

SLIDE SHOW, MONOGRAPH, CIBACHROME:
NAN GOLDIN'S COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS IN THREE FORMS

by

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Abstract

During the 1970s a new generation of artists began to use photography in a personal and experimental manner not seen prior to this decade. This thesis contends that Nan Goldin's *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1979-86) is first among the artworks to characterize the subcultural fantasy and disenchantment of that generation. By employing autobiographic subject matter and diaristic means, *The Ballad* is an affront to straight black and white practices legitimized as art in previous decades. My analysis elucidates the historical, economic and artistic conditions which activate *The Ballad* and reveal its integral role in defining photographic practices of this and subsequent periods. In the first chapter, critical texts on photography which parallel the production of *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* are examined, as well as those that draw out historical comparisons to Berlin during the Weimar Republic. Also under consideration is the impact of economic and geographic factors on Goldin's practice in relation to the work of other American photographers of the 1970s. In the second chapter, it is argued that *The Ballad's* integral positioning within the history of colour photography is contingent upon its three forms: slide show, monograph and Cibachrome. Finally, it is considered that recent inclinations to look to Goldin's photographs for ethnographic or historical evidence reveals the need to further examine *The Ballad's* 'look,' which has been co-opted as a subcultural aesthetic, while the subculture itself has become virtually obsolete.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
CHAPTER I. Critical Perspectives on Intimacy and Photography	1
CHAPTER II. <i>The Ballad of Sexual Dependency</i> in Three Forms	42
Slide Show	42
Monograph	53
Cibachrome	69
Conclusion	80
Notes	84
Bibliography	94

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Chapter I: Critical Perspectives on Colour Photography

When John Szarkowski presented William Eggleston's colour photographs at the Museum of Modern Art in 1976, it was meant to signal the acceptance in the realm of art of a medium which had existed for nearly 100 years.¹ Although colour photography was ubiquitous in advertising and preferred for amateur snapshots by the family, it had, prior to the late 1960s, failed to contend as an artistic medium. Sally Eaucloire's 1981 book, *The New Color Photography*, begins by drawing attention to this condition, claiming that "This time lag is startling, considering that the world exists in full color and photography has been valued since its invention for its mimetic powers."² Jeff Wall, however, posits a practical explanation for the time lag, suggesting that "the memesis of amateurism," to which Eggleston's colour images subscribe, could not appear until around 1966, when amateur photographers began to trade their amateur means (the Brownie) for now-affordable near professional grade Nikons and Pentaxes.³ As such, the 1970s seem to be the key decade for an assessment of the conditions which led to the acceptance of colour practices as art.

While acknowledging Eggleston's significant role in colour photography's legitimization, many artists produced colour images during the 1970s, often with unprecedented experimental and conceptual contingencies, a trend which began in the middle of the previous decade, when young artists and students "forcibly subjected the medium to a full-scale immersion in the logic of reductivism."⁴ These artists addressed intimate, personal subject matter and often presented their work in unpolished, ephemeral, and

performative modes. This chapter contends that Nan Goldin's *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* (1979-86) was one of the key photo-based artworks to emerge from this trend, and that it remains a unique artistic achievement in relation to the work of her peers, one which continues to shape our contemporary understanding of the relationship between subcultures and photography.

As defined by the artist, *The Ballad* is not a work of art, but the "diary I let people read."⁵ Assembled from nearly 700 colour photographs of Goldin's family, friends and lovers taken over a seven year period, *The Ballad* made its public debut as a slide show in New York City's night clubs. Approximately 50 minutes in length, these presentations featured various combinations of images, divided into thematic sections and accompanied by live and recorded music. The work traveled with Goldin in slide form throughout Europe and North America from 1983-87, where it was viewed in museums, cinemas, film festivals and clubs,⁶ and in the Whitney Museum's 1985 Biennial Exhibition.⁷ Selected *Ballad* images were published as a monograph by Aperture Press in 1986 and produced as Cibachrome prints during the 1980s and 1990s.

Goldin's allusions to the ballad form, a song characterized by sentimental or romantic themes,⁸ much like her claim that her photographs constitute a visual diary, marks the work as different from photo-based projects of decades past. It recalls, for example, Oscar Wilde's "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" (1898), a poem which addresses death, lost love and homosexuality, topics which also preoccupy Goldin's work. Composed after he was released from prison on charges of sexual indecency, Wilde's poem conveys the

horrific acts he witnessed as a prisoner, including the murder of a fellow inmate, thus contextualizing his own crimes. The tale, much like Goldin's, is dark, filled with expressions of Wilde struggling with his demons and evocations of torment: "Some kill their love when they are young, / And some when they are old; / Some strangle with the hands of Lust, / Some with the hands of Gold: / The kindest use a knife, because / The dead so soon grow cold."⁹ Both Goldin and Wilde are skilled in using one medium to evoke several others: while Wilde's words have strong visual evocations of death, lust and violence, Goldin's visual presentation of these same themes suggests a strong narrative component.

Goldin's title is taken more specifically from the song of the same name in *The Threepenny Opera* (1928) by Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill. First staged in Berlin at the height of the Weimar era, *The Threepenny Opera* has since become synonymous with the social and political temperament of that period, thus connecting Goldin's contemporary photographs to a specific historical condition. Brecht's plays discouraged viewers from being seduced by the fictional narrative world of performance, in favor of preserving emotional distance. Brecht believed that the distancing effect, or *Verfremdungseffekt*, would result in an intellectual and political understanding of the material. If performers disregarded the stage as an insular environment and directly addressed the audience, the illusion of an alternate reality would be dismantled and complacent enjoyment of the material diminished.¹⁰ The distancing effect is a meaningful strategy for *The Ballad* because it encourages engagement with photographs based on critical interrogation of a medium which often lends itself to complacent acceptance.

Griselda Pollock claims that "there can be no doubt that Brecht was being re-read [during the 1970s]"¹¹ and indeed his renewed popularity during this decade is evident in many artistic arenas. Jeff Wall notes the "Brechtian spirit" of films from the late 1960s, and their influence on artistic practices of the following decade (including his own), claiming that "there was a theoretical and even political stake in pursuing the thread of stylistic or technical indecisiveness, in not choosing between fact and artifice, in working only in the shadow of choice, in hesitating."¹² Goldin's indecision is visible in her repeated alterations of *The Ballad's* parameters: adding, subtracting, adjusting. Wall encourages us to view this creative process as deliberate, made by an artist wrapped up in the Brechtian climate of the 1970s.

Christopher Isherwood's *Goodbye to Berlin*, a collection of semi-autobiographical stories about the city in the early 1930s was a key document of the Weimar era which also gained popularity in film form as *Cabaret* (1972), while David Bowie's *Berlin Trilogy* and his recording of songs from Brecht's play *Baal* also indicate interest in (and perhaps idealization of) Weimar Berlin and the Brecht revival taking place at this time. According to Klaus Volker, the emulation of German culture during the 1970s captured "the lifestyle and feelings of the 'no-future generation' that embraces David Bowie's one-day hero: 'Though nothing will/Drive them away/We can beat them/Just for one day/We can be heroes/Just for one day.'¹³ The specter of bad days to come haunts this lyric in the sense that one day might be the limit of possible happiness, and thus Bowie speaks to the low expectations of his generation, clinging to the hope of a single day, rather than a lifetime.

Lou Reed's *Berlin* (1973) offers another hopeless and disenchanting viewpoint inspired by that city. When he recorded the album, Reed had never been to Berlin but "his idea was to use the divided city . . . as a metaphor for human discord."¹⁴ The record's juxtaposition of the city and the troubled relationship therein echoes Goldin's themes so closely, it would have made an apt soundtrack for her work, and indeed selected songs by Reed were part of *The Ballad* slide shows. *Berlin*'s protagonists, Caroline and Jim, are lovers plagued by jealousy and addiction, and when Reed sings "All your two-bit friends/They're shootin' you up with pills/They said that it was good for you/That it would cure your ills,"¹⁵ it is a lyric which could easily describe Goldin's drug-fueled relationship with her boyfriend Brian Burchill, *The Ballad*'s central male figure.

In *The Threepenny Opera*,¹⁶ "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency" is sung by Mrs. Peachum, whose daughter has married the play's criminal protagonist, Macheath, and whose husband is determined to have Macheath hanged. In the play's second act, after bribing Macheath's former lover to turn him in, Mrs. Peachum sings: "They're all the same in meeting love's confusion / Poor noble souls get planted in illusion."¹⁷ This lyric proposes love as a leveling force, in which otherwise rational people are overcome by bewilderment which threatens identity and leads to crisis. While Goldin's *Ballad* professes to strip love's illusion away by expressing the pains of love along with its joys, F.C. Gundlach suggests that "there seems to be a kind of secret understanding between the two women [Goldin and Mrs. Peachum] . . . they both know about the urges of lust, the violence of love, and the vulnerability of those who desire one another."¹⁸ Goldin's

subject is not merely knowledge of but addiction to lust, violence and desire, and these dependencies are framed by specific economic and geographic circumstances, suggesting their urgency.

A subsequent connection between Brecht and Goldin stems from the reception of their works. Eric Bentley suggests that it was the "'naughtiness' of the Twenties that . . . for the first time rendered *The Beggar's Opera* fully acceptable."¹⁹ Many of *The Ballad* images are deliberately provocative, reflecting the similarly mischievous sexual temperament of the 1970s. And, as both works illustrate, where there is contentious material, protest inevitably follows: "It would be hard to find works that have given more offence in their time than *The Beggar's Opera* and its successor [*The Threepenny Opera*]," which, after several years of performance, was banned in Germany from 1933-45.²⁰ If there is a history of controversy around this material, it is an arena into which Goldin entered as an eager participant, nominating her *Ballad* as a contemporary platform for an enduring debate.

In both the *Opera* and *The Ballad*, male protagonists fuel the controversy. The sympathetic portrayal of *Threepenny's* Macheath "is indeed an act of provocation . . . Here is a villain-hero who gets away with murder to thunderous applause from the mob."²¹ *The Ballad's* male hero-villain, Brian Burchill, is a similarly dubious figure. He was once the artist's boyfriend, and the perpetrator of *The Ballad's* most violent act, the beating of Goldin, which left her nearly blind. Although no one applauds Brian's actions, we must consider how the photographs themselves act as a kind of applause, or at the

very least an affirmation and art historical canonization of what Geoff Dyer calls Goldin's 'losers': "The truth is that Nan's are pictures of losers. As such they alert us to a very recent phenomenon: the glamour of failure."²² Dyer is correct that connotations between Goldin's images and the failure of glamour developed more recently than the work itself. As they were initially presented, Goldin's photographs romanticize the loser character on the basis of insular bohemian criteria and skewed morality, in much the same way Macheath's status as thief, rapist and murderer does not threaten his protagonist position.

In applying Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt* as a strategy for analysing Goldin's *Ballad* photographs, the historicity of that application must also be considered. A 1994 essay by Gerd Gemünden suggests that Brecht's "notion of anti-illusionism, today seems particularly problematic because it is based on an understanding of 'the real' which our media culture has rendered obsolete."²³ This concern has only become more urgent: if we do not know and cannot identify what is real, we can hardly oppose it. "Television, film or photography are no longer media that reflect or, as Brecht believed, distort truth; instead they create events,"²⁴ and as such, we must consider the complex role of media in society, a point not lost in *The Ballad*, which moves beyond the creation of events to the fabrication of an intimate world, based on a romantic and idealized notion of history.

Abigail Solomon-Godeau's 1989 essay, "Living with Contradictions: Critical Practices in the Age of Supply-Side Aesthetics" also warns of the historical contingencies associated with Brecht, suggesting that his writing ". . . can no longer be looked to as the vademecum of critical practice" on the grounds that "if we accept the importance of

specificity as a condition of critical practice, we are thrown into the specifics of our own political conditions and circumstances in the sphere of culture."²⁵ As her title indicates, Solomon-Godeau is concerned with the conditions of the Reagan era. But does Reagan's leadership render these references to the past and to Brecht inert? Even if Brecht is not a practical reference for Goldin, her familiarity with his work, which led to the naming of *The Ballad*, does reflect her desire to root that work in a Brechtian atmosphere.

If there is a way to justify Brecht's continued purpose in contemporary criticism through *The Ballad*, it is this: Goldin's family, insular as it may have been, responded to Reagan's leadership in the mode of refusal, and emulated Weimar conditions as a coping strategy for a dissatisfying American political condition (linked to a failed society in the eyes of Goldin and her peers). In order to illustrate the contingencies Goldin's work which make a Brechtian analysis possible, I will first consider the historical circumstances around the production of *The Ballad*.



A series of political and economic developments during the 1970s were critical to the acceptance of colour photography in art, and to the success of *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*. In the aftermath of the Vietnam War and the specter of two oil crises, America suffered “. . . the most serious economic downturn since the Great Depression,”²⁶ the most troubling result of which was “a sharp decline in the productivity of American workers.”²⁷ With many industries moving towards obsolescence, Americans began to rethink identity as it related to employment. In Bruce Steinberg's view, the shift away from so-called “blue collar” jobs would not have been problematic, “. . . if the

rapidly growing industries rewarded their employees as richly as does manufacturing, but they don't."²⁸ By the end of the 1970s, many Americans were working for little money, in jobs for which they were inadequately skilled, while facing unprecedented competition from young workers entering the job market. Additionally, there was a measurable widening of two camps: providers and recipients of service, or what Benjamin R. Barber refers to as American capitalism's shift from "a hard to a soft economy, from the manufacture of goods to the manufacture of needs."²⁹ That this shift occurred not on the basis of qualification further motivated many workers to seek employment outside capitalist parameters which seemed to be increasingly dictated by arbitrary criteria.³⁰

Typical to times of economic crisis, in the 1970s attention turned toward the family as a stalwart of stability. Drawing on Alan Wolfe's "moral life cycle" of American families, Stephanie Coontz notes how post-war models of success and happiness contingent on the family begin to break down in times of economic crisis,³¹ suggesting, of course, that it is not really the meaningful platform of the family on which these expectations rely, but on a fragile set of economic circumstances. Goldin and her peers, who had been schooled in such family ideologies as children prior to witnessing their dissolution, were faced with a choice: to follow the established formula for the American dream, despite its instability, or to propose a new formula, which was unstable by definition in its questioning of all things familial. Although her work is often framed as that of unequivocal rebellion, Goldin's photographs actually conflate these two paths: they understand that family, ideological or real, is somewhat inescapable, but also that the need to attempt an escape is a fundamental one. If, during the 1970s, the volatile economy was a part of everyday

reality for the American family, by the early 1980s the fallout of this condition was already being repressed by the Reagan administration.

Nan Goldin was born into a Jewish, middle-class family in Washington D.C. in 1953 and grew up in Boston, Massachusetts. She exhibited her first photographs at a gallery in Cambridge at the age of twenty.³² These images were taken on field trips with friend David Armstrong to Boston's gay and transgendered communities,³³ which introduced Goldin to subjects who provided a "challenging power and beauty which established society did not want to know about."³⁴ Via this early engagement, Goldin learned that power originates from layering on identity as well as stripping façades away. Both Goldin and Armstrong studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston in the mid-1970s, joining a spirited community of students determined to establish new professional pathways in photography, including Philip-Lorca di Corcia, Mark Morrisroe and Jack Pierson.³⁵ Although the five artists, Goldin's first "family of friends," influenced each other in their practices, they did not fall into the trap of a "common pictorial language,"³⁶ suggesting the range of photographic approaches in use at this time, even among a group of similarly-trained practitioners.

A focal point for photographic experimentation in the 1970s was New York City. Goldin moved there in 1978, thus initiating the migration of her Boston colleagues to the city that would define Goldin's practice. Although "To think of Goldin's sociology as rooted exclusively in New York is to miss the point of her 'diary,'"³⁷ New York City is certainly the geographic focal point of *The Ballad*, and the late 1970s were certainly specific years

in terms of artistic freedom and the transcending of conceptual and formal boundaries. The move to New York was crucial for the development of Goldin's professional practice, and allowed for the exploration of further geographic locales including Berlin and Mexico. What that city offered Goldin that previous homes had not, was an opportunity to begin the everyday practice of intimacy with the subcultures that had provided a distant fascination in Boston, as well as a loyal audience for her slide shows and venues in which to present them. Luc Sante, a member of Goldin's earliest audience, describes the milieu as such: "Life was bleak on the Lower East Side in the late 1970s, but it was a purposeful bleakness. We liked it that way. We were living a movie of youth in black-and-white that in order to be grand needed to be stark."³⁸ In this statement, Sante establishes a series of subcultural identity markers for Goldin and her peers, stemming directly from their environment, and with bleakness as a point of origin for reinvention, rooted in the fantasy world of film.³⁹

According to Geoff Dyer, Sante's commentary on Goldin's work should be approached as that of a biased insider. In reference to the same Sante passage I just cited, Dyer expresses his irritation, claiming that "little is added to our appreciation of the photographs by speaking of them *fondly*."⁴⁰ While I agree with Dyer's critique of Sante's tone, the latter does provide valuable insights regarding the self-mythologizing tendencies of Goldin and her circle. Abigail Solomon-Godeau describes the inherent difficulty of critical writing as such: "critical writing, regardless of the writer's politics, can in no way consider itself as independent of the cultural apparatus it seeks to contest."⁴¹ Is Sante's statement critical, if it appears not to contest the cultural

apparatus of Goldin's work, but to affirm it? Sante elucidates the intimacy and image-consciousness of her world as a former participant, and although he has since achieved his own professional successes as a writer and critic, this tone of aspiration still lingers in his writing.

With these contingencies in mind, I want to consider further the version of history Sante presents, and determine if, as Dyer suggests, his writing contributes little to our understanding of Goldin's images. Sante's statement makes strong allusions to bohemianism. A term first used in the nineteenth century, to describe the unconventional lifestyle of young, marginalized artists, writers and musicians in Europe, "bohemians" were notable for their antiestablishment political and social views, expressed through atypical relationships, voluntary poverty and romanticized notions of death.⁴² Sante's claim of purposeful bleakness ties his world view to this term, as does his idea of living a black and white movie, a monochrome world into which Goldin injected colour.⁴³ More generally, bohemians constitute a subcultural group, whose members "are in some way represented as non-normative and/or marginal through their particular interests and practices."⁴⁴ Ken Gelder cites ambivalence to class, negative relations to labour, association with territory, ties to excess and exaggeration, and movement from the family to non-domestic forms of belonging as key markers of subcultural behavior⁴⁵ mirroring the bohemian priorities expressed by Sante above and displayed in Goldin's photographs.

