints from the negatives—possibilities leading to very different surface and tonal characteristics.

The reason given for the title, *The Art of French Calotype,* throws an interesting light on the relation between connoisseur and art historian. According to Janis, at the Houston symposium, "I was reading all these French texts, and they never mention the word *calotype*—it's always called *photographie en papier*. . . . And I said, 'Why are we using *calotype*? This is wrong.' And he [Jammes] said, 'By now it's emblematic and it means Talbot inspired thinking about photography and we have to use it.'"

This search for an auspicious origin extends to the etymological level. According to one's preference, the Greek *kalos* may be translated as *beautiful* (by Helmut Gernsheim in his history of photography), or as *useful* (by Talbot himself, according to Talbot scholar Gail Buckland). For Jammes and Janis, Talbot's happy neologism nevertheless enables them to claim that its derivation serves "almost to predetermine its aesthetic destiny." It seems more likely that this construction of a unifying rubric with its own "aesthetic destiny" is accomplished by terminological fiat.

historian Eugenia Parry Janis, the animating ideas have been expressed so frequently in Jammes's own writings (albeit without the voluminous supporting citations in evidence here) that his imprint can be detected at every turn; as the authors put it, Jammes's collection served as "the major source for our critical inquiry at all stages" (p. xiv). Jammes and Janis frankly admit that it was "attraction to their beauty" (p. xiii) that first drew them to calotype images; and to judge from their language, which seeks dubiously to divide the "incomparably beautiful," the "exceedingly beautiful," the "sumptuously beautiful," and the "mysteriously majestic" from the merely "gorgeous," one has to do here with the aspect of *concupiscientia oculorum* that Augustine defined as *voluptas* rather than *curiositas*. In short, what Adorno mordantly termed the culinary mode of aesthetics becomes here a reckless feast.[24]

In a methodological preface to their book, Jammes and Janis criticize earlier histories' obsession with charting the technical development of the medium on the grounds that "technical description prescribes directions and implies a predetermined outcome" (p. xii). They seem considerably less enthusiastic, however, about addressing the formative power of the axiological principles guiding their own investigation. Familiar art-historical categories are hoisted unquestioningly into place and the well-worn representational machinery of the historical narrative is set into motion. The object of scrutiny, French calotype photography, inevitably reemerges as a national "art in its Golden Age"; its historical setting (as Jammes underscored it at Princeton) as a fleeting "moment of complete freedom"; and its practitioners as "primitives" of a recondite tradition hitherto accessible to only a handful of connoisseurs. The 1851 Mission Héliographique—a government-sponsored survey of France's medieval architectural monuments—provides the impetus for a "collective visual ideology" uniting French calotypists in a "romantic ideal." The photographer Hippolyte Bayard is cast as founding father, Gustave LeGray as *chef d'école,* and the critic Francis Wey as principal theorist of the new art. The photographic periodical *La Lumière* is portrayed primarily as chronicling the "quest to liberate photography's true voice" (p. 40); and this implied teleology reaches its appointed end in the figure of Eugène Atget, imagined as the chief inheritor of the pictorial concerns and romantic ideals of the earlier calotypists. Finally, lest we miss the point, "As photographers in our own time continually return to the wellspring of Atget's work to renew their art, they inevitably return to the artistic heritage established by the French photographers who worked with paper" (p. 106).[25]

24. For a recent historical critique of the concept of aesthetic pleasure, see Hans Robert Jauss, "La juissance esthétique," *Poétique,* no. 39 (September 1979), 261–274.

25. The authors' various descriptions of the leading calotypists as "wanderers smitten with a love of ruins" and "eccentric" technical experimentalists devoted to raising photography to the status of an "influential art" seem to reembroider just those traits that had made photography the subject of farce by the 1860s. In an 1865 play called *Le Photographe,* the fashionable seducer Raoul Gardefeu impersonates a photographer so as to approach an attractive baroness. He exults, "I

Titles of nobility are thus conferred and the monumental order is firmly established.

Whether this variety of art-historical business-as-usual provides the most useful model for approaching the material and the period in question has already been discussed by other writers.[26] Certainly Jammes's and Janis's founding opposition—which pits the detailed, "finicky reproduction" of the daguerreotype (and later the collodion-on-glass negative) against the pictorial effect and "intelligent art" of the calotype—is programmed in advance to recall similarly valued couples: mass art/high art, or, more generally, commerce/culture. It may be objected that this division only adopts the period's own terms, but such dichotomizing serves in this case to close off access to a more fundamental point: that virtually every corner of nineteenth-century cultural life was touched by an "aestheticizing" process in response to the new importance of visual reproduction and dissemination. From this viewpoint, even the most casual glance at the pages of *La Lumière* discloses an extraordinary effort, during the 1850s, to coordinate one system of imaging—photography—with every branch of science, the arts, industry, and society at large. Numerous proposals, reports, and speculations regarding the medium's applicability to such diverse fields as botany, anthropology, geology, agriculture, horticulture, medicine, zoology, astronomy, and meteorology, not to mention the services it might render to industrial documentation, historical archives, and art reproduction, are scattered through each issue. Here, as generally throughout their text, Jammes's and Janis's simplifying formula that the periodical "reviewed all matters of science as it concerned art" (p. 42) seems unduly skewed by the perspective imposed by their thesis. Surely from today's vantage point the writer Francis Wey seems as much a visionary when, in the early 1850s, he proposes a system of photographic identity cards, or suggests a gallery in the Louvre be devoted to photographic reproductions of masterpieces, as when he describes calotype production in the already conventionalized terms of "effect" and "sacrifice."

The diminished plausibility of the modernist enterprise in photography allows Jammes and Janis comfortably to disavow what they call a "purism" that would see photography "stripped of all but the decisive features that belong only to its peculiar syntax" (p. 95). But at the same moment that they justify a renewed attention to photography's mixed inheritance from the other arts, and particularly the graphic arts of French romanticism, we can see resurface in

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knew what this required of me. I had to be brilliant, spiritual, original. . . . This I was; I spoke of my voyages, of my work, my discoveries, my artistic dreams, and my sufferings. . . . The baroness was moved!" (Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, *Le Photographe,* Paris, Michel Levy Frères, 1865, pp. 11–12).

26. See especially Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Calotypomania," *Afterimage,* vol. 11, nos. 1–2 (Summer 1983), 7–12.

their own critical procedure several key tenets of romantic art theory that had been submerged, or assigned secondary value, in the ideology of modernism.[27]

Jammes's and Janis's insistence that calotype photography can best be judged as a practice not of servile imitation, but one aimed at idealizing interpretation and guided by poetic intuition, revives a distinctive romantic theme regarding the origin and aims of the arts. This can most quickly be grasped if we consider the models advanced by earlier epochs. In the first century, Pliny found the clue to the beginnings of the arts in the legend of Dibutades' tracing of the projected shadow of her soon-departing lover; here the mingling of desire and a special kind of visual sign—the index, or physical trace—determined the initial practice of the arts.[28] In the mid-sixteenth century, Vasari incorporated this same classical legend into his own speculation on the beginnings of the arts, but at the same time he introduced a distinction between the necessarily imitative character of the human arts and the kind of unconstrained creation that could be credited only to God. By 1802 Chateaubriand, in one of the seminal works of French romanticism, *Génie du Christianisme,* dismisses Dibutades' invention of the silhouette as heralding only an art of ever more perfect, hence ever more futile, illusion; the first true *trait de dessin,* he contends, should be considered that of the Creation.

In this decisive shift of emphasis, Chateaubriand calls to mind Kant's more elaborately argued analogy, in his *Critique of Judgment,* between the divine artist and the human one, in which the productive freedom of the one is likened to that of the other. Accordingly, for Kant, the fine arts are those that imitate the least, and for that reason most resemble unfettered divine productivity; genius, not convention, gives the rule to art. Around just this aspect of Kant's thought proliferates the romantic anthropo-theology of art, in which the autonomy and the subjectivity of the artist guarantee the unmediated genesis of the work of art.[29]

The reorientation just described cut across all spheres of eighteenth-century preromantic thought and set the stage for a critical revaluation of the earliest, least conventionalized stages of artistic production. Cultural artifacts deemed barbarous—that is, nonclassical—by the Enlightenment were reassessed as emanations from an Edenic golden age; the works of the *primitifs* were

27. On the romantic sources of several key modernist notions, see Jonathan Culler, "The Mirror Stage," in *High Romantic Argument: Essays for M. H. Abrams,* ed. Lawrence Lipking, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1981, pp. 149–163.

28. For a speculative discussion of photography and video in terms of the category of the index, see Philippe Dubois, "L'ombre, le miroir, l'index," *Parachute,* no. 26 (Spring 1982), 16–28. Dubois relies upon the ideas initially set forth by Rosalind Krauss in "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America," *October,* nos. 3 and 4 (Spring and Fall 1977).

29. For a deconstructive reading of the economy of metaphors informing romantic art theory, see Jacques Derrida, "Economimesis," in Sylviane Agacinski, *et al., Mimesis des articulations,* Paris, Aubier-Flammarion, 1975, pp. 55–93; translated by R. Klein in *Diacritics,* vol. 11, no. 2 (Summer 1981), 3–25.

prized as embodiments of the suddenly central virtues of vivacity, spontaneity, expression, imagination, and lyricism: they were prized, in short, for their "originality." In literature, preromantics like Lessing demoted the classical arts of rhetoric, and discovered new value in folk poetry, songs, and ballads. In linguistics, Condillac and Rousseau postulated the existence of an originary poetic speech prior to and outside the institution of writing. With the elevation of the *primitifs,* a new perspective opened on contemporary practices in the arts, one which called into question the finish and rational perfection so esteemed by those whom Lamartine would later dismiss as *"les hommes géomètres"* of the Enlightenment. Already in Diderot's 1765 *Salon* one could catch a glimpse of what the romantics would codify in an aesthetic of the sketch:

> The sketch commonly has a fire that the painting lacks. It is the moment of the artist's vivacity, his pure verve, free of any admixture of the affectation which reflection brings to everything. It is the soul of the artist spread across the canvas.[30]

The romantic preoccupation with what Albert Boime has usefully termed the generative stage of artistic production (the Latin *genius* apparently deriving from the Tuscan for *generator*) thus began with the attachment of a new value to those works perceived as issuing most immediately from some demiurgic force of the artist.[31] The swift acceptance, after 1815, of lithography, which combined mass reproducibility and the autographic status of the sketch, can be traced, in part, to the ease with which these romantic notions lent themselves to

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To conceive of the artist and the work of art in these terms leads eventually to the notion of the museum as a kind of holy sepulcher. At last year's Houston symposium, Eugenia Parry Janis unwittingly articulated the critical role that this analogy continues to play for many art historians and museum professionals. Responding to a question about the public's response to the "quietness" of the calotypes displayed in the "Paper and Light" exhibition, Janis said, "It's quiet, but people are quiet in museums. I think it's John Berger who took a survey and found the closest thing to being in a museum was to being in church. I mean people come to museums to sort of be quiet and be impressed." But the purpose of Berger's citation (in *Ways of Seeing*) of the earlier findings of Bourdieu and Barbel (in *L'amour d'art,* Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1966) was precisely to point up the mystificatory system of exclusions by which the museum enforces its authority in the cultural domain. According to Bourdieu and Barbel, it is the working-class audience and those least initiated into the language of art discourse who most thoroughly identify the museum with the church. For an analysis of the way that the cultural space of art is mapped and administered by the museum, see Jean-Claude Lebensztejn, "L'espace de l'art," *Critique,* April 1970, pp. 321–343.

30. Diderot, *Salons,* edited by Jean Seznec and Jean Adhémar, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1960, pp. 153–154. This passage came to my attention in reading Albert Boime's *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century.*

31. The ascription of new virtues to *les primitifs* in late eighteenth-century art history can be traced in the passage from Winckelmann—for whom the earliest stage of art served only as a prelude to the "golden age" of full maturity—to Wackenroder. Jammes's and Janis's rhetorical location of the *primitifs* of French photography in a "Golden Age" before the fall reveals the powerful persistence of this romantic trope.

Charles Nègre, Oil Presses at Grasse, *1852.*

the medium. Witness Thiers's 1824 tribute to lithography as the artist's means of escape from the stultifying demands of the finished painting, and specifically as "a means of improvisation which has permitted artists to deliver themselves over to their natural verve."[32]

In *The Art of French Calotype,* Jammes and Janis attempt to describe calotype photography not simply in terms of its visual similarity to the graphic arts of French romanticism, but in terms of the way it exemplifies the larger range of values that animated romantic practice in the arts. In the first place, they

32. Adolphe Thiers, "De la lithographie et de ses progrès," *La Pandore,* April 3, 1824; cited in William McCallister Johnson, *French Lithography; the Restoration Salons 1817–1824,* Kingston, Ontario, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, 1979, p. 47.

Gustave Viaud, Tahiti, Papeete, The Point of Fare Ute, with the Armory, *1859.*

Eugène Cuvelier, Landscape with Farm Tools, *1852.*

suggest, the calotype belongs squarely on the colorist side of the line/color opposition that has traditionally defined and even constituted the field of the French visual arts of this period, and whose emblematic figures are Ingres and Delacroix.[33] More precisely, they place calotype photography within that romantic current of the French graphic arts that, they claim, "expressed emotion through a flood of obscuring shade" (p. 65). Here they contend that the calotype negative, whose fibers tended not to hold fine optical detail, naturally encouraged photographers further to "sacrifice" (by underexposure) whole areas of shadow detail and thereby arrive at a picture structure organized around effect —pictorial coherence attained via the broad interlacing of masses of darks and lights. On the basis of this "descriptive reticence," Jammes and Janis wish to attribute to the calotype the qualities of the sketch. Speaking of calotype production in the language of the graphic arts (they would have positive prints "pulled" from the paper-negative "matrix"), they repeatedly describe the calotypists as "photographic sketchers" whose highest achievements are varieties of the "visionary sketch."[34]

By so framing their argument, Jammes and Janis intend to make a case for calotype as being—like *all* art, in romantic terms—a matter of subjective, idealizing interpretation rather than one of base imitation. The fibrous interference of the paper negative may very well lend a textural unity to the surface of the resulting print, but Jammes and Janis read this as a consciously romantic atmospheric effect which serves to "engulf all things and transport them to the realm of memory" (p. 18). It was LeGray's "romantic imagination," said Janis at Princeton, that led him to invest his forest views with "the melancholy cloak of distant time." Mnemosyne, goddess of memory and mother of the muses, is thus enlisted to escort the calotype into the circle of what Baudelaire called the mnemonic arts, the arts that spring not from mere imitation, but from transformative artistic vision. The strategic value of this connection is hinted at in Jammes's earlier protest, apropos Baudelaire's notorious invective against photography, that "it would be too simple to classify *all* photography as the outlandish abomination he abhorred. Baudelaire never attacked nor despised the

33. For an overview of the stylistic development of the graphic art of romanticism, see Petra ten-Doegschate Chu, "The Evolution of Realist-Naturalist Drawing," in *The Realist Tradition: French Painting and Drawing, 1830–1900,* Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, 1980, pp. 21–38. See also Léon Rosenthal, "La gravure romantique," in *Le romantisme et l'art,* Paris, Henri Laurens, 1928, pp. 229–249.

34. Nancy Keeler, in "The Calotype and Aesthetics in Early Photography," forthcoming in *Paper and Light* from the Art Institute of Chicago, questions the value of the detail vs. diffusion polarity that informs most discussions of early photography.

Gustave LeGray himself, in 1854, took heated exception to the idea that visible grain played any role in his own waxed-paper-negative process: "As for the *grain* reproached in prints from waxed paper . . . it is precisely by the absence of this inconvenience that [the resulting prints] may perhaps be recognized" (LeGray, *Photographie. Traité nouveau des procédés et manipulations sur papier et sur verre,* Paris, Lerebours et Secretan, 1854, p. 198).

works we have brought together. The author of the *Fleurs du Mal* dedicated his famous poem 'Le Voyage' to Maxime du Camp. . . ."[35] In *The Art of French Calotype,* the privileged realm of the calotype becomes that of "private reverie"; a technical apparatus can only be of secondary import, for "in the darkroom as under the camera darkcloth, LeGray depended upon poetic intuition" (p. 37). In light of these considerations (Janis hinted at last year's Houston symposium on early French paper photography), the "individual creative genius" of photographers such as LeGray becomes the most likely point from which to begin to explore and explain calotype photography, and the "romantic ideal" that supposedly unified this "early photographic school."

Whether Jammes and Janis accurately characterize the visual structure of the images they gather under the rubric of calotype is not of immediate concern here. As a comparison of *The Art of French Calotype* with Peter Galassi's *Before Photography* quickly reveals, an astute appropriation and orchestration of photographs from the same period, and often by the same photographers, can lend equal credence to very different critical/historical hypotheses. If, instead, we continue to follow the peculiar cluster of ideas loosely derived by Jammes and Janis from the domain of romantic art theory—the sketch, the realm of memory, private reverie, poetic intuition, imaginative transformation—it may be that another perspective on the calotype will be disclosed. Do these ideas exist in fixed constellation throughout the discourse surrounding romantic art practice? Two kinds of texts—indirectly suggested by our reading of *The Art of French Calotype*—will serve as preliminary markers: the first, Charles Nodier's introduction to the first volume of the *Voyages Pittoresques* (1820); the second, Baudelaire's elaboration of the notion of the mnemonic arts in his *Salons* of the 1840s-'50s.

The more than twenty folio volumes of the *Voyages Pittoresques,* spanning the years 1820–74, trace not only the rise and fall of deluxe lithography in

35. André Jammes, "French Primitive Photography," in *French Primitive Photography,* n.p.
A reading of the poem leads one to suspect that Baudelaire's dedication is a particularly prickly homage. Jammes's daughter, Isabelle Jammes, cites Baudelaire's letter to Du Camp in this regard: "If, for example, you were shocked by my jibes against progress, or, if the Voyager admits to having seen only banality, or finally, no matter what, tell me without embarrassment" (quoted in Isabelle Jammes, *Blanquart-Evrard et les origines de l'édition photographique française,* Geneva and Paris, Libraire Droz, 1981, p. 91).

While references to Baudelaire have unaccountably disappeared from *The Art of French Calotype,* the same disastrous yearning to bring calotype photography into constellation with established cultural monuments is evident. The rural genre photographs of Humbert de Molard, which are suffused with an aristocratic longing for the imagined social concord of the provinces, are brought into unlikely alignment with Courbet's *The Stonebreakers* by way of the proposal that both photographer and painter sought to extract the "poignant essentials" from "country life." Likewise, a snippet from Flaubert's wickedly parodic treatment of Frederic and Rosanette's outing to Fontainebleau in *L'Éducation Sentimentale* is blithely reproduced by Jammes and Janis as evidence of "the contagious delight a clump of sunlit boughs generated in the hearts of mid-nineteenth-century woodland aficionados."

France, but the transformation of particular themes as well: the replacement of the romantic cult of the Middle Ages by that of the peasant and the provinces, or the erosion of visual allegory at the expense of the new material concreteness associated in romantic theory with the symbol. The project arose in the period immediately following the Restoration as a result of Baron Isidore-Severin-Justin Taylor's desire to compile a province-by-province survey of the architectural monuments of the medieval monarchy. Subsidized by the Ministry of the Interior, Taylor was struck by the idea of using as a means of illustration the relatively new medium of lithography, rather than the more expensive process of engraving. The first volume appeared in 1820, and was received by six hundred subscribers, predominantly European nobility, the Parisian upper bourgeoisie, and artists. Devoted to Ancienne Normandie, it featured an extensive text by the romantic *littérateur* Charles Nodier, who in the years just preceding had increasingly urged French writers and poets to turn for inspiration to the literature of France's golden age, the Middle Ages.[36]

In locating the origins of their putative calotype aesthetic, Jammes and Janis draw special attention to the early *Voyages Pittoresques,* and for three reasons. First, the *Voyages Pittoresques* are described as the principal thematic precedent for the 1851 Missions Héliographiques, which sent the photographers Bayard, Baldus, Mestral, Le Secq, and LeGray throughout France to document medieval architecture for the Commission des Monuments Historiques; this Jammes and Janis describe as the moment of emergence of a unified calotype aesthetic as set forth in the critical writings of Francis Wey in *La Lumière.* Second, there is the professed family resemblance between the lithographic and photographic images, emphasizing tonal rather than linear design and a pervasive atmospheric quality. Finally, it is stressed that in each case the primary appeal is to the imagination, via picturesque conventions, rather than to factual documentary portrayal. Presenting the lithographic illustrations as oriented primarily to "imagination's associative powers," Jammes and Janis cite Nodier's introductory text: "This is not a journey of discoveries but of impressions. . . . We are not treading in the footsteps of history. We are only summoning history to conspire with our emotions."[37]

36. In Nodier's writings can be traced a profoundly conservative strain of romantic thought; see Anne-Marie Roux, "Nodier et l'age d'or," *Littérature,* no. 25 (February 1977), 100–113. His relocation, after 1830, of the golden age from the Middle Ages to the contemporary realms of the province, the peasant, the child, and the poet figured in a much broader political and intellectual debate; here his espousal of the romantic notion of a picturesque poetic language *avant la lettre* combined with a refusal of the bourgeois evolution of modern France. "We implore you on our knees! Leave us our ignorant proletarians, our unlettered people, our *black* provinces. Leave us this last guarantee against the invasion of perfectibility. . . ."

37. Charles Nodier, introduction to Baron J. Taylor, *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France,* Paris, J. Didot, Paine, vol. 1, *Ancienne Normandie* (1820), quoted in *The Art of French Calotype,* p. 49.

Having served its appointed purpose, Jammes and Janis drop this text of Nodier's just before he reveals precisely the kind of associative powers he has in mind. At this point Nodier makes clear the sort of transaction he envisions taking place between the reader, the text, and the lithographic illustrations of the *Voyages Pittoresques.* In fact, he details a characteristically romantic reception aesthetic—one that connects the lithograph-as-sketch with the modes of romantic memory. To see if this throws a different light on the relation of the calotype to romantic practice, let us take up Nodier's text where Jammes and Janis leave off.

