

CONSUMING VISIONS:
POP ART, MASS CULTURE, AND THE AMERICAN DREAM
1962-65

by

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ABSTRACT

Between 1962 and 1965 pop art received a phenomenal amount of exposure in mass-market magazines such as *Time*, *Life*, *Esquire*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Business Week*, *House and Garden*, and *Reader's Digest*. While coverage of art in non-art publications was in itself not unusual, the rapidity, prevalence, extensiveness, and ambiguity of pop coverage were unique. In the writings of most pop art historians this phenomenon is either overlooked or explained away as yet another instance of giving the masses what they want; in this case, bright, cheery, affirmative images of consumer culture which conform incredibly well to both the form and content of most mass-market publications. From even a cursory survey of mainstream periodical imaging of pop in the years 1962-65, however, it becomes obvious that mass-market magazines were not presenting pop art as simply a hip and clever advertisement for contemporary U.S. life.

By means of a detailed examination of how pop art was represented in *Life*, *Time*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *House and Garden*, this thesis aims to provide a more complex understanding of both pop's noteworthy presence in these magazines and its relationship to U.S. consumer culture of the early sixties. Locating common themes of pop coverage is the starting point for such an investigation. By determining what parameters are consistently utilized to frame pop and then situating those parameters within historically-relevant resonances, we begin to see that pop was the focus of such unprecedented public attention

not only because of its challenge to existing aesthetic norms but also because of its patent connection to consumer culture and the heated debates surrounding it.

Moving from this general overview to a more specific analysis of pop's re-presentation in the mainstream press and its relationship to contemporary U.S. life necessitates a closer examination of how pop was actually presented in the magazines themselves. Through a textual and visual deconstruction of the material representations of pop the general concepts and debates determined earlier are situated within the larger socio-cultural structure within which mass-market magazines' representations of pop were operating. Issues arising out of period critiques of consumerism and mass culture on the subjects of individualism, progress, democracy, and nationalism are then factored into an explanation of the intricate mixture of ridicule and admiration characteristic of the magazines' representations of pop, revealing pop art as an active player in the ongoing questioning and re-definition of such concepts.

Thus we find that the imaging of pop art found in non-art publications is not as pro-pop/pro-consumer culture as many theorists and historians would have us believe. While far from revolutionary critiques of early sixties U.S. society, the textual and visual representations of pop found in mass-market magazines do evince tensions over societal changes introduced by the hegemony of mass culture and the U.S.' intimate conceptual association with it. The historical significance of such an uncomfortability lies in the recognition that it is these same tensions--over issues of individualism, progress, democracy, and

nationalism--which will play key roles in the extensive questioning of U.S. values and morals which takes place in the second half of the sixties.

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INTRODUCTION: CONSUMING VISIONS, VISIONS OF CONSUMPTION

Exploding onto the art scene with its 1962 group exhibition at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New York City, pop art immediately commanded the attention not only of the art world *per se* but also of the general public.¹ Between the covers of popular U.S. periodicals as diverse as *Time*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Esquire*, *Life*, *House and Garden*, *Vogue*, *Business Week*, and even *Reader's Digest*, pop art was championed, ridiculed, vilified, debated, debased, defended, and denounced. In the more generally-oriented, inexpensive magazines in particular, pop received rapid, extensive, and, in the case of *Time* and *Life*, repeat coverage.

NOTES

¹In his New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940-1970, Henry Geldzahler, assistant curator of American Painting and Sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, reveals the extent of pop's "popularity" by means of a personal anecdote.

No movement in the history of American art was named and received more quickly. A year after it hit the galleries and magazines, I had an air conditioner installed in my apartment. An Andy Warhol painting of six Marilyn Monroes was leaning against a wall. "What's that, Pop Art?" the air conditioner man asked. Can you imagine someone in a similar situation in 1950, asking of a Jackson Pollock, "What's that, Abstract Expressionism?"

Henry Geldzahler, New York Painting and Sculpture: 1940-1970 (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1969), p. 35.

While articles on art in most of these magazines were not untypical, the rapidity, prevalence, and frequency of pop art's presence were unprecedented. This phenomenon of pop art coverage by mass-market magazines has traditionally been accounted for by art historians of the period as indicative of either pop's whole-hearted promotion of contemporary U.S. consumer culture or its unwitting co-optation by that same insatiably materialistic and spectacular society. This paper problematizes the reductive nature of such explanations by grounding pop art's representation in mass-market magazines within a more complex understanding of the concepts of "art" and "culture" current in the United States circa 1962-65 and through situating this complexity within the heated debate over the value and state of consumer, or mass, culture.²

²While acknowledging that the term "mass culture" is a loaded one I utilize it throughout this paper. My reasons for doing so are twofold. One, by applying the term to a specific historical moment I aspire to remove some of its mythic quality of universality while simultaneously preserving the sense of power and magnitude that is present in the definition of mass as "a considerable assemblage, number, or quantity." (Random House Dictionary of the English language, 2nd ed., 1983.) Simultaneously, I hope to somewhat exorcise the term of the oxymoronic stigma which has haunted it by situating mass culture as an actual historical occurrence which reveals much about the theory and practice of democracy in the United States in the early sixties.

The relationship between consumer and mass culture at this time is of key importance here. Mass culture, understood as a form of civilization wherein large numbers of individuals are equally exposed to all that that civilization has to offer, is the vehicle for consumer culture. It is mass culture's industries, commensurate politics, and sheer numbers which produce the jobs, finances, goods and mindset for consumerism to occur. And it is primarily through the act of consuming, I shall argue, that U.S. citizens constructed themselves and a particular vision of "America" in the early sixties. Thus while not directly interchangeable conceptually, consumer and mass culture's

Since the end of the second world war U.S. society had undergone a number of conspicuous and significant economic, political, and social changes. Incorporating all of these transformations and symbolic of a paradigm shift was the ubiquitous presence of consumer culture. The result of a confluence of historical events--among them an ultra-efficient war industry gone civilian, unprecedented affluence for a noteworthy proportion of the U.S. public, and greatly increased leisure time--consumerism was in full bloom by the early sixties. Much of the middle-class U.S. population had moved beyond simply purchasing more numerous or higher quality staples--kitchen appliances, televisions, washing machines--into the realm of luxury goods. Stereos, pools, and European vacations were no longer the sole property of the wealthy in the sixties technicolour version of the "American Dream."

Such conspicuous abundance for so many, particularly as manifested by consumer purchases, was not without its critics, however. Rumblings were heard from both the political left and right over the hidden costs of consumption, costs which could not be measured in dollars and cents but only in the more ephemeral currency of individual values and national pride. David Reisman raised the spectre of conformity with his delineation of the outer-directed person; John Kenneth Galbraith detailed the seductive power of greed; C. Wright Mills outlined the daily workings and future effects of the politics of power; and Michael Harrington drew a haunting picture of an "affluent" and "progressive" America of which it was difficult to be proud.³ The

link is of such a fundamental nature, especially in regards to the concerns of this paper, that they will be used interchangeably here.

³David Reisman, The Lonely Crowd (New York: 1952); John Kenneth Galbraith, The Affluent Society (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958); C.

necessary consequences of both this questioning of consumerism and the material changes wrought by contemporary consumer practice were a rethinking and redefinition of constitutive aspects of U.S. life, chief among them individualism, progress, democracy, and nationalism.

The conceptual transformations which inevitably accompanied this revamping of the powerful myth of the American Dream occurred at many levels, including that of culture. Indeed, in its taking up of what early pop chronicler John Rublowsky has called the "material manifestations of the encroaching twentieth century"⁴--Coca Cola, canned food, television, rock and roll, mass-produced automobiles, appliances, and movie stars--pop art not only challenged dominant mid-twentieth century concepts of "Art" but made links with contemporary U.S. culture too patent for viewers to ignore. At a moment when the socio-economic structure of the United States was undergoing rapid change, pop art garishly illuminated the key player in this metamorphosis--consumer culture. Through its shuffling of the categories of high and low, pop provided a stage on which the topical issues such an association provoked could be played out. In its examination of the representation of pop art in mass-market magazines in the United States between 1962 and 1965, this thesis seeks to complexify the plot of such a drama and to determine the relationship of pop's presentation in these publications to contemporary U.S. consumer culture.

Wright Mills, The Power Elite (New York: 1956); Michael Harrington, The Other America (New York: MacMillan Co., 1962).

⁴John Rublowsky, Pop Art (New York: Basic Books, 1965), p. 7.

A valid question which may arise at this point is why the focus on mass-market magazines? The answer to this query is relatively straightforward and comes in two parts. First, if one wishes to investigate the convoluted connections between pop art and consumer culture, what more likely venue to stake out than the realm in which the two so intimately converge? True, analyses of pop art exhibitions, art journal coverage, and critical debates can all contribute to a better understanding of the resonance of pop art's many forays back and forth across the border between art and mass culture, highbrow and lowbrow. Pop art's representation in mass-market magazines deserves particular attention in regards to this issue, however, not only because it is an area of research usually explained away or neglected altogether, but also because of mass-market magazines' singular combination of pop art and consumer culture.