The artist's subcultural status is hardly new, yet the need to define subcultural tendencies appears to have been a key strategy for writers and critics of the 1970s, who were

simultaneously attempting to make sense of colour photography's elusiveness. John Szarkowski's 1976 essay on William Eggleston's work expresses interest in subcultural characteristics to explain that artist's photographic priorities: "Preoccupation with private experience is a hallmark of the romantic artist, whose view is characteristically self-centered, asocial, and, at least in posture, antitraditional."⁴⁶ *The Ballad's* visual evocations of private experience often rely on the display of subcultural capital, a term coined by sociologist Sarah Thornton to describe the ideas and things possessed by members of a subculture in order to differentiate themselves from the mainstream.⁴⁷ In *The Ballad*, this ranges from the messy, deconstructed look of the subjects' apartments to the visibility of their tattoos to the appearance of a Tin Pan Alley poster on a bedroom wall or book of Rene Ricard's poetry on a beach blanket. These forms of capital are particularly important identity markers for those of Goldin's subjects who have temporarily defected from other parts of Manhattan, acting out bohemianism as a means of differentiation from upper class roots with which they will likely, eventually re-assimilate.⁴⁹ Goldin's subcultural status also explains her continued influence over contemporary photographic practices, which emulate or are compared to Goldin's work on the basis of shared habits, tastes and lifestyle rather than shared photographic techniques.

Bohemianism is also historically equated with transgressive sexual practices, and in the late 1970s and early 1980s, as Susan Sontag and others observed, homosexual men "reconstituted themselves as something like an ethnic group, one whose distinctive folkloric custom was sexual voracity."⁵¹ Sex, or sexual dependency, was a priority and a bond which connected Goldin personally and ideologically to her subjects; if not

necessarily a desire for sex with one another, there was a mutual understanding of sex's emancipatory power opposed to the monogamy advocated by the family. During *The Ballad's* years of production, this understanding of sex was changed by HIV. By 1988, the dramatic shift in American sexual behavior precipitated by the AIDS crisis was described by Sontag as such: "After two decades of sexual spending, of sexual speculation, of sexual inflation, we are in the early stages of a sexual depression."⁵² Indeed, it is no coincidence that Sontag here uses the same terminology for economics and sex.⁵³ The sexual depression of the 1980s finds a comparison in the Weimar era, in which a period of extreme sexual liberty was quickly followed by circumstances of fear which led to sexual anxiety. As Shearer West observes, the appearance of sexually-charged themes in *sachlich* art "is an important symptom of the cultural changes that characterized the Weimar republic,"⁵⁴ and as a symptom, these themes refer outward, to events of even greater significance. As Sontag clearly understands, sexual behaviour is a productive means of accessing broad cultural developments, and has functioned as such a barometer throughout history.

The role of intimacy in this progression is also key: Jonathan Green uses the term "personal journalism" to describe the narrative methodology of late 1960s/early 1970s photographers such as Diane Arbus and Larry Clark, who "attempted to make subtle distinctions between public and private realities"⁵⁵ by highlighting the subjective viewpoint of the photographer. According to Green, what distinguished such methods from those of previous generations was "a move from a style of detachment to a style of intimacy."⁵⁶ By the beginning of the 1970s, "personal journalism" had evolved into

"biographical narrative," and with it a preference for complementary forms of display such as albums and scrapbooks, as seen in Mary Kelly's *Post-Partum Document* (1973-77) and Allan Sekula's *Aerospace Folktales* (1973). Through the use of such intimate forms, photography, which had just established a "secure niche in universities, art schools, museums, and the marketplace as well as in the culture at large,"⁵⁷ was faced with a dilemma of association with the most common and popular form of photographic display: the family photo album.⁵⁸

The text that defined and helped to legitimate new photographic practices of the 1970s was Susan Sontag's *On Photography* (1977). Credited for shifting the emphasis of photo criticism from "formalist aesthetics to ethical, conceptual, and sociopolitical issues,"⁵⁹ or from detachment to intimacy, Sontag's text quelled anxiety around the common aspects of photography by calling for a re-education of the public specific to this medium,⁶⁰ and *On Photography* received frequent citation in art historical writing throughout the 1980s. The diminution of bibliographic references to *On Photography* during the following decade⁶¹ indicates the text's immediate impact and historical specificity, and thus its relevance to Goldin's work. This shift is perhaps also an indication of the lack of attention devoted in that text to colour photography. Sontag's topic is photography proper and her essays are largely absent of references to the oppositional categories of black and white or colour, although reading through the list of photographers she addresses, from Cartier-Bresson to Arbus, Atget to Sander, her emphasis is clearly on black and white.

Despite its lack of attention toward colour practices, Sontag's text does confer

tremendous importance on the photographic medium as art by raising timely questions about photography's relationship to amateurism and by exposing the scope and versatility of the medium, its achievements and limitations. She notes that "Recently, photography has become almost as widely practiced an amusement as sex and dancing – which means that, like every mass art form, photography is not practiced by most people as an art. It is mainly a social rite, a defense against anxiety, and a tool of power."⁶² In this statement, Sontag distinguishes new photography from old, on the basis of characteristics which are not photographic, but are shared with other non-photographic 'amusements.' The two amusements Sontag offers for comparison are not public, social activities, but private, bodily ones: sex and dancing. Allusions to sex and dancing appear with frequency in Goldin's work, uniting the thing that is photographed with the nature of its documentation. Sontag also makes an important correlation between a medium's popularity and its status as art, noting that in the hands of the masses, a photograph's status is derived from powerful non-art spheres of signification. By establishing definitions for photography which emerge from the medium's parameters and its affiliation with amateurism, Sontag legitimizes a discursive space for addressing the work of emerging photographers like Goldin.

Allan Sekula's 1975 essay "On the Invention of Photographic Meaning" echoes the tone of Sontag's writing by claiming that photography is a culturally contingent practice and that "Photographic 'literacy' is learned. And yet, in the real world, the image itself appears 'natural' and appropriate, appears to manifest an illusory independence from the matrix of suppositions that determines its readability."⁶³ With this opposition between naturalism

and its suppositions, Sekula suggests the necessity of acknowledging and understanding the learned way we engage with photographs, and that if photographic literacy is indeed learned, it also requires reliable teachers. However, Abigail Solomon-Godeau claims that if photographic literacy is disseminated through a network of writers, curators and practitioners, "ideally the work of the critic and the work of the artist – to the degree that they both conceive their practices critically – are theoretical, if not actual, collaborations."⁶⁴ If there are no trustworthy sources on which we can rely to assist in the translation of what we see, photography is in danger of having no discourse. While Sontag, Sekula and others point to the dramatic need for a critical discourse specific to photography in the 1970s, Solomon-Godeau argues for collaboration on the basis of mutual criticality.

And yet, Solomon-Godeau's 1984 essay "Photography After Art Photography," identifies a potential disconnection between the artist and critic, claiming that photography "has become a principal agent and conduit of culture and ideology,"⁶⁵ and thus a powerful medium which determines rather than subscribes to critical practices. As if to counter this effect, Solomon-Godeau also observes that photography has "systematically engineered its own irrelevance and triviality,"⁶⁶ an indication of photography's ongoing struggle in relation to art. In order to gain recognition as an art form and legitimacy within the canon of art history, the medium risks subjection to the same lines of critique which determine other art forms. Solomon-Godeau sees this not as an achievement, but rather a mechanism furthering banality and evincing the importance of a discourse specific to photography and the urgency around this topic expressed by Sekula and Sontag.

Thierry de Duve proposed a more aggressive definition for the popular photograph in 1978: a snapshot is "a theft; it steals life. Intended to signify natural movement, it only produces a petrified analogue of it."⁶⁷ De Duve refers specifically to the snapshot, that sub-category of photography which threatens the medium's acceptance. For de Duve, this mode is an object lesson in failure, something Goldin's practice risks by mimicking it: she produces images en masse, in a seemingly irrelevant way, but unlike proper snapshots, in which the subject matter is nearly as banal or sentimental as the composition is unlearned, Goldin's photographs distinguish themselves on the basis of disconcerting content. They reveal a nouveau bohemian underworld so unfamiliar that we are jolted back to that Brechtian position of discomfort by a presumption that we may have identified with what we had seen.

A discussion of amateurism must necessarily refer to Pierre Bourdieu's *Photography: A Middle-Brow Art* (1965). Yet Bourdieu's claim that that the photographic medium exists for the sole purpose of "solemnizing and immortalizing the high points of family life . . . of reinforcing the integration of the family group by resserting the sense that it has both of itself and of its unity,"⁶⁸ is difficult to reconcile with critical photographic practices of the 1970s, which no longer relied on that unit's stability. Sontag also recognizes this shift, suggesting that although memorializing the family's achievements is a key function of amateur photography, that practice is more relevant to the medium's initial rather than current uses.⁶⁹ Goldin's photographs provide evidence of recent and dramatic changes to the family's understanding and documentation of self. Whereas the type of photograph

described by Bourdieu functioned to quell unspoken doubts regarding family unity and identity, Goldin's photographs consider these topics within a subcultural framework which seeks to expose rather than disguise them. Her images question integration, and highlight a rupture in the family's unity so pervasive that it extends even to their methods of documentation, effectively illustrating the ways in which a family's wounds are incurred as a means of considering how those wounds might or might not be healed.

Rosalind Krauss' 1984 essay "A Note on Photography and the Simulacra"⁷⁰ re-considers *Photography: A Middlebrow Art* with particular emphasis on that text's social definition of the medium, which is linked to the snapshot. Krauss agrees with Bourdieu in terms of the camera "as a protective tool, part of the theater that the family constructs to convince itself that it is together and whole,"⁷¹ which perhaps explains why the family produces so many snapshots, with a seeming lack of concern for their de Duve-ian effects. This claim also suggests photography's potential to feed into the rhetoric of American solidarity and optimism of which Ronald Reagan's presidency was emblematic in the early 1980s. And indeed, is not at least part of a contemporary world leader's power evoked through the overwhelming dissemination of his or her image in the media and the rigorous controls placed on those images and their presentation in the public sphere?⁷² This practice, coupled with Reagan's residual film star appeal conflated the notion of president as actor and actor as president to a degree not previously seen in a world leader.

As I have already indicated, the years leading up to Reagan's term in office were tumultuous, particularly for the arts. American photographers of the 1970s were trapped

between two generations of activism, complicating their affiliations with politics and social issues and thus, "their choice of 'extreme' subjects had something to do with their uneasiness in a culture that, after all, was having a nervous breakdown."⁷³ There is a visible uneasiness in *The Ballad* which speaks to this condition: peripheral and central threats of violence, environments that appear unsafe or unclean, and subjects who seem hostile or disturbingly calm. In this sense, the use of colour can also be seen as an act of distrust in established modes of representation, including black and white photography.

As Irving Sandler notes, ". . . Reagan had pledged 'to make America proud again,' and this appealed strongly to a nation that had 'an insatiable need to proclaim its triumphs.'"⁷⁴ *The Ballad's* lack of triumph and celebration of dysfunction proudly threaten this Reagan ideal, and yet, the production of the work, which straddles these two decades of tumult, also evolves in response to shifting demands and possibilities of the art market. By the 1980s, many museum curators were establishing connections between recent political events and photographic practices. In his essay for the National Museum of American Art's 1989 exhibition, *The Photography of Invention: American Pictures of the 1980s*, Joshua P. Smith describes the photographic climate of that decade in relation to a group of artists who "make" pictures rather than take them. Although Goldin was not among the artists exhibited (her peers Cindy Sherman and Richard Prince were included), she was subject to the same economic and political conditions which Smith suggests have had impact on the practices of those photographic "makers." Smith claims that photography at the end of the 1980s can no longer be detached from the traumatic events of recent decades. He mentions the specter of "the Bomb" and the Vietnam War

specifically, but also cites "terrorism" and "political strife" as more general categories now tied inextricably to photographic representation, resulting in the fact that we have begun "to see real life as unreal and to view official public truth as fiction . . . with news becoming like entertainment and docudrama masquerading as history."⁷⁵ The instability to which Smith refers is crucial for understanding the complex pairing of skepticism and blind faith which continues to mark our contemporary engagement with photographs.

The family, in turn, mirrors the anxiety and instability of media. Since *Photography: A Middle-brow Art* was written, "Traditional family ties have, of course, been weakened . . . conventional gender roles have been questioned on principle and undermined economically."⁷⁶ Critical texts of the late 1970s and early 1980s, along with Goldin's images, suggested the family's transformation from social unit to subject of criticism on this basis. Goldin's work relies on weakening family ties, and although the results of this condition in her work are specific, an accurate historical reading of *The Ballad* is also contingent upon a comparative examination of the work of her peers, others expressing photographic ideas according to mutual terms and affected by shared circumstances.



Before Nan Goldin moved to New York's Lower East Side, Martha Rosler targeted that locale for her own photographic project. The Bowery, described by Rosler as "an archetypal skid row,"⁷⁷ served as the location for *The Bowery in two inadequate*

descriptive systems, 1974-75, which pairs 45 black-and-white gelatin silver prints with text panels cataloguing descriptive terms for alcoholics and alcohol abuse. According to Rosler, the project operates as "a work of refusal . . . an act of criticism,"⁷⁸ which places emphasis on deficiency and the failure of description itself. But what is refused?

Notorious for its homeless population or "Bowery Bums," Rosler's Bowery is empty, with the residents represented by ephemera, abandoned alcohol bottles and garbage. By not showing the human subjects, Rosler's photographs refuse the documentary mode so often used to personify (inadequately) the idea of poverty. A secondary refusal in the work is that of replacement. Rather than attempting to solve or explain her topic, Rosler focuses on either images or language's inability to represent its complexities. For Rosler, the Bowery in the 1970s was a key urban location for problematizing documentary photographic practices, and hers is thus an important project in relation to the inside spaces captured there by Goldin.

With an undoubted awareness of Rosler's work, and yet lacking the theoretical and conceptual rigor it expresses, Goldin's bohemian embodiment of the Lower East Side relied on the insulation from rather than critique of that place. If *The Bowery in two inadequate descriptive systems* is defined by refusal, Goldin's *Ballad* photographs are documents of avoidance. In an act that would define her work, Goldin claims she accidentally used a roll of colour film in her camera,⁷⁹ thus distancing her practice from the accepted art aesthetic of black and white, which Rosler critically employs, and approaching the preferred look of amateur usage. Goldin's emphasis on the accidental means by which this transition occurred is further disabled by the fact that as an

academically-trained photographer, she had learned colour techniques at school in Boston.⁸⁰

Colour photography's origins in fashion and advertising are also key factors in Goldin's use of the medium. Chris Townsend claims that Goldin's use of colour film was a tribute to photographers as ideologically separated from documentary concerns as possible, including "then critically denigrated fashion photographers such as Helmut Newton and Guy Bourdin, whom she had encountered in the magazines read by her housemates."⁸¹ Richard Avedon and Irving Penn employed colour photographs in a fashion context earlier than Newton and Bourdin, and thus the reference to these two photographers does not accurately capture the scope and contingencies of colour practices at this time. If there is a strong and obvious connection between Newton and Goldin's work, it is in their mutual focus on sexuality and nudity at a time when these topics had been reinvigorated and problematized by the feminist movement.⁸²

A more productive model for Goldin's work on the basis of colour, is found in the work of William Eggleston. Along with Stephen Shore, Eggleston was responsible for changing the way colour practices were seen in an art context in the 1970s. In the late 1960s Eggleston began using colour film and photographing prolifically.⁸³ When 75 of these works were presented at the Museum of Modern Art in New York as *Color Photographs* in 1976, it was that museum's first solo exhibition for a colour photographer, and the accompanying catalogue, *William Eggleston's Guide*, was the MoMA's first colour photo publication.⁸⁴ Curator John Szarkowski inducted Eggleston's

work into the realm of fine art in much the same way as he had legitimized Diane Arbus's practice in 1971. If Goldin's awareness of Eggleston was limited during her Boston years, she became, upon moving to New York, quickly surrounded by artists and writers under his influence.

These same artists and writers were also under the influence of Szarkowski, whose role in shaping public opinion around photography relied upon the exhibition of new colourists like Eggleston, but also survey exhibitions like "New Documents" (1967) and "Mirrors and Windows: American Photography Since 1960" (1978), which proposed a developmental trajectory for photography akin to that of established artistic media. Szarkowski's MoMA work expanded photographic parameters of all kinds, not just concerns of colour, and in this way the achievement of his curatorial work is much the same as Sontag's writing of this period.

Szarkowski's essay in the Eggleston catalogue provides one of the first written justifications for colour photography in a museological context. He claims that although colour signaled a crisis of meaning for practitioners trained in black and white, "In the past decade a number of photographers have begun to work in color in a more confident, more natural, and yet more ambitious spirit."⁸⁵ In Szarkowski's view, colour photography was not the exclusive medium of novices and amateurs, but also artists with serious ambition and exhibitionary goals. These practitioners did not constitute a small and marginal group but a broad movement with potential to revolutionize the medium. Despite its eventual recognition as a seminal exhibition for colour photography, and

Eggleston as a key model for subsequent generations of photographers, when *Color Photographs* first opened, "most of the reviews were negative."⁸⁶ While at least some of this reaction originated with Szarkowski's established critics, it would seem that another issue was with Eggleston's methodology: "Eggleston uses the snapshot style, deliberately developing specific patterns of images which seem familiar to us,"⁸⁷ and, as we have seen, familiarity threatens value and suggests that lack of skill which conflates art photography with the amateur practices of the family.

In *Morton, Mississippi*, 1971, Eggleston evokes the power of colour in a way that also manifests anxiety about change, just as the medium itself was changing. The image depicts three male adolescents of different heights. Two of the children wear Halloween costumes, but not in the obvious context for which those outfits are intended. They appear in an uncertain, liminal space in the middle of the street, presumably between houses where they have been trick or treating. This otherwise bland location is brought to life by Eggleston's skillful use of colour. A purple sky erupts from behind a horizon line of black trees. The road is dark green, intermittently covered by dirt which spills out from nearby driveways. The bright pirate/clown costume of the subject on the right, decorated with colourful flowers, pops against this dark and nuanced background.

Together, these elements evoke the typical atmosphere of a rural road and the shifting palette of autumn, but they do so with a surreal and disarming relationship to colour. The uneasiness suggested by the colour palette is mirrored in the figures. They are odd portrait subjects, staring at the camera with neither their faces or bodies conforming to

the rules of the genre. They hold hands, suggesting resistance to autonomy, and their need for support from one another in the face of some unidentified threat. They remain participants, however awkward, in the rituals of family life. And yet, where is that family? This image's unstable elements: the seasons, the shift from day to night, from innocent to sinister, captures a moment of flux and anxiety, which leads back to the family as a source. If Eggleston's colours, which serve so well to express this, were absent, the level of anxiety expressed here would also be diminished.

Colour photography's place in the realm of art was proposed as early as the 1950s, when Polaroid cameras, pocket-sized Kodak Instamatics and increasingly inexpensive processing gained popularity,⁸⁸ although "Those striving to promote the seriousness of their medium saw color as crass and even frivolous . . ." ⁸⁹ in comparison to black-and-white.⁹⁰ Perhaps because she was formally trained in the midst of this collision between established black and white practices and new colour ones, Goldin's images suggest an understandable desire for both connotations, with the success of *The Ballad* contingent on photography's crassness as a means of accessing the viewer's feelings towards it. *The Ballad's* affiliation with high art is a carefully mediated one, in which it retains a level of amateurism as a strategy of accessibility.