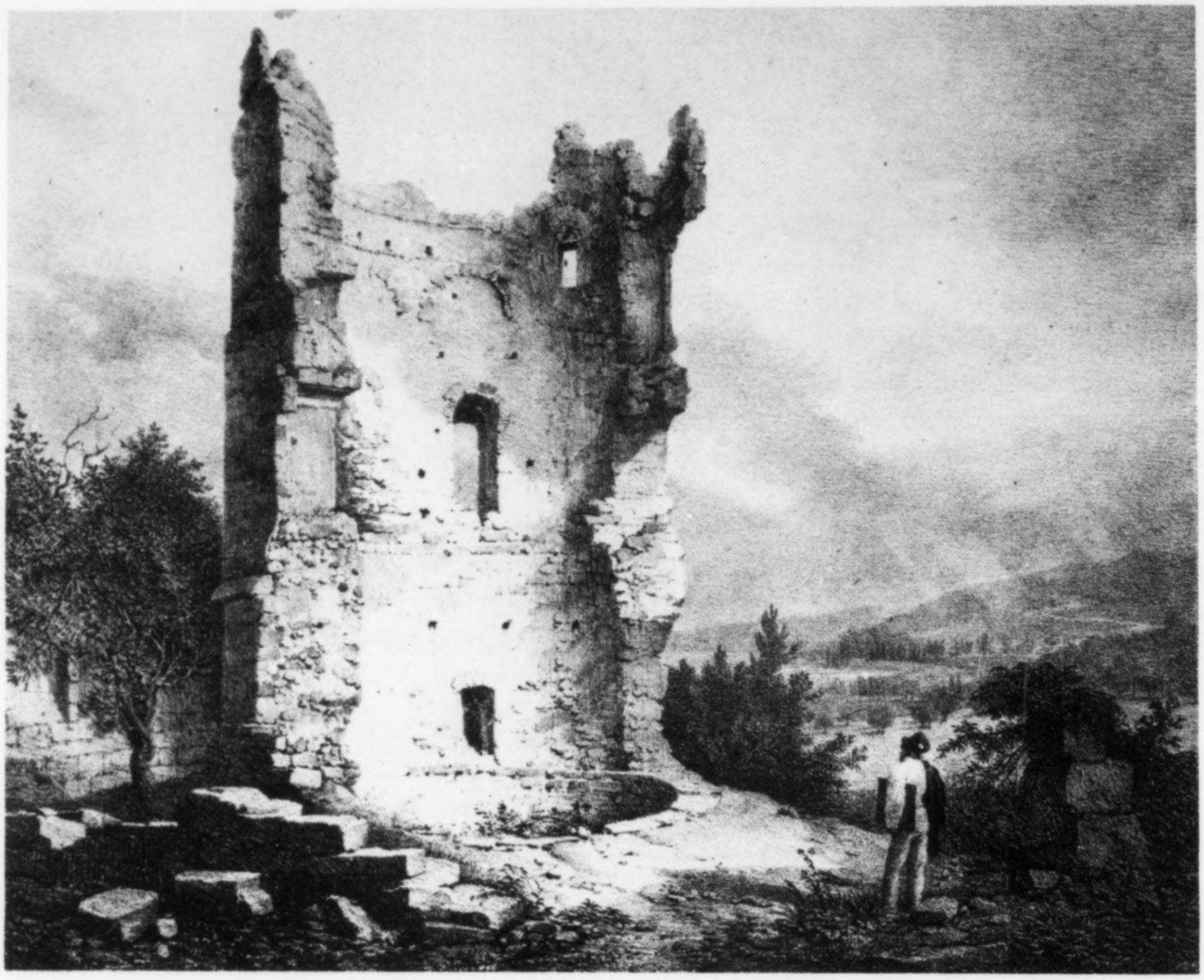
While confirming that the lithographs are to be considered spurs to the imagination rather than factual documents, Nodier takes pains to indicate the particular kind of imagination that will be required to comprehend them. Speaking in his opening lines of these fallen monuments of the feudal monarchy, he says,

> These ruins reveal ruins yet more vast, and more terrifying to thought, those of the institutions which supported the monarchy, and whose fall was the inevitable signal for its fall. It is not only the catastrophes of time that are written on the abandoned walls, but even more those of history.[38]

It is a quasi-allegorical imagination, then, that is called upon here, one that can read crumbling castle walls not simply as the ruins of time, but as *exempla* already figured in a larger, and properly political, thematic. Nodier warns that a few of the sites depicted may at first seem dull or monotonous, may "say nothing to the soul of the spectator."[39] But allegory will breathe life into them: "What becomes of this sensation," he asks, "if you learn that this was the battlefield of your favorite hero?"[40] From this standpoint Nodier's entire text seems generated by the need to provide a litany of historical anecdotes, folk legends, and literary citations that can set this particular imaginative process in motion. "The traveler will not stop at the port of Fécamp," Nodier advises, "without remembering, at the sight of the precipitous cliff which overlooks it, the celebrated exploit of the enterprising Bois Roze."[41] Thus are specific associative directions furnished for proto-touristic gentlemanly wanderers.

The ideal reader of the *Voyages Pittoresques,* then, regards the lithographic illustrations not primarily as signs of an artist's personal, imaginative intervention, but as the visual component of the mode of memory that I wish to call *commemorative.* In this I rely upon Eugene Vance's notion of commemoration as "any gesture, ritualized or not, whose end is to recover, in the name of a collectivity, some being or event either anterior in time or outside of time in order to

38. Nodier, introduction to *Voyages Pittoresques (Ancienne Normandie),* p. 1.
39. *Ibid.,* p. 9.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.,* p. 111.



Ciceri, Ruins of the sur-Epte Chateau, *from* Voyages Pittoresques, *1823.*

fecundate, animate, or make meaningful a moment in the present."[42] And, as Vance specifies, by so privileging some moment or principle of origin, commemoration inevitably calls up the simultaneous perception of the present as deficient or fallen. Now it is to just such a shared sense of belatedness on the part of his audience that Nodier appeals when he implicitly contrasts "the poetic customs and the arts of our ancestors"[43] to "our false sciences and our useless perfectibility."[44] A breach in history has been opened—which to a royalist like Nodier could only be the Revolution—such that continuity with the supposed social concord of precapitalist feudalism can be restored only through an act of imagination.

This sense of romantic belatedness is presented in the lithographic images in two ways. Some of the illustrations actively reimagine the ruined castles as they might have appeared in medieval times, peopled with human figures in

42. See Eugene Vance, "Roland and the Poetics of Memory," in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism,* Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1979, pp. 374–403.
43. Nodier, p. 4.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

E. Fragonard, Ruins of the Palace of the White Queen, *from* Voyages Pittoresques, *1824.*

period costume. More interestingly, those images set in the present moment typically include the solitary figure of the artist himself, sitting or standing with a large sketchbook, contemplating the ruined site or sketching the scene before him. What does this signify to the reader/viewer? The self-representation of the artist not only fulfills the formal mission of indicating human scale; more importantly, it inscribes within the image the copresence of artist and site, and of commemorative reverie and the resulting image.[45]

It is precisely because the sketchlike technique of lithography is presumed to guarantee this bond of copresence of immediate perception and commemoration that Nodier praises the medium. Admitting that as yet lithography "has not obtained the unanimous approval of men of taste," he nevertheless insists that its status as sketch provides important advantages over the more deliberate technique of engraving: "Freer, more original than the burin, the bold pencil of the lithographer seems to have been invented to fix the free, original, and rapid

45. On the romantic intertwining of memory and representation, see especially Eugenio Donato, "The Ruins of Memory: Archeological Fragments and Textual Artifacts," *MLN,* vol. 93, no. 4 (May 1978), 575–596.

inspirations of the traveler who is aware of his sensations."[46] The romantic reader/viewer's return, via memory, to an undefiled moment of origin is thus doubly assured. The ruined monuments are recollected as fragments that can be used to construct a representation of a past plenitude. And the lithographic image itself is said to issue spontaneously from the artist's commemorative reverie in the present of representation.

But this attempt to stabilize the system of romantic memory is undermined when we note the profusion and accuracy of architectural detail in the lithographs of the *Voyages Pittoresques,* and realize that Nodier has elided a crucial point. The lithographs were not made on the spot, but assembled in Paris at Engelmann's lithographic printing establishment from a number of detailed drawings. According to Adhémar, the lithographer might not even be the original *dessinateur,* but a professional versed in the conventions of the picturesque.[47] We are faced, then, with a memory of a memory, a representation of a representation—a pastiche. Nodier's claim that the *Voyages Pittoresques* lithographs somehow fix the artist's genial inspiration serves less to characterize the images than to tell us how to read them: in terms of the rhetorical category of the sketch already established by romantic art theory.

When we turn to Baudelaire's art criticism of the 1840s and '50s—the period that witnesses the arrival of the calotype in France—we find the values associated with the aesthetic of the sketch more deliberately woven together with a particular kind of memory. The type of memory that I earlier called commemorative—the conservative nostalgia for an imagined plenitude located in past time—gives way to a more fully aestheticized notion of a mnemonic art. A sense of the role that Baudelaire would have memory play can be detected in his allusion to the line/color dispute as "the duel between the will to see everything, to forget nothing, and the faculty of memory that has acquired the habit of quickly absorbing the general color and the silhouette, the arabesque of the contour."[48] More is at issue, however, than the simple opposition of detail and effect, understood as a local reoccurrence of the old imitation/fine-art opposition. In order to situate calotype photography within the shifting field of late romantic art practice, we must first recover from Baudelaire's text the various roles he assigns to memory.

To begin to disengage Baudelaire's "veritable memoire," we can look to his approving citation of Hoffman's dictum that "true memory, considered

46. Nodier, p. 10.
47. Jean Adhémar, "Les lithographies de paysage en France à l'époque romantique," Paris Archives de l'art français, vol. XIX (1937), p. 209. In Adhémar's preface to *French Lithography: The Restoration Salons 1817–1824,* he notes that too often the specialized division of labor in the lithographic process of the period has been overlooked "due to the action of collectors and merchants in emphasizing the artist."
48. Charles Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life," in P. G. Konody, *The Painter of Victorian Life,* ed. C. Geoffrey Holme, London, The Studio, 1930, p. 84.

from a philosophical point of view, consists, I think, in nothing else but a very lively and easily-roused imagination."[49] This is transfigurative memory, we learn: both analytic and synthetic, decomposing the sensations provided by the world and recomposing them in a movement toward the aesthetic ideal. In this special sense memory is the key to art, for according to Baudelaire "memory is the great criterion of art; art is a kind of mnemotechny of the beautiful. Now exact imitation spoils a memory."[50]

Imitation again—but why is exact imitation the nemesis of the ideal? Because the artist's mnemonic glimpse of the ideal is said to be so fleeting. At this point the elliptical, shorthand technique associated with the sketch takes on a central importance. Rapidity of execution is required "lest anything be lost of the extraordinary impression which accompanied its conception."[51] Noting approvingly that the lithographic artist Constantine Guys works primarily from memory and not from nature, Baudelaire analyzes the artist's productive process. First comes "an effort of memory that evokes and calls to life"; then, rapidly, "a fire, an intoxication of the pencil, that amounts almost to a frenzy," sparked by "the fear of not being fast enough, of allowing the phantom to escape before the synthesis has been extracted from it and seized."[52] In this economy of artistic creation, the hand becomes the servant of this generative memory: "it is important that the hand should encounter the least possible number of obstacles when it gets down to business, and that it should accomplish the divine orders of the brain with alacrity; otherwise the ideal will escape."[53]

It is just this necessarily hasty seizure of the ideal that justifies the visual structure of the resulting image. For Baudelaire, the importance of "ceaselessly sacrificing detail to whole" serves ultimately to guard against the artist's vitiating "the vitality of his thought by the drudgery of a neater and more calligraphic execution."[54] Hence the imperative force in his declaration that "as art is nothing but an abstraction and a sacrifice of detail to the whole, it is important to concern oneself above all with the *masses.*"[55] For the sophisticated, sympathetic viewer, these shorthand notations should prove immediately legible, and produce an analogical mnemonic movement; for this method "which issues above all from the memory, speaks above all to the memory. The effect produced upon the spectator's soul is analogous to the artist's means."[56]

Because of this centrality of transformative memory to what we might call

49. Baudelaire, "Salon of 1848," in *Art in Paris 1845–1862; Salons and Other Exhibitions,* trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne, London, Phaidon Press, 1965, p. 94.
50. *Ibid.,* p. 80.
51. Baudelaire, "Salon of 1859," in *Art in Paris,* p. 160.
52. Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life," p. 87.
53. Baudelaire, "Salon of 1846," p. 58.
54. *Ibid.,* p. 59.
55. *Ibid.,* p. 49.
56. *Ibid.,* p. 59.

a romantic aesthetic of production and reception, Baudelaire in 1859 castigates those landscape painters whom he suspects of substituting mechanical means (photography?) for the properly mnemonic. "Yes, imagination certainly avoids landscape! . . . Perhaps the artists who cultivate this genre are far too mistrustful of their memory, and adopt a method of immediate copying because it perfectly suits their laziness of mind."[57] Not simply a taste for greater or lesser detail (which is how the same question is more routinely handled two years earlier by the critic Gustave Planche),[58] but an entire generative aesthetic is at stake here.

Although certain of the calotype photographers of the 1850s demonstrated their ability to mimic the visual structure of sacrifice and effect—through the dispersal of detail by the paper negative, and by massing shadow areas via short exposures—in comparison with the intricate interweaving of memory and visual structure just described, the calotype remained an arbitrary process. As Jammes and Janis state, "a paper negative in the camera intrinsically produced picturesqueness"; it thus enjoyed no necessarily privileged relation to what Baudelaire called "the divine orders of the brain." Now perhaps we can begin to understand why Baudelaire so willingly conceded to photography that realm of memory that we have called commemorative. He easily granted that photography might "rescue from oblivion those tumbling ruins, those books, prints and manuscripts which time is devouring, precious things whose form is dissolving and which demand a place in the archives of our memory." But he feared that if photography were allowed to "encroach upon the domain of the impalpable and the imaginary . . . then misfortune would be ours."[59]

It may be objected that I have carried out an impartial and highly selective rhetorical analysis that fails to do justice to the complexity of the interchange between photography and the other graphic arts. But keeping in mind the distinctions already suggested, let us finally turn to a writer who can be accused of no such disability, the critic upon whom Jammes and Janis most reverently rely—Francis Wey. After publishing a very interesting and very effusive series of critical essays in 1851 in the photographic journal *La Lumière,* Wey in 1853 summed up his thoughts on the phenomenon of photography for the romantic periodical *Le Musée des Familles.*[60] Discussing the various photographic processes that had been advanced, he confirms that "we do not hesitate to give preference, from the aesthetic point of view, to paper-negative photography." Echoing the familiar romantic argument, he declares that "truth in art is never a matter of a pitiless, unintelligent trace of nature, but of a spiritual interpretation." In much

57. Baudelaire, "Salon of 1859," p. 199.
58. Gustave Planche, "Le Paysage et les paysagistes," in *Revue des Deux Mondes,* June 15, 1857; see especially pp. 762–767.
59. Baudelaire, "Salon of 1859," p. 154. Translation modified by the author.
60. Francis Wey, "Comment le soleil est devenu peintre," *Le Musée des Familles,* July 1853, pp. 289–300.

the same language as that used by Baudelaire, Wey specifies that "truth in the arts is ideal and springs from a subtle interpretation." But after then turning to ponder the implications of photography's increasing impingement upon all fields of human knowledge, Wey, in his concluding remarks, circles back to the question of photographic art. He is finally ready to specify the kind of memory upon which it must depend:

> Despite prodigious efforts on the part of certain artists to introduce into paper-negative photography an idealizing interpretation that borders most closely on art, they have succeeded in creating this illusion only by reproducing those models that human intelligence has already enlivened and rendered poetic.
>
> Statues, engravings, drawings by the masters, rocks sculpted by the hand of the Creator, which imprinted them with a physiognomy in the tones of death, arid deserts, solitudes created by vanished races, ruins of the ages, monuments of antiquity or of gothic centuries: they alone have been reproduced in all the profundity of their expression, with a fullness of the totality and a perfection of detail that defies engraving. This debris of the past, these ruins, these edifices, all have received from the art that bequeathed them to us that ideal power which photography has necessarily retraced.[61]

Our fragmentation of the romantic discourse of memory indicates an exit from the enclosed world of "private meditation" and "poetic intuition"; we are led out again into the world. That Wey can, without embarrassment, join in an uninterrupted series the reproduction of gothic ruins, classical monuments, prints, and drawings suggests an "ordering of facts" to whose organizing principle Jammes's and Janis's romantic critical perspective offers no access. What would result from a consideration of the art of the calotype not as a vehicle for personalized meditation, but as a retracing of already-constituted cultural signs? Perhaps then we could move outside the preordained oppositions of line/color, detail/effect, calotype/daguerreotype, imitation/fine art. Following Wey's hint, we can see that these pictures are (in a more recent phrasing) "signs representing signs, integers in implicit chains of signification that come to rest only in major systems of social meaning."[62] From this point we might begin to reassess photography as a technological mode of social commemoration, an economy of images circulating and exchanging the signs of culturally sanctioned "ideal power."

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61. *Ibid.*, pp. 299–300.
62. Alan Trachtenberg, "Walker Evans's *Message from the Interior:* A Reading," *October,* no. 11 (Winter 1979), 12.

Whether art history of the kind evident in *The Art of French Calotype,* with its investment in a "golden age" and its commitment to an order of masters and masterworks, has much to say on this score is open to considerable doubt. During the last two decades a radical reorientation of cultural studies has followed from the gradual recognition that one never simply "rediscovers" an already-constituted cultural past; rather, structures of intelligibility and value are imposed upon a confused, contradictory, and frequently incomplete mosaic of historical data. The current inescapability of theory springs in part from a heightened awareness of the inevitable shaping power of the historian's general presuppositions and specific research methods. This systematic self-reflexiveness has both enriched and rendered immensely more problematic the practice of cultural scholarship. Especially in historical and literary studies, profound changes have been wrought by the realization that the same terrain may be differentially "scanned" by means of analytic and critical techniques drawn from a number of specialized disciplines—linguistics, sociology, semiotics, rhetorical analysis, and psychoanalysis, to name but a few. The continued imperviousness of mainstream art history to these developments accounts in no small way for its contemporary reputation as, in Norman Bryson's phrase, the "leisure sector of intellectual life."[63]

The celebration of photography's new prestige within the art market, the art museum, and the university art-history curriculum has until recently postponed a full-scale critique of the emerging discipline that claims photography as its special province. But it increasingly appears that a truly critical investigation of photography's past may have little in common with the self-limiting strategies of aestheticization and domestication that informed all but a few of the presentations at the Princeton symposium. Other voices, unrepresented at Princeton, have begun to suggest ways to expand, not restrict the scope of historical reference in photographic studies; to interrogate the structure of photography's historical archive (its rules of formation, its conditions of production, its systems of exclusion); and to multiply, not reduce, the connections between photography and other areas of cultural study.[64]

63. Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze,* New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1983, p. xi.

64. The most provocative of recent critical/historical/theoretical approaches to photography include the essays published in Victor Burgin, ed., *Thinking Photography,* London and Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, 1982; Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention de l'hystérie: Charcot et l'iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière,* Paris, Macula, 1982; Rosalind Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," *October,* no. 19 (Winter 1981), 3–34; Eric de Kuypre's and Emile Poppe's analysis of the position of the spectator vis-à-vis the diorama and the panorama in "Voir et regarder," *Communications,* no. 34 (1981), 85–96; André Rouille, *L'empire de la photographie; photographie et pouvoir bourgeois 1839–1870,* Paris, Le Sycomore, 1982; Allan Sekula's previously cited essay in *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures;* and Noël Burch's consideration of the French physiologist/photographer E. J. Marey in relation to early cinema in "Charles Baudelaire vs. Dr. Frankenstein," *Afterimage* (Great Britain), nos. 8–9 (Spring 1981), 4–21.

Le Père Noël

STEPHEN HEATH

The Winter *October* reached me in April this year and turned out to be a special issue on "Film Books," a further chapter in the journal's investigation into "the present state of theorization of the cinema."[1] An interesting topic, indisputably right for *October,* even in April, and especially so when we can be assured from the outset of the health of that present state, called upon to recognize the sheer force of the current theoretical work: "the immediate and incontrovertible effect of its production has been the manner in which the enterprise of the film-critical establishment of this country has been rendered irremediably archaic."[2] Turn the page and there indeed, immediately and incontrovertibly, is the Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy at Columbia writing on the Walter M. Cabot Professor of Aesthetics and General Theory of Value at Harvard—"loved the book, loved the author."[3] The irremediabilization of the archaicity of an establishment has probably never been done with quite so much *class,* and we ought not, I suppose, want to cavil at that. Turn some more pages though and we have Noël Carroll with an "Address to the Heathen" (get it?), long, very long, seventy pages, supposedly about *Questions of Cinema*—"loathed the book, loathed the author." Which only leaves the back cover, with a nice still from *Bringing Up Baby,* Hepburn, Grant, and snarling leopard, no doubt allegorical, but I haven't worked it out yet: starting a fang club? Anyway, end of *October,* and my *Filmgoer's Companion* says *Bringing Up Baby* is full of "upper-bracket people . . . in pursuit of an escaped pet leopard, a dog and a dinosaur bone."[4]

"The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought."[5] Well, the Lord this time round moves from a benignant paternalism that obliges him

1. Annette Michelson, opening statement, *October,* no. 23 (Winter 1982), 3.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Arthur C. Danto, "Philosophy and/as Film and/as if Philosophy," *October,* no. 23, 14.
4. Leslie Halliwell, *The Filmgoer's Companion,* St. Albans, Paladin, 1972, p. 146. As we know, illustration in *October* is "limited and judicious," Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe, Rosalind Krauss, A. Michelson, *"October,"* publicity-subscription sheet, 1976.
5. *Psalms,* 33.10 (*Authorized Version*).

gently to "chide" me (p. 95, n. 7)[6] to a more characteristic moral wrath that incites him, righteous and foaming, to expose my "shocking features" (p. 130). The combat waged is of epic proportions: not just the word of the Lord versus the ignorance of the heathen but also—momentarily endowing the latter with reason for the necessity of the occasion—Aristotle versus Plato (p. 151). Truth is here so weighty that it demands and receives the appropriate forms of amplification, self-amplification: "Mitry, Metz, and myself" (p. 125), writes Carroll, doing no more than to grant himself his proper importance as he chides me for the shocking feature of my not having read in 1975 an unspecified article by him apparently published some years later. I stand—how could I not?—duly exposed, lost in my heathen mumblings, jumbling along with the leopard, the dog, and the odd dinosaur bone, but now, at last, at least, dimly aware of the errors of my ways, confusedly converted to the upper-bracket, "Our Father. . . ."