Looking at pop art between the covers of *House and Garden* or *Time* is a very different spatial and conceptual experience from viewing it in a gallery setting. In an art gallery, pop's presence is predominantly aesthetic and its relationship to contemporary U.S. society fairly abstract whereas amidst the advertisements and articles found in mass-market magazines the symbiotic nature of pop art and mass culture's relationship becomes increasingly obvious. Mass-market magazines are there to sell their advertisers products and the accompanying lifestyles afterall and as such they are exemplary of a "consumeristic" mentality. Pop's frequent appearance on *Life* and *Time's* pages thus provides an excellent opportunity to investigate the intricacies and subtlties of its relationship to consumer culture, the

very culture the magazines depend on for their existence.⁵ Which brings me to the second part of my rationale for working on magazine representations of pop art.

As already noted, the prevalence, rapidity, and frequency of pop art's coverage in mass-market magazines were unprecedented. Traditionally, different magazines tended to focus on different aspects of the art world depending on their target readership, or, if a similar subject was covered, it would be one already extensively discussed in the art press. With pop art, however, a profusion of essays quickly appeared in fashion, news, financial, and general interest magazines without waiting for the "word" from art authorities. Mass-market magazine coverage of pop art is thus worthy of examination in its own right as a milestone in art journalism.⁶

The phenomenon of pop's prolific and diverse coverage in mass-market magazines also problematizes certain mass-culture theories

⁵ Of course, pop art did make appearances in other consumption-oriented locales such as the 1964/65 New York World's Fair. But pop's physical presence there was lost in the overall "pop sensibility" of the fair as a whole and pop's visibility as art was minor in comparison to the other "high" art on display. For details of pop's presence at the fair see Helen A. Harrison's "Art for the Millions, or Art for the Market?" and Ileen Sheppard's "Icons and Images: The Cultural Legacy of the Fair," both in Remembering the Future: The New York World's Fair From 1939 to 1964 (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), pp. 137-166 and pp. 167-199, respectively.

⁶For specific acknowledgement of pop's novel rise to stardom in the popular press see Jennifer Wells, "The Sixties: Pop Goes the Market," in Definitive Statements: American Art 1965-66 (Providence, RI: Brown University, 1986), pp. 53-61, esp. pp. 56-57. A more general account of art as a topical concern in newspapers and magazines in the sixties is found in Sidra Stich, Made in USA: An Americanization of Modern Art (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 10.

which picture the mass media as simply putting its own unsophisticated and conservatizing twist on what has already been explored, debated, discussed, and documented in more intellectual and radical realms. Contemporary theorists such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Bernard Rosenberg, and Dwight MacDonald all indicted mass-market magazines' corporate ownership, huge advertising revenue, and sensationalism as accomplices in what they variously described as the levelling, debasing, or homogenization, of culture.⁷

According to the logic underlying the assumptions of these and like-minded theorists, pop art would find a warm welcome in the media and among the general public primarily because its bright, machined images of soup cans, comic-book characters, and Ford cars so closely resembled modern-day advertisements for consumer products, advertisements whose seductive and manipulative power was well-documented in numerous best-selling tomes of the time.⁸ In other words, pop is popular because it re-presents the comfortable, the familiar. Such a theorization of pop's "success" both presupposes and simultaneously reinscribes the consumer culture which pop art

⁷Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, The Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972); Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White, eds., Mass Culture (New York: Free Press, 1957); Dwight MacDonald, Masscult and Midcult (New York: Random House, 1961).

⁸The most well-known and sensational of these was Vance Packard's The Hidden Persuaders (New York: David McKay, 1957). Also influential in their respective takes on the power of advertising were David Potter, People of Plenty (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954); John Kenneth Galbraith, The Affluent Society (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958); Betty Freidan, The Feminine Mystique (New York: Doubleday Dell, 1963); and Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

pictures as already-existent, homogenous, and stable, thereby overlooking the inherently dynamic, heterogenous, and vascillating nature of any hegemonic culture. U.S. middle class consumer culture was not a static entity in the early sixties, it did not passively exist as a form of dominance. Like all hegemonic powers it had to be continually "renewed, recreated, defended, and modified."⁹

For the most part, art historical work on pop's relationship to consumer or mass culture has neglected theories of hegemony and instead followed the influential line of thinking originated by such writers as Adorno and Horkheimer. Within pop art historiography, for instance, one finds two distinct "camps" which may be distinguished by the contrasting themes of critique and celebration but which also work with a similar conception of mass culture.¹⁰ One group holds that pop art was an ironic comment on contemporary U.S. consumer culture which a certain segment of the population, namely cultural elites,

⁹Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 112.

¹⁰This celebration/critique split began with the first coverage of pop and continues today. Some representative examples of book-length studies and exhibition catalogues include: Rublowsky, Pop Art (1965); Mario Amaya, Pop as Art (London: Studio Vista, Limited, 1965); Lucy Lippard, Pop Art (New York: Praeger, 1968); Suzi Gablik and John Russell, Pop Art Redefined (New York: Praeger, 1969); Lawrence Alloway, American Pop Art (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1974); and Carol Anne Mahsun, Pop Art and the Critics (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987). In her work in Made In USA: An Americanization of Modern Art, author Sidra Stich does set pop art in a more complicated cultural context than other pop historians but she does so solely with the objective of assessing its "aesthetic strength and its importance with reference to the mainstream of modernism". Stich, p. 4. Thus the how and why of pop's noteworthy presence in the mass media find no place in her analysis.

could "get." In contrast, the other position believes that pop's flirtation with advertising and publicity was a genuine glorification of and acquiescence to the power of the dominant culture and its media. And yet a shared assumption of both of these positions is that pop is part of an "Art" tradition outside of mass culture. Whether approving it, mocking it, or wallowing in ambivalence, pop art is viewed as commenting on current U.S. culture while simultaneously distanced from that culture by virtue of its categorical link to high art.¹¹

That distance, however, is significantly reduced when pop art is represented in the mass media. In magazines, on television, and at the world's fair, the line between art and life becomes blurred with an art such as pop, an art which utilizes the form and content of magazine advertising, television commercials, and world fair marquees. According to much of the existent literature on pop, the resulting confusion between "outside" and "inside" is demonstrated by the widespread appropriation of pop art as artistic advertisements for contemporary U.S. society in mass-market magazines such as *Life*. In such a locale pop loses what tenuous artistic distance it once possessed, becoming a servant to the whims of an ideologically conservative media machine. Hence, according to both pop art history "camps", pop's supposedly ready acceptance by the mainstream press can be accounted for by its use as cultural affirmation of the dominant, materialistic, consumption-driven ideology of the U.S. in the early sixties.

¹¹Cecile Whiting, "'Class, Taste, and the Gendered Gaze: Tom Wesselman's Domestic Interiors," unpublished lecture, Vancouver Art Gallery, April 1, 1990.

The surge in contemporary writings on pop which began with the unexpected death of Andy Warhol in 1987 has done little to dispute the monolithic character of such a reading. Pop art's representation in the mass media continues to be neglected by scholars based on the assumption that its function in such a site is inherently and simply affirmative. Attention is focused instead on the congruencies between pop and the artistic traditions preceeding it. Any social commentary pop art is granted is thus viewed as a product of aesthetic distance from its contentious subject matter. As astutely observed by art critic Paul Taylor, pop art has become assimilated into art history's "grand procession," with Warhol being the "newest modern artist" and his work discussed almost exclusively in terms of its "avant-garde" formal properties or its knowingly satiric take on sixties materialism.¹² Positioned as a detached observer and insightful critic of mass culture, Warhol, for instance, is seen as commenting on mass culture's Dionysian excesses from the Apollinian heights of Fine Art. The schism between high art and the rest of life, which cultural historian Andreas Huyssen has described as "the great divide," is thus rigorously reinforced.¹³

Even critical social art historians such as Benjamin Buchloch and Thomas Crow remain firmly attached to the assumptions about mass culture that pervade the orthodox left position on pop art and which

¹²Paul Taylor, "Introduction," Post-Pop Art (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989): 11.