Jim Lewis claims that it is difficult to understand the precise negativity around colour practices up until the mid-1970s: "Part of it, I suspect, was simply the anxiety, attendant upon photography since its inception, that the medium wasn't really an art form at all but a quasi-scientific technique. In this regard, the unreality of black and white was

reassuring, as if it provided an aesthetic guarantee by removing the colors of the world."⁹¹

Both Diane Arbus and Larry Clark produced controversial images mediated by a lack of colour, while Goldin worked with colour's ordinariness as an advantage, a strategy she seems to have learned from Eggleston, whose images "take color's perceived vices and, by pushing them a little farther along the axis of their failings, turn them into virtues."⁹²

Goldin's use of the slide projector for presentation of her images, a machine whose purpose is to confer monumental importance upon images unworthy of display outside the family home, is one choice made in favour of highlighting perceived failings.

If William Eggleston was Nan Goldin's photographic predecessor in terms of colour, art historical texts also suggest that Goldin owed a debt to the subject matter of Diane Arbus's black and white images. John Szarkowski's 1971 celebrated retrospective of Arbus's work at the MoMA advocated for the readability of her images and provided one of the first occasions for writers including Sontag and Sekula to comment on photography in the new, critical way.⁹³ Susan Sontag's critique of Arbus's practice in *On Photography*, coming only a few years after the retrospective, indicated to photographers of Goldin's generation that they must mold themselves in relation or opposition to Arbus's example. On the basis of a comparison to Edward Steichen's 1955 "Family of Man" exhibition at the MoMA, Sontag's essay "America, Seen Through Photographs, Darkly," proposes that the popularity of Arbus's work is reflective of society's anti-humanism " . . . which people of good will in the 1970s are eager to be troubled by, just as they wished, in the 1950s, to be consoled and distracted by a sentimental humanism,"⁹⁴ thus conforming to the critical attitudes of her generation by looking to the masses as a photographic

barometer.

Sontag describes Arbus's practice as naïve yet reactionary, curious yet exploitive, and Arbus herself as sophisticated to a fault. Sontag concludes that the melancholy of Arbus's photographs has been latent since the heyday of Alfred Stieglitz's Photo-Secession work.⁹⁵ And yet, rather than reduce American society as a whole to the predictable cliché of the freak show, Sontag proposes that America's attraction to the downtrodden has a deeper cultural significance: "the American partiality to myths of redemption and damnation remains one of the most energizing, most seductive aspects of our national culture,"⁹⁶ a crucial point to keep in mind in terms of *The Ballad* as an album documenting the survival of the marginal in the era of Reagan.

One of Sontag's key assertions regarding Arbus's work echoes de Duve's notion of photography as theft. She claims that Arbus uses the camera as "a passport that annihilates moral boundaries and social inhibitions, freeing the photographer from any responsibility toward the people photographed."⁹⁷ Arbus's photographs seem to be an ideal subject around which to stake an argument regarding boundaries, due to her frequent transgression of them. But Sontag's statement also reflects on the nature of photography itself, and the camera, irregardless of the person wielding it, as an intermediary object of impropriety. Insider Darryl Pinckney claims that all of Goldin's subjects, old and young, lovers and strangers, ". . . understood that being friendly with Nan meant being on easy terms with the lens. It helped that she came of age in an exhibitionist milieu, with people whose investigations of perception included intimate

display for public record."⁹⁸ Pinckney reminds us that Goldin's interest in intimacy, and her ability to explore it was contingent upon a shifting attitude toward the camera, coupled with a subcultural inclination towards exhibitionism. Pinckney himself is complicit with Goldin's conditions. His commentary, like Luc Sante's, is that of someone whose relationship with the photographer yields personal observations about her practice. In this way, perhaps Geoff Dyer is correct in his suggestion that affirmative commentary doesn't particularly add anything to our understanding of Goldin's, or any photographer's, work, while the more interesting questions surround those subjects who are not friendly with the lens.

Arbus's subjects often appear to have an alienated or strange relationship with the camera. Sontag's writing on Arbus, which does not rely upon intimate knowledge of its subject as a foundation, acts as a basic instruction manual for how a photographer can best associate or differentiate themselves from Arbus. Goldin, for one, is careful to distinguish herself, claiming that her interest in intimate subject matter stems from an interrogation of the history of photography, including close examination (but not emulation) of Arbus's practice.⁹⁹ A key point of contention: "The drag queens hated the work of Arbus . . . She tried to strip them of their identity. She did not respect the way they wanted to be. Arbus is a genius, but her work is about herself."¹⁰⁰ *A Young Man in Curlers at Home on West 20th Street, N.Y.C.*, 1966, for example, frames the transvestite subject in a way Goldin would not: frontally, facing the camera, with emphasis on the foreign yet fascinating tactility of surfaces – the half-made-up face, pouting lip, masculine jaw line, talon-like fingernails, hair wound around curlers. Although the young

man looks directly at the camera, he doesn't do so with ease, affection or familiarity. His theatrically-penciled eyebrows seem to betray any potential authenticity of expression in their fixed incredulity. Sontag claims that Arbus's upper middle class upbringing afflicted her with an "ambivalence toward success."¹⁰¹ From this position Arbus acted out against the public world of her privileged childhood by seeking out "what was private, hidden, ugly, dangerous, and fascinating."¹⁰² The young man in curlers is the visual epitome of this quest: isolated, nameless and without any particular context, he exists only to serve Arbus's photographic desires.

Goldin claims that Arbus's transvestite portraits are disrespectful, but what do her own images achieve? Goldin's early portraits of transvestite subjects share an intimate tone with Arbus's, but also exhibit sensitivity to her subjects' definitions of beauty. As a key subcultural figure of freedom and transgression, the drag queen embodied qualities which Goldin greatly admired. In *Ivy wearing a fall, Boston, 1973* the early influence of fashion photography on Goldin's practice is visible in Ivy's demure pose. She regards the camera over her shoulder, a classic fashion posture which draws attention to the curve of her back and implies a conflation of sexuality and modesty. Yet this is not a straight fashion shot. Ivy's long, blonde hair is the focal point of the image, pulled into a girlish ponytail which begins with an elaborate woven headpiece, and then cascades down her back, catching the light. Although this early image bears greater resemblance to Arbus's work than *The Ballad* photographs, Ivy's engagement with the camera differs from Arbus's detached, impatient subject: she regards the lens attentively and with control. Goldin claims, "I never saw them as men dressed as women. To me they were a third gender."¹⁰³

Indeed, the image does not attempt to expose Ivy's masculinity, indicating its irrelevance. While this photograph points to Goldin's subsequent use of colour as a necessary means to differentiate from Arbus, it also alludes to *The Ballad's* thematic concerns of intimacy and sexuality.

In comparing Rineke Dijkstra's so-called "quasi-ethnographic" photographs to Goldin's "marginal, often bohemian folk in their natural habitat,"¹⁰⁴ Julian Stallabrass notes that in Goldin's images, "the subjects seem to have forgotten about the presence of the camera" but "the subjects do act, though usually in ways that work to fix a firm identity as alienated adolescent, bohemian, or lumpenproletarian."¹⁰⁵ This observation further emphasizes the issue of respect which for Goldin is so important. The portrait of Ivy makes clear that Goldin's photographic position is not the same as Arbus's, not founded on the need to escape one world and seek out 'freaks' in another. For Goldin, identity is conflated with a sense of belonging to a tribe, based on shared bohemian characteristics, including an assertive embodiment of one's sexuality. Ivy's expression of her sexuality confirms the emancipation from gender boundaries for which Goldin also strives, whereas in Arbus's work, the transvestite merely appears against other types.

If the viewer accepts Goldin's subjects as part of a marginal yet strong family, her images escape the troubling reaction described by Judith Butler: the repulsion felt by the viewer upon seeing Arbus's work, in which "the human figure is so proud in its enormity or deformity or plasticity."¹⁰⁶ Despite this, Butler continues, "Most consumers of Arbus head straight to the grotesque photos,"¹⁰⁷ indicating how as consumers of images, we

deliberately seek out uneasy places. Sontag picks up on this trend as well when she claims that Arbus's photographs are "typical of the kind of art popular among sophisticated urban people right now: art that is a self-willed test of hardness."¹⁰⁸ Arbus and Goldin's photographs test the viewer's capacity for things presumably foreign to them. Both photographers depended on the fact that this unfamiliarity might lead to an admission of desire for that which repels, although in Goldin's work, this admission humanizes her subjects, whereas in Arbus's work, it turns her viewers into freaks.

If Arbus and Eggleston served as Goldin's photographic predecessors, Cindy Sherman functioned as a peer. Sherman claims "I was bored by what was going on in art . . . In the late '70s and into the '80s I was aware that the painting and sculpture world looked down on people who used photography,"¹⁰⁹ suggesting her early awareness of artistic hierarchies and dissatisfaction with what established media could inspire. Sherman also mentions the influence of Arbus, and, much like Goldin, in order to differentiate between that photographer and herself: ". . . she [Arbus] was really a straight photographer, a traditional photographer,"¹¹⁰ in other words, an artist whose methodology did not strongly distinguish her work from that which bored Sherman.

Sherman's conceptual use of photographs was the means by which she countered this boredom. Much like Richard Prince, who re-photographed Marlboro cigarette ads in response to the Reagan administration's American hero rhetoric in the early 1980s, Sherman recognized that expertise in photography was not a necessary requirement for working in a photographic way. As presented by Prince, the cowboy is an elusive symbol

of American masculinity, a rugged, heterosexual figure who Prince uses "to unpack the menace, aggression, and atavism of such representations and reveal their analogical link to current political rhetoric."¹¹¹ Sherman achieves a similar critique with her treatment of feminine stereotypes, but by placing herself in the gendered roles she seeks to analyse, she reveals the innate artificiality on which the viewer/subject engagement is founded. Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills* (1977-79), whose years of production overlap Goldin's early *Ballad* photos, offer a compelling comparison in terms of the supposed fiction of Sherman's work and professed truth of Goldin's. With herself as the constant subject, interior scenes often photographed in her apartment and some of the featured props her own possessions, Sherman's black and white images raise issues around the confused status of fact and fiction in photography.¹¹²

Laura Kipnis's discussion of Sherman's work cites Arthur Danto's juxtaposition of the art photograph and the working photograph, the latter category pertaining to Sherman. When Sherman (and here is what interests Kipnis about her work) plays dress-up, exaggerates her femininity and engages with certain props and scenarios – actions which, within a sexual context, are identified as homovestism - it is not seen as perversion,¹¹³ but rather as an act of legitimation which transforms Sherman's working photographs into art. For Kipnis, this point is crucial in terms of our acceptance of certain photographic practices and condemnation of others. Pornography, Kipnis's central topic, exists at the top of the maligned list.

Rosalind Krauss suggests that Sherman's confrontation of stereotypes "is a revelation of

the artist herself as stereotypical."¹¹⁴ In *Untitled Film Still #3*, 1977, Sherman embodies the housewife role via environment, posture, clichés and props. Despite the authenticity of this scene, the disarmingly meticulous presentation of the stereotype, and her reassuring use of black and white,¹¹⁵ these stamps of perfection have a secondary effect: they remind us that Sherman's posturing is not genuine, and that where we see a housewife, we also see Sherman playing that housewife. The artifice of Sherman's images is also, much like Goldin's photographs, confirmed by their relation to one another, with Sherman transforming from housewife to the equally detailed roles of spy and femme fatale in the blink of an eye. The viewer's recognition of the type within the image exposes the artist to that same line of critique. Goldin's images also deal in types, the presentation of which is an even more subtle conflation of fact and fiction. Sherman emphatically rejects readings of her photographs as authentic, suggesting that beneath the surface of the image no intact self can be found.¹¹⁶ By this admission, Sherman differentiates herself from Goldin. She speaks of the camera's capacity to fracture or splinter identity, whereas Goldin holds firm to the notion that identity is secured and memorialized by the photograph. Sherman directs the viewer's attention toward the photograph's unavoidable surface quality which, no matter how long it is contemplated, will never be transformed into something more substantial.

Unlike Arbus and Sherman, whose alignment with Goldin has been established via criticism, Larry Clark, whose photographs are an object lesson in transgression, is identified by Goldin herself as a key influence: "In 1974, I went to school and there was a teacher who showed me Larry Clark. It has entirely changed my work."¹¹⁷ This teacher

was photographer Henry Horenstein, with whom Goldin took a night course at the New England School of Photography¹¹⁸ and the comment evinces Clark's seminal influence on her photographic viewpoint. As noted by Jonathan Weinberg, Clark's photographs served a specific purpose for Goldin, providing the example of how to represent drug use, an integral bohemian pastime: "Like the photographer Larry Clark . . . Goldin uses narrative sequences to try to convey the effects of heroin abuse from the point of view of the user."¹¹⁹ During the 1980s, there were strong cultural determinates for attitudes towards drugs, originating with Nancy Reagan's insidious "Just Say No" anti-drug campaign, which operated on a principle of unequivocal refusal, centered around the crucial moment when the "no" is presumably uttered. Goldin's photographs, like Clark's, use narrative to illustrate that drug addiction is not the result of a single refusal, but rather many related decisions over a long period of time. For both photographer and subject, explorations of the possible narrative determinates for addiction keep that crisis in line with the family, and implicate all family members in its potential remedy.

Much emphasis is placed on Clark's relationship with his mother, a photographer of babies who taught Clark her trade at a young age so he could participate in the family business. Vince Aletti describes these as "humiliating years . . . going door-to-door in Tulsa, Oklahoma,"¹²⁰ an endeavor contingent upon the coercion of the parents and baby subject. By sixteen, Clark's use of photography had shifted to more personal subject matter. Submerged in amphetamine use, he produced photographs of his so-called "drug shooting coterie."¹²¹ But Clark was also a transient figure in this scene. He attended the Layton School of Art in Wisconsin¹²² and spent time in New York, New Mexico, prison

and the army before the book's completion, with Tulsa as the place of return, and the photographs accumulating through intermittent visits.

Clark claims that "Every time I was down Tulsa through the years, I photographed,"¹²³ noting that the city itself also changed over this period of time: "There was a time lag there when the Tulsa scene shut down for a while. A lot of people went to the penitentiary. I spent a year and a half in New Mexico getting myself clean and healthy."¹²⁴ In 1971, Clark returned home with a Leica "and did the rest of the pictures very quickly because I knew the scene so well."¹²⁵ That Clark was an adult by the time this project reached its completion is an important biographical detail. The gradually increasing age differential between Clark and his subjects renders the photographer a step removed from the scene he is documenting, a gap which is filled in by the shared affection for drugs between photographer and subjects. Although there is familiarity between Clark and his subjects on this basis, he approaches them as a trained photographer, not an amateur, and as an adult, not a peer.

The resulting images were published in 1971 as *Tulsa*, and their candid, black and white presentation coupled with highly controversial subject matter symbolizes the transition from "documentary-style journalism of the 1950s to the more personal and investigative photographic explorations of the 1970s and 1980s."¹²⁶ The Tulsa locale is the key to Clark's avoidance of journalistic cliché, and his connection to Brecht's call for action: we should not be complacent viewers of the disturbing activities occurring in our own homes. In *Untitled* (from *Tulsa*), 1971, for example, we see three naked teenagers in what

looks like a child's bedroom, with a small twin bed, clothes and shoes strewn across the floor and ghoulish posters tacked to the walls. Within this space, the young subjects are engaged in an adult act never made explicit in Goldin's *Ballad*. A young man with dark hair is tying a girl's upper arm while she injects herself with a needle. The third subject sits on the bed next to the girl as an observer, embodying what Andy Grundberg refers to as Clark's recurring phallic motif, "which appears not as an icon of empowerment but as a sign of lost hope,"¹²⁷ and indeed, the conflation of the subject's sexual desire with their need for a fix, as portrayed in this childish, insular setting produces a contrary effect to Prince's fictional Marlboro heroes, lit by the golden sunset of the American west.

The gender issues suggested here remain at a developmental stage, one which perhaps precedes the relationships presented in Goldin's work. As José Esteban Muñoz has observed, "Women are always surrounded in Clark's project. They are encompassed by young male bodies which are calibrated to draw on their presence as an anchor which moors them to heterosexuality. To put it bluntly, Clark's young women are the only thing that keeps these men from being naked with each other."¹²⁸ In *Untitled*, the female subject is the focus of attention for both of her male companions, but as Muñoz suggests, one cannot help but sense that she acts as a physical barrier, preventing the two male subjects' sexual engagement with one another. These young men do not wear costumes of masculinity as Prince's cowboys do, suggesting their indifference to the layers of adult identity, and yet the female subject remains a figure of prevention and reassurance.

A similar attitude of indifference towards the camera pervades Goldin's *Ballad* photos, coupled with a more assured sense of sexual identity. Her subjects often appear unaffected by the camera's presence, suggesting that it is a familiar and common object. But, in *Getting high, New York City 1979*, it is a clothed, adult male subject, not a naked teenager, who portrays the drug user. He is poised on the edge of a bed with a spoon and matches in hand, his body severed from the shoulders up by the photograph's frame. His action is specific and focused, not clouded by or conflated with sexual activity, as in Clark's photographs. The cropping both supports this focus, and illustrates the privacy line in Goldin's world which the viewer is not permitted to cross. With the *Tulsa* series, Clark affiliates drug use and sexual activity with transgressive details: the subjects' identities, where they are and how they live,¹²⁹ thus exposing his subjects, but also implicating the viewer in the cycle of violence and abuse. Who do Goldin's photographs implicate? Her subjects are consenting adults, presumably responsible for their behavior, not children, for whom parents should be held accountable. While Goldin's subjects have learned to be discreet, Clark's subjects incite both pity and concern for their lack of discretion.

Although Clark's work speaks of a youth culture for which he is wistful, the *Tulsa* photographs in particular also speak (dare I say, tenderly) to the memories of youth in the absence of family, and Clark's need to record them. There is an underlying poignancy to the work: this drug-ridden, abusive, sexually volatile youth is the thing he is desperate to capture. Clark's photographs see the family as a culpable source for the scenarios presented, in their allusions to neglect and the economic factors which contribute to

parental absence. In Clark's America there is no happy family, most definitely not the kind of family whose pastimes include the affectionate assembly of photos into an album. Rather, his emotionally detached teenage subjects exhibit a disturbingly nonchalant ease in turning gestures into photographic currency. *Tulsa* "shows the quiet atrocities of a very real war. Tulsa is the battlefield. For Clark it was 'shaking' with violence, guns, sex, and drugs."¹³⁰ The history of violence implied in his photographs thus returns us to the socio-political conscience of photographic practices coming out of the 1960s.

Clark's rise to fame after the publication of *Tulsa* also marked his most difficult period of addiction, and thus it was only after a twelve year absence that he produced a new series, *Teenage Lust* (1983). Those images, also black and white, seem to pick up where *Tulsa* left off, with a disregard for the interim years and a lack of evolution in both the photographer and his subjects. Jim Lewis describes the state of Clark's career, circa 1992: "In the past year or two his work has been recontextualized, in part by the artist himself, and in part by the world around him,"¹³¹ a reframing which did not take place in the 1970s, when Clark's own condition closely mirrored that of his subjects, but rather in the 1990s, the decade in which Clark (by then rehabilitated) published *The Perfect Childhood* and made his first feature film, *Kids*. In these works in particular, the stakes of Clark's practice are raised by the increased distance between the artist and his subjects, confirming his perversity in the eyes of his critics while implicating his new admirers in that condition.