Perhaps, however, heathenism might be allowed a final gasp, a plea for believing in no gods, not even Carroll's. Indeed, reading his "Address" it is hard to know what one is supposed to end up with, where one is supposed to be being taken. For a ride, I am tempted to say, since in all the seventy pages nothing emerges that could conceivably teach anyone anything with respect to that field in which *October* is situated, namely the conjoining of "revolutionary practice, theoretical inquiry, and artistic innovation."[7] Carroll is solely and determinedly negative: with true missionary zeal, he has a truth with which he is going to put an end, for once and for all, to wild talk of . . . well, of just about everything that has been the matter of that theoretical production that is celebrated for its radical fruitfulness at the start of this special issue, not to mention of much of the avant-garde film work that *October* has been involved in supporting. Despite the "Mitry, Metz, and myself" flourish, Metz's writings themselves, for example, equally fall before the word of Carroll, bound up as they are with the imaginary and enunciation and all the other horrors, empty as they are of the Carroll-preferred "event-recognition capacity in the organism . . . able to detect given event-specific invariants" (p. 133). What we are offered, in fact, is a prolonged act of closure (hopefully) on '70s film theory in the interests of '80s law and order, the pull back into academic safety and the "coordinated research program" (p. 157). Enough of the "exorbitant," time to be good—"more moderate pragmatic, logical, and epistemological" (p. 162).

In all this, *Questions of Cinema* is the proverbial red rag. Carroll gets very excitable where recent film theory is concerned; my book happens to be in the field with the required redness, so he charges. As with bulls and rags, the aim is

6. Page references in parentheses in the text are to Noël Carroll, "Address to the Heathen," *October,* no. 23, pp. 89–163; page references in parentheses in the text preceded by *QC* are to Stephen Heath, *Questions of Cinema,* London, Macmillan, and Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1981.

7. Gilbert-Rolfe, Krauss, Michelson, *"October."*

not really to focus with any precision on the particular object, simply to charge —snort, pant, trample; result, a lot of hot air, some random damage, and a great deal of self-satisfaction. *Questions of Cinema* was meant as a serious title: *questions,* a number of issues raised across a number of articles written across a number of years with changes and shifts and reconsiderations. It would be too much to expect Carroll to make any acknowledgment of this in a seventy-page "review essay"[8] (why, for example, should he bother even to mention the later articles written specifically for the book?), but he could at least have shown us how to move forward on the issues, given us a piece with some use-value. But then, bulls and rags again, the whole point is the attack; the details are irrelevant, let alone advancing what the opening statement calls "the formulation and exploration of those questions . . . which are among the central concerns of a truly contemporary discourse on the cinema."[9]

Which is to say that this "Address" is extensively unreliable; there are so many confusions, so many misrepresentations, that it is hard to know where to begin to deal with them (one of the effects of the length of the piece and its repetitious rehearsing of the same irrelevancies over and over again is to form a kind of solid block of error). To follow through every one of Carroll's twists would be tedious in the extreme, so I shall limit myself to: (1) demonstration of a few examples of the confusions and misrepresentations that characterize the "Address"; (2) discussion of one or two areas to which Carroll devotes major sections of his piece; (3) more general remarks as to some of the implications of all this with regard to "the present state of theorization of the cinema"; (1) and (2) should suffice to indicate the "quality" of Carroll's "points" and "arguments" and the nature of the attack overall. I doubt nevertheless whether, even limiting myself in this way, I shall be able entirely to avoid tedium (and the seventy pages of solid blockishness will force me in turn into a certain length); all I can do is try. It is hard, too, to know if it is even worth dealing with an onslaught of this kind. I said I would originally, before seeing the piece (in a conversation with Annette Michelson), when I thought it would be productive (I understood that from A.M.), though there were a few rumors to the contrary (the gossip that agitates a few people in "cinema studies" and in relation to which onslaughts are set up and written). Now, though the productive occasion has more or less gone (it may still be possible to learn something), not to reply might leave the piece with some credit, but, equally, to reply is to be placed in a stupid position of defense and attack; "stupid" because of the limitations that position involves, because of the whole scenario of "settling accounts," because of the pathetic male jockeying with which, by the force of Carroll's circum-

8. "This issue . . . entirely devoted to review essays of recent publications," Michelson, opening statement, p. 3.
9. *Ibid.*

stances, I am going to be complicit. *Questions of Cinema* was not written to become "a favorite of graduate film students" (p. 153); that is Carroll's world and desire, not mine. The articles that it brings together, along with a number it does not (most of those written for *Screen,* for example), were written in the '70s in the context of the development of a critical and theoretical account of cinema and film able to engage in cultural and political issues. That that development and, within it, those articles have their errors and weaknesses, limitations, and contradictions I do not for one moment doubt; indeed I have written critically in relation to it and them. But I also think that the development was important and productive; I agree with that emphasis of the special issue's opening statement, or, more precisely, with Chuck Kleinhans when he talks of "portions" of that development as moving "in a correct direction and [being] essential to theoretical development," but of there also being real inadequacies that need attention and that will involve critical reassessment of certain concepts and the elaboration of new ones.[10] *Questions of Cinema* is one record of a part of '70s film and cultural theory, for use, discussion, criticism, whatever. My purpose here in the first instance is merely to bring it back to that from Carroll's "Address to the Heathen," a task not of my choosing.

*

For the purposes of "Address to the Heathen," Carroll resorts to the usual strategies of such attacks: amalgamation, falsification, construction of straw positions against which to argue, skillful deployment of ignorance, and so on. The examples that follow are given headings from the "Address" itself; apart from their intrinsic appropriateness, these will have the advantage of allowing me to recall directly a little more of the onslaught, to acknowledge its high level of self-reference, and so to let Carroll select his own terms. The order of the examples has no particular logic, is simply that of a plunge straight into the thick of the "Address," ranging across different topics treated by Carroll, some of which will be taken up in more detail later.

i. *"riven with errors" (p. 105)*

Discussing the idea of subject construction, Carroll writes: "it is believed that there is no subject, unified or otherwise, because the self is always the production of the Other" (p. 100). The impersonal form—"it is believed"—leaves it typically unclear as to whether or not I am supposed to hold this belief. Presumably I am, as Carroll is purportedly writing about *Questions of Cinema;* but as the latter is very much concerned with the subject, it seems odd to say that I believe that there is no such thing, "unified or otherwise." Perhaps Carroll holds the unlikely view that theoretical discussion of something means that one does

10. Chuck Kleinhans, "Subtexts and Audiences," paper given at the 1982 film conference in Athens, Ohio; typescript, p. 2.

not believe in its existence (discussion of *x* involves disbelief in the existence of *x;* or, Marx didn't believe in the existence of capitalist societies)? Or perhaps it is the equally unlikely view that emphasis on something as constructed is equivalent to denial of its existence (analysis of the construction of *x* involves disbelief in the existence of *x;* or, ditto with Marx and capitalist societies)? It may be that I am missing something important in the switch from "subject" to "self," a concept not used at all in *Questions of Cinema,* nor in Althusser (the "it is believed . . ." is offered "in the context of the Althusserian position" p. 100), nor in Lacan (Lacanian psychoanalysis is identified as the key discipline that "studies subject construction" p. 90). Lacan does not believe that there is no subject and, *a fortiori,* it makes no sense to say that he could believe such a thing "because the self is always the production of the Other." What is constantly stressed in Lacan's work is "the constitution *of the subject* in the field of the Other": "the subject depends on the signifier and . . . the signifier is first of all in the field of the Other."[11] This stress—together with its famous accompanying formulae, "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other," "man's desire is the desire of the Other"—is so central in Lacan that it is truly difficult to credit that Carroll could really think he is talking about what he seems to be saying he is talking about (perhaps "subject" and "self" are "associatively intersubstitutable" p. 156). If one wanted at all costs to find a position for "the self" in Lacan, it could only be in relation to the ego as site of the imaginary identifications of the subject, but then Lacan, like Freud, precisely does not work with a pretheoretical notion suggesting a simple inner unity of person and personality; the whole of his work, like Freud's, is involved in an analytic account of subjectivity as process and interaction of instances: the subject is not "the self," nor is it the ego, nor is the ego to be run into "the self," which is broken down, analyzed out by Lacan, by Freud, not part of their psychoanalytic problematic.[12] It doesn't help much either if we ditch the idea that Carroll is talking about Lacan and hope that he is talking about Althusser as distinct from the former, since, apart from the fact that the concept of "the self" is not present in the relevant texts,[13] the most striking thing about Althusser's work in this area is the way in which it avoids any theory of the constitution of the subject by simply assuming "the individual" as given and carrying "the subject" over as the effect of ideological interpellation

11. Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire livre XI: les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse,* Paris, Seuil, 1973, pp. 189, 186; trans. Alan Sheridan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis,* London, Hogarth Press, 1977, pp. 208, 205; my italics in first quotation. For the Lacanian formulae subsequently mentioned, see, e.g., *ibid.,* pp. 119, 213; trans., pp. 131, 235–236.

12. A brief summary of the implications of reference to "the self" in relation to psychoanalysis can be found in Guy Rosolato, "Recension du corps," *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse,* no. 3 (1971), 5–28.

13. The key text is Louis Althusser, "Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État (notes pour une recherche)," *La Pensée,* no. 151 (June 1970), 3–38; trans. Ben Brewster, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* London, New Left Books, 1971, pp. 121–173.

alone. I have criticized this Althusserian collapsing of the subject into the ideological, just as I have criticized the Lacanian abstraction of the subject from the social (and in *Questions of Cinema,* too, e.g., *QC,* pp. 101–107). Carroll's "it is believed . . ." is merely the mask for confusion and error; either he is struggling to make the criticisms I have already made or he is attempting imprecise versions of Lacan and Althusser, conflated or not from paragraph to paragraph, with the idea that these will include *Questions of Cinema* in their wake—probably a mixture of the two.

ii. *"no argument in the vicinity" (p. 153)*

My account of a particular narrative system of cinema in terms of a production of coherence is said by Carroll to be different from the account of coherence given in "classical aesthetic theories" and is thus, apparently, identified as failing:

> Yet, in the tradition that speaks of unity and coherence in art, these aesthetic unities and coherences are understood by the concept of unity-and-diversity. That is, Western tradition sees artworks as producing not a unity or coherence that turns the work into a homogeneity, but one in which unity is seen in tandem with heterogeneity, variety, and diversity. That is, this tradition is quite clear that artworks are in some sense heterogeneous. Spectators find pleasure in the tension between unity and *diversity*. The tension, and hence pleasure, is destroyed, in fact, if the work is viewed as homogeneous (p. 134).

I thought that I had spent some time in *Questions of Cinema* insisting on pleasure as lying in the balance and play between—the intandemness of—unity and diversity, and indeed I need not document that here since Carroll himself, a couple of pages later, forgetfully or rememberingly (according to point of view), comments: "Heath does not claim that every detail presented in a plot does, in fact, play into this transformation-substitution nexus, but only that a classically narrated plot gives the impression (illusion) of this sort of homogeneity, and that pleasure in narratives is grounded in the tension between equilibrium and disequilibrium (homogeneity and heterogeneity) in which homogeneity ultimately wins out" (p. 137). On Carroll's own authority then, I *do* think that pleasure in the cinema I was talking about is bound up with unity-diversity tension and, like "Western tradition," I *am* "quite clear that" the films of this cinema "are in some sense heterogeneous." What that sense is I try to specify in, for example, to take an initial formulation, "Film Performance" (*QC,* pp. 113–130).

The "in some sense heterogeneous" in Carroll's statement is no more than a sleight-of-hand tactic, since, if it were given any precision with respect to the

invoked "tradition," there would be no position left for the argument against the contrary position which I am credited with holding in the face of that "tradition" (and then described anyway as not holding; later, it might be added, I am also described as holding a "view of textual infinity and flux," p. 141, which doesn't sound altogether like simple unity and homogeneity). "Western tradition sees artworks as producing not a unity or coherence that turns the work into a homogeneity, but one in which unity is seen in tandem with heterogeneity, variety, and diversity." Carroll, who loves accusing me of "word play," himself offers no justification for "variety" and "diversity" as being synonymous with "heterogeneity"; if they are not, then all that is being said about "Western tradition" is that it sees "artworks" as producing "a unity" that is "in some sense heterogeneous" inasmuch—this is the "sense"—as it contains a variety of diverse elements to which, exactly, a unity is given in the work; and that unity can in "Western tradition" be very strongly conceived indeed, as for instance in romantic and postromantic notions of "organicism," the binding and fusing powers of the creative imagination, and so on: "Multëity in Unity."[14] The difference in *Questions of Cinema* from "the tradition that speaks of unity and coherence in art" is the effectively much greater stress on heterogeneity in the former, on the complex process of the film's work over a range of diverse materials and the difficulty of holding to fictions of unity. Carroll may not like this but he might at least try to describe it correctly instead of bringing in "Western tradition" to set up what is, in the terms he provides, a false opposition.

But then suppose Carroll had managed to describe what I say and differentiate it from "Western tradition" with some degree of accuracy. What would be the relevance of such a procedure? The introduction of "Western tradition" allows Carroll one of the all-knowing footnotes to which he aspires, references to Hutcheson,[15] Kant, and Croce; but just why some departure of mine from its majority opinion would be an automatic failing is not explained (Marx in *Capital* departs importantly from Adam Smith, Ricardo, and the tradition of

14. S. T. Coleridge, "On the Principles of Genial Criticism" (1814), in *Biographia Literaria,* ed. J. Shawcross, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1979, vol. II, p. 232. The secondary imagination, the creative faculty of poetry and art, ever "struggles to idealize and to unify," *Biographia Literaria* (1817), *ibid.,* vol. I, p. 202; thus Shakespeare's works give a whole "by the balance, counteraction, inter-modifications, and final harmony of differents," "Lectures of 1818," in *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism,* ed. T. M. Raysor, London, Constable, 1936, p. 190. A work of art is "rich in proportion to the variety of parts which it holds in unity," "On Poesy or Art" (1818), in *Biographia Literaria,* vol. II, p. 255.

15. Francis Hutcheson (1694–1746), Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, author of *An Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (1725). Knowledge in the "Address" is sometimes given somewhat exclusively: a name, a title (simply and unhelpfully that of the first of the two "treatises" of which the *Inquiry* is composed), no date, no development, just the assurance of an elegantly offhand gesture from the history of philosophy (not that this assurance should be accepted as meaning that Hutcheson's actual stress on the foundation of Beauty as "Uniformity amidst Variety" has anything to do with the heterogeneity that Carroll seems by his reference to be saying it has).

political economy, but I can't see that saying that points to some weakness, though Marx's departure certainly had some upsetting effects for the sitting tenants of the existing order). Carroll furthermore seems to have no doubts that the correct way to talk about the films of the narrative system of cinema is to talk about "artworks" and that spectators of these films relate to them immediately and inevitably within the tradition of relation to works of art. I shall come back later to this unargued and unlikely assumption which is crucial to whatever position Carroll has. For the moment it is sufficient to say that *Questions of Cinema* is not at all about "film as art" (Carroll finds this upsetting, presumably because "film as art" is part of the ideology of his conception of film in connection with his professional status—hence his rage at current film theory) and that I nowhere proceed on the assumption that the relations of spectators to films in the specific and historically dominant narrative system of cinema are best approached through the "Western tradition" of aesthetic theory. Carroll thinks the reverse, but his "Address" merely uses that assumption, giving no argument for the primacy or even relevance of that approach, let alone—to use one of his favorite turns of mind—any scientific demonstration of its validity.

iii. *"hallucinations" (p. 120)*

"Arguments" and "positions" are discovered by Carroll with dogged ingenuity. Thus we hear of "the argument that a coherent narrative film is not really a unity unless it reveals that it is a production—a fictional world constructed by a team of cinéastes and by a process of suture" (pp. 151–152). I really do not know what this could mean and would certainly be incapable of arguing it. There used to be an argument to the effect that building into a film some revelation of it as "a fictional world constructed by a team of cinéastes" was *ipso facto* a radical strategy, an automatic *undermining* of it as "unity," as "coherent narrative film" (I have often criticized this kind of simple "self-reflexivity" idea),[16] but I have never met with the argument that such a revelation is the *condition* for coherence and unity. Does it matter? Not to *Questions of Cinema.*

iv. *"some extremely shaky claims" (p. 109)*

Carroll attacks my account of "the interlocking equivalency of narrative and perspective," my "best example" of which is "point-of-view editing," treated by me "as a perspective system internal to the film":

> The character in the film is at some virtual station point looking at the perspectival view of a preceding or ensuing shot. The spectator identifies with the character while also identifying with the perspec-

16. See, e.g., the remarks on "the problems of a formal idea of deconstruction," *QC,* pp. 59–64; on the misunderstanding of "distanciation" as a form or as a series of techniques, "Lessons from Brecht," *Screen,* vol. 15, no. 2 (Summer 1974), 112–113.

> tivally engineered camera. These three different cases of looking become identified through some vague process of relays, and the central perspective viewpoint of the succeeding shots is confirmed by the character's act of looking. This account, though seemingly precise, is quite nebulous. Speaking of point-of-view editing as an internal perspective system is inaccurate. The only similarity between the perspective model and the point-of-view model is that both involve someone looking at something. A point-of-view format can and most often is made with little or no respect for the exact geometric relation of the character's position and the station point of the perspectival image the character is looking at. King Kong can look *down* at Ann Darrow and we can see her squirming in a shot that was taken from an eye-level camera position and yet still we know that the point-of-view conventions are implying that Kong is looking at her (p. 123).

Accuracy and precision are standards that are appealed to but not followed. I did not say that narrative and perspective were equivalent; I simply tried to sketch out the way in which they came together and interlocked in the development of the dominant narrative cinema. Two things can interlock historically without being equivalent; the Quattrocento introduction and use of perspective in painting can be quickly caught up with a narrative purpose, and the relations between narrative and perspective can then be analyzed, but this analysis has nothing at all to do with saying that they are equivalent, that neither can exist without the other.[17] Nor did I say that point-of-view editing was a perspectival system, that is, was equivalent to geometrical perspective; I simply said that there was "a narrative organization of look and point of view that moves space into place through the image-flow; the character, figure of the look, is a kind of perspective within the perspective system, regulating the world, orientating space, providing directions—and for the spectator" (*QC,* p. 44). I then went on to a fairly detailed consideration of camera image, point of view, character position, "subjective" marking, and so on (*QC,* pp. 45–52), a major emphasis of which is that point-of-view editing in the cinema under discussion involves "an overlaying of first and third person modes" (*QC,* p. 48) that maintains a stable, "objective" vision. The spectator must *see,* see truly, what is the case; point-of-view editing orders the images, makes sense, but not at the expense of that vision which it overlays and which remains more or less constant. "More or less" recognizes the possibility of "subjective" images, though these are relatively infrequent, where the subjectivity is not just point of view but some recognizable marking—distortion—of the "normal" image, a narra-

17. For consideration of the historical relations between perspective and narrative, see, e.g., E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion,* New York, Pantheon, 1960; Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1974.

tively motivated aberration of vision of some kind or another (the blurred image of Gutman in *The Maltese Falcon* as the subjective image of the drugged Spade). "Overlays" recognizes that point-of-view editing is not an exact equivalence nor necessarily constantly present. The *King Kong* example that Carroll produces as some kind of refutation is ludicrous inasmuch as it might be straight out of the discussion in *Questions of Cinema* which says nothing at all about point-of-view editing as demanding "the exact geometrical relation of the character's position" (Carroll's Kong-looking shot would, in exact geometrical relation to Kong's position, be marked as "subjective" by virtue of the exceptional height and angle). Nor again, as will already have been suggested, did I say that "the three different cases of looking" become identified; I simply describe "a certain mobility" between them that this cinema "incites and controls" (*QC,* p. 120), nothing about their being identified with one another. In order to have his attack, however, Carroll has to make me say that everything is equivalent to everything else—the "precise" will indeed become "quite nebulous" if you know how to go about it.

And this is not the first nor the last occasion on which Carroll goes about it as far as *Questions of Cinema* and narrative are concerned. Earlier he gives us his position against mine:

> To summarize, narratives do not necessarily involve space, and even when narrative films do involve space they do not rigorously organize that space in a way that can be mapped with any precision (at most, in the standard case, care is only taken to avoid suggesting the space is unmappable). Thus, narrative is not to be equated with perspective (p. 122).

I won't bother to repeat that I never said that "narrative is . . . to be equated with perspective." I never said either that "narratives . . . necessarily involve space"; I discussed a certain narrative organization of space in cinema. Even Carroll has to admit, though somewhat reluctantly ("I do not deny"), "that most film narratives concern actions that occur in space" (p. 122), he could hardly do otherwise; but this isn't going to stop him: *Questions of Cinema* talks about the narrative space of cinema; this means that I think all narratives involve space—big wrong in red ink; *Questions of Cinema* talks about narrative and perspective in cinema—this means that I think all narratives involve perspective and all perspective involves narrative—another big wrong, more red ink. If I talked about meat in hamburgers, Carroll would translate this into my claiming that all meat goes into hamburgers; if I talked about meat and bread going together in hamburgers, he would translate it into my saying that meat and bread were equivalent. "Narrative economy does demand repetition of certain objects and characters, not, however, the repetition of scenes" (p. 138), announces Carroll—thank God he told us (remember this *is* an "Address to the Heathen")! But then, ignorance is bliss, I didn't know I thought it did, thought

I'd been looking at "the particular economy of repetition in classic cinema" (*QC,* p. 154) and describing the way in which its films are "gathered up in a whole series of rhymes in which elements—of both 'form' and 'content'—are found, shifted, and turned back symmetrically, as in a mirror" (*QC,* p. 155), showing examples of this in relation to the repetition of scenes.[18] Enough of Carroll's shadow-boxing.

v. *"not merely slipshod and lazy" (p. 155)*

Take Carroll's note 5 (p. 92): "Heath denies that his analyses are causal ones but then goes on to offer causal analyses." There is no such denial in *Questions of Cinema.* "For example, the concept of the 'causation of the subject' is used explicitly throughout the text." The concept in question is from Lacanian psychoanalytic theory and occurs in *Questions of Cinema* between pages 77 and 84 in what is offered as "a somewhat 'technical' exposition of certain aspects of Lacanian theory" (*QC,* p. 76); a quotation from Lacan on pages 117–118 talks of the signifier as "cause" of the subject; page 126 is listed under "causation of the subject" in the book's index because it contains a criticism of the abstraction of Lacan's theory of the causation of the subject.[19] Thus "used explicitly throughout the text" (and the whole point for Carroll is this continued explicit use of "causation") means occurring over seven pages of straightforward exposition of Lacanian theory in a book of some 245 pages of text. "Heath criticizes causal analyses by noting that searching for cause-effect relations is like believing that solving questions of historical materialism is easier than solving an equation in the first degree." I did not note any such thing. What I did do, quoting from a letter written by Engels in 1890 in the context of a discussion of ideology, was to comment as follows: "It must be seen that the notion of determination which has proved—or been made to prove—such a stumbling block for ideological analysis cannot be conceived of as a problem in cause-and-effect with its answer an explanation from an absolute point of origin (as though historical materialism were to be, in Engels's words, 'easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree')" (*QC,* p. 6).[20] This is not a criticism of causal analyses in general or as such, nor does it say that "searching for cause-effect relations is like" anything, let alone what Carroll maintains I say it is like. It says that de-

18. The work of Raymond Bellour has given particular attention to this repetition, to what he calls "the effect of generalized rhyme" in "the classic film," "Le Blocage symbolique," *Communications,* no. 23 (1975), 346; Bellour's various analyses have been collected in *L'Analyse du film,* Paris, Albatros, 1979. For an overview and discussion of his work in English, see Janet Bergstrom, "Enunciation and Sexual Difference" and "Alternation, Segmentation, Hypnosis: Interview with Raymond Bellour," *Camera Obscura,* nos. 3–4 (1979), 33–103.