¹³Andreas Huyssen, The Great Divide (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). Another excellent historical account of the split between high and low is found in Jim Collins' Uncommon Cultures. Popular Culture and Post-Modernism (New York: Routledge, 1989).

appear to preclude detailed analyses of pop's relationship to consumer culture.¹⁴ In his 1987 essay on Warhol's early work, for instance, Crow makes the argument for a more complex understanding of Warhol's position as artistic producer by attributing to him a greater criticality and political awareness than has been presented previously. Yet Crow does so within the framework of Warhol as an exception, asserting the uniqueness of pre-1965 work such as the *Disaster* series as a phenomenon both in Warhol's oeuvre and pop art generally.¹⁵ With this assertion Crow evinces both a continued reliance on contemporary art historical constructions of the avant-garde and artistic intention and an indifference to pop's ambiguous relationship to the standards of high art and its manifest engagement with the peculiarities of mass culture. Hence, while presenting a strongly-argued and valuable reading of Warhol's early work, in stopping short of pushing his analysis into the unknown depths of consumer culture Crow misses out on some of pop's most evocative echoes.

That is not to say that Crow's study and others like it have nothing to offer pop art history,¹⁶ that there is not significant work being

¹⁴ Benjamin Buchloch, "Andy Warhol's One-Dimensional Art," in Andy Warhol: A Retrospective, Kynaston McShine, ed. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989), pp. 39-61; Thomas Crow, "Saturday Disasters: Trace and Reference in Early Warhol," Art in America, v. 75, n. 5 (May 1987),: 128-36.

¹⁵ Crow, 136.

¹⁶ For a critical collection of essays on Warhol, for example, see Hal Foster, ed., "The Work of Andy Warhol," Discussions in Contemporary Culture, v. 3 (Seattle: Bay Press, 1989).

done,¹⁷ or that no alternative positions have been articulated.¹⁸ It is to claim, however, that when it comes to the question of pop's relationship to consumer culture, little attention has been focused on the complexities and implications of such a symbiotic association in terms of contemporaneous concepts and manifestations of individualism, progress, democracy and nationalism, concepts undergoing significant shifts at this time due to the pervasiveness of consumer culture.

Because the literature on pop art to date has focused on the writings of intellectuals and art critics and on the works as exhibited in galleries and museums, it necessarily retains the dominant line on pop's connection to mass culture; that is, that it is affirmative of U.S. consumer society. In so doing it overlooks a truly significant aspect of pop art--its active role in the production, questioning, and redefinition of U.S. consumer culture in the early 1960s. From the white-walled confines of a gallery or in the typeset text of intellectual journals pop art may appear to easily adapt to either extreme of elitist critique or uncritical celebration. But when viewed amongst advertisements for soap and encyclopedias between the covers of mass-market magazines and in the context of rapid technological progress, unprecedented material affluence, socioeconomic upheaval, and the publicized search for a national purpose, the tension between critique and celebration in pop art becomes visibly manifest.

¹⁷One good example would be Cecile Whiting's work on the interrelationship between discourses of class, taste, and gender in the early work of Tom Wesselmann. See note 11 for full citation.

¹⁸Andreas Huyssen's "The Cultural Politics of Pop," in his book The Great Divide, is one such study.

In its presentation on the glossy pages of magazines like *Time* and *Ladies Home Journal* pop not only provoked the question “can this be art?” but also found itself framed as a site rife with issues resonant of the contemporary dichotomies of growing mechanization and high unemployment, greater affluence and excessive materialism, augmented opportunities for choice and widespread conformity. A thorough examination of how pop art was presented in mass-market magazines is thus key in both fathoming the intricacies of the relationship between pop art and U.S. consumer society, and to comprehending pop’s active role in articulating an historically-specific version of the American Dream.

Hence the choice of both subject matter and methodological approach found in this thesis. Chapter One sketches out the common parameters of pop’s textual and visual representation in mass-market magazines and illuminates the historical implications of these representations and their reception through investigating contemporaneous concepts of art and debates over mass culture. Chapter Two locates these concepts and debates within the larger socio-cultural structure within which mass-market magazines’ representations of pop were operating by deconstructing the actual material representations of pop art found in *Life*, *Time*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *House and Garden*. Issues arising out of period critiques of consumerism and mass culture on the subjects of individualism, progress, democracy and nationalism are then factored into an explanation of the intricate mixture of ridicule and admiration characteristic of mass-market magazines’ representations of pop. In the Conclusion, the role of this ambiguous vision of pop art in the ongoing drama of U.S. consumer culture is delineated and mass-market

representations of pop revealed as central characters in the plot's enactment. The fundamental concerns of this thesis, therefore, are: How is pop presented in mass-market magazines in the United States in the years 1962-65 and what is the historical significance of the relationship between these representations and contemporary U.S. consumer society?

CHAPTER ONE: POP POPS IN

“And pop art, much as it may outrage Pop, not to mention Grandpop, is the biggest fad since art belonged to Dada.”

-*Time*, 1963¹⁹

In order to closely analyze how pop art was represented in a range of mass-market magazines in the United States in the early sixties we first require a more general understanding of pop's coverage as a cultural phenomenon. While articles on fine art in mass-market magazines like *Ladies Home Journal* and *Life* were not untypical, the prolific nature of pop's presentation was and needs to be accounted for historically. What was it about pop art that made it the preferential object of such widespread fascination? Through schematically delineating the themes of mass-market magazines' coverage of pop and then contextualizing them within changing definitions of art and heated debates over mass culture, this chapter addresses that very question and thereby lays the groundwork for a thorough textual and visual investigation of the actual material representations of pop found in *Time*, *Life*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *House and Garden*.

THE *LIFE* AND *TIME* AND *VOGUE* OF POP

NOTES

¹⁹“Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace,” *Time*, v. 81, n. 18 (May 3, 1963): 65.

In browsing through the June 1962 issue of *Life* magazine a reader might have been somewhat surprised to discover images of cafeteria pies, billboard-size tires, plaster people, and huge comic-strip figures dominating the art pages (figure 1). While *Life* magazine had certainly dealt with contemporary art before, the works it represented had always had some connection with particular assumptions about "Art"--creativity and transcendence, for example.²⁰ Collected under the apt heading "Something New is Cooking," the work of Wayne Thiebaud, James Rosenquist, George Segal, and Roy Lichtenstein blatantly possessed no such connection being, in *Life's* words, as "easy as pie" to cook up and "inspired by commonplace, mass-produced objects of everyday life".²¹

But it was not simply the "mundane" subject matter and less-than- painterly techniques employed that were startling. It was also the resultant blur between art and reality, highlighted by subtitles such as "Plaster woman at a real table," colour photographs of artworks that looked deceptively similar to fragments of billboard advertising and luncheon counter pastry cases, and text which consistently referred to the "unexpected familiarity" of the imagery. That the artists who produced these works were former commercial painters (Rosenquist) or ex-chicken

²⁰While at times considered somewhat "baffling" the art of the abstract expressionists, for instance, was still framed by discussions of inner visions and artistic transformation. See, for example, *Life* art editor Dorothy Seiberling's two part series on the abstract expressionists, "the world's 'dominant' artists today." "Baffling U.S. Art: What It Is About," *Life* v. 47, n. 19 (Nov. 9, 1959): 68-80 and "The Varied Art of Four Pioneers," *Life* v. 47, n. 20 (Nov. 16, 1959): 74-86.

²¹"Something New Is Cooking," *Life*, v. 52, n. 24 (June 15, 1962): 115.

farmers turned schoolteachers (Segal) no doubt provided some explanation for such a questionable aesthetic but the fact that their shows were selling out for extremely large sums of money to important private collectors who would hang them alongside "revered DeKoonings and Picassos" quickly muddled matters once again.²²

Reading the text was not a prerequisite to having one's initial reaction to these artworks complexified, however. Subtitles like "Giant cartoons, \$400 to \$1200" and "Jarring blend of billboard pieces," combined with three-quarter page colour photographs of what appeared to be cafeteria pies, pop bottles, and comic strips--themselves interspersed with advertisements for haircolour, tin cans, homeowners insurance, toys, socks, and car maintenance--visually added depth to the enigma "how can this be art?" (figure 2)

Not just for *Life*, but in fact a wide range of financially-successful U.S. magazines in the early 1960s, such an enigma apparently made good copy. *Time*, *Vogue*, *Reader's Digest*, *Business Week*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *Esquire*, *House and Garden*--all ran articles on what came to be known as pop art.²³ To be sure, covering the intrigues of the art world was not an unusual activity for mass-market magazines. The morally-enlightening and educative aspects of art, as well as its more pragmatic function as signifier of social status, had long been recognized as of interest to a general public and thus a selling point for the magazines.

²²"Something New is Cooking," 120.

²³For a comprehensive listing of specific issues of mass-market magazines which reported on pop see Appendix 1.

Major exhibitions of Impressionist paintings or African tribal masks, record-breaking auction sales, governmental funding for the arts, the latest works by acknowledged masters and critically-acclaimed newcomers, roundtables on modern art--all were given space on the art pages of assorted mass-market magazines.