In framing the next chapter of this paper around *The Ballad's* three forms: slide show, Cibachrome and monograph, I will continue to consider sexual dependency as the project's central theme and conceptual anchor. *The Ballad* photographs are a window into the secrecy of the family, the sexual attitudes which are formed in childhood and determine future relationships, and indeed such psychological connections were prevalent at the time of *The Ballad's* creation. The late 1970s and early 1980s witnessed "an explosion" of studies on American women "trapped" in destructive relationships: "Talk show exposés and popular movies . . . raised awareness and encouraged the creation of women's shelters, support groups, and other institutional responses to the problem of spousal abuse."¹³²

In the group of photographers explored in this chapter, several manifestations of the destructive relationship have been presented. The consequences of absent adults are set in Clark's teenage subjects, in their play acting of adulthood and crippled pseudo-parenting of one another. In Sherman's work, relationship issues are raised via stereotypes and through the often voyeuristic point of view she presents, suggesting a stalker or menacing figure, peering through doorways, over Sherman's shoulder, or from a distance through binoculars. In Arbus's case issues of marital discord are evidenced biographically, in her balancing of roles including dutiful assistant, loving wife, nurturing mother, and her increasing disenchantment with anything assumed to be "normal."¹³³

Nan Goldin began her professional practice at a time when the parameters of colour

photography were changing. Her use of the family's preferred medium, and her mimicking of the amateur snapshot confirms Bourdieu's claim that "the rejection of the family photograph, if it does not actually refuse the family all value, at least amounts to a refusal of one of the family values by refusing to serve the family cult."¹³⁴ Goldin's photographs respond to this condition via subject matter which seeks to replace and redefine the family unit rather than refusing it. In this way, her project is a productive and expansive one which desires to turn the family's critique back on itself. With its exploration of dysfunctional relationships in which sexual dependency stands in for chemical dependency,¹³⁵ *The Ballad* illustrates how fissures in the family first appear. Goldin's candid display of sexual topics suggests that ruptures in formerly unified zones can result in both new subjects and methodology for art. The second chapter of this paper will consider Goldin's seminal participation in photographic and subcultural discourses of which her work has subsequently become the hallmark.

Chapter II: *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* in Three Forms

Slide Show

In the catalogue essay for the Baltimore Museum of Art's 2005 exhibition, *SlideShow*, Darsie Alexander charts the history of photographic slides from utilitarian function to artistic form. The widespread popularity of the slide, in Alexander's view, can be attributed to the fact that it offered what no other form could: "a communal experience of showing and receiving large-scale pictures of private life in a color-saturated palette."¹ She describes the viewing of slides as a "coming-together for members of a discrete clan, a time to watch and reminisce in the comfort of the living room,"² With the slide show, the family effectively produced its own entertainment, in a manner that rivaled the media on which it already relied for evocations of domestic togetherness: radio and television.

With the advent of conceptual art practices in the 1960s, it no longer mattered that slides were considered "low" in comparison to painting's "high" status. In fact, this status only added to the slide show's iconoclastic appeal. Although the medium "carried with it an abject quality as the already slightly archaic means by which families documented and presented their travelogues for their bored friends,"³ its association with banal vacation photographs, academic lectures and referential status to things inert and absent served it well as a medium for art which sought to critique the family. As the most amateur of Goldin's three *Ballad* modes, her use of slides depend on their inseparability from such connotations.

It took some time for photographers, having so recently legitimated artistic uses of colour, to accept modes which required further justification. William Eggleston claims that although Kodachrome slides were appealingly saturated and sharp, they "had to be projected to be seen and I really did not like being forced to see them only in that way."⁴ Rather than experiment with the slide show's potential as Goldin did in the 1970s, Eggleston saw it in terms of its limitations, speaking to the generation gap between these two photographers, and Eggleston's reliance on a conventional enlarged paper print format.

New York City became the epicenter of subversive slide show activity in the late 1970s with the "screening rooms, clubs, and noncommercial galleries"⁵ of the Lower East Side, locations which removed the slide show from the home and complemented its new artistic function. It was in such contexts that *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* was first seen. Alexander remarks on the aptness of Goldin's images in slide form, noting that ". . . people's fantasies and sorrows should be realized as short-lived projections,"⁶ and indeed, the slide show's images, moving in front of the eye in a cinematic and rapid manner rather than statically, poetically mirror the drama and urgency of the *Ballad's* themes and emphasize the form's fundamental ephemerality. Typically, once the last slide is viewed, the projector is turned off, the screen disassembled, and the living room or classroom returned to its previous function. In alignment with the artistic priorities of her generation, Goldin's work proposes that the projector should not be so easily dismantled or forgotten: "the slide show is not a substitute; it *is* the work of art."⁷ And yet, the use of a slide format also served a practical purpose for Goldin, who claims "I started doing

slide shows because I left school."⁸ The mode speaks to the reduced availability of photographic resources outside of the academic setting, and how Goldin's inability to make prints led to new means of representation.

As a further reinvention of the rigidity and silence of home and classroom shows, Goldin's slides were presented in bars like the Rock Lounge and OP Screening Room on Broadway, and initially featured live music by Jim Jarmusch's No Wave band, The Del-Byzanteens.⁹ Eventually "an eclectic 45-minute musical soundtrack" was established, featuring music as varied as "opera to blues to punk and new wave."¹⁰ Goldin claims that the music came together in much the same way as the images, through a process of accumulation and rearrangement: "There's stuff from *The Threepenny Opera* . . . because I grew up on that. I used 'I Put a Spell on You' – then Jim [Jarmusch] put Screamin' Jay Hawkins in *Stranger Than Paradise* [1984] and the song had much less impact on audiences after that came out,"¹¹ suggesting her concern for the experiential value of the work, as well as its originality.

Goldin's combination of images with music and her use of Lower East Side nightclubs as venues meaningfully connects *The Ballad* to Berlin cabaret culture of the 1920s. The German word *Kabarett* appeared as early as 1910, to describe an "entertainment-oriented, somewhat literary, small music hall,"¹² and the venue placed emphasis on two features which also appear in *The Ballad*: "conspicuous consumption and eroticism."¹³ During Germany's difficult post-war economy, cabarets flourished as a means of escape from daily troubles, thus broadening and equalizing the audience to which they appealed, and

reducing their subject matter to something palatable for the masses. What Goldin's *Ballad* retains from this model is the notion of the small public venue as a productive site for the presentation of work which is marked both by its artistic value and exploration of erotic themes.

Unlike Weimar cabarets, Goldin's early slide show venues were not a meeting place for New York's high and low societies, but rather a highly specific and intimate circle of Goldin's friends, although she eventually modified her photographic means in order to accommodate more economically and socially stratified audiences. The anxiety felt by Weimar-era intellectuals about the death of cabaret culture due to its popularity with the masses is thus mirrored in the anxiety around colour photography in the 1970s. In both cases, the market responded by providing that public body with more of what it already desired, in an easily accessible form. As Alan Lareau indicates, the dissolution of the literary, experimental cabaret "had economic reasons, of course, for there was now a broad, middle-class audience,"¹⁴ a powerful body which transformed the cabaret's subversive entertainment into something popular. This group should not be disregarded in the way Goldin's work was transformed from performance into prints.

Much like Weimar-era forms of entertainment, *The Ballad* incited both protest and fascination from the upper classes. In relation to the popular *Dirnenlieder* or whore's songs, which dominated cabaret repertoire around 1920, "The dirty, vulgar milieu of the underworld held a romantic attraction for the bourgeois viewer, who was not shocked, but instead perversely titillated by the misery displayed for his money."¹⁵ The intrigue of

misery and vulgarity also pervades *The Ballad*, but the titillation felt is in response to images of the viewers themselves, with no financial transaction involved. If there is a clash of high and low society in relation to Goldin's photographs, it appeared not in the slide show arena, but in the museum, that same platform on which the most vocal opposition to Goldin's work finally arose.¹⁶

Luc Sante describes the initial reaction to Goldin's slide shows as one of astonishment:

. . . the slides were raw slices of the collective experience, uncannily preserved, but they went far beyond that. They were art and everybody knew it right away. It wasn't simply that they were perfectly composed, although they were, but that they reconfigured the known into something rich and strange.¹⁷

With Dyer's analysis again in mind, I want to consider the value of Sante's statement beyond the objective historical criteria it fails to meet. Sante defines *The Ballad* in terms of the reaction of a body of viewers inclined to respond to them positively. Such an audience is unique in relation to Brechtian theory, in that it is not the performance which draws them into a potential world of fantasy, but rather that they come to the performance from the fantasy world of their daily lives, which is then reflected back to them as art. For Goldin's slide show audience, theatrical entertainment was among the most conservative forms of escapism. As is evident from his statement, attaching immediate significance to Goldin's work was an advantageous strategy for viewers who, like Sante, were invested in Goldin's accomplishments. As members of a so-called family, her success was their emancipation. If they didn't know what to call themselves before, now they were at least

models and muses. If anything, Sante confirms that this insular, pseudo-public space was without critique, built on affirmation, narcissism, and desperation.

Within this pseudo-public space, Goldin's unselfconscious lack of mechanical virtuosity was another means by which the presentation of the slide show became an act of intimate performance. Goldin describes how she would stand, holding the "projector in my hand and loading the slides one by one. It was totally untechnical . . . Sometimes I had to run home and get another bulb for the projector."¹⁸ As recalled by witnesses, early presentations of *The Ballad* seemed technically amateur, interrupted by seconds of blank screen, irrational special effects, and slow transitions from image to image.¹⁹ In slide show form, the projector's deficiencies and Goldin's reactions to them became aspects of *The Ballad*. The functional unpredictability of the slide show required Goldin's constant intervention: in relation to the manufacture of the images, their transference into the public sphere, and the way they are now discussed and remembered.

And indeed, our relationship with slides is often based on nostalgic recollection. Robert Storr, in reference to the slide's role as a teaching aid, writes of the impossibility of thinking about slides without thinking "simultaneously of plastic sleeves and cardboard or plastic boxes, of file drawers and projection trays (straight or circular), and of all the frustrations and the comedy of manners that come with these systems."²⁰ Goldin's slide shows also remind us that despite its increasingly efficient mechanization, slide projection is rarely without some technical fumbling, and it is around this comedic ritual that memories of the show are formed and later recalled. While in an academic context,

such as the one Storr describes, slides function as an illustrative tool for something foreign to the audience, in the home, slides trigger intimate memories of spaces, occasions, and sensations of viewing.

The Ballad frequently addresses remembered spaces and private zones of the home, spaces which are re-written by Goldin as sites of pleasure, freedom and sexuality. One of the most common spaces in Goldin's photographs, the bathroom, is also the most private in the context of the family, a room which typically appears in the slide show only under strict guidelines. By representing it often, *The Ballad* dismantles the taboo status of the bathroom without sanitizing or disguising its functions. As naturally " . . . exclusionary spaces that others are allowed to enter only if related to their occupants like members of a family,"²¹ bathrooms also become increasingly privatized with age, particularly during teenage years, when spatial boundaries are firmly drawn for the first time. By granting us access to her bathrooms, Goldin invites discussion around the varied meanings of this space and its function as a subcultural zone.

For whom does the bathroom's meaning extend beyond the obvious functions? Drug users spend a lot of time in bathrooms, and this fact points us towards what might be "wrong" with Goldin's emphasis on this room. Geoff Dyer suggests that "the traces of depravity in her world,"²² such as filthy bathroom floors are overshadowed by the more controversial features of Goldin's images. In regard to an image of Brian on the toilet, Dyer claims " . . . it is shocking – not that he's naked, but that he is barefoot."²³ For Dyer, the unclean bathroom floor acts as a meaningful index of the way Goldin and her 'family'

lived, their standards of human hygiene, and what a lack of concern for cleanliness might suggest about them as subjects, and us as viewers.

With *Ryan in the Tub, Provincetown, Mass, 1976*, Goldin legitimizes the dirty bathroom as a site of intimacy and an appropriate subject for slide show display, and places that site within a bohemian framework. Goldin describes Provincetown, where she lived while studying at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, as "a gay resort three hours away from Boston," a place, which during the 1970s was inhabited by artists and writers who lived "in small groups."²⁴ This description implies a communal structure based on shared artistic interests rather than familial relationships. Ryan belongs to this world away from reality. Floating in murky bath water, her pale body is thin to the point of androgyny. Although her eyes are closed, she appears more strained than restful with her head awkwardly leaning against the edge of the tub, just above the waterline. Her fingers crossed below her breasts, rather than concealing them, constitute a deliberate gesture. Much like Larry Clark's nude subjects, Ryan doesn't hide her body, suggesting an ease with the presence of the camera, as well as an understanding of the bohemian mandate of Goldin's work to show something otherwise unseen.

This portrait of Ryan is by no means explicit, even in comparison to other *Ballad* images. But it is striking in the context of the nostalgic, familial slide show mode. The photograph is tightly cropped, stopping at the subject's waistline. The bathtub acts as a secondary frame. A bar of soap rests on the edge of the tub, and yet this subject does not bathe. She merely lies in the water, which does not look particularly warm or comforting.

The basin itself is rather dirty in fact, a ring of residue visible around its edge, further begging the question of why the subject remains there. Such details are heightened in slide show form, and the public display of such an image naturally incites discussion among viewers as to how it belongs. By all accounts it does not. It is neither subversive in its mode of intimacy, appropriated from a family model, nor totally fitting for the formerly wholesome means which presents it, due to its transgression of the bathroom space, and the display of nudity therein.

If the filthiness of the subject and the room is considered as meaningful content, as Dyer suggests it should be, an assumption might be made linking Ryan's passivity to her bohemian identity, suggesting that Goldin's subjects are dirty on an iconographic level. We cannot ignore the obvious baptismal association of water, a reference which returns us to Sontag's definition of the photograph as a rite or redemptive action, which necessarily implies the admission and then cleansing of sin. If Ryan is a subject in need of redemption, her sins are contrasted with the implied purity of the family, and the tradition of family photography in which the bathroom is a permissible location for the camera. The documentation of young infants or children in the bath relies upon bathtub as a playful site of aquatic exploration and wonder. In Juergen Teller's portrait of his son, *Ed in Japan*, 2005, Ed's maniacal wide-eyed expression is simultaneously funny and terrifying, reflecting his sensory response to the water, but also to the potential danger of that space, as indicated by the halo of soapy bubbles framing his face. While the recording of "baby's first bath" legitimizes the camera's presence in this space of the home, it also raises the question of when such images shift from innocent mementos to

erotic or morbid ones. Ryan's face expresses a sensory experience of the bathtub space, but with greater ambiguity, recalling Seiichi Furuya's very similarly composed 1979 portrait of his wife Christine, *Graz*, 1979, 1979. In that image, one of four hundred portraits Furuya took of his wife before her suicide, Christine's eye contact with the photographer functions both as a kind of apathetic dare and confirmation of the bathtub's deadly potential. There is a similarly ominous quality to *Ryan in the tub* and the way it reconfigures innocent associations between children and bathrooms around an adult subject.

Art historical references to bathing are plentiful and varied. According to Linda Nochlin, "The indoors-ness is a major factor" in Edgar Degas' images of bathers (1885), in which the voyeuristic spectator of Degas' images is "thrust intrusively into the pictorial space of modesty and privacy,"²⁵ much like Goldin's viewers are thrust into an awkward space of immodesty and publicity. Jacques-Louis David politicized the bathroom in his post-mortem portrait of assassinated revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat (1793), while also aestheticizing his subject's severe skin condition, from which the bath provided a soothing respite. Geoff Dyer also claims that in Goldin's images "suggestions of Bonnard crop up again and again in photographs of women bathing,"²⁶ a reference to art historical representations of the female toilette, and perhaps the relative immodesty of Goldin's subjects.

If bathing images are ubiquitous in the history of art, what is the source of our uneasy viewership of Goldin's bathroom subjects? Judith Butler observes, in relation to Diane

Arbus's photos, that when a subject faces the camera with eyes closed, "The camera seems oddly rebuffed . . . and the figures present an obdurate surface, one that cannot be entered or known."²⁷ Perhaps Ryan's closed eyes incite viewer discomfort. Yet the true obdurate surface in this image is not the subject, whose inclusion in *The Ballad* implies an intimate relationship with the photographer, but the bathroom itself. *Suzanne in the shower, Palenque, Mexico 1981*, for example, also displays the subject with her eyes closed and her body facing the camera, cropped from the waist up, a composition which seems to evince the subject's close relationship with Goldin. Given what we know about the omnipresence of the camera in this family, Ryan and Suzanne's closed eyes should not be seen as gestures of refusal, but rather evidence of image-taking as a constant activity in this bohemian world. What cannot be trespassed so easily is the space beyond the frame. Access to it would satisfy our curiosities about Goldin's dirty little world, and thus while Ryan more or less conforms to an established art historical treatment of the bathing subject, the lack of access to the whole picture makes us uneasy.

Such images also remind the viewer that "there are no strictly private gestures in Goldin's oeuvre. Everything is being performed for the camera, and, therefore, for the public."²⁸ In *The Remembered Film*, Victor Burgin considers the photographic relationship between privacy and betrayal: "The telling of memory, of course, betrays it. Both in the sense of there being something private about the memory that demands it remain untold (secreted), and in the sense that to tell it is to misrepresent, to transform, to diminish it."²⁹ If we follow Bourdieu's notion that sharing photographs is the point of taking them, particularly for the family, is this not a kind of betrayal? And does this not bring Goldin's

work back to the reference points of the family? Burgin highlights the importance of betrayal to photographic representation and the illusory mantras of cohesion, unity and protection suggested by Bourdieu and Krauss.³⁰ We must consider how openly and vulnerably Goldin's subjects react to this betrayal, and what they might want in exchange. *Ryan in the tub*, which along with other *Ballad* images challenges the parameters of the traditional slide show and standard categories of family photograph is, in Goldin's world, an object of public display and communal celebration which reflects back to the community an assured sense of identity. As such, Goldin's slide show encourages us to consider the public and private zones of the home, the role of photography therein, and the betrayals required to affirm the identity of the family unit.

Monograph

A monograph is "a highly detailed and thoroughly documented study or paper written about a limited area of a subject or field of inquiry,"³¹ and photographs have been published in this form since the inception of the medium. The monograph offers edited, sequenced images combined with text and graphics, providing opportunity for new interpretations of images seen previously as individual prints, or without referential context. William Henry Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* (1844) was the first published book to feature photographic illustrations, thus establishing a relationship between images and text. The invention of the halftone plate in the 1880s made it possible for publications to regularly include photographs. The plate, "which allowed type and photographic images to be reproduced on the same press, dramatically changed the means by which the general public viewed and had access to photographs."³² Thus it was

in combination with text that series of photographs first became available for contemplation on an personal level. Book publications allowed the viewer to hold and consider images for unrestricted amounts of time, in an illustrative role which complemented the text. Via the halftone method, photographs became part of everyday life.