19. Extended discussion of "the causation of the subject" can be found in two texts not included in *Questions of Cinema,* both critical: "Anata Mo," *Screen,* vol. 17, no. 4 (Winter 1976–77), 49–66; "The Turn of the Subject," *Ciné-tracts,* nos. 7–8 (1979), 32–48.

20. F. Engels, letter to J. Bloch, 21–22 September 1890, *Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels Werke,* Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1967, vol. 37, p. 463; trans., *K. Marx-F. Engels Selected Works,* London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1968, p. 692.

termination has often been a stumbling block in ideological analysis inasmuch as it has been brought down to the terms of deciding a cause-effect explanation from a single and unique point of origin (economic). What Engels meant to stress, I think, was not just that there were many variables involved but that there was a complex *interaction* which could not merely be reduced to "variables" in this way.

It is true that the main purpose of this note 5 is the possibility it affords Carroll of implying the strength of his knowledge of . . . mathematics, as opposed to the weakness of Engels's and mine. Thus the note goes on to end with an appeal to "witness [my] endorsement of an absurd foray into the foundations of arithmetic by Jacques-Alain Miller ([*QC*] p. 84)." Needless to say, on the page specified I neither endorsed nor criticized since I was only concerned with setting out, perfectly accurately, for English-speaking readers, the context in which suture had appeared as a concept and in particular with giving an account of an article by the Lacanian Jacques-Alain Miller entitled "La suture" that formed an important part of that context. That aside, it is quite difficult to know where Carroll's objection lies: is the "foray" absurd because out of place or because Frege, whose theory of numbers Miller refers to, was wrong or because Miller has unwittingly got Frege wrong? If the former, and assuming some endorsement on my part, what we are asked to "witness" would hardly constitute an example of my "grasp of mathematics," "pretty shaky" or otherwise; if one of the latter, then we must await Carroll's demonstration of Frege's or Miller's absurdity, and this still, of course, wouldn't give the slightest indication of my grasp or not of mathematics, and anyway since the point is the strength of Carroll's, asserted if unearned, it really doesn't matter; indeed let him assert it. "Absurd" is the word, and you may be wondering again what it all has to do with *Questions of Cinema;* me too.[21]

vi. *"certain peculiarities of argument" (p. 114)*

Misrepresentation is so natural to the "Address" that it is often concentrated in single words, little stylistic sneers, automatic hiccups of scorn. Thus "Heath . . . congratulates Lacan for discovering the concept of *lalangue"* (p. 130, n. 45)—savor the "congratulates." There are, in fact, four mentions of the concept of *lalangue* in *Questions of Cinema* (*QC,* pp. 80, 198, 204, 213): in the first three it is introduced in what is basically exposition of Lacan and his psychoanalytic approach to language, while in the fourth it appears as follows, after criticism of the "fetishization of 'subject' and 'language'" in psychoanalysis: "The real history with which psychoanalysis deals is still directly and immedi-

21. Joan Copjec provides a perfectly accurate account of the "absurd foray" in the very same "Film Books" issue (Miller, she says, "disfigures Frege's theory by adding to it what it had explicitly excluded—the subject"), thus doubtless revealing *her* pretty shaky grasp of mathematics, "The Anxiety of the Influencing Machine," *October,* no. 23, p. 47.

ately social, not 'before' or 'elsewhere' to social processes, ideological places. There is a material history of the construction of subjectivity and that history is also the social construction of the individual as subject in a kind of necessary simultaneity, like the recto and verso of a piece of paper; between the psyche and the social, no 'fundamental dividing line' is to be drawn, not even with *lalangue* which can quickly become the separate realm of psychoanalysis, the term of its suspension of history." Anyone but Carroll would be hard put to describe that as my *congratulating* Lacan, but then anyone but Carroll. . . .

vii. *"hazy slidings and turnings" (p. 154)*

A golden rule of the "Address," as by now will have become clear, is to convert one argument or position into another which is then available as a handy target. Consider the following:

> Heath writes, "Instead of holding a reproduction of life [in fact, I wrote "Instead of holding to a reproduction of life" but then this is a minor point in the régime of miss and hit] (Lumière was adamant in later years: 'the film subjects I chose are proof [I wrote "the proof," accurate transcription no matter] that I only wished to reproduce life'), it [film] holds to a reproduction of the image of life. Of Lumière one has the right to demand to know where this 'life' comes from—and the answer is certainly not from itself, for life is composed on screen of representations of work, family and leisure, *La Sortie des usines, Le Repas de bébé* and *L'Arroseur arrosé,* chosen subjects indeed. Of the reproduction thesis one has the right to demand to know where the image comes from and what it is doing in the film" ([*QC*] p. 4).
>
> Heath seems to be saying that film cannot objectively reproduce life because its images are selected. This is a bad argument. Selectivity, in and of itself, does not preclude objectivity (p. 115, n. 31).

What I was interested in in the passage cited, in the context of a discussion of ideology, was avoiding any simple notion of film as reflection of existing representations, the reproduction of the image of life, and stressing the need to consider the specific relations of ideology in film, the work of ideology in the film, and of the film in ideology. I drew a parallel between simple reflective ideas and the early Lumière-style enthusiasm for film as a reflection of life *tout court* and indicated that if one were interested in political and ideological analysis, one would want to raise questions with respect to these notions. This is not "saying that film cannot objectively reproduce life because its images are selected" nor that "Selectivity, in and of itself . . . preclude[s] objectivity," though obviously, contrary to Carroll's naive assumptions, the definition of "objectivity" there is going to be crucially important. To identify the Lumière films as involving specifically chosen subjects was not to say anything about objectivity

and selection; it was to question the kind of assumption of objectivity in the notion of "the reproduction of life." Objectivity is not something that happens to be around out there like water in the Hudson River; it is always a systematic production which necessarily and creatively includes "selectivity." Carroll, however, has some entity-view of an "objectivity" suspended somewhere between material reality and the human construction of an objective grasp of it (as though we could somehow discover "objectivity"); hence his lame formulation that "Selectivity, in and of itself, does not preclude objectivity," which is neither what I said nor anything more than one of those "truisms" with which the naive, ideologically strong versions of "objectivity" work ("objectivity" is a given to be attained, with "selectivity" a separate and unfortunate but nonpreclusive limitation). That formulation, that is, should in no way prevent us from asking questions about the idea that we are watching life, about the terms of the reproduction, about the specific system in which the desired reproduction of life is given, and so on. Not to do this would, of course, be the end of any radical political approach to film or television, whether making, watching, or analyzing. Perhaps that is what this "Address" is all about? Which is odd in *October*.

viii. *"an exercise in wool-gathering" (p. 90, n. 2)*

In the midst of a lengthy version of Althusser or Lacan or both, Carroll writes: "Individuals are constituted or constructed as unified subjects from the outside, so to say" (p. 93). To this he then appends a note which reads in its entirety as follows:

> The vocabulary and problematic of the Lacanian-Althusserian position are very Hegelian. Without accepting the Hegelian reconciliation of self and Other in the Absolute, Lacanian Marxists adopt the Hegelian characterization of the relation of the self and the Other; e.g., consider Hegel's "I am a being for itself which is for itself only through another. Therefore the Other penetrates me to the heart. I cannot doubt him without doubting myself, since self-consciousness is real only insofar as it recognizes its echo in another." See especially the section entitled "Self-consciousness" in *The Phenomenology of Mind* in order to grasp the importance of Hegelian thinking for Lacanian-Althusserianism (p. 93, n. 6).

The text continues: "In this theory, the relevant outside independent variable is discourse. Discourse addresses the individual as a unified subject . . ." (p. 93).

It would be easy to point to the imprecision and error here. Lacan does not have an "outside independent variable" called discourse, just as, once again, he has no conception of "the self and Other." He talks of the Other as the "locus" of the symbolic which produces the subject *as constitutively divided* and precisely does *not* address it as "unified." As I have already mentioned above, I

think that the importance of this idea of the Other and the symbolic is crucial to Lacan exactly because it allows him to abstract from problems of social-historical determinations, and I have made this criticism in *Questions of Cinema* and elsewhere at some length. Althusser's use of the Other is very different and quite un-Lacanian for all the verbal repetitions and the appeal to Lacan's work. The problem in Althusser, again mentioned above and raised in *Questions of Cinema* and elsewhere, is that the subject is locked into a simple fiction of ideology, a constrained and passively inevitable unity; discourse *can* then become the term of the reduction of language and subjectivity to ideology (I think this happens in Michel Pêcheux's *Les Vérités de la palice,*[22] though the issue is somewhat more complex—see *QC,* pp. 101–105). So one has, as it were, on the one side a pure psychoanalytic subject, on the other a totally ideological subject, and, as I stress in *Questions of Cinema,* "a materialist theory of the constitution-construction of the subject cannot be developed in abstraction from the discursive and the ideological but, equally, cannot be developed as an account of interpellation [what Carroll may be trying to refer to in his "Discourse addresses the individual as a unified subject"] which effectively takes the subject as given and not in effect of the signifier" (*QC,* p. 106).

Imprecision and errors are not, however, what I want particularly to focus on here, but rather the question of the purpose of Carroll's note (its *point*?). It presumably cannot be intended as an original contribution to knowledge, since Lacan, in his earlier work, clearly refers to, uses, and acknowledges Hegel, notably the description in the *Phenomenology* of the master-slave relationship (it has often been pointed out that an important part of Lacan's intellectual formation was the set of lectures on Hegel given by Alexandre Kojève in Paris in the 1930s and that that formation was contemporary with the beginnings of Sartrean existentialism).[23] Nor presumably can it be intended as informative, since no attempt is made to offer evidence or explanation: the quotation from Hegel, as it stands, is in fact much closer to, say, Sartre's *L'Etre et le néant* (*Being and Nothingness*) and just shows how *different* Lacan is from Hegel, since Lacan's theory of the construction of the subject is not about "the self and the Other" and the Other is not a "him" (or a "her," though Lacan does tend to put the mother as the first representative of the symbolic relation to the field of the Other). Perhaps it is critical? Perhaps the mere suggestion of "the influence of Hegelian thinking" for some body of work is enough to damn it? In which case, goodbye Marx and Marxism.

Seriously, who is Carroll talking to? Not to people who know anything about Lacan (Hegel's influence on Lacan is well known, as is the latter's "Lacan

22. Michel Pêcheux, *Les Vérités de la palice,* Paris, Maspero, 1975; trans. Harbans Nagpul, *Language, Semantics and Ideology. Stating the Obvious,* London, Macmillan, 1982.
23. Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel,* Paris, Gallimard, 1947; trans. J. H. Nichols, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel,* New York, Basic Books, 1969; this book collects lectures delivered between 1933–1939.

against Hegel,"[24] and Carroll gets Lacan wrong), nor to the author of *Questions of Cinema* (Carroll gives no evidence for an important Hegelian usage of "the Other" in the book), nor again to people interested in cinema, cultural theory, or whatever, people reading *October* with no particular knowledge of Lacan or Hegel (Carroll gives no details, no help, no explanations about their critical relation). This is all just smokescreen authoritativeness, sheer display coupled with automatism-criticism: Hegel bad.

ix. *"Nor, I think, can one blithely say . . ." (p. 133)*

"Heath's basic premise is that the prime function of ideology is to construct subjects. (This process is also known as positioning or 'interpellating' subjects)" (p. 91). Compare: "interpellation can in no way be the key either to ideology or to subjectivity (the fact of the individual as subject)" (*QC,* p. 103). Resolutely, Carroll remains unmoved by such minor discrepancies as "can in no way be the key to ideology"; he takes the broad stride of convenient simplification and conflation into the pages on (more or less) Althusser that he wants to get in somewhere or other. I say, for example, that the constitution-construction of the subject is not to be explained by ideology simply, that Althusser "reproduces the subject as a kind of essence of ideology" (*QC,* p. 106), and so on, but all this is irrelevant, a mere bump in the ground to be trampled down and smoothed away as quickly as possible; everything equals everything else, and who cares anyway?

Not that I am suggesting that *Questions of Cinema* is uniformly and consistently critical of Althusser and his work on ideology. The first piece in the book, "On Screen, in Frame: Film and Ideology" is very Althusserian in its account of ideology, though it should be said that "interpellation" is not specifically developed there as a concept, which absence I can now read as a sign of the difficulties I was already having with its role in Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses."[25] I wrote "On Screen, in Frame" in 1975 and gave it as the opening presentation at the first Milwaukee film conference. It was meant as a synthesis of the current thinking and a point of departure for discussion and questioning, which purpose I believe it to have fulfilled; *Jump Cut,* I remember, not exactly noted for uncritical admiration where my work is concerned (and who would want that? just serious, politically helpful criticism), thought it was a fair summary indicating some problems and directions.[26] I put the piece at the beginning of *Questions of Cinema* for this reason, because it was referred to

24. Lacan, *Les quatre concepts,* p. 195; trans., p. 215.
25. As far as I can tell from a rapid check, interpellation, which is equivalent to my "basic premise," is only discussed—mentioned even—in *Questions of Cinema* in the pages in which I say that it cannot serve as the key to ideology (*QC,* pp. 102–106); critical discussion is developed further by me in "The Turn of the Subject."
26. Chuck Kleinhans, "The Signifier That Failed to Make Milwaukee Famous," *Jump Cut,* nos. 10–11 (1976), 58.

often, because it was a survey, a *beginning*. By the time of the later pieces in the book, "Language, Sight and Sound" or "Contexts," say, there are obvious differences; throughout bits are taken up, reworked, changed—Althusser and ideology and interpellation included. Once again, I meant both the book's title and the Preface's stress that "the intended unity of the book" was "a series of questions of cinema" (*QC,* p. vii). Questions, not a "basic premise," and certainly not the one that Carroll wants to give me with interpellation.

I should apologize, I got carried away, I started thinking about the development of film theory in the '70s, remembering it had a history, seeing *Questions of Cinema* in connection with it, a bit beyond onslaughts and academic cabbage patches, more with regard to the opening up of areas like film and ideology and the ensuring that the formulation and exploration of questions of cinema is involved in them, has at least that political edge. I began rereading here and there in an article Annette Michelson sent me, a photocopy from an old *October,* "The Prospect Before Us," the need for "the construction of a theoretical and critical framework radically distinct from 'progressive' presuppositions of continuity as the ground of cultural pluralism and identity as the criterion of coherence" and so on.[27] Apologies. We could go on picking out passage after passage from the "Address," phrase after phrase, writing it all out again, and adding the headings and the commentary: x. *"thoroughly confused" (p. 125),* xi. *"a weakness for equivocation" (p. 117),* xii. *"self-celebratory gravity" (p. 153).* . . . But enough has been said to give the initial feel, to show up the nature of its writing, the kind of review it is, and to suggest the respect it commands.

It is time to turn to one or two of the topics Carroll considers at length, to which he devotes a whole or a substantial part of a whole section of the "Address."

Perspective

Carroll spends a great deal of time repetitively attacking an article I wrote in 1975 entitled "Narrative Space" (*QC,* pp. 19–75) for its treatment of perspective and in particular for its criticism of the latter. Of course, I was not aware that I was involved in any simple sense in criticism of perspective; I was, I thought, concerned with the historical appearance of perspective and its relation to a certain production and currency of images, the development of a dominant mode of representation bound up with a complex of vision-reality-truth in which cinema has participated. The article was not about perspective in the abstract but about a history and transmission of science (geometry, optics) into art and ideology, social representation in a whole manufacture of images.

Carroll is upset at what he declares to be my insistence that perspective is "a dissimulation," "a counterfeit replica of vision," leading to "the illusion of the

27. Annette Michelson, "The Prospect Before Us," *October,* no. 16 (Spring 1981), 122.

image" and employing "faith in . . . pictorial fidelity" as "a piece of self-deception" (p. 114). By now it should come as no surprise when I say that neither the first two phrases nor the term "self-deception" occur anywhere in "Narrative Space." Not, to be honest, that I would see a lot to object to in "a counterfeit replica of vision," other perhaps than the too automatically pejorative overtones that may come with the word "counterfeit": linear perspective has been used in a certain matching of the visual world in images and in that sense, which is not that of recording the reality of the process of vision, might be spoken of as a "replica of vision," to that extent counterfeited.

Let us come, however, to illusion and deception (not "self-deception"), the two no doubt linked and the former without doubt one of Carroll's major pet hates. As far as I can determine, mention of *illusion* occurs just eight times in "Narrative Space" (which takes up over fifty pages of *Questions of Cinema*). Three of these occurrences are in connection with the illusion of continuous movement in cinema, which I would have thought was uncontroversially acceptable, even if not to Carroll (*QC,* pp. 26, 27, 33).[28] Two more come in discussion of established rules for the filmic construction of space, the system of narrative space, where the point is above all to stress the way in which those rules were conceived precisely in terms of the creation and maintenance of illusion, "the spectator's illusion of seeing a continuous piece of action," as Karel Reisz and Gavin Millar put it in their *The Technique of Film Editing* (cited as an example, *QC,* p. 42, which thus accounts for one of these two occurrences, the other to be found on p. 41). Another is in the phrase "a sure illusion of scrutiny" to describe what I take to be a certain distance of the image for the spectator sustained in this narrative-space cinema, the spectator looking, safely seeing, set in an illusion of mastery (*QC,* p. 37). Which leaves two occurrences of *illusion* that might possibly have some connection with Carroll's discussion, so I shall give them in full, for the sake of accuracy and in order to be able to begin to look at that discussion:

28. This does not mean that *explanation* of the illusion is uncontroversial; see Joseph and Barbara Anderson, "Motion Perception in Motion Pictures," and Bill Nichols and Susan J. Lederman, "Flicker and Motion in Film," in *The Cinematic Apparatus,* ed. Teresa de Lauretis and Stephen Heath, London, Macmillan, and New York, St. Martin's Press, 1980, pp. 76–95 and 95–105.

It might also be noted that the last of these three occurrences (*QC,* p. 33) involves *illusions* used in a phrase quoted from the chronophotographer E. J. Marey, which may be worth replacing here in its context, inasmuch as it grasps in its own way, from the very start, a development of cinema not at all in terms of science but in those of confirming representations: "Animated photographs have fixed forever essentially fleeting movements . . . but what they show the eye might have been seen directly; they have added nothing to the power of our sight, rid it of none of its illusions, where the true character of a scientific method is to make up for the inadequacy of our senses or to correct their errors" (Marey, cit. Jacques Deslandes, *Histoire comparée du cinéma: tome 1 de la cinématique au cinématographe, 1826–1896,* Paris, Casterman, 1966, p. 144). The point of scientific images is to make things visible, not to record what is visible; and the visible then produced is dependent on a skilled *reading* of the images (think of X-ray photos in medicine, for instance), it is not just given "in" them.

i. "It [linear perspective] is the art of depicting three-dimensional objects upon a plane surface in such a manner that the picture *may* affect the eye of an observer in the same way as the natural objects themselves. . . . A perfectly deceptive illusion can be obtained only on *two conditions:* (a) the spectator shall only use one eye, (b) this eye has to be placed in the central point of perspective (or, at least, quite near to this point)" (*QC,* p. 28).

(This in fact is a quotation from G. Ten Doesschate, *Perspective: Fundamentals, Controversials, History,* Nieuwkoop, B. de Graaf, 1964, pp. 6–7. I then go on, in a passage quoted by Carroll (p. 111), to ask the reader to note the terms of that description: "The component elements of that account should be noted: the possible exact match for the eye of picture and object, the deceptive illusion; the centre of the illusion, the eye in place. What is fundamental is the idea of the spectator at a window, an *'aperta finestra'* that gives a view on the world—framed, centred, harmonious (the *'istoria'*)." Carroll's quotation of this passage cuts off "the *'istoria,'*" which is exactly the concept in Alberti's treatise *Della Pittura* (*On Painting,* 1435) of the relation of perspective to a certain image-production of unity and coherence.)

ii. "What is clear and important is that the Renaissance perspective system opens the way to an assurance and a trap for the look, the vision of the subject, to an *illusion* of *reality,* in the play of which two terms a whole problematic of representation is established—a problematic in which cinema is engaged, *moves*" (*QC,* p. 70, n. 12).

(This follows a discussion of anamorphosis in the light of Ernest B. Gilman's account of it—"the curious perspective system"—as having as its effect "to parody, question, and even undermine the central cognitive assumption behind perspective representation" (*The Curious Perspective: Literary and Pictorial Wit in the Seventeenth Century,* New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1978, p. 233). Having quoted Gilman, I add: "It remains, however, that the 'wit' of anamorphosis is constantly a reference to a rational and stable system that it assumes in the very moment it parodies or questions and is thus always available as a final image of order; as witness the idea of anamorphosis in a passage from Leibniz on universal harmony quoted by Gilman (p. 97): 'It is as in the inventions of perspective, where certain lovely drawings appear only as confusion, until one finds their true point of view or sees them by means of a certain glass or mirror. Thus the apparent deformities of our little world come together as beauties in the greater world, and there is nothing opposed to the unity of a universally perfect principle.'")