What is significant about the coverage of pop art between 1962-65, however, is that it was picked up by so many magazines, so quickly, and then followed up fairly regularly.²⁴ Of course, due to the differing editorial policies, aesthetic positions, target audiences, and material formats of these magazines the coverage of pop art was diverse. Some magazines loved pop art, some saw in it the downfall of western civilization as we know it, while still others hedged their bets, exploring the vast middleground between these two extremes. There were also more subtle aspects to pop's mass-market magazine presentation, however. Different periodicals had differing opinions at various moments on assorted artists; the same journal would change its position, or at least its tone, on pop's social relevance from one issue to the next; and the more-exclusive magazine's well-known critic would at times unwittingly find him or herself in complete agreement with the

²⁴The time frame 1962-65 has not been chosen arbitrarily. The "New Realism" show held at the Sidney Janis Gallery in the fall of 1962 is widely-recognized as the exhibit which put pop on the map. As this is the same moment when a large number of mass-market magazines first noted pop on their pages, it seemed an appropriate place to begin this study. 1965 was chosen as the end point, not only to put some limit on the research I would be doing, but also because I feel that the particular constellation of socio-political events I am discussing herein, as well as both pop production and mass-market magazine coverage of it, has undergone notable transmutations by 1965.

aesthetic argument of the anonymous staffer of the mass-market serial.

Yet, despite the many incongruities in the representations of pop art and the variegated spectrum of viewers to which those representations were addressed, pop's coverage in mass-market magazines was united in a number of distinctive and significant aspects. It is on these similarities that this paper concentrates. Such a focus does not imply a blithe erasure of the many and important distinctions between the various magazines discussed herein, however. Rather it is a keen awareness of the different markets, formats, advertising bases, editorial policies, and traditions of art coverage of magazines as diverse as *House and Garden* and *Time* which allows for the recognition of the highly unusual, and thus intriguing, nature of their commonalities. For not only is the prevalence of mass-market magazine articles on pop anomalous, but also the thematic similarities of these articles in regards to what was provocative about pop.

Characteristically the articles began with an investigative focus on the prosaic subject matter of pop art. Were the works "tedious copies of the banal"²⁵ wondered *Life* in January 1964 or "ingenious lampoon[s] of contemporary mores"²⁶ mused *Ladies Home Journal* in March of that same year, questions no doubt echoed by the magazines' readers. In order to explain pop's content's

²⁵Dorothy Seiberling, "Is He the Worst Artist in the U.S.?" *Life*, v. 56, n. 5 (Jan. 31, 1964): 79.

²⁶Emily Genauer, "Can This Be Art?" *Ladies Home Journal*, V. 81 (March 1964): 151.

“normality” and contemporaneity and to analyze the formal properties of the images such as their chemically-bright, primary colours and machined appearance, allusions to the mass media and the commercial art backgrounds of many of pop's artists were often brought up for discussion. For instance, *Vogue's* Aline Saarinen observed that pop artists were not painting actual objects but the mass media symbols of the objects while in both *Time's* “Cult of the Commonplace” and *Life's* “Something New Is Cooking,” artist James Rosenquist's past employment as a billboard painter is referenced in regards to the “economy-size” scale and “fragmented” quality of his work.²⁷ Technique and subject matter, art and the everyday were thus presented as both familiar and intimately united.

The illustrations of pop art that accompanied these articles were photographed, usually in colour, in the artist's studio, at gallery exhibitions or, more often than not, in collectors' homes as tellingly evinced by articles with titles like “At Home with Henry,” and “You Bought It, Now Live With It.”²⁸ The collectors themselves were often described as nouveau-riche business people and self-made success stories as in *Time's* 1964 account of Robert Scull's meteoric rise from sign painter to taxicab and real estate magnate.

²⁷Aline B. Saarinen, “Explosion of Pop Art,” *Vogue*, v. 141, n. 8 (April 15, 1963): 86; “Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace,” 67; “Something New Is Cooking,” 117.

²⁸“At Home With Henry,” *Time* v. 83, n. 8 (Feb. 21, 1964): 40-45; “You Bought It, Now Live With It,” *Life* v. 59, n. 3 (July 16, 1965): 56-91.

New York-born Robert Scull, 45, paid his way through nine years of part-time college by painting signs, ran his own industrial design firm through the 1940s. He and his wife Ethel, whom everybody calls "Spike," lived in a one-room flat a few blocks from the Museum of Modern Art and regarded its paintings as theirs. 'Nearly all of our entertaining was held in the penthouse of the museum,' Scull reminisces. Then Scull acquired a fleet of taxicabs, some real estate, and started making money.²⁹

These were not individuals from upper class, established U.S. families who had a long line of art collecting behind them but people named Bob and Spike who were part of "a normal, unpretentious, upper middle-class American family" and who were pictured in *Time* magazine "laughing it up."³⁰ (figure 3)

Quotations from these owners of pop art, stressing its contemporaneity, market value, and "Americanness" were liberally scattered throughout the articles with collectors Scull and Leon Kraushar being the most vocal and thus, most cited. "I love pop art because it's the life we live today," claimed Kraushar in *House and Garden* in May 1965. "It's the American landscape, with its billboards, its highways, its hamburgers, its filling stations, its wonderful consumer goods."³¹ Such quotations not only played a

²⁹"At Home With Henry," 40.

³⁰"At Home With Henry," 40. The "normality: of the Scull family is noted both directly and indirectly in this article. An example of the less-direct reference is found on page 45 when, in describing a rather unusual family portrait by Rosenquist, Robert Scull comments, "Not quite the *Mona Lisa* but it's us."

³¹Francine du Plessix Gray, "The House That Pop Art Built," House and Garden, v. 127, n. 5 (May 1965): 162, 216.

large part in the texts themselves, but were also frequently employed as subheadings or captions for the numerous images of Brillo Boxes, fast food, and movie stars found throughout the articles.(figure 4)

Prominently displayed titles such as "Can this be art?", "You think this is a Supermarket?", and "Sold-Out Art," questioned pop's place in the art realm, punned on its deceptive familiarity to things in the 'real' world, and frequently remarked on its faddishness and financial success. In bold type subtitles and call-outs announced pop's link with consumerism, its mass media sources, and its disputed claim to artistic status. The 'everydayness' of pop's subject matter was emphasized literally in the discussions in mass-market magazines and figuratively in the language the articles utilized to analyze the works' relationship to contemporary U.S. society--slang, quips, and witticisms are noticeably present as in the unnamed *Life* writer's description of Thiebaud's *Pies* as "desserts [which] seem deserted, a lonely caloric crowd untouched by human hands."³² Such metaphors are not unusual and play an important role in suggesting that, as far as mass-market magazine coverage is concerned, pop art is not picturing U.S. consumer culture as a singularly attractive enterprise but rather as a more complex, and complicated, affair.

To summarize then, it appears that the representations of pop art in mass-market magazines are repeatedly framed by a particular set of parameters--subject matter, technique, the changing role of the artist, a growing art market, and the place of

³²"Something New is Cooking," 115.

private collectors in pop's success. Moreover *what* is textually asserted regarding these aspects of pop is simultaneously given visual articulation and force by *how* it is expressed--choice of imagery, captions, type-size, titles, sub-headings, layout, and so forth. Precisely how the mass-market magazines' textual and visual representations of pop art work together to present a particular vision of pop--and, in fact, U.S. society--is the subject matter of the next chapter, however. Before that task can be tackled we have to first take a step back and determine possible historical resonances of those parameters by which pop is framed.

That such diverse magazines as *Time* and *Ladies Home Journal* shared framing devices in reporting pop is a singular occurrence and must undoubtedly indicate current areas of import or concern in contemporary U.S. society. Being in the business of making money, mass-market magazines were hardly going to devote time and energy to subject matter which they did not believe held some interest for their readers/buyers. Parameters such as pop's subject matter or the growing art market were not chosen haphazardly afterall, but arise both from the visual properties of pop itself--especially in regards to its challenging of existing aesthetic paradigms--and specific interest in and manifestations of consumer culture found in the United States in the early sixties.

In mass-market magazines pop's subject matter is this consumer culture, its techniques related to the technological wonders of the mass media, and its collectors presented as individualistic entrepreneurs and self-made successes. What significance might such characteristics hold in a society where conformity, progress, and social status are the subject of much

debate? What was pop's relationship to postwar affluence and the resultant socio-economic and cultural shifts? Where did it fit into traditional understandings of "Art" and what role did it play in the ongoing changes to those understandings occurring in the sixties? By situating pop's representation in mass-market magazines within the context of "high" art tradition and debates over the goods and evils of mass culture, we may in part be able to account for the widespread fascination with it.

DISTINCTIVELY UNEXPECTED

Pop art, in its very claim to artistic status, overturned viewers' expectations about art and its meanings. While one might argue that its utilization of the customary artistic categories of still life, genre, nude, or portraiture provided a place for pop within a traditional understanding of art, its means of representation and use of colour, scale, and two-dimensionality quickly renders such an argument highly questionable. In its particular combination of irreverence for and claims to traditional art, pop challenged viewers' beliefs both about art's functions and the very concept "Art".