The monograph's popularity increased steadily throughout the 20th century, with key publications offering detailed instruction on the way books should be assembled, organized and presented in relation to a photographer's work. Robert Frank's *The Americans* (1958) remains one of the most significant photo publication of the 20th century on this basis. Prior to its publication, photography monographs had a representative role, but with *The Americans*, the book itself became an extension of the work, rather than a mere format. Published at the height of the Cold War, when most of the United States was "sunk in a complacent prosperity," "*The Americans* looked like a slap in the face,"³³ and Frank's stern subjects suggested the unarticulated anger brewing beneath America's prosperity, the subtle manifestations of which could be read on their faces and in their body language. Together, the images of this bleak America were so coherently referential "that even when exhibited singly in museums, they still evoked their placement in the book – like quotations from a sacred text they called up entire passages, themes, subtle connotations to other photographers."³⁴ Regardless of the earlier period of American history they capture, Frank's portfolio of this marginal world was something to which Goldin could relate: the power of a series of photographs to communicate a cultural message which required no external confirmation.

According to Marvin Heiferman, Goldin "was influenced by the subjective, romantic look of Robert Frank's early photographs as by the blistering outsider's clarity of his political and social observations."³⁵ If *The Ballad* photographs, which had previously reveled in the spontaneous flexibility of the slide show, were required to conform to a more static medium, Goldin could not have looked to a better model than *The Americans* to observe the potential of this form. Edited down from 28,000 exposures to a mere 83 photographs, Frank's series was a perfect example of how a reduced number of images, if selected carefully, could more powerfully articulate the thematics of a topic than padding that topic with superfluous visual evidence. If this lesson was not enough to draw Goldin to Frank's work, his affiliation with Beat Generation icons Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg offered further confirmation of his outsider status, and thus his appeal as a subcultural role model.

When *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* was first published in 1986, the slide show's expansive parameters were reduced to a sequence of 125 images, which could no longer be re-arranged, added or removed, based on Goldin's whim or mood. Fixed on the page, facing plates were now permanently, rather than temporarily, related. According to Chris Townsend, "Publication conferred status and authority on the performative by fixing signification as durable and establishing presence through privileging print over projection."³⁶ In slide show form, signification was ephemeral, audience participation was essential, and music operated as a key component of the performance, which added to its intimacy. Townsend illustrates the rebirth of these materials in a form almost

contradictorily stable in relation to its subject matter. Via the monograph, Goldin's idiosyncratic fumbling was removed, and she was forced to consider her authoritative voice.

The monograph's reduced number of images were the result of a selection process dependent not only on Goldin's authority, but that of a team of editors: Marvin Heiferman, Mark Holborn and Suzanne Fletcher. Fletcher's editorial role in particular, as one of *The Ballard's* most recognizable and frequent subjects, suggested that she shared Goldin's perspective as a license to speak about the images in an intimate way. She appears in the monograph under chapter headings like "Femme Fatale," "Wild Women Don't Get the Blues," and "Casta Diva (Chaste Goddess)," which make reference to the work's relationship to music and to the empowerment of the female subject as a carefree seductress. Fletcher is shown alone, with men, naked and clothed, contemplative and tearful. In attempting to answer fundamental questions about the nature of male/female relationships, she is one of Goldin's women.

Via its resemblance to a photo album, the monograph also continued *The Ballard's* engagement with familial modes of display. In this form, the comparison stems from a practical need to organize photographs as they accumulate, forming an archive not limited to the family, although meaningful therein. According to Jacques Derrida, the archive cannot exist "without a place of consignment, without a technique of repetition, and without a certain exteriority. No archive without outside."³⁷ *The Ballard* relies on repetition as evidence of the artist's urgent topic. With the publication of the monograph,

Goldin's images engaged with the notion of exteriority via an audience outside her family to whom her photographs became available. A second level of exteriority resulted from the editorial process itself: if 125 of the images appeared inside the monograph, the vast majority were left out.

diane arbus, published in 1972, is one of Aperture's most well-known monographs. It has been essential to the posthumous analysis of Arbus's work, including her influence on Goldin. The Arbus monograph illustrates how meaning is made on the pages of a book without the artist's consent or participation, providing a marked contrast to the way *The Ballad* or *The Americans* came into being. Produced shortly after the artist's suicide in 1971, and in conjunction with a tremendously popular retrospective of her work at the Museum of Modern Art, *diane arbus* was edited by two members of her inner circle: her daughter, Doon Arbus, and Marvin Israel, her former advisor. Together, they established eighty photographs as the "core" of Arbus's practice,³⁸ a reductive total in comparison to the 7500 rolls of contact-printed film and 1000 finished prints she left behind.³⁹

According to Leo Rubinfien the Arbus monograph was designed for dramatic effect, a goal which compromised accurate understanding of the artist's work,⁴⁰ and yet, due to a lack of other materials to challenge it, the monograph was seen for decades as a comprehensive document, thus illustrating the book's capacity to transform and direct meaning.

Catherine Lord holds an additional document responsible for fabricating Arbus's public image after her death: Patricia Bosworth's unauthorized 1984 biography, *Diane Arbus*.

Echoing Rubinien's concerns, Lord claims that Bosworth's text "makes blatant the usual tautologies of the monograph *genre*: the life generates significance for the art, which is in turn referred back to the life . . . The photographs are 'explained' by constructing Arbus herself as a freak, and their power, from which derives their value as art, is legitimated by her suicide."⁴¹ The Arbus biography proves that it is not via images alone that a portrait of the artist is created, but by an often varied library of evidence. The Arbus monograph and Bosworth biography serve an explanatory purpose in relation to Diane Arbus, the deceased artist. Goldin's photographs, on the basis of similar criteria, are more difficult to explain, due to the artist's overt participation in her own mythology.

Two texts written by Goldin appear in *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* along with the photographs: a Foreword, composed in 1986, the year of the first edition, and an Afterword, written ten years later for a revised edition. In these two to three page texts, the artist reinforces the themes of the images, thus sharpening the viewer's engagement with the work and positioning Brian Burchill and Goldin as protagonists in a narrative primarily concerned with sexual dependency. The essays also offer two distinct Goldins: one young and curious, the other thoughtful and introspective. This contrast provides a crucial frame for the photographs by reinforcing the notion of a family photo album as a record of the maturation of its subjects.

Although there are moments of high drama contained within *The Ballad* pages, a dramatic effect such as Rubinien describes cannot be ascribed to Goldin's monograph. Rather, *The Ballad* monograph is "a total experience that is neither repetitious, like

family albums, nor 'arty.'"⁴² Within albums, as *The Americans* illustrates, images operate on a relational basis, with high ruptured by low and snapshots confounded by set portraits. While family events such as parties, births, deaths and marriages are displayed on *The Ballad's* pages, they do not appear chronologically, as they would in a family photo album, but thematically, according to the pressing question of sexual dependency. There are sections on men and women, together and alone, with each photograph interrogating its subject on the basis of their entanglement in a relationship. In this way, *The Ballad* depends on the photo album's principles of organization, yet while Goldin visibly loathes the album's construction of history, she also craves its predictability, the discovery on its pages of images which fundamentally belong.

Nan and Brian in bed, New York City 1983 elucidates issues specific to the monograph form and articulated in Goldin's Foreword and Afterword. The image features the two subjects in a location established by other images in *The Ballad* as one of intimacy. We have observed the bed's diverse operations regarding friendship, seduction, devastation, sleeping, eating, sex, alienation, togetherness and drug use. Goldin's are decidedly unfamiliar-looking beds. The most unified thing about them is their frequent messiness – they are post-coital, post-party beds. Their sheets appear tangled, stretched, worn-out and dirty. The bodies that appear in them are naked, hairy, sweaty and sick. In homes, they are surrounded by a plethora of junk and trash. The eerie sparseness of *The Ballad's* hotel room beds produces a similar discomfort. The most pristine bed in *The Ballad* belongs to a whorehouse.

In *Nan and Brian in bed*, the bed is a site of estrangement. Nan reclines with her head on a pillow, but does not occupy the bed in a restful way. The robe she wears reveals her legs, curled close to her body. She appears to grip the blankets under her with a clenched hand. Although her gaze is focused on Brian, there is no physical contact between the two subjects. Goldin's expression is difficult to read: she appears worried, wistful, vulnerable, and weary. This confluence of emotion, she seems to say, is the look of dependency. Brian sits on the edge of the bed, shirtless and smoking, a habit which suggests dependency as a fixture of his daily life. His body appears stiff, poised between two worlds: the bedroom, as signified by his lack of clothing, and the world outside, as suggested by his position on the edge of the bed. He looks away from Nan and toward the source of the orange light which fills the room. This fiery colour amplifies the emotional intensity of the image, and yet, reduced to a reproduction on the monograph page, the photograph also lacks the geographic expanse associated with this light of sunrises and sunsets. Instead the hue pollutes the room, further dismantling the heroic connotation of the American west to which the golden sunset symbolically subscribes and is critiqued in Richard Prince's work. The smoke from Brian's cigarette, made visible by the light, also contaminates the air, adding to the feeling of claustrophobia, with the stale conditions of the room mirroring the stagnant state of the relationship.

Brian's dual appearance in *Nan and Brian in bed* also speaks to the complexity of dependency. A photograph of Brian tacked to the wall acts as a reminder of his permanence. He is a fixture in Goldin's world, appearing repeatedly on the monograph's pages. Geoff Dyer remarks on how frequently "pinned or stuck to the walls behind

Goldin's friends we see other, earlier photographs which modify – and are modified by – the later context."⁴³ This print is also differs from the large, glossy Cibachromes that Goldin produced for the art market in the 1980s. This small image belongs to Goldin's personal collection, a test print not intended for display outside her home. Yet this image within the image dramatically alters the bedroom space. If Brian were to leave, photographic remnants of him, a kind of detritus, would be left behind. Photography thus keeps the departed lover present, and the dependency too. The position of this photograph above the bed suggests that it is sacred as a memento, and yet the haphazard manner in which it is tacked to the wall also negates the calculated mechanisms of display associated with the family, the precision of frames, mantles and shrines. *The Ballad's* messy beds serve the same purpose: they connote reality through the acts that occur in them, not the pristine surface prepared for the sake of guests. The relationship is connected to this messy bed. It is a stage both repellent and welcoming, and a site which for Brian, if he stays, must be shared with Nan.

In *The Ballad* Foreword, Goldin confesses her susceptibility to the conflicts that arise from male/female coupling, clarifying that although sex is only one aspect of sexual dependency, the need to participate in coupling is strong. Autonomy is a key issue for Goldin, as the antithesis of dependency and a source of tension for couples. The Foreword alludes to Goldin's inclination towards bisexuality and her bohemian perception of friendships with women as "marriages,"⁴⁴ thus re-writing the meaning of that word. *The Ballad's* "marriages" encompass same-sex relationships (at this time, not often discussed in a marital vocabulary) and friendships, suggesting that the marital bond

can be one of platonic fidelity. As such, Goldin's work reconsiders engrained patriarchal terminology around the institution of marriage, while retaining its emphasis on lifelong devotion and loyalty, and perhaps relieving the pressure of the couple proper, which her relationship with Brian tried and failed to fulfill.

Goldin also correlates the need for coupling with addiction, and she uses the "substances" love, heroin and chocolate⁴⁵ interchangeably, as examples of this need. Among the three, it is love which appears the most often in her images. And while *The Ballad's* portrait of Nan after suffering a severe beating at the hands of Brian is hardly an image of love, it does speak to the limits of a once loving relationship. Despite the comparisons to harmless substances Goldin attempts to forge, her relationship with Brian is rationalized in the text in a manner which only someone with dependence problems would describe it: she claims that when he beat her it was because "his conflict between his desire for independence and his addiction to the relationship had become unbearable,"⁴⁶ echoing Lou Reed's *Berlin* lyric which bluntly states "Why is it that you beat me / it isn't any fun."⁴⁷ Reed's statement of misguided expectations mirrors the lack of logic in Goldin's analysis of Brian's behavior and her use of therapeutic buzzwords like "conflict" and "addiction," with a seemingly vague sense of their meaning.

Although the abuse depicted in *Nan after being battered, 1984* occurs later chronologically than the portrait of Nan and Brian in bed, it appears earlier in the monograph, suggesting the importance of sequence to *The Ballad*, and the referentiality of the images. Much like Frank's *The Americans* prints, even when presented separately

as Cibachromes, all the images of Brian in *The Ballad* lead back to this one. The title does not name Brian as the perpetrator of Goldin's beating, but the Foreword has already alerted us to this fact. The image of Nan educates us about the violence of the relationship as a preface to their alienated togetherness, while the text informs us that Goldin understands her battered state as a manifestation not of Brian's specific rage, but the project's dependency theme, an inevitability for two people driven to the brink of rational behavior by their addiction to one another. Yet, only Goldin appears physically injured. Both of her eyes are bruised. One is red and swollen, making it look smaller than the other, and skewing the symmetry of her face, thus distancing it from subject matter appropriate from a portraiture standpoint. There are dark circles around her eyes and her face is blotchy. She wears no makeup other than red lipstick which highlights the redness of her face and her bloodshot eye. Her jewelry also speaks to the attempted artifice of masking or dressing up what cannot be hidden.

Marvin Heiferman observes a further link to Weimar Germany in Goldin's work, one which can be applied to the portrait of Nan and Brian in the monograph: "Just as one looks at August Sander's rigid and elegant portraits of Weimar Germans and sees, retrospectively, the hint of their powerlessness before the specter of Nazism, one senses in Goldin's cinematic photographs the specter of devastation that would eventually shatter the bliss of her postmodern bohemia."⁴⁸ But what is the source of this devastation? Goldin's frequent reference for instability is the family, and in her failed attempt to achieve a lasting relationship with Brian (albeit in the guise of bohemianism), she confirms the illusion of that model once more, along with its consequences.

The powerlessness visible in August Sander's portrait of a *Bohemian*, 1922, foreshadows the anxiety exhibited by *Nan and Brian in bed* concerning sexuality and identity. Young Gottfried Brockmann's portrait is a study in subtle, effeminate gestures: holding his cigarette with one hand while the other rests in his pocket; the coy tilt of his head as he maintains eye contact with Sander's lens. Together, these gestures speak to the fleeting gender freedoms of Weimar society. In the subject's solemn facial expression there are hints of a slight, burgeoning anxiety surrounding identity and its representation on film. Christoph Schreier reminds us that "Sander makes photographs that 'suspend time' or are 'time-saturated', pictures that are interpretations, stagings of reality."⁴⁹ It is with an assured understanding of the seemingly contradictory idea of 'staging reality' that we must also assess Goldin's portraits of bohemians. Brockmann offers one interpretation of the bohemian, but because he is without narrative, his identity relies on this title. The image illustrates identifiable bohemian characteristics which recall the term's specific Czech origins, yet the portrait also suspends time by illustrating the link between bohemians of various eras, whose concerns around identity and marginality remain the same.

In spite of their timeless quality, Sander's images are also embedded in the political and economic conditions of his era. Under Nazi rule, Sander's work on the *People of the 20th Century* project, to which the portrait of Gottfried Brockmann belongs, was stifled and his book *Face of our Time*, first published in 1929, was banned for its portrayal of German society, indicating the book form as a target for artistic repression. Several

decades later, Larry Clark's monographs incited similar public controversy for their portrayal of youth culture, yet despite attempts to regulate the publication of these highly controversial images, digital reproduction has allowed for their widespread availability. As Liz Kotz points out, although copies of *Tulsa* and *Teenage Lust* remain "long out of print, rare, and quite expensive," "access to the 'original' images barely matters, since this look has so disseminated throughout the culture,"⁵⁰ and the forces seeking to regulate their availability are ill equipped to counter this effect. Clark and Goldin's monographs suggest the history of anxiety around books as private yet political objects, subject to restriction, destruction or obsolescence. Yet, the most controversial works by both of these artists also prove how such fears have been displaced to digital platforms such as the internet, where controversy now operates as the impetus for widespread proliferation.

With the image of abused Nan, the family, a former sanctuary of moral virtuousness, and then platform for bohemian freedom and love, is rendered ambiguous and sinister with the artist/subject occupying a position of powerlessness. We are reminded, by the most intimate of *The Ballad's* portraits, of our constant distance, of the line drawn by Goldin which we are not permitted to cross. The specter of devastation in this image lies in the suddenly fragile emotional and physical condition of the photographer, alerting the viewer to the shame typically associated with acts of domestic violence, the unspoken rules of photographic propriety, and the uncommon appearance of these types of images in an album context. Its placement in the monograph, before *Nan and Brian in bed*, suggests that this incident of violence did not necessarily signal the immediate end of the subjects' relationship. Despite their casual poses and familiarity with the camera, Nan and

Brian are in a different way just like Sander's "types": In the absence of real occupations, abusive boyfriend and needy girlfriend become their unfortunate markers of identity.

And yet, Sander's photographs, founded on typology and social classification, do not mirror Goldin's interest in narrative. Her practice is not based in social science, nor is she trying to educate her audience about bohemia - she is living it. Sontag recognized the impossibility of an American comparison for Sander's work, claiming that it is "hard to imagine an American attempting an equivalent of Sander's comprehensive taxonomy.

The great photographic portraits of America – like Walker Evans *American Photographs* (1938) and Robert Frank's *The Americans* (1959) – have been deliberately random . . . "⁵¹

This statement suggests that not only do American subjects require photographers to work in a fundamentally different manner than their European counterparts, they are a body for whom labour is not the primary capital of concern. Even Diane Arbus's photographs, which often address questions of type (be it twins, transvestites or nudists), lack a taxonomic emphasis, while Goldin's narrative avoids the strategies which typically bring coherence to the monograph form. In fact, the principles of organization which govern other books (chapter headings, titles, sections, written material), are employed by Goldin for a different purpose: they are inside-jokes and oblique pop culture references, further evidence of an insider position which her monograph audience is neither equipped nor required to dissect.

As evidence of *The Ballad's* narrative priority, the heterosexual couple's disintegration is established not only by the ominous harbinger of battered Nan, but by a series of related

images. One of the monograph's first examples, *Nan on Brian's lap, Nan's birthday, New York City 1981*, frames the subjects as shy, awkward sitters for a professional portrait. Towards the end of the book, Goldin places images of couples as skeletons (*Skeleton's Coupling, New York City 1983*), weary divorcées (*Mexican couple a week before their second divorce, Progreso, Yucatan, Mexico, 1981*) and tombstones (*Twin graves, Isla Mujeres, Mexico 1982*) are the "couples" on display. The graffiti signals its inevitable erasure with a disingenuous affectionate gesture, both obviously and symbolically skeletal. For the elderly Mexican couple, the insidious and prolonged nature of dependency has made divorce a repeated event. If Nan and Brian are somewhat romantic figures of obsession, this weary pair express the mature embodiment of that behaviour. The twin graves place relationships in relation to eternity, a proposition both romantic and morbid. All three couples suffer from dependency over which romantic love does not prevail. In relation to Nan and Brian, the grave reference is most ominous, suggesting the symbolic death of the relationship, as well as the real threat of violent death.