For Carroll, there is no relation between perspective and illusion and this is true inasmuch as there is no *necessary* relation; perspective can be put to a number of different uses (in astronomy, for example, where visual estimation

of the real configuration in space of celestial bodies is hopelessly inadequate). One use to which the geometrical system of linear perspective has been put, however, and which has had a considerable historical importance, seems clearly, though not to Carroll, to have been connected with the realization of images with respect to ideas of matching visual experience for effects that can include illusion and with success in varying degrees. There is nothing wrong with the Ten Doesschate quotation, except for the "perfectly," if *illusion* is understood in one particular and limiting way: the Pozzo painted ceiling in the St. Ignazio church in Rome,[29] for example, which depends on the use of perspective projection, achieves a high degree of illusion, but the illusion is not perfect in the sense of totally delusive (there are difficulties with color, light, and so on; we might note, at the risk of Carroll's wrath, that one way of increasing the degree of illusion is by reducing signals external to the image, for instance by darkening the surrounds of its perception, as in . . . well yes, cinema). The second quotation above from *Questions of Cinema* does indeed contain the taboo word *illusion* willingly assumed by me; taboo by Carroll fiat but, of course, historically present from the beginning in the use of perspective in painting and architecture (for the latter, see, for example, the perspective arcade by Borromini in the Palazzo Spada in Rome, designed and conceived in terms of the creation of the illusion of space and, in fact, capable of deluding).[30]

Nor should these Pozzo and Borromini *trompe-l'oeil* examples, which might be regarded as extreme,[31] be allowed to diminish the recognition of this effective link between perspective and illusion. The art historians whom Carroll somewhat barmily cites in his support are themselves quite happy to discuss the one in the same breath as the other; thus John White's *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space* (p. 112, n. 25) has a chapter on "Illusion and Perspective," while Gombrich, called upon as one of the "major defenses of perspective" (p. 110, n. 24), manages to conclude a version of the same topic with the obviously shocking statement that "it is the strength of the forces of illusion that alone ac-

29. Fra Andrea Pozzo (1642–1709); the painting is on the ceiling of the nave, which is hemicylindrical in shape; standing on the floor below at the appropriate central position, the painted scene appears strikingly three-dimensional and it becomes difficult to grasp the fact of the material ceiling itself.

30. Francesco Castelli, called Borromini (1599–1667); the real arcade is the solid perspective, in three dimensions, of an imaginary arcade; seen from the entrance it looks and gives the powerful illusion of being longer than it really is.

31. Thus M. H. Pirenne argues that *trompe-l'oeil* art is quite different from normal art employing perspective techniques; in the former, the argument runs, the supporting surface becomes "invisible"; in the latter, awareness of its presence is crucial. The point, though, is not thereby to divorce art that is not extreme *trompe-l'oeil* from the notion of illusion, only to argue that it needs a different explanation for its production of illusion. See M. H. Pirenne, *Optics, Painting and Photography,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970, *passim.* (Pirenne's book contains excellent illustrations of the Pozzo and Borromini *trompe-l'oeil* examples mentioned here.)

counts for the violent reaction against these forces in twentieth-century art";[32] and these discussions, of course, reflect, and reflect on, discussions of perspective and illusion that surrounded and were part of the context of the introduction of the system of linear perspective into the practice of image-making in the Renaissance: for Boccaccio or Leonardo it makes proper sense to talk about the use of perspective in connection with illusion, the degree to which the latter might be produced, and so on.[33] Worse still perhaps, cognitive psychologists, whom I am chided for ignoring, also seem to be interested in discussions of perspective and illusion; thus, for instance, R. L. Gregory, in his *Eye and Brain: The Psychology of Seeing,* devotes a chapter on "Illusions" to considering the relations between illusion and perspective in connection with both images and vision (concluding that "the illusions are reduced, and largely absent, when perspective cues are meagre").[34] Part of Carroll's problem is his usual obstinate reductionism (we will see this at its most wilful with regard to the term *illusion* when we come to the treatment of Brecht): illusion is collapsed into delusion but, as Gombrich puts it, that is not "the only legitimate meaning of the term";[35] illusion as aesthetic or representational or ideological effect is not just some rare aberration of total false belief, utter delusion; it can coexist with a knowledge at some level that one really is looking at a painting or watching a play or a film; it can be more or less successful: "Far from being an all-or-nothing affair, illusion in these contexts is always a matter of degree," the obviously shocking Gombrich again.[36] Despite the Carroll fiat, there is nothing wildly nonsensical about work-

32. John White, *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space,* New York, Harper and Row, 1972, chapter XIII, pp. 189–201; E. H. Gombrich, *Meditations on a Hobby Horse,* London, Phaidon Press, 1963, p. 159; analyzing a perspective woodcut Gombrich finds no difficulty in talking of its "compelling illusion," *ibid.* p. 158. Cf. "perspective is in fact a valid method for constructing images designed to create illusion. . . . This theory suffices to 'deceive the eye'" (*Art and Illusion,* p. 250).

33. See Baxandall, *Painting and Experience;* quotations from Boccaccio and Leonardo, p. 33.

34. R. L. Gregory, *Eye and Brain: The Psychology of Seeing,* London, World University Library, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966, pp. 162–163.

35. E. H. Gombrich, "Illusion and Art," in *Illusion in Nature and Art,* ed. R. L. Gregory and E. H. Gombrich, London, Duckworth, 1973, p. 194.

36. *Ibid.,* p. 196. In this same essay, Gombrich gives an account of his response to moving-image media that must have Carroll falling off his chair with laughter at the yokel lunacy of the dreadful old dimwit (as we shall see, probably as bad as poor Brecht): "When there is a sequence imposed upon us within the frame which carries the confirmations and refutations we employ in real-life situations, it becomes indeed almost impossible to read the picture and attend to the alternative system in which the screen is an object like any other in the room. The cinema, of course, enhances the illusion by darkening the room and television viewers may do the same, but even without this additional aid to illusion it seems to me to be very hard to remain aware of the projection surface. Even if the show will not involve us emotionally, it is next to impossible to 'concentrate' on the screen to the extent that we merely see the expanding and contracting shapes rather than people and objects approaching and receding. I, for one, have never succeeded in suppressing my responses and anticipations. Not, to repeat, that this compels me to say that the cinema or television so overwhelms my critical faculty that I become deluded; but my experience is shot through with illusions which remain uncorrected" (p. 241).

ing with the idea of illusion, nor was it just dragged in and deemed important in connection with perspective and image production by me or Metz or Lacan or Althusser (or John Berger or Stan Brakhage or Rosalind Krauss, come to that . . .);[37] it has a somewhat longer history.

A part of which history is what in its treatment of perspective "Narrative Space" was all about, whereas Carroll refuses any consideration of the use of perspective as a particular currency of images, the implications it might have in its particular use in relation to a whole ideological formation. When did I say that perspective "*uniquely* suits capitalism" (p. 114, n. 30)? Might it not be possible, though, to give some consideration to the appearance and propagation of central linear perspective as the system of representation in Europe in the Renaissance, its historical intermesh with the rise of capitalism and its image forms and machines?[38] I suppose not in the Carroll world: perspective is perspective, a picture is a picture, a film is a film, with Reality, God bless it, behind them all, as we know from Science.

Still, we should pause a little more on Carroll and perspective; we may learn something, and if we don't, it will not be for want of his trying, since—with his characteristically compulsive "formulaic repetition" (p. 153)—he tells us again and again what perspective is all about:

> i. perspective as an accurate, indeed as the most accurate, means of pictorially depicting the world (p. 111)

37. No more than the author of *Questions of Cinema* does Metz propose that the spectator takes the film for "the real thing"; indeed he opens his "Le film de fiction et son spectateur (étude métapsychologique)" ("The Fiction Film and Its Spectator: a Metapsychological Study") with the statement: "The dreamer does not know that s/he is dreaming; the film spectator knows that s/he is at the cinema. . . ," *Communications,* no. 23 (1975), p. 108; trans. Celia Britton, Annwyl Williams, Ben Brewster, Alfred Guzzetti, *Psychoanalysis and Cinema: The Imaginary Signifier,* London, Macmillan, 1982, p. 101. This does not, of course, prevent him from examining the degree of illusion of reality, the force of the impression of reality, in the fiction film régime of cinema: "a tendency, in short, to perceive as real the represented and not the representer (the technological medium of the representation), to pass over the latter without seeing it for what it is, to pass on blindly" (p. 118; trans., p. 115); note the similarity with Gombrich's description previously cited, n.36. Metz's analysis of "the filmic state which cinema in its ordinary functioning plays upon" (p. 132, trans., p. 138); his account of perceptual transference, regression, degree of belief, and so on, still seems to me very fine. As for Berger and Brakhage, they are knocked down on p. 114, n. 30 of the "Address" for loose talk of perspective art and capitalism, while Rosalind Krauss (unnamed) goes on p. 123 for emphasizing that "perspective space carries with it the meaning of narrative." We have already seen that Carroll dislikes the conjunction of perspective and narrative, but then, as Gombrich puts it in another authoritative article cited by Carroll, "This theory [the theory of perspective] was developed as a response to the demands of narrative art," "Mirror and Map: Theories of Pictorial Representation," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, B., Biological Sciences,* vol. 270, B. 903 (13 March 1975), 132.

38. Thus Fredric Jameson, in his contribution to the "Film Books" issue, has some remarks on the development of capitalism, reification, "the reification of sight itself," and "the primacy of the geometrical" ("Reading Hitchcock," *October,* no. 23, p. 41).

ii. it provides accurate information about certain aspects of the appearance of the natural scene . . . the appearance of the relative positions of things in space and the distances between them (p. 111)
iii. the perspective system is more accurate in terms of affording spatial information than any other mimetic pictorial system (p. 111)
iv. no competing mimetic representational system is *as* accurate as perspective in rendering information about the appearance of the relative disposition of objects in space (p. 112)
v. if we want accurate spatial information about the appearance of the world from our pictures, then we use perspective (p. 112)
vi. if one is committed to pictorial fidelity in respect to spatial appearance, then perspective is, as a result of its scientific origins, the best means to that end (p. 113)
vii. it is the most accurate means of rendering information about spatial appearance (p. 114).

This is repetition in full force, the bludgeon that blurs. Perspective pictures may not at all provide "accurate spatial information" about "the distances between" "things in space": as everyone knows, a photograph of two railway lines going off into the horizon shows them coming closer to one another, which is not accurate information about the distance between them. So Carroll, except in iii., where he forgets, puts the weight on *appearance:* the point is that perspective gives us accurate information not as to true distance but as to appearance, appearance to the eye. But then what do we do with the effective possibility of perspective images going against the eye's vision and thus giving inaccurate information about appearance? For example, photographic images produced with a pinhole camera, which realizes accurate central projection of the objects photographed, are often pictures that do not at all look like the objects as they appear to the eye (they appear deformed).[39] We might, however, say that this is accurate information as to the way in which the objects appear to the eye, inasmuch as the eye is, in principle, like a camera obscura; so what we are given—the accurate information of appearance—is the "retinal image." But then again we do not see our retinal images, and anyway the relation of seeing to pictorial analogies is open to doubt, considerable doubt: "the more one considers the characteristics of the nervous visual process, the less it seems possible to conceive how vision could occur as a result of somehow 'seeing' the spatial pattern, formed by these processes, in the way we see a picture."[40]

39. Examples can be found in Pirenne, *Optics, Painting and Photography,* pp. 101, 104–105, 107–111, 118–119, 124, 132, 134.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 9. We could add that the attraction of such pictorial analogies is strongly felt in the context of the massive cultural production of perspective images, of Jameson's "reification of sight."

Carroll's formulations continually bring us back to appearance but leave it undefined; apparently (!), it means things as we ordinarily see them, the eye as I (not as camera obscura). Yet we must leave aside any concrete historical specificity, since for Carroll this I is also really only eye, a station point in geometrical space, a given vision.[41] Vision and perspective go together: perspective is true, vision is perspective, so vision is true, accurate information all around, from one to the other, with appearance thrown in, vaguely, to make everything come right. I put it like this because "appearance" in the "Address" shores up a version of the eye/camera analogy and assumes a fixed correlation between the physical world, the optical world, and the appearance of the world in our experience. Gombrich spent some time in *Art and Illusion* trying to eradicate analogy and assumption: "The art of perspective . . . does not claim to show how things appear to us, for it is hard to see what such a claim should mean."[42] The optical world and the world of our visual experience are not equivalent, the eye is not just a camera-obscura mechanism, and appearance depends on more than simply input from the optical world. What Carroll wants, however, is exactly the fixed correlation, the possibility of a calculation from physical to optical to apparent worlds that holds it all firmly together with no gaps or discrepancies, no constructions or transformations, no questions or difficult histories—of I and subject for instance. Everything must come down to "an inescapable human concern": "Perspective's basic concern is with where things appear to stand in space. This is an inescapable human concern, one of quite as much interest to hunter-gatherers as to shipping magnates" (p. 114, n. 30). It might have been expected that hunter-gatherers and shipping magnates would be more interested, a lot more interested, in where things *really* were in space, but Carroll has to have "appear," since his argument here is about "pictorial" perspective and the point is the latter's fundamental naturalness. In fact, he fudgingly hovers between natural perspective—an inescapable human concern inasmuch as it represents the laws of the production of retinal images by light convergence—and artificial perspective—the geometrical system of linear perspective used to produce perspective images, this being a perfectly escapable human concern since there have been and are societies with no commitment to the production and circulation of images that reproduce by means of projective geometry the way things appear to stand in space. How did all those hunter-gatherers get on before the advent of perspective pictures? Do

41. It was with exactly this subject-form of vision, its ideological possibility, that "Narrative Space" was concerned. In this connection, it is worth looking at Lacan's remarks on "the use of the geometrical dimension of vision to captivate the subject" and the particular version of the latter thus projected; Lacan, *Les quatre concepts,* pp. 80–90; trans., pp. 85–97. Whatever the criticisms that would need to be made, these remarks do at least, along with Jameson's already referred to, raise historical questions that Carroll's assumption of this very subject-form depends on refusing.

42. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion,* p. 257.

they have them now when they go hunting and gathering and, if so, what do they do with them? And how many shipping magnates run their businesses with perspective pictorial representations? "Perspective's basic concern . . ." is an empty flourish, the hopeful creation of a kind of universal human agent, but perspective is no such thing and is only a "biologically deep concern" (the symptomatic rewrite in the same note 30 of "inescapable human concern") if we take it to mean the physical facts of retina, light convergence, and so on; the elaboration and use of its laws is cultural and historical, as is the production of perspective images. If Carroll can conjure everything into biology, then we can forget any need to ask how and why and in what terms such images are developed, what purposes the reproduction of appearance is put to, its effects—the kinds of question that "Narrative Space" was trying to remember. Hence the wavering, the sliding around under "perspective" and "appearance."

Forgive me, but we should pick up one or two points again in rapid summary form, making their emphasis clear before we go on through the muddle. Human vision can be understood in relation to invariable geometrical properties, and "natural perspective" is often used as the term to describe this understanding. Linear perspective, or "artificial perspective," the history of the definition and systematization of which effectively begins in the Renaissance, derives from natural perspective and deals with the projection of scenes and objects onto a two-dimensional surface. Human vision is not merely the geometrical properties of natural perspective; the eye is and is not like a camera (the comparison is justified in the context of optics, very misleading for the study of visual perception): retinal images are formed by light convergence in the same way that images are formed in a camera obscura, but, as was said above, it is not retinal images that we see; these are a part of a whole *process* of vision. Vision as such has no status in science: it is not an adequate scientific procedure, and science is not content with appearance (if appearance and the understanding of reality directly coincided, then science would be superfluous, to repeat an obvious emphasis constant in Marx and Marxism in its theory and practice, giving "a history that is quite the reverse of 'visible,'" *QC,* p. 216). Moreover, vision has no particular hold on truth (though we may be able to analyze ideological formations which involve the definition of a relation between seeing and truth and a specific subject form of that relation; which is what I thought it was clear I was doing in "Narrative Space") nor on "accurate information" (though it can be given such a hold by tautology: seeing is the accurate information of seeing; further, by the time you have said "accurate spatial information" over and over again, some high truth-value seems to have been established, and undefined "appearance" becomes transparent in that fixed correlation already mentioned, with hunter-gatherers and shipping magnates making their entry to prove that perspective pictures = appearance = reality = truth = just "accurate spatial information" for hunting and gathering and shipping and all). Visual perception of the external world is "selective, incomplete and often erro-

neous";[43] appearance to us is bound up with selection, interpretation, and so on, a whole treatment of optical information; part of appearance is subjective and cultural, part of it indeed a learned standard of vision in which perspective images, the currency of such images, and their terms—paintings, photographs, films—have their effects. To say this is not to deny the scientific validity of perspective and its understanding of the formation of retinal images nor of its other various uses, including its possibilities for the production of images; it is simply to say that we can look at the terms, the implications, the history of that translation of perspective into generalized image production, no more and no less.

Back to the muddle. One of the difficulties, and I put it mildly, of Carroll's repeated statements as to the strengths of perspective is, within the more general wavering and sliding considered above, the movement in and out of a distinction between representational systems and mimetic representational systems, in fact "mimetic pictorial system[s]" (p. 111, the opposite of "nonmimetic pictorial practices," p. 113). At one point Carroll claims that "No other system of representation is based on scientific laws" in the way that "perspective . . . has been grounded in the laws of vision" (p. 112). This is either tautologous truism—nothing is grounded in the laws of vision in the way that perspective is grounded in the laws of vision, only perspective is perspective—or nonsense—no other system of representation is based on scientific laws in a way that is similar to the way in which perspective is based on scientific laws (in its case, the laws of vision), which, were it true, would mean that just about all forms of representation currently used by science would be of no scientific validity, not to mention such humdrum things as maps. Perhaps the claim was a slip in the heat of the moment (but then the aim is to remove perspective representations from history and culture, and what better way than to declare them not just scientific but uniquely scientific?); nevertheless, the general reference to representational systems comes and goes, is part of the argument or the strategy. "The relativist [meaning the author of "Narrative Space"]," Carroll admits, "is right in arguing that there are many different representational systems" (p. 112) but "nonrelativists [meaning the author of "Address to the Heathen"] say that the perspective system is more accurate in terms of affording spatial information than any other mimetic pictorial system" (p. 111). English Ordnance Survey Maps are mimetic representational systems that give rather good, accurate information about the relative disposition of objects in space without involving perspective picturing. It is true that these maps are not mimetic if mimesis is limited by decree to pictures like perspective paintings or photographs, but then to limit mimesis in this way is to build into the argument from the start precisely what it is supposed to prove: if a condition of mimesis is perspective picturing then it is not surprising that perspective wins hands down as far as

43. Pirenne, *Optics, Painting and Photography,* p. 10.

mimesis is concerned. But that unsurprising victory is not much good, so it is offered as totally extensive, hence the reference to representational systems generally, of the "no other system of representation" type, which is then untenable; so that Carroll eventually abandons the gesture of general comparison to representational systems, "the genus, representational systems," and limits his field to "the species, mimetic systems" (p. 113; note the language, "species" and "genus": Carroll knows only a *natural* history and a logic of classification that arranges everything as the elements of a universal pattern for his knowledge to contemplate), finally bringing his discussion down to just a "subset" of the "species" within the "genus," namely "representational pictorial systems" (p. 113). At which point what more can he do than start making his statements all over again: "As the relativist points out, there are many pictorial representational practices . . ." (p. 113)?

"My argument," Carroll informs us, "is a conditional one" (p. 112). The conditional in Carroll is the mode of the eviction of history, politics, ideology. . . . If we want to eat meat between two slices of bread, then we eat hamburgers. Sure. Who is this "we"? what is this "want"? where do the hamburgers come from? what are the terms of their production, their distribution? etc., etc. "If we want accurate spatial information about the appearance of the world from our pictures, then we use perspective" (p. 112). No questions; we are not "playing by the rules of society," "we are adapting to the structure of the world" (p. 112). Exit historical materialism, the point of which, I suppose we must add in the midst of all this, is not to deny the possibility of objective knowledge of the world, material reality (on the contrary), but to stress—to describe and understand—the specific determinations of its production, use, representation, at a given moment in a given society (the emphasis of historical, *historical* materialism). The conditional of the eviction of history is exactly matched in all Carroll's terms. Society is a set of rules which we may or may not play by, in which latter case we simply adapt to the structure of the world, the world being yet another unproblematic term, no doubt what you can see in perspective pictures; and if these latter happen to be around in a culture, well that "may be a product of the social contract" (p. 113), but then, as the term *social contract* already tells us, it makes no difference, simply "if *we* want . . ."—the one big anthropological subject, hunter-gatherers and shipping magnates, "inescapable human concern," "deeply biological concern," the end.

As a set of rules we can choose or not to play by, society is separate from men and women, a kind of arena into and from which we can come and go with our wants and concerns, our humanity, and our biology; separate too from material reality, which we can observe and know and adapt to the structure of, whenever we choose not to play by society's rules. There are no social determinations, just "the social contract," the rules again, and the world is knowable in its truth, the realm of Science which thus has no historical-social implications. Epistemologically, there is only the opposition of nonrelativism to relativism

which is the denial of truth; historical materialism, which is neither relativist nor nonrelativist, is incomprehensible. All historical-social questions about scientific developments, the terms of their use, and so on, for example about perspective and image production, are automatically received as denials of Science, which is to say as denials of the reality of reality. Laws are laws, full stop. "The laws from which perspective derives are in no sense conventional, arbitrary, or adopted by fiat. They are laws" (p. 112).

It is Carroll's picture, the position of the "Address," the guarantee of his authoritativeness, and there is little more to add. Of course, "Narrative Space" never did say that the laws from which perspective derives were any of the things mentioned, just that they were . . . laws, "laws of the rectilinear propagation of light rays" (*QC,* p. 28), but then such details are unimportant. If Carroll wants to think that "the laws of the scientific theory" (p. 112) are out there in the world waiting to reveal themselves to whoever should stumble across them, why spoil the nice assurance of the picture by raising some of the irritating objections that the history and philosophy of science have made to this extreme empiricism?[44] But quite why "a representational mimetic system," or "a representational pictorial system," is to be freed of all reference to convention is, I confess, a little

44. Carroll's procedure is to collapse real complexity into a blindingly irrelevant opposition: "the laws of the scientific theory in question ["the laws from which perspective derives"] were not adopted as a result of a social compact or decision; they were not invented; they were discovered" (p. 112). Either the laws were discovered, you accept their reality, or they were invented, you deny their reality, ludicrously claim that they are just fictions, something cobbled up as a result of some social decision or social compact (apparently a preliminary version of what on the next page Carroll calls the "social contract") and devoid of any truth. "The laws of the scientific theory," however, are presumably also internal to the theory and their discovery is a process of elaboration, not simply one of coming across them as we come across tables or moonlight in Vermont or copies of *October.* But this doesn't mean (unless to an extreme empiricist) that the reality of the phenomena described in the laws is being denied, nor that the laws are being said to be incorrect or fictitious or whatever. Which in turn (the movement of the complexity) is not to say that in some immediate sense the truth of the scientific theory is that of a simple "correspondence to the facts" (the so-called "correspondence theory of truth"). If a scientific theory were merely the expression of the facts of the world, which thus contains the knowledge of itself, were just discovered "out there," recognized in its presence in the world, then changes in scientific theory, the superseding of one theory by another, become inexplicable (short of postulating that it is the material world that has changed, thereby giving a new set of facts to which the new theory corresponds). From the point of view of Einstein's theory, the mechanical world of Newtonian theory does not correspond to the facts, but the latter theory can nevertheless be seen to remain truthful, approximately applicable, and successful. Light has been variously talked about scientifically as rays, particles, waves, and indivisible packets of energy or photons, and the descriptions given have produced more or less successful explanations and laws, but these theoretical entities do not get us nearer to, nor exist in, the world as it "really" is, to which we simply do not have theoretically independent access, without this depriving descriptions, explanations, and laws of any reality or truth. Carroll cuts off all problems about science because he wants to cut short all questions of the human relations of science: science is the absolute truth of the world itself and all social, historical, political questions are ruled out of court, identified and castigated as being a ridiculous denial of science and truth and physical reality, as being the relegation of everything to "invention."

hard to fathom and a little tough to swallow.[45] In the emphasis of one of the cognitive psychologists whom Carroll cites with authoritative approval, "When the laws of perspective are employed in picture making . . . they are indeed saddled with convention."[46] Which sums up much of what "Narrative Space" was about, with its stress on the historical use of perspective and its development in picture making, in making movie pictures.