While disputing existing definitions of art was nothing new--it was in fact a long-established prerequisite of avant-garde art by this time--pop did so with a twist. Its challenge consisted not simply of disputing the accepted form and subject matter of art, as had impressionism in the nineteenth-century and abstract expressionism in the twentieth, but of questioning the concepts of originality, authorship, and innovation which constituted the category "Art." Through a response to television, newspaper, and

magazine imagery which employed "artistic" scale and formats, pop art problematized the supposed purity of the formal and visual categories of high art and reframed the viewing idiom. As Lynne Cooke has observed in her work on British and U.S. pop art, unlike such patently avant-garde activity as happenings, which adopted non-art means, materials, and techniques, and even took place in venues that were regarded as in some way alternative, pop art located itself "at the very heart of the mainstream," at the intersection of the realms of high and low.³³ Although appearing quite similar to Marcel Duchamp's work in revealing the process of perception through the misconstruction of familiar forms, pop art emphasized the everydayness of its objects without the "inspired" artistic vision a Duchampian use of the everyday brought to common objects. Duchamp's decrees transformed a common object into an art work; pop's practice blurred the distinction between common object and art.

In their imaging of pop art, mass-market magazines often focused on this manifest similarity of pop to everyday life. "How can this be art?" was a question raised again and again as distinction, excellence, and uniqueness, commonly viewed as the three most fundamental prerequisites of "high" art, were patently missing in pop art.³⁴ In fact, for many reviewers, it was not

³³Lynne Cooke, "'The Independent Group: British and American Pop Art, A 'Palimpsestuous' Legacy,'" in Kirk Vardenoe and Adam Gopnik, eds., Modern Art and Popular Culture (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), p. 204.

³⁴For more on pop's problematic and provocative relationship to existing traditions of art see Dick Hebdige, "In Poor Taste: Notes on Pop," Block 8 (1983), p. 65.

simply that these characteristics were absent in the works, but that their very lack was what distinguished pop. Where was the originality in an art form which drew on advertising and media imagery for its subject matter? What kind of artists would use the conventions and techniques of mass reproduction to then represent it? What was so unique and inspirational about the design of a Brillo box?

While images of high art were present in these magazines previous to pop³⁵ the dynamics of the situation had altered significantly when it was no longer a case of "nine color pages of Renoir followed by a picture of a roller-skating horse,"³⁶ but of nine colour pages of images of soup cans, movie stars, typewriters, political persona, and hotdogs which laid claim to artistic status, followed by one hundred and nine pages of advertisements, photographs, and illustrations for articles containing similar imagery which did not make such claims. In the context of high art, pop's utilization of diverse mass media signifiers--images subtly blurred like those of early colour television, onomatopoeic and boldfaced texts resembling those found in comic books, repetition of forms simulating supermarket shelf displays, magnified details

³⁵While lacking in critical analysis, Brad Collins' recent historiography of *Life* magazine and the abstract expressionists contains a useful bibliography in this regard. Bradford R. Collins, "Life Magazine and the Abstract Expressionists, 1948-51: A Historiographic Study of a Late Bohemian Enterprise," *Art Bulletin*, v. 73, n. 2 (June 1991): 283-308.

³⁶Dwight MacDonald, *Masscult and Midcult* (New York: Partisan Review, 1964), p. 13.

comparable to journalistic photography, shallowness of space similar to posters--made traditional significations for these signifiers questionable. In the context of mass-market magazines, they were doubly so. Was the image on the magazine page before you pop art or a Romance comic panel, a pop painting or an advertisement for a household spray cleaner, a pop sculpture or an automat sandwich?

Pop's provocative presence in mass-market magazines was complemented by the growing visibility of art in U.S. culture in general and the resultant shifts in public perception regarding art's definition and function. One symbolic yet significant aspect of these shifts was the Kennedy administration's acknowledgement of the significant role of the arts in U.S. life by appointing the White House's first cultural coordinator, Arnold Heckscher, and forming the President's Advisory Council on the Arts. In a speech made in early June 1963, shortly before resigning and after sixteen months of working at what was to have been a six-month assignment, Heckscher clearly illuminates the position the administration had taken on the arts and why.

'We have dreamed that through the arts we might. . . transform our lives. . . and make the age itself glorious. . . . No age before our own has dared suppose that the arts could be spread broadly without cheapening them. And the greatest ages have been those that took for granted that the arts were for the few Our conviction that we can combine numbers with excellence . . . is as least as bold as that of the founders of our republic who affirmed that freedom and democracy were compatible.'³⁷

³⁷As quoted in "Art and Politics," Newsweek v. 61, n. 24 (June 17, 1963): 85.

Thus the link between democracy, culture, and the "masses" was made manifest. And how could it be otherwise when of all the characteristics that set the U.S. way of life apart, respect for the appearance of democracy is the most dominant?

Democracy had also infiltrated the traditionally elite and highly hierarchized structures of the art world. Increasingly, art was being moved out of museum and gallery buildings to places where larger numbers of people could view them, either through transporting the art works themselves or circulating reproductions in some form. For example, in Dallas the Museum of Fine Arts had a rotating collection at the LoveField terminal of the airport while in Boston its counterpart was busy circulating over 62,000 slides to art clubs, classes, and individuals--three times as many as it had ten years earlier. In addition, museums began opening at night in order to service interested businesspeople who did not have the time to visit during the day and artmobiles became familiar sights in towns far from any gallery.³⁸

³⁸Alvin Toffler, The Culture Consumers (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), pp. 169-170. "Art Seminars in the Home" offered by the venerable Metropolitan Museum of Art provided both lectures and colour reproductions--"suitable for framing"--that were guaranteed to increase the whole family's appreciation for art. The syllabus included such topics as "What is a painting?" "Composition," "Technique," and "The artist as visionary." In the advertisement cited over 200,000 families had already subscribed. Harper's v. 227, n. 1362 (Nov. 1963): npag.

One did not have to even leave the living room in order to experience culture by the early sixties, however, as art had managed to find favour with that most demanding of clients--the television. As James Thrall Soby, former assistant director of MOMA (1943-45), commented in the *Saturday Review* in 1957,

One of the many indications of art's enormous and growing popularity in this country is the frequency with which it is mentioned on TV or furnishes the central theme of TV programs. One hears on good authority that unusually large audiences watched a California jockey win \$64,000 for his ability to identify paintings and sculptures; more recently the duel between Vincent Price and Edward G. Robinson was a phenomenal success. . . . It's getting so a fantastic number of TV performers mention art in one connection or another, and unlikely people turn out to be aspiring painters or dedicated connoisseurs.³⁹

As Soby notes, art's presence on television was a multifaceted one. It supplied the dramatic plot for many a television program, had a number of regular shows dedicated to it--Brian O'Doherty's "Invitation to Art" and Jean Marie Drot's "Art and Man," for example--and was the star player of many hour-long colour specials such as "The Louvre: A Golden Prison" and "The Art of Collecting."

While far from being unanimously hailed as a breakthrough--due primarily to problems with screen curvature, light fluctuation, and personality presentation--televised art was viewed as a medium

³⁹James Thrall Soby, "Art on TV," Saturday Review v. 40 (April 13, 1957): 29.

with a future. More innovative techniques, methods, and planning were needed in order to do justice to the art and to keep the viewer's attention but television's practice of blow-ups, close-ups, and selective details were seen positively as providing fresh insights and new perspectives.⁴⁰ With four times as many television sets in homes in 1965 than there had been thirteen years earlier⁴¹ access to such art programming, and thus to art, increased dramatically. The results of such access was, as Frank Stanton, president of the Columbia Broadcasting System said in a November 1962 lecture at Dartmouth College, to shrink the great void between art produced for the few at the top and art for the masses. "Now cultural activity of variety and depth has become the common heritage and the common quest of all the people."⁴²

⁴⁰For a range of contemporaneous readings dealing with the issue of art on television see: Robert Lewis Sharpton, "Art on TV: The Louvre," Saturday Review v. 47 (Dec. 19, 1964): 18; Katherine Kuh, "The Art of Collecting," Saturday Review v.47 (Jan. 18, 1964): 37-52; Katherine Kuh, "The Unhappy Marriage of Art and TV," Saturday Review v. 44 (Jan. 21, 1961): 61; "Art and the People," America v. 108 (Feb. 2, 1963): 162-63; Soby, 29-30; Mannes, 56-61.

⁴¹In 1952 there were 17 million television sets in the States. By 1958 that number had reached 48.5 million and by 1965, 70 million. Russell Nye, The Unembarassed Muse (New York: Dial Press, 1970), p. 407.