As if to confirm the message offered by these photographs of couples, that "men and women are irrevocably strangers to each other, irreconcilably unsuited,"⁵² Goldin exhibits a different tone in her images of women together and appears to take refuge in female relationships. On *The Ballad's* pages they are loving, peaceful, full of camaraderie, seduction, and genuine affection. Despite this, Jonathan Weinberg concludes that Goldin's images are

two-dimensional pictures that for all their emotional impact should not be mistaken for real life. As works of art, her photographs are as much products of cultural

myths and her aesthetic training as they are documents of lived experience. Even when Goldin appears to be at her most confessional, as in the famous image of her face battered by her boyfriend from *The Ballad* . . . she is creating stories about herself that correspond to popular tropes about abusive relationships and addiction.⁵³

If Weinberg's claim is correct, Goldin's work occupies the territory Gerd Gemünden described, where Brecht is no longer useful and where the real is indistinguishable from the fictional. From circumstances of abuse, Goldin fabricates stories, and while the abuse is real, the latent photographic recording of it inducts it into *The Ballad's* narrative framework. Weinberg suggests that we should not mistake the emotional circumstances of "Nan" and "Brian" as those of real people, and yet, because Goldin's medium is photographic, and her subject is herself, this suspension of reality is difficult to accept. Goldin's self-portrait, however confessional it may be, confirms a negative cliché about traditional relationships that is supported by her contrasting images of bohemian ones.

The publication of the monograph distanced *The Ballad* from the familial connotations on which it was originally founded, and its circulation among a known group of peers. With the input of an editorial team, *The Ballad* began to conform to the reductive, coherent layout of the publication, and images once rapidly presented in a social venue became available for private contemplation and prolonged viewing. Although the form suggests permanence, there is also an implied fragility in the "private disclosure that gets trampled by the rampant consumerism of the coffee-table book and the museum catalogue."⁵⁴

Having relinquished creative flexibility to the fixed parameters of the monograph format, the artist's relationship to this consumer body is not one of power, but submission. The

form links *The Ballad* to American photo publications of the past, as well as publications from Weimar Germany, on the basis of common subcultural values. The monograph reveals the strong relationship between images and narrative, and suggests that once produced, photographs in book form take on a permanent role that cannot be reversed, modified or recanted.

Cibachrome

Cibachrome images are created via a silver-dye bleach process, in which the exposed areas of the image are bleached, resulting in transparency, while areas with no exposure are saturated with dye.⁵⁵ The first silver-dye bleach process was made in 1905, although it wasn't until 1930 that the process became a commercial product as *Gaspar Color*.⁵⁶ Kodak developed a silver-dye bleach material called Azochrome in 1941, but it was never commercialized. Ciba began to develop a silver-dye bleach after 1950, and in 1963 the first commercial material appeared under the name Cibachrome.⁵⁷ According to Matthias Schellenberg, silver-dye bleach systems have clear advantages in comparison to the popular chromogenic photographic process: a stable process which "leads to a direct positive image,"⁵⁸ dyes with "considerably greater inherent dark and light stability than the . . . dyes used in chromogenic films and papers."⁵⁹ and finally, prints with "better sharpness, more brilliant color, more resistance to fading, and generally longer print life . . ."⁶⁰ And yet, Cibachrome prints never rivaled chromogenic prints in popularity. The delicate nature of the materials kept costs high, and "Silver dye-bleach never conquered large market segments, but it filled specific market gaps in the professional field."⁶¹

Although significant improvements to the materials occurred during the 1970s, the decade when Goldin first encountered them, the Cibachrome process remained within a professional and academicized context. Here was a type of photography that differed from what the masses were using and required a certain level of expertise from the practitioner. Similarly, when William Eggleston discovered dye-transfer printing while teaching at Harvard in 1973,⁶² he increased the popularity of that photographic method as art,⁶³ but it did not become common practice for amateurs due to cost. Dye-transfer has since become obsolete – "Kodak stopped manufacturing the papers and chemicals necessary to produce dye transfers in 1992, when it was no longer cost effective."⁶⁴ It was on the basis of characteristics such as these that certain colour processes distinguished themselves from amateurism, and became aligned with high art.

With the financial success and legitimating power provided by the monograph and a string of high profile exhibitions, Goldin returned to the Cibachrome printing methods of her student days. Enlarged and singled out, Goldin's prints act as a recollection of their original form: they recall modes of display familiar to the family, yet possess a scale and value that keep that family at a measurable distance; they allude to the volume and breadth of the slide show but without that mode's vitality, spontaneous orchestration and amateurism.⁶⁵ What the prints do achieve is a more obvious relationship to art history. While Arthur C. Danto describes Goldin's prints as having a "Caravaggesque intensity,"⁶⁶ in relation to light and colour, Goldin alludes to this comparison on a different basis, dubiously claiming that "Caravaggio also knew all the people that he painted. They were his lovers or hustlers."⁶⁷ If Danto's comparison is a formally legitimate one, Goldin's

focus on Carravaggio's relationships with his subjects forges a connection between the two artists based not on their work, but on intimacy. As prints, *The Ballad* photos often appear less intimate, mirroring the increasingly alienated relationship with the viewing audience. Removed from the familial context from which they came, it is with the art collector, historian, critic and curator that Goldin's Cibachromes contend, the same sources from which Caravaggesque comparisons are most likely to originate. For this audience, Goldin's images do not represent a lived or remembered moment, and this foreign quality is key to their appeal.

One hundred and forty-nine of Goldin's Cibachrome prints were featured in Charles Saatchi's 2001 exhibition *I am a Camera*, under the collective title *Thanksgiving*. Previously shown at White Cube in London in 2000, the installation covered that gallery's walls from floor to ceiling with images spanning the years 1973 to 1999.⁶⁸ As Liz Kotz suggests, "When the same images are reproduced too many times, in too many places, and are liked *in the same way* by too many people, this intimacy is inevitably compromised . . . And few things are more repellent than a programmed sense of 'intimacy' or a regulated experience of 'accident.'"⁶⁹ In comparison to the two other photographic modes I have discussed, it is with Cibachrome in particular that Goldin's images risk the loss of intimacy Kotz describes. In collage form, *Thanksgiving's* images operate as a quick study in the Goldin catalogue, a display of greatest hits devoid of the monograph's considered narrative emphasis and the slide show's easy charm.

The title of Saatchi's exhibition once again confirms Weimar Berlin as a productive

reference for contemporary photographic practices. Christopher Isherwood's *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939) opens with the phrase, "I am a camera with its shutter open, quite passive, recording, not thinking,"⁷⁰ a statement which has been a tremendously influential articulation of the photographer's complex relationship with the camera. In Isherwood's view, the photographer is an extension of the perpetually active camera machinery, and thus the camera's behavior becomes the photographer's behavior: mechanical, functional, not thoughtful. In claiming that he is a camera, Isherwood asserts a bohemian and atypical identity which suggests the embodiment of a fantasy world in which the camera satisfies all hungers. Yet David P. Thomas claims that Isherwood's notion of the camera is " . . . a defensive mask, the pseudo-impersonality of a young man, 'alone, far from home,' attempting to protect a vulnerable personality against the terrors of isolation."⁷¹ Much like Sander's bohemian, Isherwood is a thoughtful, even tentative figure of revolt, confronting similar issues of identity and homosexuality. Goldin's fear of isolation is also best articulated in relation to the camera. When she entered rehab in 1988 and her camera was taken away, this absence contributed to her "terror in going through withdrawal,"⁷² suggesting her reliance on the camera to mediate her experience of the world, but also to cope with events which would otherwise take a much more severe emotional toll.

Isherwood's isolation also refers, not surprisingly, to its opposite, "an aching need to join the mainstream of direct human sympathies. There is a powerful dramatic interaction between 'Isherwood's' inability to enjoy open human relationships in personal contexts and his sympathetic instinct for the destitute and despairing."⁷³ For Goldin, who shared in the condition of destitution with her subjects, it is more than sympathy that drives her

work, and yet her photographs share with Isherwood's work a palpable lack of joy, evincing *The Ballard's* broader theme of crisis. Goldin's Cibachromes act as a manifestation of need, the commodification of digestible fragments of *The Ballard* to support the continuation of her existence as a bohemian in the rapidly changing economic situation of the 1980s.

I am a Camera presented Goldin's work in relationship to other photographers who address social taboos and controversial subject matter, from Tierney Gearon's portraits of her children nude to Richard Billingham's candid and unflattering images of his parents. In Jonathan Jones' view, only a "radical critic of modern society would juxtapose" Nan Goldin's work with that of Jessica Craig-Martin,⁷⁴ whose photographs appeared alongside Goldin's in the exhibition as an obvious example of class contrast. These images of New York society, cropped from shots taken by Craig-Martin on assignment as a society photographer, place emphasis on her subject's grotesque qualities, including sagging flesh, implants and smeared lipstick.⁷⁵ This unlikely comparison for Goldin's images of subcultural marginality, suggests the polarized meanings of that term and considers that behind the camera, Craig-Martin and Goldin take refuge from their respective worlds in a similar way. And yet, the juxtaposition is troubling. Jonathan Jones claims that "*I Am a Camera* is finally a snapshot of the futility of representation in a world of devastating ironies. The juxtapositions of low life and high life . . . are not furious but celebratory,"⁷⁶ and furious is exactly what Saatchi's exhibition needed to and could not be. Through Saatchi's eyes, Goldin's world, once intimate and raw, became part of the collector's fantasy, a world unlike his own, to which Craig-Martin's work seemed an appropriate

complement.

Goldin and Craig-Martin's mutual concern for the party subject suggests that event as a platform for working out Isherwood's anti-social tendencies, something which Saatchi's exhibition failed to explore. Goldin claims that every party is hers,⁷⁷ firmly establishing her role as insider, and implying the existence of the undesirable outside, the position of alienation to which Isherwood subscribes. Craig-Martin's insider status at the parties of New York's social elite is established by different means: as a celebrity photographer for magazines, her professional task allows her access to this other, surprisingly similarly insular world. Although Craig-Martin has expressed a fear of being sued by her famous subjects⁷⁸ she has more often been embraced by them, earning a position via methods which surprise even her: these subjects admire rather than detest Craig-Martin's representations of them, and her visual appeals to their boundless narcissism is what ushers her into their social world.⁷⁹

In her review of *I am a Camera*, Vicki Goldberg suggests that the exhibition "implied that 'reality' today, the life we live and the world we move in, is disjunct and essentially dysfunctional, and that both truth-telling and artistry consist of unmasking that fact,"⁸⁰ further confirming the lack of a contemporary platform from which Brechtian instability can be created. Perhaps the subtle difference between Craig-Martin and Goldin resides with the camera itself. If the latter's role is not simply that of an observer, but also a participant and ethnographer, the former has learned to use her camera-passport exactly as Sontag described, as an object of permission for entering worlds to which the

photographer does not otherwise belong. While the passport forces acceptance of the photographer, it is only in order to visit, not to stay, and certainly not to blend in. If Craig-Martin initially subscribed to this definition, using her press access as a means by which to produce non-press images, the popularity of her work among her subjects and her transition from observer to participant signals a new phase.

Goldin's *Twisting at my birthday party, New York City, 1980*, the title of which again employs the assertive "my," depicts a party's high point, while also confirming the seedy dereliction typical of the artist's living conditions on the Lower East Side. In the center of the image, a young woman wearing a sequined dress is doing the twist. Although her partner's back faces the camera, he occupies a space of physical primacy in the composition. At the height of the disco era, these twisting figures take up the dance craze of their childhood, suggesting a disregard for the contemporary, nostalgia for the recent past and a confident embodiment of their own insular reality, a pastiche of bohemian eras past and present. While *Twisting's* principal subjects help to incite nostalgia in the viewer for their own parties and the possibly fictive intimacy they establish, the room also reinforces this feeling. Cardboard boxes are stacked up in the windows. Many small postcards, stamps, bits of paper and paraphernalia are tacked to the yellow walls. We relate to these objects and ephemera because they imply habitation and recall our own homes. And yet, this apartment also revels in chaos. Small figurines, doll heads and fake flowers are set up on the window ledges. Two guests eat pizza from paper plates, balanced precariously on a desk which also holds a sewing machine. The scene appears

on the brink of some disaster by which this domestic clutter is transformed into an indistinguishable junk pile. Louis Kaplan suggests that this space teeters precariously on the edge of collapse, or implosion: "It is clearly an image that exposes community to itself by means of a party caught in the act of exhausting itself."⁸¹

Yet rather than avoiding or masking the party's inevitable exhaustion, *The Ballad* examines it. If *Twisting* expresses a high point, other images from *The Ballad* are melancholic, if not depressing, representations of the party's dénouement. At the point when the family camera would stop recording, Goldin's continues, even when her subjects have become despondent and antagonistic, revealing a different kind of intimacy in these figures than was expressed at the party's height. These images suggest how strongly meaning is affixed to the party event, and that without it, there is no identity, no joy and the subjects retreat back to bed, weary and bored. In *Trixie on the cot, NYC, 1979*, we observe a typically neglected aspect of the party, via the subject's lack of engagement with the camera, her disheveled dress, and the ugliness of the room, emptied of people. Sucking on her cigarette, Trixie returns, much like Isherwood, to an anti-social state, aware of Goldin's camera, but indifferent to its continued documentation of her, long after the celebration has ceased.

Many writers, in describing the development of Goldin's practice, contrast her early use of flash to illuminate otherwise dark party locales and her later use of natural light in

outdoor settings as a metaphor for developments in her personal life. The Cibachrome form elucidates on a practical level, the dichotomy of dark and light in Goldin's work. Like the bleach and dye that transform her work into prints, the work's central themes are also an exercise in extremes. Geoff Dyer claims that "we do not properly appreciate just how extreme is the artificial light that drenches the photos from Goldin's years of heavy drug use until, following a period in rehab, we get the first glimpse of the subtleties of natural light."⁸² Light's redemptive properties are confirmed by the artist herself: "Goldin has said that until she detoxed, she had no real relationship to daylight and the natural world, as she lived totally in the night and so could not connect."⁸³ This feeling of disconnection is visible in *Trixie*, unwilling or unable to look in the direction of the camera. As Goldin describes in *The Ballad's* Afterword, "I had never known before that photography was related to light. I had always thought that available light meant the red light bulb in an after-hours bar."⁸⁴ *The Ballad* is filled with images that use the available light of late night bars in combination with Goldin's flash. As a document of her so-called dark years, *The Ballad* should thus be considered in terms of specific photographic principles and social locales which determine its look. Goldin's scenes of New York nightclubs and parties exemplify this lighting concern.

The party also elucidates issues of inclusion and exclusion which are fundamental to *The Ballad*, particularly as individual prints, where Goldin's protagonists are more difficult to trace. We must consider that one's position within Goldin's "family" is not secure, as in the biological family, but rather susceptible to change and instability, conditions promoted by Goldin herself: "Living in Goldin's world must involve a certain amount of

competition to be in a picture and a worry that you might fall from favor, perhaps because you are no longer interesting enough or beautiful enough to be photographed."⁸⁵ Just as art collectors replace old acquisitions with new ones, Goldin's subjects must meet certain criteria, or be replaced. The allusion to childhood cliques is also apt. Goldin's shunning of certain friends is confirmation of boredom, and an assertion of social power. Nowhere is this more obvious than when such images are selected to be printed as Cibachromes, thus divorcing them from Goldin's clique.

Susan Sontag claims that the photograph "is always the image that someone chose; to photograph is to frame, and to frame is to exclude."⁸⁶ If Craig-Martin's photographs are a successful exercise in cropping and editing to re-frame subject matter founded on excess, *The Ballad's* progression from voluminous slide show, to reduced monograph, to placement on museum walls as a collage of decontextualized images, was a process of exclusion that achieves the opposite effect. Miguel Rio Branco observes that "when you see an exhibition of her [Goldin's] framed photographs, they lose some of their vigor,"⁸⁷ a loss which seems to be the direct result of their disassociation from the spontaneity of the slide show form. Their mode also changed for practical rather than symbolic reasons. When Craig-Martin crops an image around her subject's ankles, it is a gesture of power which indicates the fragment's ability to represent the whole. Goldin's reduction shows how a fragment fails to capture its missing parts.

Goldin's Cibachromes are individuated souvenirs of an intimate but inaccessible world. And although this form assists in drawing out important binary oppositions of high and

low, darkness and light, rich and poor, happiness and despair, they are also utterly decontextualized and cleaned up for a specific, affluent audience. If the slide show refuses the idea of art as commodity via means that are openly archaic and ephemeral, the Cibachrome indicates precisely how the values we attach to photographs begin to dictate the modes of representation that created them.

Conclusion

Nan Goldin snapped the first photographs of *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* more than thirty years ago. Since that time, *The Ballad* has become a mythic thing, "the great Book of the Dead of the period – a love letter to a generation . . ." ¹ and Goldin has developed two distinct but related reputations as subcultural icon and acclaimed photographer. Goldin's personal overcoming of *The Ballad's* emotional and physical trials – drug addiction, abuse, dependency, heartbreak, illness – and the notably different tone of her recent work, has not, however, dampened *The Ballad's* powerful feeling of crisis and despair. In fact, her survival has made *The Ballad* more accessible and less narcissistic, evincing the fact that a life is made of bad and good moments in relatively equal proportion.

Through William Eggleston and Stephen Shore's work in the 1970s, colour practices were legitimized and included in major museum exhibitions, and they began to appear in increasingly experimental and personal forms. Tracing *The Ballad's* progression from slide show to monograph to Cibachrome illustrates Goldin's experimental inclinations, and allows for three comparative assessments of her work. Goldin's pictures have shaped our contemporary engagement with colour photographs, and the important role of amateurism as a visual strategy. Her snapshot vernacular has become a historical precedent and visual aesthetic for much photographic work from the 1990s, including that of "influential contemporary photographers such as Corinne Day and Wolfgang Tillmans," ² and more recently, that of Ryan McGinley, who cites *The Ballad* as a major

influence.³ Given the significance conferred upon Goldin's work by these photographers, we must consider how their recent projects are Goldin-like, and how they solidify the lasting significance of the work that inspired them. While personal photography and diaristic forms are more popular than ever before, achievement equivalent to Goldin's project is found rarely among these efforts, which place emphasis on intimacy but fail to satisfyingly explore the meaning or purpose of their own confessions.

As I proposed at the start of this essay, Goldin's colour photographs evolved out of social, political and economic anxieties of the late 1970s and early 1980s which considered the nuclear family unstable and fraudulent. From this anxiety, artists sought historical points of reference rather than immediate ones, and Weimar Berlin became an important touchstone for Goldin, as a means of escaping reality, and creating a rich mythological world to inhabit. As Arthur Danto suggests, "It is hard to separate the art from the reality it encodes. Goldin's pictures are indissolubly both universal and other."⁴ Given Goldin's inclinations toward fantasy, it is necessary to be cautious in the application of claims of universality to Goldin's images, whose marginalized subculture roots emphatically contradict that suggestion.

With its primary subject of sexual dependency, *The Ballad* addresses the accelerated pace of contemporary relationships by redefining their results. In Goldin's world, falling in love was a dangerous act which led to dependency, abuse and destruction. Goldin's was the first generation to address the messiness of relationships in the public eye, and to promote the idea that not every coupling must result in a permanent heterosexual

partnership. With the camera marking these brief unions, photographs provide evidence where actual memory fails. And although images are reassuring in this sense, they also speak to the anxiety associated with loss. For Goldin's generation, loss was widespread: of national solidarity, of trust in political leaders, of employment, of money, of life due to drug use and illness, of the fiction of the family, and of trust in other people.