Brecht

Some time into his attack, Carroll launches *"A Brief Digression: The Legacy of Brecht's Errors."* "Brief," needless to say, means several repetitive pages that are quite breathtaking in their doggedly malicious silliness.

Poor Brecht. It "may be true," Carroll suddenly slips into a note, that the description being given of Brecht's thought and theories is not really what is reflected in "the central parts of his thinking" (p. 104, n. 19), but who cares? Just bang down the required version of "Brecht's errors" and bang away at them. So, poor Brecht. His crucial failing was an incorrigible propensity to talk of illusion; he believed, that is, that people take, completely and ludicrously, representation for reality:

> Purportedly, viewers mistake the events depicted by these means of representation for actual events. But this is absurd; the mistaking of plays and films for the real thing by yokels is a standard, universally appreciated, age-old joke of both theater and film because one would have to be abnormally dim-witted to make such an error. Most plays and films, when seen in standard viewing conditions, don't look like events and locales outside the theater. Things like the monocular station point, scale variation, and black-and-white photography work against a film's being taken for reality while the missing fourth walls should persuade uninformed theater goers that something is amiss. But, of course, the telling point is that theater goers and film goers are informed: theater going and film going are institutionalized activities; the normal spectator in the normal viewing circumstances is there to see representations, not the real thing. The apoc-

45. One of the possibilities of Carroll's "conditional argument" strategy is indeed to close discussion by and in "scientific origins": "if one is committed to pictorial fidelity in respect to spatial appearance, then perspective is, as a result of its scientific origins, the best means to that end" (p. 113). Many things have "scientific origins" and are no doubt the best means to their ends; I wouldn't have thought though that that should be enough to stop discussion of those ends, nor of the history, terms, and realization of the "means." "Narrative Space," once again, was concerned with the pictorial development and use of perspective.

46. Margaret A. Hagen, "Picture Perception: Toward a Theoretical Model," *Psychological Bulletin,* vol. 81, no. 8 (1974), 475. Hagen is here restating an emphasis made by J. J. Gibson, whose work is another of Carroll's "major defenses of perspective" (p. 110, n. 24).

> ryphal yokels are funny because of their extraordinary ignorance. They are not normal viewers. Maybe they are such stereotypical comic butts because everyone can feel superior to them (p. 106).

Brecht, the original nonapocryphal yokel, stands there rubbing the straw from his eyes and hopelessly trying to collect his dimmer and dimmer wits, picked out as supreme comic butt in the spotlight of Carroll's rightly felt superiority: he really does believe that spectators act like this, that plays or films are mistaken for "the real thing." Carroll is a brilliant Dr. Johnson: "It is false that any representation is mistaken for reality; that any dramatick fable in its materiality was ever credible, or, for a single moment, was ever credited. . . . The truth is that the spectators are always in their senses, and know, from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage, and that the players are only players."[47]

Maybe, though, the superiority and the brilliance depend on Brecht's having been just a little *too* much set up as the best butt yet? With a smart "perhaps," Carroll does momentarily envisage the possibility of what he calls—such is his way—an "(epistemically) benign sense of illusion," that is, a sense which it would be okay for you, me, and Brecht to use; this would be illusion as "looks like," "*x* looks like *y*" (p. 106). Maybe, "perhaps," but Brecht didn't mean this, or only used it, the cunning old buzzard (can't trust those yokels!), slidingly to justify the malign meaning, which makes the benign malign, too, when Carroll thinks about it:

> Let us call this the (epistemically) benign sense of illusion. The Brechtian, ideological sense of illusion, however, regards mimetic stage flats and film images in a way that implies that normal spectators are deceived or ensnared in falsity by verisimilitude. The argument seems to succeed by initially describing its objects by means of the benign sense of illusion and then fallaciously switching to the deception sense of illusion mid-proof. In respect to its capacity for equivocation, perhaps the benign sense is not so benignant after all, and might better be dropped altogether (p. 106).

When, as he tells us, Carroll looks in his bathroom mirror, he is much too canny to believe that his "doppelgänger" is before him, luckily; when people watch plays and films, they know they aren't seeing the real thing: "Do people usually squabble in kitchens with views fronting on fifteen-hundred seat auditoriums?" (p. 107). General laughter. Poor Brecht!

Whether or not Brecht made the errors ascribed to him is of no significance; the point is to go on, regardless, and, in so doing, to say something about *Questions of Cinema* and "most mainstream film theory in the '70s" for

47. Samuel Johnson, *Preface to Shakespeare* (1765), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1957, pp. 26–27.

which "the Brechtian framework" provided "the working model" and "a number of the operational assumptions" (pp. 103, 108). Nevertheless, before Brecht is sent packing from the light of truth, perhaps it could just be said that he didn't think any of the things Carroll says he did. "The spectator never loses consciousness of the fact that he is at the theatre. He remains conscious of the fact that the illusion from which he derives his pleasure is an illusion." Carroll? No, Brecht, quoted in an article entitled "Lessons from Brecht," which I wrote in 1974.[48] The straw-figure sense of illusion set up and demolished by Carroll over and over again is nowhere in question.[49] In fact, coming around to me for a moment, of the two essays I wrote on Brecht in connection with *Screen*'s interest in Brecht and the idea of a Brechtian cinema (neither reprinted in *Questions of Cinema*), the second, "From Brecht to Film,"[50] contains no mention of *illusion,* while the first, the "Lessons from Brecht" already referred to, has, as the reference will have implied, nothing other than rejection to do with the "error" Carroll attributes, falsely, to Brecht and, presumably, equally falsely, to me: "As has been so often pointed out from at least Dr. Johnson on, no one . . . has ever taken the illusion *as* reality."[51] *Questions of Cinema* itself contains nine references to Brecht (*QC,* pp. vii, 7, 9, 11, 16–17, 33, 227, 237, 242), of which only one even appears on the same page as the word *illusion.* Indeed the piece in the book in which *illusion* mostly occurs, "On Screen, in Frame: Film and Ideology," itself makes reference to a Biograph film that plays on representation-for-reality illusion ("a country bumpkin who becomes so overwhelmed by watching his first motion picture from a stage box that he tears down the screen in his enthusiasm to help the heroine of one of the films," *QC,* pp. 4–5) in order to stress the inadequacy of illusion in thinking about cinema and ideology. The same piece also goes on to stress, for example, the need for caution with regard to

48. "Lessons from Brecht," *Screen,* vol. 15, no. 2 (Summer 1974), 103–128, p. 113; the Brecht quotation is from *Gesammelte Werke,* Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1967, vol. XV, pp. 386–387.

49. The "Address" thrives, if that is the word, on the red-herring repetition of straw-figure arguments. Thus we are told in a note: "One argument in favor of an illusion theory of spectator response—i.e., a theory that says spectators believe they are somehow witnessing the 'real thing'—is to ask a psychological question: 'Why would audiences cry and scream unless they believed the events before them were actually occurring?' I do not examine this type of argument in the section above because it is not one that ciné-Brechtians rely on. However, for the record, let me say that I would begin to answer it by denying the psychological assumption that we are only moved by events that we believe are actual" (p. 104, n. 19). Here Carroll simultaneously states that the supposed argument in question has nothing to do with what he is apparently discussing and gets it in nevertheless for good contamination-by-association effect. However irrelevant, it serves to bolster his equation of all talk of illusion in theater or cinema with "a theory that says spectators believe they are somehow witnessing the 'real thing,'" events that they "believe are actual." Having thereby established the extent of the prevailing dimwittedness, Carroll is not averse, "for the record," to letting us tantalizingly in on the new insight to come: we are not only moved by events that we believe are actual; we can be moved by events in plays and films. And don't be fooled, Brecht never thought of that.

50. "From Brecht to Film," *Screen,* vol. 16, no. 4 (Winter 1975–76), 34–44.

51. "Lessons from Brecht," p. 113.

such received ideas "as that of a simple commitment in the mainstream development of cinema to the effacement of the marks of cinematic practice in favour of a transparent presentation of 'reality'" (*QC,* p. 15).

It is true that both Brecht and the author of *Questions of Cinema* believe that plays and films can "look like events and locales outside the theater." Carroll thinks not: "Most plays and films, when seen in standard viewing conditions, don't look like events and locales outside the theater" (p. 106), which must make things difficult for him, since it means that he can't tell from watching *Rio Lobo* that it isn't set in Wooster Street, New York City. But this may well be no more than a momentary over-the-top gesture in the Dr. Johnson role, as Carroll also has it that film images use perspective, which is bound up with "resemblance" (p. 113) and "provides accurate information about certain aspects of the appearance of the natural scene" (p. 111), so presumably films can manage to look like events and locales outside the theater, and even Carroll can see Wooster Street in a movie. . . ? The "most," too ("most plays and films . . . don't . . ."), is one of Carroll's surprises: so *some* plays and films, when seen in standard viewing conditions, *do* look like, etc.? Is it that Carroll thinks that some plays and films do produce illusion, that sometimes the not simply "abnormally dimwitted" do take plays and films for the real thing? Or is it that the whole reductive fiction of an argument is losing its already feeble grip? Arguing against an extreme version of illusion that Brecht never held (illusion as delusion, play or film experienced *exactly* as the real thing, the spectator unable to make any distinction between the two), Carroll makes wild blanket statements denying that plays and films can have ways of looking like events and locales, which position even he cannot long sustain and which he is obliged vaguely to moderate, thus losing the whole of his (non)argument.

The contortions gone through simultaneously to say something and to avoid saying it are worth noting here. "We treat camera images more like the way we regard the world—as opportunities for sensations and perceptions—than the way we regard our own sensations and perceptions. This is not to say that we take these images to be real in any sense but that we respond to them with an awareness that we are 'outside' rather than 'inside' the world of the photograph; and it is this quality of outsideness that makes seeing a motion picture like seeing an event (though only in this specified respect)" (pp. 115–116). The dismal assertion that we do not take camera images as "real in any sense" is probably just another heat-of-the-moment slip—most of us, I should think, certainly take camera images as real in the sense that they are real images—and is best quickly forgotten. Treating camera images "more like the way we regard the world—as opportunities for sensations and perceptions" is difficult to understand unless the two have some quite considerable relationship of similarity, and indeed "seeing a motion picture" *is* "like seeing an event" (compare "Most plays and films . . . don't look like events and locales outside the theater"). Since Carroll also, however, can't allow himself to say this, because it might

give scope to the dreaded notions of illusion, he throws in the bracket qualification, only in the specified respect of "outsideness." But what that might mean is anybody's guess. Clearly we are not "inside" the world of the photograph in the sense of not knowing we are not in the film, walking around with E.T. or Rocky or any other of the "Address"'s favored movie figures (this is Carroll's old straw-figure illusion, mistaking play or film for "the real thing"), but this can hardly be what is at stake here, since being "outside" is also operative with respect to the way in which we view the world (why we are not "inside" the world in which events take place is left unspecified). "Outsideness" brings world and film together as far as our seeing is concerned: I-eye on the one side, the world and the film on the other, the outside; which again suggests quite a high degree of similarity, look-alikeness, and so on. Perhaps the point is that we see films and we see events, we use our eyes in both cases, this being the "specified respect." I agree, along, as far as I know, with every filmmaker, theorist, and spectator past, present, and future. In a note to the passage quoted (p. 115, n. 31), getting at the maximum "specified respect" outsideness, Carroll tells us—it is another insight—that "the viewing situation" is to be analyzed as "witnessing camera images" (not "real in any sense"?). I agree again, very happily, especially inasmuch as I doubt many filmmakers, theorists, spectators, past, present, future ever thought that watching a film wasn't "witnessing camera images"; but then it's just that I doubt that most of them didn't think watching a film was also more than that (what did you do last night? I witnessed some camera images. . . .), was exactly watching "a film," images of events and locales with words and sounds and music all put together in certain ways, with look-alikeness, story, emotional involvement, impressions of living the events—all sorts of appallingly unepistemic benign and malign and malignly benign goings-on.

Which is what, if used, *illusion* is about. Carroll pours scorn on "effusive critical claims like 'the play was so good it seemed real'": "These are obviously tropes of hyperbolic praise—the play was so good that it achieved something impossible (it seemed unequivocably real)" (p. 106). The rewrite gives the usual game away, back to the yokels and the abnormally dimwitted. The claim "the play was so good it seemed real" does not say anything about achieving something impossible, about play or film as unequivocably real (note the yokel-argument introduction of "unequivocably"); all it says is that the play or film seemed real, that it gave an impression of lifelikeness, that one believed in the representation as *of* reality, that it commanded certain kinds of assent, adhesion, participation—yes that's how it was, how it is, how it must have been, how it would be; it was just like life. Such responses may be dumb and incorrect for a Noël Carroll but they are not, I would have thought, uncommon; they are indeed, to use a Carroll term, quite "normal"; "normal" spectators seem to indulge in them; even some film theorists have been known to talk about things like "immediacy." Nor, yet once more, do they have anything to do with thinking the film *is* the reality it shows. Irrelevantly, Carroll waxes humorous

on this same old theme: "Nor are the producers of these spectacles interested in fooling spectators. Imagine the chagrin of the makers of *Tora! Tora! Tora!* had the opening of that film not been reported in the arts section of *The New York Times* but on the front page as a news item under the headline—'World War II Breaks Out on Broadway'" (p. 107). Though I don't know anything about the film in question, on the face of it I would have thought the producers would have been rather pleased with a sensational headline on the front page of *The New York Times;* but, leaving that aside, this is anyway nonsense, triggered off by the loaded "fooling spectators," with the yokel argument well in tow. The truth is that producers go to some lengths to create accurate representations, to make films like life, to produce something of an effect of having a feel of what it "might have been like" to have been in, say, World War II, to give, well, yes, an illusion of reality. Does Carroll seriously think that the production of *Gandhi,* for example, had nothing to do with an idea of producing a response of the kind "it was so good it seemed real," that Attenborough went about things wanting and expecting spectators just to come out saying they had witnessed camera images?

Such a response—"it was so good it seemed real"—goes along with ideas of being gripped by the film, of getting involved in it, of—Carroll's "outsideness" notwithstanding—actually feeling caught up in, feeling inside the world depicted. For, yes, knowledge and belief can go in many ways and at one and the same time, and this while Carroll is watching his not-real-in-any-sense camera images and hooting at the dimwits. People can know perfectly well they are in a theater or a cinema watching a play or a film and simultaneously entertain forms of belief in the scenes, the images, the world shown; be caught up and carried along in the play's or film's movement, the reality it offers. "Things like the monocular station point, scale variation, and black-and-white photography work against a film's being taken for reality while the missing fourth walls should persuade uninformed theater goers that something is amiss" (p. 106). Which merely says, again (multiplied by a couple of hundred), that plays and films are not the events and locales outside the theater, that the spectator is there to see representations and not "the real thing." But knowledge of the reality of the representation (I am in a cinema, not in India with Gandhi) does not eliminate the possibility of, to use a famous phrase, "the willing suspension of disbelief" (I am in India with Gandhi, living his story; I feel I'm really there, really witnessing the events); or, in another famous phrase, "I know, but all the same. . . ."[52] Indeed, it is precisely on the basis of the knowledge that this is a

52. The phrase is that of the disavowal that Freud describes as the basic operation of fetishism, "Fetischismus" (1927), *Gesammelte Werke,* London, Imago, 1940–1952, vol. 14, pp. 311–317; trans., "Fetishism," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* London, Hogarth Press, 1953–1966, vol. XXI, pp. 147–157. For the classic statement of the phrase and its relation to representational illusion, see Octave Mannoni, "Je sais bien, mais quand

representation and not "the real thing" that the suspension of disbelief is possible, that illusion can work. "The telling point is that theater goers and film goers are informed," says Carroll (p. 106). Exactly, and what this informedness means is that they know about theater and cinema not just as places and bits of machinery and so on, but as conventions of representation within which a certain kind of involvement, a belief that one is watching a kind of reality of life, may be solicited and sustained.

Poor Brecht. He thought he was situated with respect to a theatrical history in which just such belief and involvement were engaged. When he looked at cinema, he saw new possibilities and, quickly, old forms, more illusion.[53] Poor Brecht, what more is there to say?

Just two things, I think, to touch on the implications of all this, on something of its political position.

Carroll has shown to his satisfaction—this is his purpose—that there is no such thing as "cinematic illusionism," that all claims about it are "shaky," indeed are referring to "nonexistent phenomena" (p. 109). Consideration of film and ideology through analyses of "narrative illusionism," "the illusionism of cinematic verisimilitude," their interrelations, and so on (p. 105) is rubbish, to be put a stop to; no more "illusion." Carroll is right: this *is* an attack on "much of the ambitious film theory of the '70s" (p. 105), though, since "ambitious" is a word from the Carroll world, I think we should translate: "much of the political film theory of the '70s." It encompasses, for instance, Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," with its analysis of "illusionistic narrative film."[54] I cite Mulvey's article not only because of its importance but also because it appeared in *Screen* and had repercussions there for everyone's work, including mine, including *Questions of Cinema.* But I should add that it encompasses, too, much of the work that has seemingly been influential for *October,* as for instance, Noël Burch's account of film's "institutional mode of representation," his critique of "the whole illusionist discourse of film."[55] *Questions of Cinema* contains criticisms of Burch, but I can accept with him that there is indeed matter for debate and analysis and change, that, instead of "nonexistent phenomena," there is a "politics of illusionism." Which phrase I borrow from Annette Michelson; it occurs in her "Introduction" to Burch's *Theory of Film Practice* and

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même. . . ," and "L'Illusion comique ou le théâtre du point de vue de l'imaginaire," *Clefs pour l'imaginaire,* Paris, Seuil, 1969, pp. 9–33 and 161–183.

53. For discussion of Brecht's attitude to and work in cinema, see Ben Brewster, "Brecht and the Film Industry," *Screen,* vol. 16, no. 4 (Winter 1975–76), pp. 16–33; "The Fundamental Reproach (Brecht)," *Ciné-tracts,* no. 2 (1977), pp. 44–53.

54. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen,* vol. 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1975), 17.

55. For programmatic statements, see, e.g., Noël Burch, "Propositions" (with Jorge Dana), *Afterimage,* no. 5 (Spring 1974), 40–65; "Avant-garde or Vanguard," *Afterimage,* no. 6 (Summer 1976), 52–63.

elsewhere, importantly; and it indicates, I think, not that she too was talking about something nonexistent, but that, in the context of an idea of dominant cinema as "the most achieved of all illusionist systems," she was understanding and championing a certain avant-garde: "the development of that detailed critique of illusionism which marks the passage from *cinema* to *film.*"[56]

Attacking that film theory, any politics of illusionism, Carroll, and this is the second thing I wanted to say, is advancing a position whose effect can be grasped from a reference he makes to *Fort Apache, the Bronx* (part of his attack on "the Brechtian framework"):

> One asks of those viewers who thought the film was truthful about communal life in the South Bronx whether it was the mimetic cinematography that got to them rather than the fact that they already believed certain myths about the unrelenting violence of black social life? And wouldn't such viewers continue to believe these myths if the film were shown out of focus or if the production had been a stick-figure cartoon? (p. 108).

These questions are an expression of the complete political demobilization that Carroll is given over to in his work (I assume the "Address" is fairly representative)—no wonder he begins by "leaving aside" political questions (always a good thing to do) to get into "theory as theory" (p. 89, n. 1). If the rhetorical questions in the passage are given the assent they ask for, then we must recognize that it is useless (and probably epistemically wrong)—we really shouldn't do it—to protest about *Fort Apache, the Bronx* and indeed any other film, since films have no effects. Nothing matters, out of focus, stick-figure cartoons, it's all the same: spectators already think what they think and will continue to think it regardless of what they see. The crucial word is *already*—"the fact that they already believed": people believe myths (which presumably here means false beliefs), they have illusions, but they already have them, always already. Where do they come from? Mystery. From society, we might hazard. But that won't get us far (especially if we think that society is just "a set of rules"). Suppose we start to talk about ideology, systems of representation, and so on; suppose we say that cinema is part of ideological realization, that it is a constitutive part of social representation; but then that would mean that people might get beliefs from films (from films among other things), that films might play a part in the ideological elaboration and definition and confirmation of those "myths,"

56. Annette Michelson, "Introduction" to Noël Burch, *Theory of Film Practice,* London, Secker & Warburg, 1973, p. xi; "Screen/Surface: The Politics of Illusionism," *Artforum,* vol. XI, no. 1 (September 1972), 58–62; "Paul Sharits and the Critique of Illusionism," in *Projected Images,* Minneapolis, Walker Art Center, 1974, cit. Peter Wollen, *Readings and Writings: Semiotic Counter-Strategies,* London, Verso, 1982, p. 194. Wollen's "'Ontology' and 'Materialism' in Film," from which this last Michelson quotation comes, gives a good overview of "anti-illusionism" in avant-garde film theory, *ibid.,* pp. 189–207.

that they do have effects, that the terms of their production do matter, including whether or not they are shown out of focus, so that there might be some point in protesting, attempting alternative forms? No, not at all, people already believe, somewhere there is an origin of ideology, personal and mental; the beliefs—the myths—that ideology simply is are not bound up with social systems of representation like cinema; people have them in their heads, already, and with luck and logic and Carroll we can probably clear our heads rather as we blow our noses. Meanwhile, be that as it may, the one thing we can be certain of is that cinema and ideology is a contradiction in terms, so we'd better give it up and leave the new film theory in peace.

Interminability

Carroll has a section entitled "The Interminability Thesis." Reading it, I have to admit to a peculiarly intense feeling of estrangement. I learn that I follow the "current notion" (though with my "own view") of texts as "multiple, or in some sense infinite"; this notion is "supported by a range of arguments" which "extend from the absurd claim that each reader has his own meaning to a theory which holds that since each word is interdefined by others within the language system, each word leads us ceaselessly to others" (pp. 140–141).