⁴²As quoted in Helen B. Schaffer, "Arts and the People," in William B. Dickinson, Jr., ed., Cultural life and Leisure in America (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1969), p. 44. In *House and Garden's* May 1965 article "The House That Pop Built," there is a quotation from Leon Kraushar that echoes Stanton's statement but with an emphasis on pop's role in the new aesthetic order. "With all the new leisure time, more people are interested in art than at any other time in history. Art is no longer an interest for the wealthy dowager: it must become an art of the masses and that's the great role of pop art." du Plessix Gray, 216.

The issue of increased access to art and the concept of common heritage received a shot in the arm in a very public fashion at the 1964 World's Fair in New York when Fair director Robert Moses managed to convince the Vatican--through personal consultations with Pope Paul VI--to show Michelangelo's *Pieta* at the fair. The progress of the negotiations, the debates over the wisdom of transporting the 465 year-old marble sculpture, and its eventual arrival and installation at the fair were events all avidly reported in the press.⁴³

While fine art was a familiar sight at world's fairs, both the larger and more specific context in which one found the *Pieta* is of interest. The 1964 Fair was described at the time as an enticing and flattering mirroring of the free-enterprise system as corporate logos abounded and the products of mass production and technology were highlighted using modern-day advertising techniques. The *Pieta*, considered one of the major art works of western civilization and once available to only those U.S. citizens able to travel to Rome, was one of the exposition's highlights and made the Vatican pavillion one of the most popular sites of the New York fair. Seen through a plexiglass security shield from a series of viewing tiers which were part of a highway of moving sidewalks, one was afforded about a minute's glimpse of the work. Surrounded by flowing, deep-blue drapery and bathed in a halo of fluorescent lighting, the *Pieta* practically glowed, an effect no

⁴³Helen A. Harrison, "Art for the Millions, or Art for the Market?" in Remembering the Future: The New York World's Fair from 1939 to 1964 (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), p. 148.

doubt enhanced by the "Gregorian muzak" playing in the background.⁴⁴ Although certainly not a typical setting for high art, the dramatic presentation itself would have been both somewhat familiar and seductively attractive to fairgoers fluent in the language of contemporary advertising. Just as the rest of the fair represented the world around them, only brighter, the *Pieta* represented all that was wondrous in art, only louder.

While still being produced and shown in the rarefied atmosphere of the New York art world, pop art was also making incursions into more frequented altitudes. At the world's fair, for instance, pop's dominant presence on the New York State Building's exterior served as a kind of aesthetic billboard announcing that New York was to be identified with the most recent trends in painting and sculpture while simultaneously conforming incredibly well with the overall "consumerized" look of the fair. So well in fact that pop's claim to artistic status was challenged in some of the other pavillions. As Max Kozloff reported in *The Nation* in 1964, "in the IBM show an announcer calls for a work of art to appear on the screen, gets a filmed shot of Andy Warhol's Campbell Soup cans, demands 'real' art, and is rewarded with an Ingres' *Odalisque*".⁴⁵

Pietas and odalisques were obvious objects of contemplation and discussion, soup cans and brillo boxes were apparently not so. The mystification that surrounded the former was significantly lacking in the latter. Pietas and odalisques were enveloped in an

⁴⁴Harrison, p. 162.

⁴⁵Max Kozloff, "Pop on the Meadow," Nation v. 199, n. 1 (July 13, 1964): 17.

exclusionary parlance of connoisseurship and privilege, a foreign language many viewers had come to expect in their tentative ventures into the esoteric realm of Art. Even when physically accessible to the "masses" as they were at the 1964 world's fair site, the conceptual accessibility of these works, originally made for the papacy and the French upper class, was minimal. Brightly-illuminated by a fluorescent halo though it was, Michelangelo's *Pieta* was still shrouded in the opaque aura of Art.

And in the late 50s and early 60s auras were big sellers as U.S. citizens adjusted their social status through actually buying art as well as looking at it. With a shorter work week, paid vacations, and early retirement, the middle class, white, male U.S. worker had more free time for longer periods than ever before and, as the economy steadily grew, more money to spend on it. A significant proportion of both this disposable income and leisure time was spent on culture.⁴⁶ "America became a nation of culture consumers for whom art was not just an object of beauty that provided sensory pleasure, but a commodity."⁴⁷ A 1965 *Business Week* article corroborates such observations with an evaluation of art's newfound role as a statement of personal taste and a significant

⁴⁶This new and apparently widely available leisure time was seen as such an important aspect of the "good life" which was the present-day United States that it even rated a *Life* special year-end double issue. While there had been a time when only the rich had much leisure, *Life's* introduction mused, with the introduction of mass production and automation, "suddenly what used to be the small leisured classes became the big leisured masses." "The Good Life," *Life*, v. 47, n. 26 (Dec. 28, 1959): 2.

⁴⁷Stich, p. 10.

factor in social positioning.⁴⁸ Owning original art had become a middle-class status symbol of note.

Quick to pick up on the needs of its middle-class customers, major department stores had special showings of fine art or even opened fine art departments. In Los Angeles a \$200,000 collection of aboriginal art from New Guinea was "selling like sunglasses at \$3 to \$3,000 apiece" at the May Co. department store⁴⁹ while in some of its 755 retail outlets Sears was also out to prove that "fine art can be mass-marketed".⁵⁰ Having hired Vincent Price, "actor and art connoisseur" to gather together an initial inventory of approximately \$1 million in art works, Sears began to tour the

⁴⁸"For more than art's sake," Business Week (May 15, 1965), p. 151. Included in an another *Business Week* article on art was an interesting aside on the relationship of the new attitude to art possession to the longevity of contemporary marital unions. "On theory that paintings are becoming as vital to the decor of today's new households as china or silver patterns, Findlay Galleries, Inc., Chicago, has set up what it believes is the first bridal registry for paintings in the U.S." It allows an exchange after five years due to acknowledgement of developing tastes " or if the marriage is dissolved in that time, the couple may turn in their original choice for two pictures with the same value." Business Week (June 19, 1965), p. 82.

⁴⁹"The Economy: New and Exuberant," Time, v. 81 (may 31, 1963): 56.

⁵⁰"At Sears, art conquers," Business Week (Dec. 1, 1962), p. 28-29. While there was a "sprinkling of lorgnettes and fur stoles" at the art opening in the Detroit Sears store "among the estimated 4500 who jammed the opening more workaday garb dominated: leather jackets, smart casual coats - the trappings of Mr. and Mrs. Suburbia." Besides a booming art business, side benefits to Sears included attracting customers who would not usually come to Sears and a 3-5 percent increase in the sale of home furnishings, the department that housed the exhibits.

collection in groups of several hundred at its major stores. Including original works by Rembrandt, Goya, Millet, Hogarth, Dufy, Chagall, Rouault, Vlaminck, and Picasso, and with prices ranging from \$30 to \$9,000, Sears was able to sell 12,000 art works for a total of \$1.2 million in less than two years. Drawing features for the Sears customer were terms that could run as low as \$5 down, \$5 a month for three years and, of course, the familiar environment of a department store. "We are taking the chi-chi out of art," declared Price,⁵¹ indicating the appeal the Sears displays would have for the average buyer who was intimidated by imposing art galleries and their equally-imposing staff.

Department store executives were not the only ones to recognize a growing market when they saw one, however, and art was just as much a commodity and status symbol on 57th St. as it was in a suburban mall, although not packaged in quite the same fashion. In the early sixties, increasing numbers of sharp entrepreneurs and art world hopefuls opened galleries while existing enterprises turned to new selling techniques more reminiscent of Madison Ave than the Left Bank.⁵² Art became another playing piece in the game of supply and demand as newly-affluent and often self-made industrialists and businesspersons showed their eagerness to don the mantle of patron of the arts. Neophyte collectors for the most part, their tendency to move

⁵¹Business Week (Oct. 13, 1962), p. 54.

⁵²The number of art galleries in New York doubled between 1950 and 1960. Alvin Toffler, "A Quantity of Culture," Fortune, v. 64, n. 5 (Nov. 1961): 127.

outside the established collecting and connoisseurship patterns made for good stories in the popular press and was aided and abetted by dwindling supplies of blue chip "old Master" works.⁵³ Although the British aristocracy and French upper class were having to break up collections because of their need for ready cash, these prestigious art works were snapped up as soon as they were on the market, if not before, leaving many enthusiastic potential buyers empty-handed.⁵⁴

This demand for art by the newer collectors was in part filled by and in part created the overwhelming interest in contemporary work which characterized the early sixties. Jackson Pollock's death in 1956, combined with the international success of the "new American painting," had triggered a price rise in abstract expressionist work which grounded the legitimation of contemporary art as an area of collection and investment on solidly U.S. soil.⁵⁵ With the world art centre now thriving in New York under the banner of challenging older, established, European traditions, there was a greater acceptance of the untested and the experimental. For historian J.B. Plumb "it was as if the widespread belief in infinite possibilities in the sixties gave rise to an

⁵³Jennifer Wells, "The Sixties: Pop goes the Market," in Definitive Statements (Providence: Brown University, 1986), pp. 56-57.