For all their desire to emulate a foreign past, Goldin's *Ballad* images also suggest impending photographic concerns. Much like the accessibility of better quality cameras signaled the end of true amateurism, as noted by Jeff Wall, recent technological developments have dramatically altered our engagement with media. As Mary Warner Marien proposes, "The millions of digital images now on hard drives and memory chips may be changing the definitions of the snapshot and family photography as a palatable, lasting record, the stuff of albums."⁵ Photographs are no longer permanent markers of memory. They have become as forgettable as memory itself, erased just as easily as they are captured, and our feelings towards the vast majority of them are not as strong.

Just as Goldin's notion of bohemia was built on an earlier one, today's subcultures appropriate the "Goldin aesthetic" for their own fantasies. Even more specifically, it is not Goldin's full body of work which interests today's young photographers (Goldin's recent work is "quieter, more contemplative, and . . . more focused on couples and children"⁶) but *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* alone. According to Max Pam, "Nan Goldin is the last big thing in contemporary photography because of the impact she's had on global visual language. You look at it, it's everywhere. It is traceable to a line straight

back to *Ballad of Sexual Dependency* . . ."7 While it is doubtful Nan Goldin's work has changed visual language (another misguided claim to universality), the continued dissemination of photographs as evidence of subcultural activity does echo Goldin's methodology, and has reached a level of insidiousness in recent years which calls into question photography's status as art.

What further scholarship on Goldin's work must consider is how permutations in form will continue to affect *The Ballad's* relationship to current subcultural movements. Despite Ryan McGinley's 2003 assertion that "The Kids are Alright,"8 Douglas Haddow offers a bleak view of today's subcultures, claiming that "While previous youth movements have challenged the dysfunction and decadence of their elders, today we have the 'hipster' – a youth subculture that mirrors the doomed shallowness of mainstream society."9 This is a troubling assertion, for if current so-called subculture does not, in fact, counter mainstream society, hopes of Brechtian revolt are also diminished, returning our engagement with images to a state of indulgence. If contemporary colour photographers, who either cite Goldin as an influence or are now grouped together with her on the basis of a so-called aesthetic, produce work which confirms the mainstream rather than defying it, embraces decadence rather than rejecting it, proclaims its own ahistoricity, and is distinct from Goldin's only via a lack of seriousness or pathos, colour photography has indeed reached an artistic and cultural nadir in need of further inquiry. As such, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency* remains both a work of lasting importance to the history of colour photography and its modes of display, and a tragically intimate portrait of a family in crisis.

Notes

Chapter I

1. James Clerk Maxwell is believed to have produced the first colour photograph in 1861.
2. Sally Eaucraire, *The New Color Photography* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1981), 9.
3. Jeff Wall, "'Marks of Indifference': Aspects of Photography in, or as, Conceptual Art," *Jeff Wall: Selected Essays and Interviews* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2007), 164.
4. *Ibid.*, 159.
5. Nan Goldin, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, eds. Nan Goldin, Marvin Heiferman, Mark Holborn, Suzanne Fletcher (New York: Aperture, 1993), 6.
6. Nan Goldin, *The Devil's Playground* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2003), 500.
7. Lisa Liebmann, "Goldin's Years," *Artforum* XLI, no. 2 (October 2002), 120.
Irving Sandler also notes that "In particular the Whitney Biennials provided encouragement to and recognition for new artists. They were often the first to show young artists in a museum setting." See Sandler, *Art of the Postmodern Era: From The Late 1960s To The Early 1990s* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 220.
8. Dictionary.com, s.v. "ballad," <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ballad>.
9. Oscar Wilde, "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," *The Ballad of Reading Gaol and Other Poems* (Mineola: Courier Dover Publications, 1992), 27.
10. Katya Mandoki, *Everyday Aesthetics: Prosaics, The Play of Culture and Social Identities* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2007), 20.
11. Griselda Pollock, "Screening the Seventies: Sexuality and Representation in Feminist Practice – A Brechtian Perspective," *Vision & Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the Histories of Art*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 163.
12. Jeff Wall, "Frames of Reference," *Jeff Wall: Selected Essays and Interviews* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2007), 181.
13. Klaus Volker, "Brecht Today: Classic or Challenge," *Theatre Journal* 39, no. 4 (December 1987), 430.
14. Ed Pilkington, "The Day the Wall Came Down," *The Guardian*, June 6, 2007, sec. G2.
15. Lou Reed, "Oh Jim," Lou Reed Guitar Archive, http://ww21.tiki.ne.jp/~wildside/tabs/oh_jim.html. Following a critical and commercial backlash, Reed rarely performed the *Berlin* songs until 2007, when he toured the album for the first time. A documentary about this tour, directed by Julian Schnabel, has subsequently reinvigorated discussion around the album, which is now regarded by many as a key recording of the 1970s.
16. *The Threepenny Opera* is itself an adaptation of *The Beggar's Opera*, an 18th century English ballad-opera by John Gay. Brecht's version, set in Victorian London, offers a Marxist critique.
17. Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, "Ballad of Dependency," sung by Charlotte Rae, *The Threepenny Opera (Original Off Broadway Cast), Blitzstein Adaptation* (New York: Decca Broadway, 2000). Marc Blitzstein's 1954 off-Broadway production of *The Threepenny Opera* was performed at the Theater de Lys in Greenwich Village, New York, with Charlotte Rae as Mrs. Peachum. The "Ballade von der sexuellen Hörigkeit" has been translated into English by various sources as "The Ballad of Sexual Obsession" and "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency."
18. F. C. Gundlach, "Emotions & Relations," *Emotions & Relations: Nan Goldin, David Armstrong, Mark Morrisroe, Jack Pierson, Philip-Lorca diCorcia* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen Verlag GmbH, 1998), 16.
19. Eric Bentley, "Two Hundred Years of Macheath," *The Threepenny Review*, no. 8 (Winter 1982), 19.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*
22. Geoff Dyer, "Nan Goldin," *Anglo-English Attitudes: Essays, Reviews, Misadventures 1984-99* (London: Abacus, 1999), 96. When exactly did failure become glamorous? Permutations in the fashion industry's notion of beauty during the 1990s contributed at least partially to this development. Goldin claims not to have been conscious of the co-opting of her look in relation to the 'heroin chic' movement of that decade, in which models appeared bored and emaciated, in part as a reaction to the supermodel aesthetic of the 1980s: "Maybe we were younger and thinner and

- did dress-up, but I didn't know anyone who found *The Ballad* particularly glamorous until the '90s fashion world discovered it and co-opted it as 'heroin chic.'" See Amy M. Spindler, "The 90's Version of the Decadent Look," *New York Times*, May 7, 1996, <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/05/07/style/the-90-s-version-of-the-decadent-look.html> and "Nan Goldin Talks to Tom Holert," *Artforum* XLI, no. 7 (March 2003), 274. But while the emphasis in the 1990s was centered around heroin use, which gained popularity during that decade, the connections between beauty, sexuality, drug addiction, and glamour had been propelled by the fashion industry as early as 1977, when Yves Saint Laurent launched his infamous *Opium* fragrance, inciting immediate and widespread controversy around the designer's endorsement of drug use. In the print ads for *Opium*, the tagline read "Opium. Pour celles qui s'adonnent à Yves Saint Laurent." According to Alicia Drake, "The word 's'adonner' stretches an octave of nuance in the French language so that the line might imply, 'Opium. For those who abandon themselves to the worship of Yves Saint Laurent,' or, in juxtaposition to the name *Opium*, it could also mean, 'For those who are addicted to Yves Saint Laurent.'" See Alicia Drake, *The Beautiful Fall: Fashion, Genius, and Glorious Excess in 1970s Paris* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2006), 252. In a 2002 interview, Goldin claims "I never took pictures of people doing heroin to sell clothes. And I have a bit of a problem with it. Like this Dior campaign right now, where the girl is really dope-sick then she sprays Addiction perfume and suddenly she's high. I find that really reprehensible and evil." See Sheryl Garratt, "The Dark Room," *The Observer*, January 6, 2002, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/theobserver/2002/jan/06/features.magazine27>.
23. Gerd Gemünden, "Re-Fusing Brecht: The Cultural Politics of Fassbinder's German Hollywood," *New German Critique* 63 (1994), 64.
 24. *Ibid.*, 65.
 25. Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Living with Contradictions: Critical Practices in the Age of Supply-Side Aesthetics," *Social Text*, no. 21 (1989), 209-10.
 26. Robert M. Collins, *Transforming America: Politics and Culture in the Reagan Years* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 7-8.
 27. *Ibid.*, 8.
 28. Bruce Steinberg, "The Mass Market is Splitting Apart," *The Eighties: A Reader*, ed. Gilbert T. Sewall (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1997), 122. Goldin worked as a bartender at the Tin Pan Alley in Times Square from 1980-85.
 29. Benjamin R. Barber, *Consumed: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007), 44.
 30. The central figure in the economic downturn of the 1970s was American President Jimmy Carter. In his memorable 1979 'malaise' speech, Carter warned the American people to be prepared for sacrifice in the face of dire economic circumstances. The overthrowing of the shah of Iran in February 1979 was a key example of " . . . the limited ability of the Carter administration . . . " and a direct indication of larger issues of powerlessness within the American government at this time. Carter's weak leadership was also manifested in the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, prompting fear and outrage and leading to an overwhelming public opinion that the Soviet Union was gaining the upper hand in the Cold War, and that the U.S. was retreating. With the country already dealing with the aftermath of both Watergate and the Vietnam War, Carter's deficiencies as a leader further contributed to a nation-wide crisis of confidence. See Dean Baker, *The United States Since 1980* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 51.
 31. Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: BasicBooks, 1992), 266.
 32. Goldin, *The Devil's Playground*, 500.
 33. Goldin and Armstrong had a particularly close relationship. They had known each other from a very young age as students "at the hippie free school called Satya in Boston (1969)," Gundlach, "Emotions," 16.
 34. Dorte Zbikowski, "'My life is My Work,'" *Emotions & Relations: Nan Goldin, David Armstrong, Mark Morrisroe, Jack Pierson, Philip-Lorca diCorcia* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen Verlag GmbH, 1998), 33.
 35. Professionalism in the arts was encouraged by the school itself, which offered (and still offers) a fine arts diploma program with a 5th year certificate program which allows diploma graduates the

- opportunity to access the school's resources and equipment while working professionally as artists. See School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, "Fifth Year Certificate Program," *School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Fifth Year Certificate Program*, http://www.smfa.edu/Programs_Faculty/Fifth_Year_Certificate_Program/Index.asp.
36. Gundlach, "Emotions," 15.
 37. Max Kozloff, *New York: Capital of Photography* (New York: The Jewish Museum; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 64.
 38. Luc Sante, "All Yesterday's Parties," *I'll Be Your Mirror*, eds. Nan Goldin, David Armstrong and Hans Werner Holzwarth (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996), 97.
 39. Lisa Liebmann confirms the influence of film on this group, suggesting that *The Ballad's* "low-rent glamour, like a true fleur du mal or a '70s Fassbinder film, feeds more on defeat than on success, on squalor as well as on beauty, on death as on life, and on the myopia of self-absorption along with grand visions, however blinding, of love." See Liebmann, "Goldin's Years," 120.
 40. Dyer, "Nan Goldin," 95.
 41. Solomon-Godeau, "Living with Contradictions," 209.
 42. Dictionary.com, s.v. "bohemians," <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/bohemianism>; <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bohemians>
 43. Sante, "All Yesterday's Parties," 99.
 44. Ken Gelder, "The Field of Subcultural Studies," *The Subcultures Reader*, Second Edition, eds. Ken Gelder and Sarah Thornton (London: Routledge, 2005), 1.
 45. Ken Gelder, *Subcultures: Cultural Histories and Social Practice*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), i.
 46. John Szarkowski, "Introduction," *William Eggleston's Guide* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1976), 10-11.
 47. Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1996), 12. Thornton's argument draws from Pierre Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital which breaks with hierarchically-organized sociological models which claim that youth cultures form in opposition to the same dominant cultures to which they eventually assimilate.
 48. Sarah Thornton, "The Social Logic of Subcultural Capital," *The Subcultures Reader*, Second Edition, eds. Ken Gelder and Sarah Thornton (London: Routledge, 2005), 191.
 49. *New York Magazine's* adoring 2007 profile of recently-deceased artist Dash Snow and cohorts Ryan McGinley and Dan Colen placed particular emphasis on the former's upper class pedigree as a point of contrast for his downtown 'infamy': "Dash snow could very easily have lived a different kind of life, been a different kind of artist. Snow's maternal grandmother is a De Menil, which is to say art-world royalty, the closest thing to the Medicis in the United States." See Ariel Levy, "Chasing Dash Snow," *New York Magazine*, January 7, 2007, <http://nymag.com/arts/art/profiles/26288/>.
 50. Rupert Weinzierl and David Muggleton, "What is 'Post-subcultural Studies' Anyway?" *The Post-Subcultures Reader*, eds. Rupert Weinzierl and David Muggleton (Oxford and New York: Berg Publishers, 2003), 13.
 51. Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors* (New York: Picador, 2001), 164.
 52. Ibid, 164.
 53. According to John Roberts, the rise in popularity of pornography in America in the 1970s can be attributed to an ideological shift around the photographic category of the everyday. In Roberts view, the everyday prior to 1973 was dominated by "the labouring body and industrial culture," whereas the late 1970s witnessed an interchangeability between the everyday and the sexual. This definition confirms what we have already seen in the economic realm, of the movement from blue collar industries to new spheres of employment at this same time. As the economy shifted away from industry, new types of production including pornography began to carry a viable economic currency for the first time. Roberts' identification of 1973 as the moment when this shift occurred perfectly coincides with the recession and resultant identity crisis identified by Robert M. Collins earlier in this chapter. See John Roberts, *The Art of Interruption: Realism, Photography and the Everyday* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), 180.
 54. Shearer West, *The Visual Arts in Germany 1890-1937: Utopia and Despair* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 164.

55. Jonathan Green, *American Photography: A Critical History 1945 to the Present* (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1984), 118.
56. *Ibid.*, 119.
57. Geoffrey Batchen, "Camera Lucida: Another Little History of Photography," *The Meaning of Photography*, eds. Robin Kelsey and Blake Stimson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 86.
58. In relation to "biographical narrative," Green also notes that "the majority of its practitioners in the middle to late seventies were women who used biography and narrative to confront issues of feminism, particularly the relationship of women to culture and the family," a statement which applies to the work of Martha Rosler and Judy Chicago among others. American photographer Helen Nestor's 1970 project *Non-Traditional American Families*, for example, is a series of portraits which speak to the significant restructuring of the American family in the 1970s. Nestor's project interrogates the organic transformations of the family over time, with emphasis on the relationships contained within that framework. See Green, *American Photography*, 210.
59. Green, *American Photography*, 193.
60. *On Photography's* first essay, "In Plato's Cave," opens with the following claim: "being educated by photographs is not like being educated by older, more artisanal images . . . In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and enlarge our notions of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to observe. They are a grammar and, even more importantly, an ethics of seeing. See Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Picador, 1977), 3.
61. Michael Starenko, "Sontag's Reception," *Afterimage* 25, no. 5 (March/April 1998), 7.
62. Sontag, *On Photography*, 8.
63. Allan Sekula, "On the Invention of Photographic Meaning," *Photography in Print: Writings from 1816 to the Present*, ed. Vicki Goldberg (Albuquerque: UNM Press, 1988), 454.
64. Solomon-Godeau, "Living with Contradictions," 209.
65. Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Photography After Art Photography," *Art After Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984), 76.
66. *Ibid.*, 85.
67. Thierry de Duve, "Time Exposure and Snapshot: The Photograph as Paradox," *October* 5 (Summer 1978), 114.
68. Pierre Bourdieu, *Photography: A Middle-brow Art* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 19.
69. Sontag, *On Photography*, 8.
70. Krauss co-founded the critical art journal *October* in 1976.
71. Rosalind Krauss, "A Note on Photography and the Simulacral," *October* 31 (Winter 1984), 56.
72. On January 15, 2009, media news blog Gawker.com posted an article entitled "Time Nears Completion of Nearly Every Possible Obama Cover Variation," noting that an image of the then incumbent U.S. president had already appeared on the magazine's cover fifteen times. See Gawker Media, "Time Nears Completion of Nearly Every Possible Obama Cover Variation," *Gawker*, <http://gawker.com/5132191/time-nears-completion-of-every-possible-obama-cover-variation>.
73. Kozloff, *New York*, 62.
74. Sandler, *Art of the Postmodern Era*, 425.
75. Joshua P. Smith, *Photography of Invention: American Pictures of the 1980s* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1989), 14.
76. Julian Stallabrass, "Cold Eye: Review of Pierre Bourdieu's *Photography: A Middle Brow Art*," *New Left Review* 220 (1996): 147-152.
77. Martha Rosler, "In, Around, and Afterthoughts (On Documentary Photography)," *Decoys and Disruptions: Selected Writings, 1975-2001* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004), 175.
78. *Ibid.*, 191.
79. Elisabeth Sussman, "In/Of Her Time: Nan Goldin's Photographs," *I'll Be Your Mirror*, eds. Nan Goldin, David Armstrong and Hans Werner Holzwarth (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996), 31.
80. Goldin, *The Devil's Playground*, 500.
81. Chris Townsend, "Nan Goldin: Bohemian Ballads," *Phototextualities*, eds. Alex Hughes and Andrea Noble (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 106.