Questions of Cinema has nothing about each reader having his (?) own meaning or about words leading ceaselessly to others. What I do say, in a piece offered as a brief conclusion (*QC,* p. 244) and totally ignored by Carroll, is as follows:

> Debate around films often stumbles over issues of effectivity, "the real effect of a film," deadlocks on either "the text itself", its meaning "in it", or else the text as non-existent other than "outside itself", in the particular responses it happens to engage from any individual or individual audience—the text "closed" or "open". The reading (viewing, reception, understanding, reaction) of a film, however, must be seen as neither constrained absolutely nor free absolutely but historical, and that historicality includes the determinations of the institution cinema, the conditions of the production of meanings, of specific terms of address (of engagement of reading) (*QC,* pp. 242–243).

Whatever the failings of that formulation, it cannot be said to involve anything of what Carroll says to be bound up with the assertion of texts as "multiple, or in some sense infinite."

But then apparently it can; or, to put it another way, Carroll embarks on a remarkable demonstration of the idea that "each reader has his own meaning" (the point of the "his" becomes clear: Carroll is referring to himself, he has his own meaning for anything he reads in *Questions of Cinema*), remarkable not least for the contortions it once again entails. Thus, though I am credited with an "own view" that "a film is always—interminably and ceaselessly—constructing

and reconstructing the subject through the film discourse" (p. 141), it turns out anyway, by a kind of infectious juxtaposition-elision, to be the same current notion about multiple and infinite texts, so not really an "own view" at all; whereupon "dark prospects" are envisioned: "From the practical viewpoint of film criticism or film theory, the interminability thesis holds dark prospects. What consequences does it have for research? How would it, for example, guide one to analyze a film? Would one sit at one's viewing machine and chart each ceaseless suture as it appears?" (p. 141).

I have to say that "dark prospects" for film criticism or film theory as Carroll represents them don't much alarm me—that is his professional perspective, not mine, the worry about what "one" will do at "one's" viewing machine, deducting $3,000 for moviegoing on the year's taxes (p. 91), and so on. Equally, though, I never advocated, even less practiced, "Such interminable analyses" (p. 141). It is true that I wrote what Carroll refers to as a "monograph-scale study of *Touch of Evil*" (p. 162), which, naturally, he doesn't like, and which, inevitably, he declares to be an example of the current notion of interminability; it is true, too, that "Narrative Space" has some analysis of a scene from *Suspicion,* which attracts the same natural dislike and inevitable declaration (p. 163). But then six pages on the *Suspicion* scene or a hundred or so on *Touch of Evil* hardly seem instances of interminable analysis (is it just that, as seems to be implied, a "monograph-scale study" of a film is wrong in itself?). Leaving that aside, what is more immediately important is that these analyses do not say anything like the text is interminable, each reader has his or her own meaning, and so on. Among other things, the study of *Touch of Evil* is devoted to the film *and its system* with a quite definite analysis of meaning.[57] Furthermore, the idea that a film is involved in the interminable construction and reconstruction of the subject through the film discourse, or "interminable suture" as Carroll elsewhere puts my "own view" (p. 162), has simply nothing whatsoever to do with an idea of the film's being without localized meaning, every viewer for him or herself. Much time is spent in *Questions of Cinema* on narrative as a localization of meaning, as a specific and specifying order of the film; and the whole point of the concept of suture, I would have thought, is the account it gives of the binding of the spectator to a coherence, a meaning, a closure of the possible multiplicity (so that from the standpoint of an infinite multiple text theory, suture would be on the other side, a limiting operation, about the closure of texts).

By the end of his "Interminability" section, Carroll has symptomatically lapsed into shadow-boxing argument with an imagined "follower of Heath" (p. 151; of course, I have and want no followers, would want only people accompanying me as I accompany them in exchange and criticism and effort to

57. "Film and System: Terms of Analysis," *Screen,* vol. 16, no. 1 (Spring 1975), 7–77, and vol. 16, no. 2 (Summer 1975), 91–113; additional note, *"Touch of Evil*—the long version," *Screen,* vol. 17, no. 1 (Spring 1976), 115–117.

sustain political-cultural work and analysis; all Carroll can think of is having followers, being a favorite of graduate students, and so on). The tone gets irate, "humbug" and "prattle" are flung about, and the follower or me is rapped on the knuckles in case we said that a film is at once finished and unfinished. The best thing is to quote the relevant passage in which Carroll puts things right:

> However, it is not the case that the film is both complete and not complete, finished and not finished at the same time, in the same way, in any sense that is paradoxical. For these putative paradoxes disappear once we qualify our way of using the concepts of complete and finished. Heath is simply retreading an ancient, fallacious argument form—one Plato relished, but Aristotle corrected. The film as a coherent structure (not as a homogeneous, process-whole) embodied in celluloid and ready to be mounted on a projector is finished or completed at the time of its release. A car is finished as a car when it rolls out of the factory. The term of its literal construction is over. Of course, it is an object for use. So one might say that it is not completed until it is used. But this is a new sense of completion. It is a function sense, rather than an object sense. In a certain patriarchal way of speaking, it is said that a woman is not complete until she has borne a child. Here, the sense of "completeness" is not that of a numerically identifiable entity but that of "fulfillment." The film is constructed, finished, and complete as an identifiable entity at the time of its release. It remains to fulfill the task it was made for through repeated showings. So it is not that the film is both complete and not complete, but that it is finished as an object in terms of its construction but remains to perform the task it was constructed to perform. There is no paradox, though Heath is led to see one because he equivocates on the sense in which we are to understand *finished* (p. 151).

I never said there was any paradox, just that this is the way it is with film; and this in order to focus on different levels of enunciation (*QC,* pp. 216–217; Carroll drops this bit). The car analogy is a deliberately confusing simplification, "bullying" (p. 153); for if film and car are going to be compared, then part of the comparison should stress the difference between the two and not merely conflate them, thereby removing film—but then this is the point of the operation—from the field of the process of representation and meaning, crucially from ideology. A film is made to be projected, a car to be driven, both are objects for use in these ways, finished or completed as such objects "at the time of its release" or "when it rolls out of the factory." We agree. But, end of agreement, a film is also rather different. If you see a film, it makes sense for someone to ask you what it's about; if you buy a car, I think you'd be a bit surprised at such a question, find it a little odd. Most likely you'd be asked "what make?" and you'd know the answer—Toyota, BMW, Ford. . . . Whereas with a film,

you'd be asked "*who* made it?" and you might know or you might not, and in the first case you'd answer Graeme Clifford, Chantal Akerman. . . . "You" here, it should be noted, is getting precarious in its generalization, since "who made it?" is more socially limiting than "what's it about?," is bound up with more specific terms of response, interest, and knowledge. Relatively few people, I suppose, see *Je tu il elle* without knowing that "Chantal Akerman" would be an acceptable answer to "who made it?"; indeed that knowledge is probably in many cases a significant part of the seeing of the film. Many people, I suppose, see *Frances* without knowing at all that Graeme Clifford made it and without caring two hoots (I had to stop and look it up), while being perfectly ready to say and discuss what it's about. Moreover, when we say that Chantal Akerman or Graeme Clifford "made" this or that film, we don't at all mean that they made the object in the can *qua* object; we don't believe they made the actual reels of film; we mean that they made what is "in" the film, this particular film, where the particularity is in the meanings, the representation, the discursive act. Reels of 35mm film look alike and there is no difference between them in their object-for-use status as such; they will all fulfill the function of being put through a projector equally successfully. Yet, however much this may make films like cars, most of us know perfectly well that films are still very different objects, not like cars, that they are also entertainment, images of life, extensions of our imaginative experience, emotionally engaging stories, and so on, any number and mixture of such things. I should add that this is not to say that cars are not involved in meanings; they are—Barthes's *Mythologies* and the subsequent developments of semiotics have sufficiently alerted us to the inevitable existence of objects as *cultural* objects, surrounded by, taken up in, shot through with meanings. However far one pushes that emphasis and the analysis of cars it gives, though, film is *still* different: an object for use and a specific production of meaning that is in fact its use for the spectator, and that is separate from, and not elided with, its simple objectness (hence the difference in the habitual questions about car or film mentioned above); the "coherent structure . . . embodied in celluloid" is particular and discursive, not just some pattern or shape made out of celluloid, not just "a numerically identifiable entity" like the 177th Toyota produced today.

End of the car analogy. I did say at the start that we wouldn't altogether manage to avoid tedium, the inclination to pack up for lunch is gaining ground (what got *October* into all this?). But Carroll has another analogy, a woman and completion by having a child. He introduces it with "In a certain patriarchal way of speaking," so we know we are being asked to take him as distant from this instance of a sense of completion that he wants to identify; he tells us not to think that he thinks that "a woman is not complete until she has borne a child," but he does want, he is going to adopt, "this sense of 'completeness,'" "not that of a numerically identifiable entity but that of 'fulfillment'": "The film is constructed, finished, and complete as an identifiable entity at the time of its re-

lease. It remains to fulfill the task it was made for through repeated showings."

Earlier, talking about film as finished and unfinished, Carroll says that it is just a "harmless paradox" (p. 150; "the paradox we are left with is perfectly harmless"). Though I don't happen to think it is a paradox and never suggested it was, I agree with the "harmless" bit—saying it doesn't hurt or oppress anyone. I also think it can be developed to pose questions that the understanding and analysis of cinema and ideology needs to take into account, but that's another matter. Is Carroll's analogy harmless? Of course, in one establishment of language philosophy the content of your examples is pleasantly immaterial; whether you talk of cars or women or whatever is irrelevant; it's all one huge game in which errors can be corrected from the armchair of truth. Carroll has his two senses of "completeness," his "object" sense and his "function" sense, and gets them from "a car" and "a woman" (indeed, "a woman" is a happy addition, a further example for a sense he already had with his car, which "is not completed until people buy it and drive it," p. 150). These are good senses, they can be applied acceptably to film. Does this acceptableness run back into the original—or rather second—analogy, a woman? If not, how do you stop it? By removing the function sense and leaving a woman with the other sense, the object sense, the "numerically identifiable entity"?

All this is irrelevant, the analogy is perfectly harmless. . . . Carroll says what he means and means what he says without doubt. But analogies are risks taken and the risk here, as a woman becomes an analogy in the general drift after cars, is to leave her in the sense of completion, let her end up like a film or a car, an interesting analogy, whether or not you allow the two senses or one. Completion has nothing to do with women or men at all, other than as a fiction in a discourse of constraint or oppression: people do not complete themselves by bearing a child or becoming a father, *nor are they complete without those "fulfillments,"* fixed entities, finished in some initial essence of "a woman" or "a man." I don't believe there is any politically progressive room for a discourse of completeness and completion in relation to human beings and I think that has to be said every time, not left off for the expedient analogy. The interesting thing in the present context is that that emphasis is exactly the potentially radical stress of psychoanalysis and its reference to interminability; it is what *Questions of Cinema* is concerned with in its uses of psychoanalysis and its references to interminability; it is part of a recognition of the functioning of ideology in its representative institutions (like cinema), the making and remaking of sense, over and over, just because there is no beginning and end, no simply fixed point of identity, no "the man," "the woman."

But I've started slipping; I took the analogy *seriously,* whereas Carroll means what he says: it's just an analogy. Yet even then, we know it's not, not *just* that. One of its points—neither innocent nor arbitrary—is to signify "I am okay, correct, nonpatriarchal" (one of my difficulties here is then that of not signifying that I am somehow better by virtue of Carroll's default, of not accepting

the stupid positioning that the "Address" forces): "In a certain patriarchal way of speaking, it is said. . . ." Others say, not me; patriarchy is somewhere else, another way of speaking, is other men or society or. . . . In this the analogy says a lot too about what Carroll doesn't say, the sudden entry of a woman in a certain patriarchal way of speaking in an "Address" from which any consideration of sexual difference is otherwise completely absent, the sudden appeal of such a simple "example."

Carroll would not accept any of this, since he does not accept that the relation between subject and language is at all problematic, unsettled, divisive, does not accept anything of the "subject-in-language myth" (p. 129). Like Humpty Dumpty he is the master of words, they do what he wants, "neither more nor less."[58] So the core of the "Interminability" section is his refusal of "a fact of speech that Heath characterizes by the 'enounced'/'enunciation' distinction": "The crux of this story is the distinction between the 'enounced' or statement and the 'enunciation' or speech act. If this split is not forced upon the subject by all representation, then there is no reason to postulate the Imaginary as the means of overcoming the cleavage it is said to impose. The interminability thesis would thus lose its support" (p. 148). Most of the time, in fact, Carroll attempts a kind of defensive minimalization: the distinction is part of a story and banished into the realms of fiction, but suppose he were to have to allow it some reality, then at least he is going to stop the rot spreading too far:

> I say, "I went to the store yesterday." The subject, "I," inside the quotation marks is the subject of the statement. The subject outside the quotes, the "I" speaking the sentence in the present tense, could be seen, heuristically, as the equivalent of the subject of the speech act. Or, to be more precise, the simple utterance "I went to the store yesterday" really has two subjects, the "I" (of the statement) who went to the store, and the unwritten "I" that speaks the sentence (the subject of speech act). Every utterance has these two subjects, and they are not the same. . . .
>
> This account, as Heath argues it, is extremely improbable. It asks us to believe that every sentence and every representation involves a split subject. The evidence is based on first-person utterances: "I went to the store." But what about second and third person utterances? I say, "He went to the store." Where is the split subject? It's true that I said it and he did it, but what would this have to do

58. "'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.' 'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you *can* make words mean so many different things.' 'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master—that's all.'" Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass* (1872), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982, p. 190.

> with the identity of the speaker? Also, sometimes first-person present-tense utterances don't imply a duality of subjects. Asked what I am doing at this moment, I reply, while still pushing my pen, "I am writing." Thus, the distinction between the subject of the statement and the subject of speech act seems to apply only to a limited range of utterances. So, why is it generalized as a feature of all languages and all representations? How can such a limited phenomenon reveal something that is true of all representations? (pp. 148–149).

The most astonishing thing about this, given the stance of rigorous philosophical knowledge the "Address" constantly claims to adopt, is the hopelessly off-target lunge at performative utterances. When I reply, in Carroll's example, "I am writing," "I," subject of the enunciation, report that "I," subject of the statement, produced in a specific representation, am involved in the activity of writing: I make a statement about myself and the movement from the process of the "I" making to the myself made, the "I" produced as subject of the statement, is the distinction between enunciation and enounced. There is no difference in this respect between "I am writing" and "I went to the store yesterday"; "while still pushing my pen" is a red herring, merely a case of suiting the action to the word that does nothing to change, and has no implications for, the distinction between the discursive act and the statement made, in which distinction the subject is held and divided. Carroll is confused with the more interesting case of performative utterances where the enunciation *accomplishes* the act enounced. When I say "I promise to come," I have promised to come; by saying the words I accomplished the act of promising. "I am writing" is quite different: saying the words does not accomplish the act of writing; I just report on what I am doing, a report which could be true or false (I can say "I am writing" without being involved in the activity of writing at all). A more intricate example might have been "I am speaking," since if I say those words out loud I will indeed have spoken. Even here, though, we can note that the action of speaking could be accomplished equally well by saying anything in any language (the relation to saying "I am speaking" has no necessity, is finally an extreme case of suiting word and action, whereas the action of promising is limited in its verbal realization and is not *suiting* word and action but word as *doing* the action) and that the continuous present tense is that of reporting, not of performative doing (thus "I am promising" is different from "I promise"; in the former I report or comment on an act I am doing; I do not thereby do the act).[59]

59. One way of bringing "I am writing" into a performative analysis would be to move from a distinction between saying something and doing by saying, between "constative" and "performative" utterances, to the emphasis that language is always language in use, that any saying is always in itself a doing. J. L. Austin, who introduced the analysis of "performatives," himself made this move with his stress on the "illocutionary" force of any utterance; see *How to Do Things With Words,* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1962. Thus "I am writing" is the assertion "I tell you I am writing." For the linguistic development of this (the illocutionary force of an utterance is part of the

Beyond the confusion with "I am writing," performative utterances do provide something of a scenario of the closing of the split between subject of the enunciation and subject of the enounced (so that performatives were what Carroll aimed at but missed). When I say "I promise," I pose myself as the subject of an action that is really mine in language: I accomplish the action and, exactly, that accomplishment is the achievement of a stable, unified "I," full of the action that is mine—only I can promise for me—and the holding of language entirely to that action of mine—the utterance is the action. Subject of enunciation and subject of enounced come together: "I" has the identity of my action that this utterance is. Thus the supreme performative, eminently and appropriately Carrollian, is "I object" (in a debate, for instance). To say "I object" is to object; I may or may not go on to give reasons for my objection but, no matter, I have objected. But then, precisely, I have indeed *objected,* brought myself together as an identity, erect, *an "I" object.* The objectification—or "objection"—is cast in the imaginary, is a fiction of the ego; "I" is always, evidently, a mark of the subject in language; the division never closes; the performative act is also an act *of language;* the imaginary is a production *in relation to* the symbolic which always returns the process of the signifier and the implication of the subject there (language never just means what I mean, even I-Carroll). Performatives are an example of an imaginary of the "I," but this is to say that that "I" is an object constructed, underrun by the process it offers to stop, to identify as "mine."

"I am writing" fails to keep the enunciation/enounced distinction down to a restricted number only of all first-person utterances. What will also fail (the future tense seems best, as Carroll makes no substantial effort, merely odd gestures of irritation) is the attempt to limit it solely to first person utterances, "But what about second and third person utterances?" The "I" may be a sensitive point in our relation in and to language, a point at which we join and divide and are identified, but its absence does not magically raise an utterance out of the distinction. When Carroll brings out his "In a certain patriarchal way of speaking, it is said that a woman is not complete until she has borne a child,"

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meaning of the particular sentence and is given as a performative verb that may be deleted from the actual surface form), see notably John R. Ross, "On Declarative Sentences," in *Readings in English Transformational Grammar,* ed. R. Jacobs and P. S. Rosenbaum, Boston, Ginn, 1970, pp. 222–272. The significance of Austin's move in the present context is exactly the way in which within linguistic philosophy it begins an interest in matters of the enunciation, opening out from attention to language in a simply descriptive function (the construction of sequences of propositions). Austin has no developed enunciation/enounced distinction and works with "utterance" and "issuing an utterance," the latter clearly marking the limits of his analysis—language as performance by a *given* I-identity. For a discussion of Austin's work in the context of the enunciation/enounced distinction and in relation to film, see Joan Copjec, *"India Song/Son Nom de Venise dans Calcutta désert:* The Compulsion to Repeat," *October,* no. 17 (Summer 1981), 37–52.

we still have an enounced and an enunciation, a statement and the fact of its production, with Carroll implicated there as subject. That he projects his distance as ego, proposes himself as subject-master of a simple analogy that in no sense concerns him and is just a term in the pure reason of an argument devoid of any "I," does not stop the discursive act, the reality of the production of the utterance, the involvement of him in that produced utterance quite differently from the projected place of his subject-mastery. Indeed, one of the things an understanding of ideology includes is the analysis of the available and assured forms and conventions of the "resolution" of the enunciation/enounced distinction, the versions of subject-coherence in language and their institutional definition and support. The "Address" cries out for such analysis.

We have already run over into what is fundamental to Carroll's refusal of enunciation and enounced, "a further problem": "There is a further problem with Heath's account. Not only is the statement/speech act distinction said to apply to all utterances, but it is said to portend a *split* in the subject, and *not only a difference* in subject(s) of the sentence" (p. 149). Carroll refuses the distinction, but if by some misfortune he can't get rid of it, then he'd rather be two whole subjects than a split subject, a subject in process. Still, split there is, of the subject in language which is more than the positions, the representations ceaselessly effected and assumed.[60] "When a sickly adult says, 'I was a healthy child,' we understand him as saying that with respect to health, he was once better off, but we do not take this to mean that he has been split—logically, ontologically, or psychologically—from the child he once was. The sickly speaker is an enduring substance who has different properties at different times" (p. 149). Why what we understand is a criterion for whether or not there is a split is not explained; I would have thought that one of the things that Freud and psychoanalysis had effectively demonstrated was that what we understand is less than what there is to understand, that what we think we understand tells us nothing about the fact of the unconscious. But then the unconscious is what Carroll cannot allow, cannot allow without losing the whole imaginary of his arguments and position, his very mission—imagine the Lord with an awareness of the unconscious addressing the heathen!

Hence the clutching at straws: "The sickly speaker is an enduring substance who has different properties at different times." "The sickly speaker" presumably means "the speaker." (If the *sickly* speaker is the enduring substance, how did the healthy child get into the act? Was the healthy child an enduring substance at the time? If not, what was it? If it was, what happened to it?) "The speaker" itself seems a bit tough. (Are babies not enduring substances before they speak? If the sickly speaker becomes unable to speak as a result of the sick-

60. Joan Copjec has some remarks on the subject as "simultaneously constituted and dislocated by speech" in the same "Film Books" *October;* "The Anxiety of the Influencing Machine," p. 58.

ness, is the enduring substance lost?) In fact, it looks as though "the sickly speaker" means . . . the individual (?). This, however, can only be the beginning of a problem, not an answer, not even in Carroll's terms (to put it in the jargon of the philosophy he has as one basic component of his authority and position, we are left with a substance-attribute metaphysic which simply presupposes and asserts substance identity). The sickly speaker, the speaker, the individual is "an enduring substance who has different properties at different times." What is this enduring substance? Silence from Carroll. Some physical matter? The body? In what sense and how does it have different properties at different times? How is it the same? What are the terms of, and what guarantees, its identity? Where does it begin and end? Is it always already a person ("an enduring substance *who*. . . .")? Not physical matter but a kind of given original identity that then works itself out through the healthy child and the sickly adult? Is it mind, some kind of Cartesian "spiritual substance"? Etc. Etc. The history of philosophy could be written as an endless series of debates over "identity" and "substance," the "enduring substance" Carroll just throws in as an answer; he cannot appeal from there to the unity of the subject and the errors of psychoanalysis. All he has done is to declare that the individual is an individual, prelinguistic and pre-anything in its enduring substance which is an identity "I" from the start and for ever after, one and the same.[61]

I'm tired, and angry, too, by now at being involved in this in *October,* at not having something constructive to move from, to develop. Here I *should* say that the "sickly speaker"/"healthy child" example is a version of one given by Freud (cited *QC,* p. 117) and go on to discuss the enunciation/enounced distinction in the context of psychoanalysis and its understanding of the unconscious (the distinction then not at all to be read merely as the linguistic philosophy account of "speech acts"), outlining the terms for an approach to subject

61. For an example of the continued debate around "substance" in Carroll's invoked philosophy, see David Wiggins, *Sameness and Substance,* Oxford, Blackwell, 1980.