⁵⁴"For more than art's sake," 151.

⁵⁵This grounding was made more solid with U.S. pop artist Robert Rauschenberg's win at the 1964 Venice Biennale. See Laurie Monahan, The New Frontier Goes to Venice (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1985) for further information in this regard.

appetite for novelty and change in art."⁵⁶ Although Plumb's observation needs to be mediated by an awareness that avant-garde culture since the mid-nineteenth century had similarly traded on the new and the different, there was a significant shift in terms of collectors and collecting practices at this time which underlies and lends historical credence to his statement. As *Esquire* magazine noted in 1965 the "new" had become a distinguishing "accoutrement" and a sign of rising social status for an unprecedented number of U.S. citizens.⁵⁷ To be among the first collectors of a new art movement was to identify oneself in a significant fashion. It was a gamble to be sure, but the rewards were great, including having one's collection, home, and spouse as the focus of a colour-illustrated feature of the most widely-read magazines of the day.

What was truly novel about the U.S. arts scene in the early 1960s, however, was both the serious consideration of newly-emerging artists from the moment of their arrival on the national art stage and the call for U.S. standards in the arts. The logic

⁵⁶J.B. Plumb, "A Nose for Treasure and a Taste for Profit, " New York Times Book Review (15 Feb., 1981), p. 11.

⁵⁷Marvin Elkoff, "The American Painter as a Blue Chip," *Esquire* v. 63, n. 1 (Jan. 1965): 41. "In a short span of time, serious avant-garde collecting changed from a private and depreciated 'act' of commitment to untested ideas into a conspicuous public activity that drew more and more eager recruits from the age of affluence. Advocacy and support of experimental art has now gained such a hold on the American imagination that the normal lag between artistic invention and its public acceptance is disappearing." Sam Hunter, The Harry N. Abrams Family Collection (New York: Jewish Museum, 1966), n.pag.

behind these aesthetic shifts was commonsensically outlined by one reviewer in the *Saturday Evening Post*: since patterns of living had changed rapidly of late and modern civilization was different from the civilization which produced Chartres, modern civilization should have a new and different culture appropriate to its changed patterns of living.⁵⁸ Internationally, the U.S. became increasingly acknowledged as the place to be and its lifestyle--typically characterized as technological, democratic, progressive--deemed as the most contemporary. "In order to interpret our period, an artist has to be familiar with its realities, its sensibility. These can be felt better and more intensely in New York," stated art dealer Daniel Cordier as he permanently closed down his Paris gallery in July 1964.⁵⁹

Even museums, traditionally somewhat hesitant to get on any art movement bandwagon too early for fear of it being overturned, expanded their activities in contemporary art, especially U.S. art. Not only was the work available and relatively inexpensive but it

⁵⁸Frederick Breitenfeld, Jr., "Who says I'm Uncultured?" *Saturday Evening Post* v. 235, n. 27 (July 14-21, 1962): 10.

⁵⁹"Goodbye Paris, Hello New York," *Time* v. 84, n. 3 (July 17, 1964): 38. The timing of Cordier and a host of other Parisian dealers' departure from France is noteworthy in that it occurs immediately after Robert Rauschenberg won the grand prize for painting at the 1964 Venice Biennale.

In addition to the mass exodus of Parisian dealers, both commercial and avant-garde, power in the art world was converging in New York in financial terms. "Sotheby's purchase of the controlling interest in Parke-Bernet . . . marks the final shift of power to the United States, because it means that New York will become the auction, or price-setting, capital of the world." Elkoﬀ, 112.

also attracted the media whose coverage in turn led to the larger audiences the museums needed to assure their existence and growth.⁶⁰ There was always the risk that one would get caught up in a fad and end up sacrificing some concept of quality for relevance (a catchword of the period) but, as with private collectors, the potential rewards ultimately overcame any reservations.

In brief, as a result of the "boom" in culture in the late fifties and early sixties culture itself had come to include those arts traditionally considered high art, the book-of-the-month club, and everything in-between while "consuming" culture meant anything from attending a professional opera performance to taking a ceramics class at the local community college. Culture was no longer to be found only in leather-bound volumes, recital halls, or galleries, but in paperbacks, on cassettes, and in department stores.⁶¹ Indeed, the so-called culture boom was not solely a

⁶⁰Irving Sandler, American Art of the Sixties (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), p. 122. A 200 percent increase in attendance at the Metropolitan Museum of Art from 1953 to 1963 was said to have been matched or surpassed by museums and galleries in other parts of the country. Schaffer, pp. 46-48. The audiences attending were from diverse social backgrounds as shown by Arnold Mitchell, the economist responsible for a Stanford Research Institute report working on trends in cultural consumption, who made the illuminating discovery that "more servicemen visiting New York go to the Museum of Modern Art than to any other attraction except for the Empire State Building." Toffler, The Culture Consumers, p. 17.

⁶¹For example, due to an increasing demand, the number of fine arts books published in the decade leading up to 1961 doubled. And of course these books were not just published but sold as an increase from 487,000 book purchases in 1947 to 903,000 in 1958

statistical phenomenon documenting the increased number of people listening, reading, or seeing what had always been considered "Art," but a perceptual metastasis wherein the very notion of "Art" was constantly being reshaped. In magazines, on television, or at the 1964 world's fair, art had become a very public, in fact, a "mass" public, affair.⁶²

With the growing visibility of art in U.S. culture in general and its concurrent redefinitions, it is thus unlikely that the widespread engagement with pop in mass-market magazines was solely attributable to what some viewed as its fraudulent claims to artistic status. While pop might not possess the aura of a *Pieta* nor easily fit into traditional categories of art, the shape of those categories was beginning to undergo significant alteration by the early sixties; significant enough that pop was being collected both by individuals and art institutions as early as 1961. Rather, the fascination with pop and a further explanation for the particular parameters framing it in mass-market magazines appears to reside in "getting" the IBM announcer's joke--namely, that Ingres' odalisques are "real" art while Warhol's Campbell's soup cans are not. Perhaps through a closer examination of the historically-

clearly indicates. Statistical Abstract of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1962), p. 521.

⁶²A now-famous description of the broad spectrum of mass culture's public is found in Dwight MacDonald's evocative socio-economic cartography of *Life* magazine--"appearing on the mahogany library tables of the rich, the glass cocktail tables of the middleclass, and the oilcloth kitchen tables of the poor." MacDonald, Masscult and Midcult, pp. 12-13.

loaded significance of paintings of a mass-produced, brand-name soup we may in fact discover another factor of pop's "popularity."

THE MYTHS OF MASS CULTURE⁶³

In a 1962 *New York Times Magazine* article entitled "'Affluence' begins to Affect Europe," the central question asked is "will a high standard of living 'Americanize' Europe?"⁶⁴ In the very phrasing of this query an easy equation is made between affluence, the products of mass culture, and the United States. The images accompanying the article are themselves quite instructive as they show bewildered Europeans trying to fit a baguette into a toaster, putting wooden shoes in the dryer, and caught in freeway traffic jams in their sportcars, surrounded by billboards advertising wine, cigarettes, and motels "avec TV". When the audience of the

⁶³The title for this section is adapted from Alan Swingewood's literary-based study, The Myth of Mass Culture (London: MacMillan Press Ltd., 1977). Although presenting both "sides" of the debate for historical contextualization of the issues involved, in this thesis my interest lies in challenging the totalizing quality of much left mass cultural analysis. Consequently I will focus on that argument in regards to specific critiques of pop art's representation in mass-market magazines. The flaws of the liberal pluralist position are, I believe, self-evident and grounded in their disregard for questions of authority, legitimation, and ideology. For an interesting discussion of these problems and of significant similarities in attitude towards mass culture by both the left and right despite radically different assumptions about human nature see Jim Ferreira, "Cultural Conservatism and Mass Culture: The Case Against Democracy," Journal of American Culture, v. 13, n. 1 (Spring 1990): 1-10.

⁶⁴Edwin L. Dale, Jr., "'Affluence' Begins to Affect Europe," New York Times Magazine (Jan. 28, 1962): 12, 52.

magazine laughed at the humour present in the images it was because they got the joke. There can be little doubt that for them as well as for the hapless Europeans depicted, consumer culture--toasters, dryers, cars, motels, television, billboard advertising--signified "America". This conflation of the United States with mass culture was not an untroubled one, however. Close on the heels of the second world war an impassioned debate arose in the United States regarding the good and evils of mass culture, a debate played out not only in intellectual journals and political proclamations but also in the mass media itself.