82. "Newton's photographs have been subject to all manner of misinterpretation, especially in the 1970's when the women's movement understood most fashion images, particularly those of unclothed women taken by men, to be victimizing." See Ginia Bellafante, "An Appreciation; Helmut Newton and the Invincible Woman," *New York Times*, February 3, 2004, sec. B.
83. Mark Holborn, "Introduction," *Ancient and Modern* (New York: Random House, 1992).
84. Thomas Weski, "The Tender-Cruel Camera," *The Hasselblad Award*, 1999, http://www.egglestonrust.com/hasselblad_weski.html.
85. Szarkowski, "Introduction," 9.
86. Jim Lewis, "Kodachrome Moment: How William Eggleston's Revolutionary Exhibition Changed Everything," *Slate*, February 10, 2003, <http://slate.msn.com/id/2078059/>.
87. Ibid.
88. Green, *American Photography*, 185.
89. Darsie Alexander, "SlideShow," *SlideShow: Projected Images in Contemporary Art* (Baltimore: The Baltimore Museum of Art, 2005), 4.
On page 27 of the same text, Alexander mentions Cindy Sherman as a key figure of the acceptance of colour photography in art, with her shift from small black-and-white prints for which she became famous to photographs which "grew enormously in size, color, and detail, with the artist herself taking on more extreme roles and poses."
90. Max Kozloff reminds that "Ernst Haas tried out color and Saul Leiter possessed it, with real sophistication, as early as the 1950s. But the aesthetics of color in New York photograph comes into its own in the mid-1970s." See Kozloff, *New York*, 63.
91. Lewis, "Kodachrome Moment."
92. Ibid.
93. Green, *American Photography*, 195. As the MoMA's influential Director of Photography, John Szarkowski is credited with launching the careers of Arbus, William Eggleston, Garry Winogrand and Lee Friedlander.
94. Sontag, *On Photography*, 32-33.
95. Ibid., 47.
96. Ibid., 48.
97. Ibid., 41.
98. Darryl Pinckney, "Nan's Manhattan," *I'll Be Your Mirror*, eds. Nan Goldin, David Armstrong and Hans Werner Holzwarth (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996), 204.
99. Goldin and Arbus shared a preference for the Leica camera, see Adam Mazur and Paulina Skirgajll-Krajewska, "Nan Goldin Interviewed," *Fototapeta*, www.fototapeta.art.pl/2003/ngie.php. John Roberts claims that "The new conditions of spontaneity introduced into photography by the Leica and other portable cameras were produced out of the critical and political application of the technology's formal effects Henri Cartier-Bresson and Helen Levitt were also Leica fans. See John Roberts, "On the Ruins of Photographic Culture: The Politics of Photographic Form Today," *The Meaning of Photography* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 164.
100. See Mazur and Skirgajll-Krajewska, "Nan Goldin Interviewed."
James Guimond seems to agree with Goldin. He gives Arbus credit for her attempted rebellions against gender stereotypes of the 1950s, but states that "She photographed gays and transvestites with such an emphasis on the ugly and the sullen, however, that it is difficult to believe she had much respect and tolerance for them." See Guimond, *American Photography and the American Dream: Cultural Studies of the United States* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 225.
101. Sontag, *On Photography*, 45.
102. Ibid., 45. Sheltered for many years from the social and political realities of New York City, Arbus's photographic discovery of "freaks" doesn't have a historical alignment like Goldin's embodiment of a moment in history. Weegee, for example, had been photographing New York City's seedy underbelly for years, and "the nonchalance with which he crossed the line between tolerated snooping and private obsession is symptomatic of the atmosphere of license in the big city," thus establishing invasive photography as not only common but also stereotypically urban. See Kozloff, *New York*, 33. James Guimond remarks that "In the mass media of the late 1940s and the 1950s, one of the most ubiquitous symbols of cultural order was the middle-class nuclear family" and that "Even Diane and Allan Arbus made a modest contribution to this stereotype in

- 1947 when they photographed themselves for a *Glamour* series called 'Mr. & Mrs. Inc.,' which were case studies of seven young couples who had achieved 'togetherness' in their careers." This aspect of Arbus's early career is important in terms of identifying what kind of background she came from, and the image of the family she participated in early on in her adult years. See Guimond, *American Photography*, 222.
103. Garratt, "The Dark Room."
 104. Julian Stallabrass, "What's in a Face? Blankness and Significance in Contemporary Art Photography," *October* 122 (Fall 2007), 73.
 105. *Ibid.*, 73.
 106. Judith Butler, "Surface Tensions: Judith Butler on Diane Arbus," *Artforum* XLII, no. 6 (February 2004), 120.
 107. *Ibid.*, 120.
 108. Sontag, *On Photography*, 40.
 109. David Frankel, "Cindy Sherman talks to David Frankel – '80s Then – Interview," *Artforum* XLI, no. 7 (March 2003), 54.
 110. *Ibid.*, 54.
 111. Solomon-Godeau, "Living with Contradictions," 204.
 112. *Ibid.* In a 2004 *Artforum* article written by David Rimanelli, the author describes an assignment he gave to his undergraduate students in a contemporary art survey course at NYU, entitled 'Make Your Own Nan Goldin.' Rimanelli talks about the art historical juxtaposition of Goldin and Sherman's works as a common one because both artists are relatively well-known, even to novice students. For Rimanelli, repeated viewings of Sherman's *Film Stills* and Goldin's *Ballad* produced an interesting result: they began "to bleed together" on the basis of the similarity between Sherman's so-called constructions and Goldin's snapshot aesthetic, suggesting that regardless of the divergent motives of these two photographers, history has had the effect of conflating the work of one with the other. See David Rimanelli, "Being Nan Goldin: David Rimanelli gives his class homework," *Artforum* XLII, no. 10 (Summer 2004), 85, 88.
 113. Laura Kipnis, *Bound and Gagged: Pornography and the Politics of Fantasy* (New York: Grove Press, 1996), 80.
 114. Krauss, "A Note on Photography," 61.
 115. "In 1980 Sherman began to take color photographs that employed backscreen projection. She no longer acted out media stereotypes but portrayed herself in the guise of ordinary contemporary women." See Sandler, *Art of the Postmodern Era*, 410.
 116. Elisabeth Bronfen, "The Knotted Subject: Hysteria, Irma and Cindy Sherman," *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts: Feminist Readings*, ed. Griselda Pollock (London: Routledge, 1996), 51.
 117. Mazur and Skirgall-Krajewska, "Nan Goldin."
 118. Sussman, "In/Of Her Time," 30.
 119. Jonathan Weinberg, "Fantastic Tales: The Photography of Nan Goldin," *Fantastic Tales: The Photography of Nan Goldin* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press/Palmer Museum of Art, 2005), 19.
 120. Vince Aletti, "Larry Clark," *Artforum* XL, no. 9 (May 2002), 27.
 121. Brian Wallis, "Larry Clark," *Larry Clark at International Center of Photography*, International Center of Photography, http://museum.icp.org/museum/exhibitions/larry_clark/.
 122. Lynn Hirschberg, "What's the Matter with Kids Today?" *New York Magazine*, June 5, 1995, 36.
 123. Gus Van Sant, "Larry Clark, Shockmaster," *Interview Magazine* 25, no. 7, July 1995, 44.
 124. *Ibid.*
 125. *Ibid.*
 126. Wallis, "Larry Clark."
 127. Andy Grundberg, "So, What Else Do You Want to Know About Me?," *New York Times*, September 21, 1990, sec. C.
 128. José Esteban Muñoz, "Rough Boy Trade: Queer Desire/Straight Identity in the Photography of Larry Clark," *The Passionate Camera: Photography and Bodies of Desire*, ed. Deborah Bright, (New York: Routledge, 1998), 172.
 129. Sally Mann's photo projects, particularly *Immediate Family* (1992), provide another example of a multi-year project, like Goldin's or Sherman's as well as Jock Sturges' portraits of Misty Dawn and

- Nicholas Nixon's *The Brown Sisters* (1975-) concerned with the representation of family. In Mann's case, the family is her immediate biological one: her three children. One of the problems identified in Mann's work is the class status of her subjects, "who are not poor but appear to be in the photographs," And not only poor, Mann's children often appear to be of a different era, emblematic of a kind of dust bowl nostalgia, itself a problematic reference. In Richard B. Woodward's view, what is represented as "cowboy playtime for her [Mann's] children . . . is taken away from them when transported to the realm of adult melodrama," an important distinction which links Mann's practice to Clark's and distinguishes it from Goldin's. Mann's subjects, like Clark's, are recognizable as children, even when they are posturing the behaviors of adults. In Mann's work, these postures are suggestive, as in *Candy Cigarette*, 1989, with the young subjects ignorant of the references, whereas Clark's subjects do not mimic, they embody. But despite their adult behavior Clark's subjects reveal themselves, most definitively through their physicality, as youth. See Richard B. Woodward, "The Disturbing Photography of Sally Mann," *New York Times*, September 27, 1992, <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/09/27/magazine/the-disturbing-photography-of-sally-mann.html>.
130. Green, *American Photography*, 126. Only in Clark's later film work do we see hints of consequence being explored, and even then, they exist in the periphery, while sex and violence remain the centerpieces of the story. A key example of this is Clark's 2001 film *Bully*, in which a group of aggressive, frustrated teenagers seek revenge on one of their peers. While the film (which is based on the real-life murder of Bobby Kent) concludes with the legal implications of homicide, the bulk of the film deals with the planning and execution of the murder, as well as the simultaneous sexual escapades of the Florida teenagers responsible for the crime. An alleged meditation on boredom in suburban America, the film's preoccupation with graphic sex and violence incited controversy from the public when it was first released. See Stuart Jeffries, "King Leer," *The Guardian*, February 28, 2002, http://film.guardian.co.uk/interview/interviewpages/0,,659674,00.html#article_continue.
131. Jim Lewis, "Larry Clark: What is This," *Parkett* 32 (1992), 21.
132. Weinberg, "Fantastic Tales," 19.
133. In Patricia Bosworth's controversial biography, which places great emphasis on Arbus's abnormality, she claims that Arbus suffered from increasingly severe depressions throughout her marriage: "On the surface Diane appeared to be leading a rich, active life, sharing not only a successful career with her husband but two bright, healthy children as well. Even so, at the core something was false and empty for her and she remained restless and depressed much of the time," see Patricia Bosworth, *Diane Arbus: A Biography* (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 117.
134. Bourdieu, *Photography*, 19.
135. Rosler talks about how even drunkenness has been replaced by "substance abuse" – a problem of bureaucratic management," see Rosler, "In, Around, and Afterthoughts," 178.

Chapter II

1. Alexander, "SlideShow," 3.
2. Ibid.
3. Weinberg, "Fantastic Tales," 14.
4. Barry Schwabsky, "Interview with William Eggleston," *Kultureflash*, <http://www.kultureflash.net/archive/104/privity.html>.
5. Alexander, "SlideShow," 24.
6. Ibid., 26.
7. "Nan Goldin Talks," 232.
8. Mazur and Skirgajll-Krajewska, "Nan Goldin."
9. Nan Goldin and J. Hoberman, "My Number One Medium All My Life," *I'll Be Your Mirror*, eds. Nan Goldin, David Armstrong and Hans Werner Holzwarth (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996), 139.
10. Dana Friis-Hansen, "The Party's Over," *Parkett* 57 (1999), 94.
11. "Nan Goldin Talks," 233.

12. Alan Lareau, "The German Cabaret Movement during the Weimar Republic," *Theatre Journal* 43, no. 4 (December 1991), 473.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., 480.
15. Ibid., 478.
16. When one of Goldin's photographs, *Klara and Edda belly-dancing, Berlin*, 1998, was seized from an exhibition in England in 2007, its owner, Elton John, made a statement indicating the image's long history, prior to attracting complaints from the public: "The photograph exists as part of the installation as a whole and has been widely published and exhibited throughout the world . . . It has been offered for sale at Sotheby's New York . . . and exhibited in Houston, London, Madrid, New York, Portugal, Warsaw and Zurich without any objections that we were aware of." See Laura Coverson, "Art or Porn? Elton John's Photos Seized," *ABC News Online*, ABC, September 27, 2007, <http://abcnews.go.com/US/Story?id=3658634&page=1>.
17. Sante, "All Yesterday's Parties," 101.
18. "Nan Goldin Talks," 274.
19. Peter Marshall, "Nan Goldin's Mirror on Life," *Re:Photo*, <http://re-photo.co.uk/?p=90>.
20. Robert Storr, "Next Slide, Please . . ." *SlideShow: Projected Images in Contemporary Art* (Baltimore: The Baltimore Museum of Art, 2005), 51.
21. Arthur C. Danto, "Nan Goldin's Recent Photographs," *Parkett* 57 (1999), 78.
22. Dyer, "Nan Goldin," 98.
23. Ibid., 99.
24. Mazur and Skirgajll-Krajewska, "Nan Goldin."
25. Linda Nochlin, *Bathers, Bodies, Beauty: The Visceral Eye* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2006), 119-20.
26. Dyer, "Nan Goldin," 98.
27. Butler, "Surface Tensions," 120.
28. Weinberg, "Fantastic Tales," 26.
29. Victor Burgin, *The Remembered Film* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2004), 16.
30. Burgin's observation reminds us that the subjects are crucial players as well. Burgin began his career as a conceptual artist before gradually blurring the lines between the theory and practice of art.
31. Dictionary.com, s.v. "monograph," <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/monograph>.
32. "Reading the Modern Photography Book: Changing Perceptions," *National Gallery of Art Exhibitions*, <http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2009/frank/library/brochure.pdf>.
33. Malcolm Jones, "A Terrible Beauty," *Newsweek*, June 2, 2008, <http://www.newsweek.com/id/138381>.
34. Jno Cook, "Robert Frank: Dissecting the American Image," *Exposure Magazine* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1986), 31.
35. Marvin Heiferman, "Pictures of Life and Loss," *I'll Be Your Mirror*, eds. Nan Goldin, David Armstrong, Hans Werner Holzwarth (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1996), 281.
36. Townsend, "Nan Goldin," 113.
37. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 11.
38. Leo Rubinfien, "Where Diane Arbus went," *Art in America* 93, no. 10 (October 2005), 66.
39. Catherine Lord, "What Becomes a Legend Most: The Short, Sad Career of Diane Arbus," *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992), 122.
40. Rubinfien, "Where Diane Arbus went," 66. Rubinfien also has harsh words for Patricia Bosworth's biography of Arbus, which according to Rubinfien, was written with minimal access to Arbus's extensive correspondence, none of her diaries, project lists, or people closest to her, and, perhaps most seriously, an inaccurate and poor understanding of the photographs. According to Rubinfien, the resultant text is worshipful, condescending, overattentive to sex, depression and famous people, and not terribly concerned with Arbus's art. *Revelations* is of central importance to Rubinfien for correcting many misunderstandings established by the Arbus monograph and biography, but also speaking to the power of these texts to inform public opinion on the artist's work for a lengthy period of time.

41. Lord, "What Becomes a Legend Most," 115.
42. Weinberg, "Fantastic Tales," 21.
43. Dyer, "Nan Goldin," 97.
44. Goldin, *The Ballad*, 7.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., 8.
47. Lou Reed, "Caroline Says II", Lou Reed Guitar Archive, http://ww21.tiki.ne.jp/~wildside/tabs/caroline_says_2.html
48. Heiferman, "Pictures," 281.
49. Christoph Schreier, "Historical document and artistic masterpiece: The Photography of August Sander," *August Sander: 'In Photography There are No Unexplained Shadows!'* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1997), 2.
50. Liz Kotz, "Aesthetics of 'Intimacy,'" *The Passionate Camera: Photography and Bodies of Desire*, ed. Deborah Bright (New York: Routledge, 1998), 205.
51. Sontag, *On Photography*, 61.
52. Goldin, *The Ballad*, 7.
53. Weinberg, "Fantastic Tales," 19.
54. Kotz, "Aesthetics of 'Intimacy,'" 207.
55. Matthias Schellenberg, Ernst Riolo and Hartmut Blaue, "Silver dye-bleach Photography," *The Focal Encyclopedia of Photography: Digital Imaging, Theory and Applications, 4th Edition*, ed. Michael R. Peres (St. Louis: Focal Press, 2007), 701.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid. Cibachrome became Ilfochrome and Ilfochrome II in 1989, and are currently sold under this name.
58. Ibid.
59. Peter Krause, "Color Photography," *Image Processes and Materials: Neblette's Eighth Edition*, eds. John M. Sturge, Vivian Walworth, Allan Shepp (Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 1989), 130.
60. Bruce Warren, *Photography: The Concise Guide* (Florence: Delmar Cengage Learning, 2002), 17.
61. Schellenberg, "Silver," 701.
62. Holborn, "Introduction."
63. Michelle Golden, "William Eggleston: Living Color," *Photo District News* 23, no. 1 (January 2003), 28.
64. Ibid., 28.
65. Eauclaire, *The New Color*, 110. In her discussion of Eve Sonneman's Cibachrome work, Eauclaire notes the "glossy surface, high contrasts, and acidic colours" of the prints as qualities which "taint illusion with technological artificiality," while Sonneman's use of a black border achieves a level of artifice Eauclaire refers to as Brechtian.
66. Arthur C. Danto, "Nan Goldin's World," *The Nation* 263, no. 18, December 2, 1996, 33.
67. Mazur and Skirgajll-Krajewska, "Nan Goldin."
68. White Cube. "Nan Goldin: Thanksgiving," *White Cube Exhibitions*, <http://www.whitecube.com/exhibitions/thanksgiving/>.
69. Kotz, "Aesthetics of 'Intimacy,'" 207.
70. David P. Thomas, "'Goodbye to Berlin': Refocusing Isherwood's Camera," *Contemporary Literature* 13, no. 1 (Winter, 1972), 21.
71. Ibid.
72. Goldin, *The Ballad*, 145.
73. Thomas, "'Goodbye to Berlin,'" 52.
74. Jonathan Jones, "The Beautiful and the damned," *The Guardian*, January 13, 2001, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2001/jan/13/thesaatchigallery.art>.
75. Craig-Martin's photographs recall the work of Goldin's contemporary, Mark Cohen, whose work is described by Sally Eauclaire in similar terms: "People are often shot from such close range that they seem virtually assaulted, their heads and limbs cropped from the picture." See Eauclaire, *The New Color*, 69.
76. Jones, "The Beautiful."
77. Goldin, *The Ballad*, 6.

78. Ian Blecher, "Photographer Jessica Craig-Martin is High Society's Cockeyed Optimist," *The New York Observer*, November 19, 2000, <http://www.observer.com/node/43650>.
79. Craig-Martin's "friend and muse," art collector Yvonne Force Villareal claims to 'love' the artist's portrait of her urinating. See Blecher, "Photographer Jessica Craig-Martin."
80. Vicki Goldberg, "Reality and Its Discontents in a Photographic Age," *New York Times*, April 1, 2001, sec. 2.
81. Louis Kaplan, *American Exposures: Photography and Community in the Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 98.
82. Dyer, "Nan Goldin," 98.
83. White Cube, "Nan Goldin."
84. Goldin, *The Ballad*, 145.
85. Weinberg, "Fantastic Tales," 26.
86. Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003), 46.
87. Nan Richardson, ed., "Miguel Rio Branco Speaks with Tereza Siza," *Conversations with Contemporary Photographers* (Brooklyn: Umbrage Editions, 2006), 156.

Conclusion

1. Jerry Saltz, "The Seventh Circle," *The Village Voice*, April 12-18, 2006, 92.
2. Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2006), 507.
3. "I looked at Nan Goldin's *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, and I was blown away. I just couldn't believe it. I could relate to it so much – it was about New York, it was about downtown, it was about a bohemian lifestyle, and it felt very close to home. That was a big influence." See Aaron Schuman, "Thirty and Dirty: An Interview with Ryan McGinley," *Hotshoe International*, April/May 2008, http://www.hotshoeinternational.com/art_details.do?b=121&c=1.
4. Danto, "Nan Goldin's Recent Photographs," 78.
5. Marien, *Photography*, 510.
6. Phyllis Thompson Reid, "Nan Goldin – Dark Diary," *Aperture* 176 (2004), 64.
7. Nan Richardson, ed., "Max Pam Speaks With Pablo Oritz Monasterio," *Conversations with Contemporary Photographers* (Brooklyn: Umbrage Editions, 2006), 93.
8. "The Kids are Alright," was the title of Ryan McGinley's 2003 exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art. McGinley was 24 years old at the time of the exhibition, making him the youngest artist to have a solo exhibition at the museum.
9. Douglas Haddow, "Hipster: The Dead End of Western Civilization," *Adbusters* 79, September/October 2008, n.p.

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