It would be equally possible to give the questions here a run around in linguistic philosophy terms. When I speak about myself in the Carroll version of identity, I am the person I am speaking about, and that I is not linguistic, is one and the same with no loss of unity (no split, no movement from I to I, no subjects of enunciation and enounced, no such distinction anyway), is preexistently identified. "I" then simply refers to my always preceding enduring substance; identity is the same in every case (since the enduring substance by definition always precedes and underlies it). Thus if we had, say, (1) "I am thinking about God the Father," (2) "I watched a movie yesterday," (3) "I was hit by a cricket ball," (4) "I'm meeting Peter Gidal for doughnuts in the park," I should be able in each case to bring the "I" back to my enduring substance. Carroll doesn't tell us what the latter is, but it seems not unfair to try "my body" as a reasonable candidate and see how we get on making that the identity of the "I." Fine for (3), not too good for (2) and (4) (just "my body watched a movie yesterday," "my body is meeting PG for doughnuts in the park"?), even worse for (1) ("my body is thinking about God the Father"?). Substituting "my mind" doesn't seem to help much, merely reverses things, down to "my mind was hit by a cricket ball." Even supposing the enduring substance and its specifiable identity "who" preexists, wouldn't the fact that it cannot be identically reflected in language still be a problem? Cf. H. P. Grice, "Personal Identity," *Mind,* vol. 50 (October 1941), 330–350.

construction, the limitations of psychoanalysis, and so on. But I have tried to do this in the movement of *Questions of Cinema* and its explicit moments of critique (e.g., *QC,* pp. 194–220), in "Difference" in connection with representation and sexual identity, in "The Turn of the Subject" in a way that attempts to define and relate instances such as individual and ego and I, and, in so doing, to look at certain problems with regard to ideology.[62] What is the point of copying them out? I would have liked here, in this *October,* to have been able to begin elsewhere, not in this position from Carroll. I was working on a piece on ways of thinking about identification and the implications for cinema and ideology, looking back critically over recent film theory, *Questions of Cinema* included; but that turned out to be another issue, in both senses—quite another issue from Carroll's "Address to the Heathen," and so another issue of *October,* if they want. Which just leaves time now for some general remarks, somewhat curtailed—it has been a long and dreary day writing this.

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At the beginning of the *October* "Film Books" special issue, one of the editors, Annette Michelson, stresses the radical force of recent film theory that has rendered archaic the film-critical establishment of the United States. At the end, Noël Carroll declares that: "Interestingly enough, cinema studies is an area of academic inquiry in which Marxism and psychoanalysis are regarded as established, mainstream methodologies" (p. 89); then he starts his attack, the "Address to the Heathen."

I would suppose that the film-critical establishment of the United States is surviving quite well and that that indeed is part of the continued *opposition* of *October.* Perhaps it has been rendered archaic theoretically, but practically?[63] At the same time, Michelson also points to "the academy": to the university presses which have brought out these books under review and many others (*October* is published by MIT Press) and to the universities themselves which provide "one major forum and audience" for this "theorization of the cinema," that can then be seen just like "other developing disciplines."[64] Which is where Carroll picks up, where his "Address" is from. I am not well placed to judge whether or not Marxism and psychoanalysis have become established, mainstream methodologies in "cinema studies" as "an area of academic inquiry" in the U.S., but I doubt it; the '70s may have seen Marxism and psychoanalysis becoming important in a number of film journals and filmmaking practices with some (or no) direct connection with the academy and then entering the

62. "Difference," *Screen,* vol. 19, no. 3 (Autumn 1978), 51–112; for "The Turn of the Subject," see n. 19 above.

63. I was struck in this context by the Godard/Kael debate published in the last issue of *Camera Obscura* that reached me at the same time as the "Film Books" *October;* Jean-Luc Godard and Pauline Kael, "The Economics of Film Criticism: A Debate," *Camera Obscura,* nos. 8–9–10 (Fall 1982), 163–184.

64. Michelson, opening statement, p. 3

latter from there to determine debates and work to some extent, but mainstream and established? I think that *Screen* made a real contribution to the development of that situation, the situation in which Carroll can feel the need to put it like that, to begin "interestingly enough" with "Marxism and psychoanalysis"; and if, as he says, *Questions of Cinema* played its part too, so much the better. Not that the work it represents was done by me either in any direct sense in the context of the academy (and its original publication in Britain was not by a university press): unlike Carroll, I am not—as the "Address" seeks to make abundantly clear—a professional, I do not earn my living by cinema studies; indeed there are no such studies in the university that employs me, not to mention that Marxism and psychoanalysis are about as established as polar bears in Florida (so that, for instance, putting things into Carroll's professional terms, I can have no graduate students). The work around *Screen*—I put it like that because it involved day events, weekend schools, reading groups, interventions in various cultural institutions, and so on—met the establishment at every turn, but was not within the academy, into which it may nevertheless have fed, inflecting cinema studies where these were effectively developing.

The history of *Screen,* however, is another matter: *this* is *October,* with all the *question* of its title—"'But why *October*?' readers still inquire."[65] Perhaps the most truly stunning moment of the "Address" is its identification as an "error," made if not by Brecht then by Godard and "*his* imitators," of "Marxism merging with modernism" (p. 103). Is it possible to imagine a title for a cultural journal more suggestive of a commitment to Marxism merging with modernism than *October*? Is it possible—but this is only a query within that general question—that it should be the work of Godard that is singled out as representing the exemplary error when that work is also to be seen in terms of "a progressive political radicalization" in which he, Godard, has reinvented "the aesthetic strategies of his American independent contemporaries,"[66] a filmmaking practice that has been crucial to *October*? It really is a special issue, this "Film Books" *October* that ends with the error of Marxism and modernism. In relation to which final stand, we could remember too some of the more local difficulties that have already been indicated in the course of looking at the "Address": Joan Copjec's writing on the grounds of film theory and psychoanalysis, for instance, at the very moment Carroll is declaring all that to be null and void; and the instances could be continued beyond those indicated, right down to Nick Browne's criticizing David Bordwell's *Dreyer* book for lacking "an elementary theory of enunciation."[67] Just as we could look back to *October* 17, "The New Talkies," "in the spirit of" which *October* 23 is said to be presented,[68] and see how much of

65. Michelson, "The Prospect Before Us," p. 119.
66. Michelson, "Introduction" to Burch, p. xiv. Cf. "Screen/Surface: The Politics of Illusionism," p. 62.
67. Nick Browne, "The Formalist's Dreyer," *October,* no. 23, p. 87.
68. Michelson, opening statement, p. 3.

that too falls before Carroll, is the object of the "Address"—its target, after all, "most mainstream film theory in the '70s" (and now we know what "mainstream" means).

The specialness of the issue, however, is then not that of a developed and articulated debate or progressive exchange but that of a conflict of positions, of, in Carroll's terms, truth versus error, the error of most "mainstream" film theory, the error of Marxism merging with modernism. Carroll takes up his battle on and from his professional terrain, cinema studies in the academy: he represents the development that the Michelson opening statement points to and then leaves unproblematic, the academy as the bright hope for "a new discipline." The *October* issue is an exact reflection and correction of that: a conflict untheorized and untheorizable within the terms of the opening statement and an organization, an enclosure from Danto and Cavell to Carroll, that symptomatically shows what that statement cannot say and describes the political cost of this disciplinary reaction.

Danto doesn't say "theorization of the cinema" for "cinema studies" and he has nothing of the still discernible radical rhetoric (no pejorative sense is intended by that word) of the opening statement (breaks, production, rendering archaic), nothing of *October* (= Marxism merging with modernism); he says, quoting Stanley Cavell, "the serious humanistic study of film."[69] These are the words of the academic discipline, cinema studies like literary studies and all the rest. "Humanistic" means *not political* (definitely not Marxism, however mainstream we are going to be simultaneously told it is), *not theoretical* (certainly not in the sense of a political use of theory, theorization of the cinema to prize open "humanism" and its academic terms and to raise all the questions that it and they can function to distort and exclude). "Serious," a dim echo of the opening statement's already unspecified "pertinence and rigor,"[70] is interesting for what follows, which is exactly about that, being serious about film, "a new discipline." Danto and Cavell are professionals with a huge capital P, professional philosophers and prestigious holders of prestigious chairs: they know what it is to be serious and they have a form for it, the professional philosophical paper that Danto discusses.[71] But here is Cavell, the Walter M. Cabot Professor, writing about . . . Hollywood "comedies of remarriage," being "outrageous," Kant and Capra in the same breath! Danto gives a *tour de force* description of which a sample will suffice here:

> He reveres Wittgenstein and J. L. Austin, reads Shakespeare dazzlingly, rubs shoulders as a fellow New Englander (which he is not) with Thoreau and Emerson, plays with foolish theories, relishes sly impossible juxtaposings, distracts us with impractical jokes, likes to

69. Danto, "Philosophy and/as Film," p. 5.
70. Michelson, opening statement, p. 3.
71. Danto, "Philosophy and/as Film," pp. 6–7.

> be outrageous, campy, seductive, and to meet questions with questions. He moons like a walrus in search of a carpenter, writes at times like an angel and at times like Woody Woodpecker, sneers, leers, and lays the toys of his imagination on the seminar table as though they were the pieces of several true crosses, all the while flirting openly with himself as though he were someone else. And he is capable of such bad philosophy that we think this must be an instance of playful seriousness.[72]

I doubt we could find a better crystallization of the academic. Cavell's outrageousness and Danto's mock-horror, delicious *frisson*-of-pleasure, celebration of it, exist only in relation to the soundly secured academic base, the discipline with all its rules and forms of seriousness in which their mastery is confirmed, the position they maintain in their very play: cinema studies as sport of the gods, humanistic conversation and brilliant exhibition, Cavell dialoguing—flirting—with himself for his peers, and for us allowed in on the act, Cavell leaving film buffs standing as they grope for mathematical logic and lesser philosophers gawking at this playful turn to their routine seriousness.[73] For the panache is in the position, and not merely the position as an academic philosopher but also the position in the hierarchy of the profession—this you can do at the very top of the tree, chaired and reputed, epitome of the academy, not just "serious humanistic" but human too: look! no hands! Wittgenstein *and* Woody. . . .

So at the end of *October,* behind Cavell and Danto, arms tightly round the trunk of the tree of discipline, comes Carroll. They sport, he is deadly serious, rigor *and* mortis, grimly at one with the professional role: while Cavell, as Danto tells us, is toying with several true crosses on the seminar table, Carroll has just the one, the one true cause of his missionary "Address," Christian to Heathen, fight the good fight, end error now. I have never met Carroll and knew nothing of his work, but I have met and do know the voice we hear addressing us, that begins by announcing "interestingly enough" that Marxism and psychoanalysis have become established in this or that area of study in the academy, and proceeds to issue warnings about it all (as here "to forewarn film scholars," p. 103), about Marxism and psychoanalysis and Brecht and Lacan and Althusser and Godard and me and the textual analysis of Roland Barthes and Marxism merging with modernism, etc., etc. (where I come from, this voice loses people their jobs—the MacCabe affair, amongst others). In the new conservatism of the '80s, film theory, like so much else, is going to be brought to order, straightened out for academic discipline; what got into the academy is going to be got out; enough is enough. And the terms of this operation, intellec-

72. *Ibid.,* p. 13.
73. *Ibid.,* pp. 5–6.

tually, are a foregone conclusion: epistemology as formal inspection and evaluation of theories (Carroll's announced concern with the adequacy of "theory as theory" and his subsequent attempted display of logic and philosophical argument); a functional biological-psychological positivism (Carroll's organisms and stimuli, human concerns running into biological depths, cognitive psychology as model description of human behavior); and the end of ideology (Carroll's version of society as set of rules or contract or compact which the organism-humans of cognitive psychology choose or not, and his conversion of ideology into mere beliefs that individuals may happen to have, mere errors that the professional philosopher or epistemologist or whatever long ago saw through).

The result for cinema studies is an equally foregone conclusion: a universal "normal spectator" (p. 106 and *passim*), the receptor-organism about whom cognitive psychology can tell us scientifically what we need to know, and a universal culture that includes a universal cinema. As Carroll puts it in the two other essays by him I've been able to locate, we are dealing with "the social institution of world cinema": "filmmaker and viewer, as members of the same institution of world cinema, share the same bases for induction, and more broadly, the same twentieth-century world culture."[74] The term for this is then "art," which logically (of course) precedes ideology (those beliefs that this or that spectator might have already before watching those world-cinema films that might just as well be shown out of focus for all the ideological reality they have): "I want to stress that the study of film as art logically precedes the study of film as ideology because art, its forms and its traditions, is the filter through which ideology must pass." Indeed, when you think about it, film is a little society in a big society or a suburb in the big city of art: the theory Carroll proposes "envisions film as a society—the filmworld as one of the sprawling suburbs of the artworld."[75] Exit Marxism, together with whatever psychoanalysis might be made to tell us about subject construction. Good for cinema studies, left with its world of film, its human universality, its filmmakers and viewers inducting away together in the shared harmony of twentieth-century world culture, its cozy little society, its unifying category of art and the required epistemological benediction for doing it all this way, for the desired abstraction (in fact, for the ideology it effectively is)—the logical precedence over any question of ideology of the study of film as art.

Hence the maneuvering that runs through the sections of the "Address" on perspective, Brecht, and interminability (to remain with the ones taken here as examples) and from the aim of which maneuvering they draw their rationale: ground image-production unquestionably in scientific reality (science ends the questions and the reality is the laws of the physical world and the facts of deep

74. Noël Carroll, "Toward a Theory of Film Editing," *Millennium Film Journal,* no. 3 (Winter-Spring 1979), 79, 98.
75. Noël Carroll, "Film History and Film Theory," *Film Reader,* no. 4 (1979), 84, 94.

human-biological needs);[76] get rid of the politics of illusionism (political-ideological critiques of dominant forms of cinema have been based on an extraordinarily ignorant belief in nonexistent phenomena); establish the fullness of the individual as subject-identity, father-master of meaning and truth (the guaranteed identity of I, the *one* who may be fitted into social rules or roles but who may pull out into the sphere of the truth of knowledge, absolute and of no social relation).[77] At most, ideology is a foreign body, it passes through, like tea through a filter-strainer, flowing away again. (And why include the strainer in a study of tea? or a study of tea in the study of strainers? Cinema, for example, is art, and art, having its forms and traditions quite separate, is not ideology, so that ideology only appears in art and cinema as a minor irritation, tea leaves in a strainer, that can be tipped out, washed off.) In Carroll's mind, in the "Address," ideology is a very foreign body, wrong ideas that he doesn't have; dealing with it, with them, is a matter of philosophical correction, of *knowing*. Which is why his examples of ideological functioning are sentence-beliefs; not even that, since he can give no acknowledgment of any social institution of "belief" (which means in any Marxist sense no account of ideology); just propositions, "lies" (p. 96) that *I* "may reject" (p. 97). But then if ideology were to be allowed to be more than that, if it has a social reality and force, is not just in the mind, and if individuals have their existence socially, are not just minds making compacts or choosing sets of rules, the purity of Carroll's position, his authority, disappears, his "I" less assured in its truth—and who knows but that the academy, even cinema studies, might not be a little less universal and a little more open to political questioning as regards the given knowledge and its terms, a little less protected by the logical, and a little more caught up in the ideological?[78]

Perhaps writing is to be judged by its helpfulness to the academy, that institution of knowledge. As simply as that? Annette Michelson wrote me that Carroll's "Address" was to be "a challenge." A challenge to *October*? For me, in the ways I have indicated, it is not at all a challenge (even supposing that I were to have any desire for or relation to this kind of invitation to some fight or com-

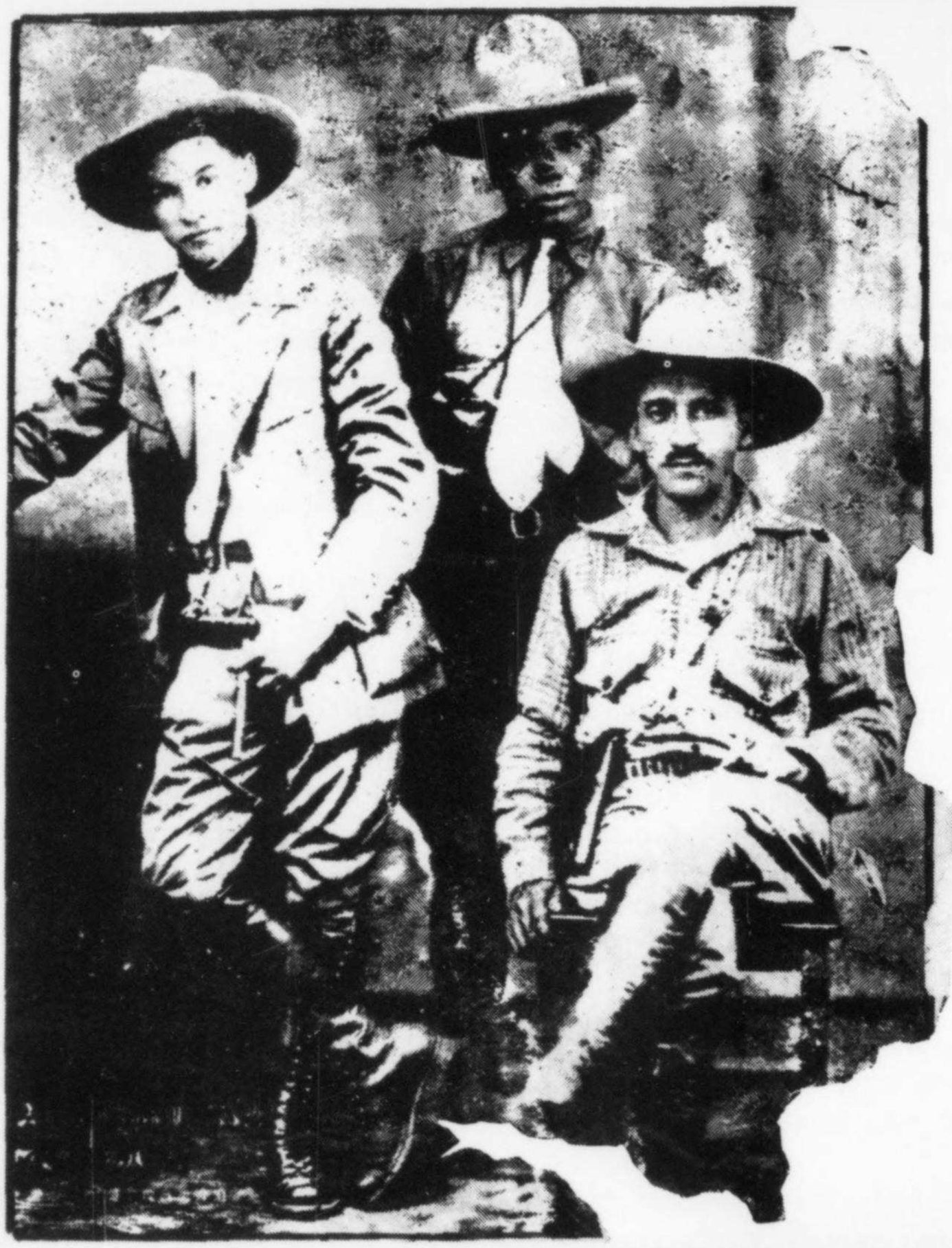
76. The best short account I know of historical materialism in its understanding of the physical world and its scientific investigation is Raymond Williams, "Problems of Materialism," *New Left Review,* no. 109 (May-June 1978), 3–17.

77. Cf. Joan Copjec, "The Anxiety of the Influencing Machine," pp. 58–59 (on "role model theory of socialization," "an unproblematized notion of ideology—as though it were unified and/or conscious," etc.).

78. I add for the benefit of the "Address" that this is not at all to go against serious work, empirical research, and so on; of course not. Carroll has a standardly misrepresenting section entitled *"The Cinematic Apparatus"* (pp. 157–163) in which the discussion of historical approaches to the cinema and the terms of their determinist explanations is converted into my denying "the legitimacy of undertaking perspectivally limited historical projects" (pp. 159–160). It *is* true, though, that I don't think that the academy should be granted its version of its monopoly on such work and research and that the terms in which it defines, directs, and limits them are open to discussion, criticism, and opposition.

petition), but a mass of confusion and misrepresentation coming from a quite specific and effectively reactionary position. Maybe I'll be invited to reappear in some other *October* in more constructive circumstances (I've said already that the worst thing about the "Address" is the necessity it produces of having to *reply*). Meanwhile this *October,* I'm told, will be in time for Christmas, so this piece might as well have the appropriate title too, the heathen a bit overcome at hearing from the Lord but doing my best to get the "Address" finally right: Santa Claus? Father Christmas? *Le Père Noël.*

13–14 July 1983



Augusto Cesar Sandino and Farabundo Marti.

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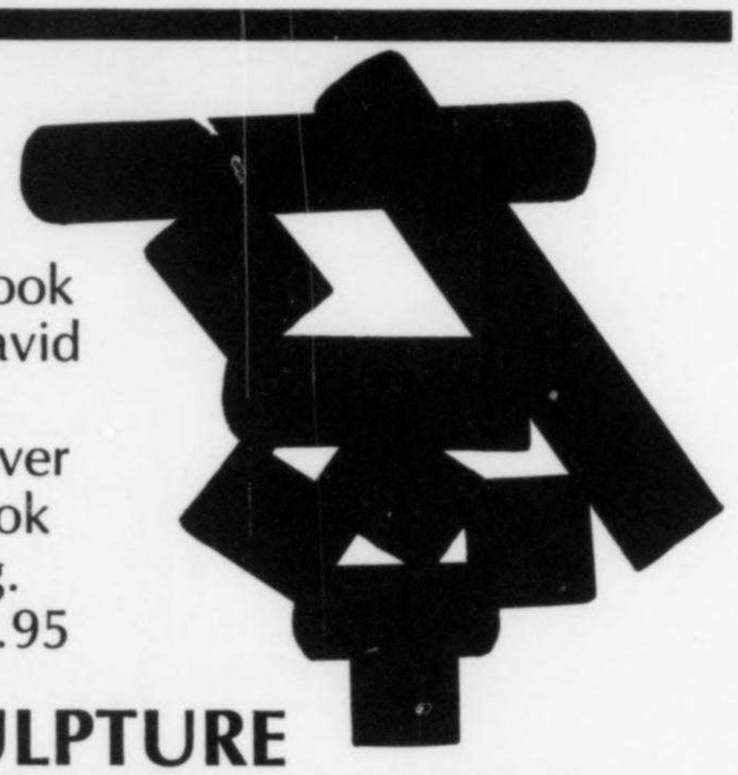

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