For contemporary liberal theorists such as Edward Shils and Daniel Bell the mass society from which this mass culture both emerged and was a constitutive factor provided a greater scope for human initiative, development and freedom.⁶⁵ Because of the wealth of ideas and options accessible to the average citizen as a result of technological progress and advanced industrialization, individuality, they argued, is enhanced through decision-making which in turn leads to increased social participation. As Shils stated in 1960,

Mass society has aroused and enhanced individuality. Individuality is characterized by an openness to experience, an efflorescence of sensation and sensibility . . . [it] has liberated the cognitive, appreciative and moral capacities of individuals. Larger elements of the population have consciously learned to value the pleasures of eye, ear, taste, touch, and conviviality.

⁶⁵Edward Shils, "Mass Society and Its Culture," Daedalus, v. 89, n. 2 (Spring 1960): 288-314; Daniel Bell, "America as a Mass Society: A Critique," The End of Ideology (New York: Collier Books, 1961), pp. 21-38.

People make choices more freely in many spheres of life, and these choices are not necessarily made for them by tradition, authority, or scarcity.⁶⁶

Democracy in this view is strengthened as the social bases of political pluralism--free and open competition for leadership, widespread participation in the selection of leaders, self-government in many areas of social life--are augmented.⁶⁷ Society is pictured by these liberal theorists as a complex structure of checks and balances in which no one group wields dominant power and in which, for the first time in human history, the broad mass of the population engages in a democratic mass culture. Nationalism is supposedly heightened as a sense of affinity in a shared culture grows among members of different classes and regions of the same country.⁶⁸ Consumer culture is seen positively as it is equated with the fact that more people are buying more sophisticated goods and participating in more cultural aspects of modern life, thereby achieving a higher standard of living than any other country in the world.

The benign function of mass culture in teaching individuals how to adjust to, cope with, and enjoy the fruits of consumer society is also emphasized by intellectuals like Shils and Bell. Mass culture was seen as providing no threat to elite culture but rather as

⁶⁶Shils, 290.

⁶⁷W. Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society (New York: Free Press, 1960), pp. 230-31.

⁶⁸Shils, 294.

playing a significant and positive role in pushing it on to a new stage of development, a stage that was more appropriate to the changed and diverse social relations that constituted contemporary society.⁶⁹ Mass culture was argued for on the grounds that it spread high culture to new audiences--television coverage of ballet performances, paperback editions of Shakespeare--and was thus seen as eventuating in a democratic common culture which reinforces, not weakens, democratic institutions and processes. For liberal theorists, then, rather than being a source of alienation, the commodity offered liberation, the opportunity to exercise one's individual choice, and the "success" of mass culture was deemed proof positive of this.

Choice was not something considered prevalent in mass society by intellectuals on the left, however. Theorists such as C. Wright Mills, Irving Howe, and Dwight MacDonald had a rather more pessimistic take on U.S. society in the fifties and sixties, picturing mass culture as a "profitable opiate, synthetically prepared for consumption for a society of automatons".⁷⁰ As Bernard Rosenberg

⁶⁹In an article in Fortune magazine in 1961 Alvin Toffler summarized the recent societal shifts. "The character and quality of American society are being drastically changed, in both their public and private aspects, by mass interest in cultural activities. Perhaps this change is implied in the term 'democratic civilization,' a condition to which Americans seem to be moving and which is far broader than political democracy. The lack of historical precedent may be one reason that the present trend occasions so much disquiet and acrimonious debate in sophisticated quarters." Toffler, "A Quantity of Culture," 174.

⁷⁰Andrew Ross, No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 50. For a critical overview of

wrote in 1957, "at its worst, mass culture threatens not merely to cretinize our taste, but to brutalize our senses while paving the way to totalitarianism."⁷¹ Mass culture is characterized as imposed from above, fabricated by technicians who have been hired by corporations. Its audiences are viewed as passive consumers who are unable to express themselves as self-conscious human beings because they are related to one another neither as individuals nor as members of a community and whose participation in "democratic" culture is limited to the choice between buying and not buying.

Mass culture is democratic, notes MacDonald, "very, very democratic: it absolutely refuses to discriminate against, or between, anything or anybody. All is grist to its mill, and all comes out finely ground indeed."⁷² Due to collective forms of economic and political life associated with modern industrialization, left-leaning theorists such as MacDonald and Mills view what was once an informed and critically independent "public" as having collapsed into a largely apathetic "mass", the consequence of which is a weakened civil society. Due to this lack of critical public awareness, when nationalistic sentiments are displayed they are typically in jingoistic form. The population is

fifties intellectuals' thoughts on mass culture see Ross's chapter two, "Containing Culture in the Cold War," pp. 42-64.

⁷¹Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White, eds., Mass Culture (New York: Free Press, 1957), p. 9.

⁷²MacDonald, "A Theory of Mass Culture," in Rosenberg and Manning White, p. 62.

believed to grow passive, indifferent, and atomized, traditional loyalties and associations becoming lax or dissolving completely, and human beings becoming solely consumers, mass-produced like the products, entertainment, and values which they uncritically absorb.⁷³

While such general fears resembled those expressed less apocalyptically by political leaders that mass hedonism would lead to the United States going "soft,"⁷⁴ there was also the more specific concern in left intellectual circles over high culture's role in a society in which it needed to compete with mass culture or be merged into it.⁷⁵ In the latter view, the newly-won leisure time of

⁷³Mills, pp. 301-20.

⁷⁴ "We have gone soft The slow corrosion of luxury is beginning to show." "Leisure could Mean Better Civilization," *Life* v. 47, n. 26 (Dec. 28, 1959): 62. The worry regarding the United States going soft in 1959 was Senator Kennedy's although it was certainly not his alone. Towards the end of Eisenhower's final term in office a search had begun for the lost sense of national purpose, a search which originated in cold war critiques of consumer culture. The Soviet Union's rapid recovery from the devastation of World War II, its explosion of a hydrogen bomb, and its successful launching of Sputnik in 1957 put the U.S.'s preeminence in technology under question. Because advances in technology were so intimately linked with progress and thus a better existence in U.S. rhetoric, the Soviet successes in space challenged the U.S. way of life as the best way of life in that a socialist-governed society had surpassed it technologically. Consequently, when *Life* magazine took up the ongoing quest for the national purpose in a "crucial new series" begun on May 23, 1960, and posed the question of "what we as citizens and a nation hope to achieve," underlying such a query was also a questioning of the values associated with consumer sovereignty. "The National Purpose," *Life* v. 48 (May 23, 1960): 23.

⁷⁵MacDonald, "A Theory of Mass Culture," in Rosenberg and Manning White, p. 61. Such a concern was publically evinced in the early

the post-war period was spent in second and third-rate aesthetic gratifications that would eventually "infect" culture and, because culture was the realm wherein the most important values of a society lay, lead to the destruction of everything worthwhile in civilization.⁷⁶ In a special issue of *Daedalus* (the journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences) devoted to "Mass Culture and Mass Media," humanistic scholar Hannah Arendt provides a concise description of the inevitable course of events. "Since the appetites of the entertainment industries are insatiable," writes Arendt, "they will in time consume the classics, and thereby destroy culture."⁷⁷ At its best mass culture was deemed a vulgarized reflection of high culture, its overriding effect being

fifties at the "Our Country and Our Culture" symposium, organized by and eventually published in the *Partisan Review* in 1952. The symposium's participants cautioned that "serious" creative pursuits had to be kept above and beyond the "tawdry" products of mass culture if they were to retain their purity and transformative powers. "Hollywood movies, Coca-Cola, television, supermarkets, soda fountain luncheons, *Time*, *Life*, comic strips, mass journalism, and advertising" were mentioned by name as examples of what to avoid. Stich, p. 9. Such a list is intriguing as it could virtually double as a cataloguing of the subject matter of pop art.

⁷⁶Imagery of disease and decay litter the texts on mass culture by left intellectuals: middlebrow culture threatens to engulf everything in its spreading ooze (MacDonald), the vast culture industries are parasites on the body of art (Howe), the virulence of kitsch (Greenberg) needs to be quarantined (Harold Rosenberg), and there is no avoiding contamination without avoiding contact (Louis Kronenberger). For a historical grounding of such loaded rhetoric see Ross, pp. 42-47.

⁷⁷Hannah Arendt as quoted in Norman Jacobs, "Mass Culture and Mass Media," *Daedalus* v. 89, n .2 (Spring 1960): 275.

the infantilization of its viewers, listeners, and readers. Even cultural criticism which concerned itself with mass culture was considered by certain intellectuals as a surrender to mass culture's repulsive charms.⁷⁸

Yet in at least one segment of mass culture itself, similar debates were simultaneously taking place. In magazines like *Life*, *Newsweek*, *Look*, and the *New York Times Magazine*, the goods and evils of U.S. mass culture and its effects on the arts were argued over from positions not unlike those found in the "highbrow" journals. In a 1963 issue of *Look* magazine, for example, President Kennedy emphasized the widespread and unifying impact of the arts in every U.S. citizen's life and linked it to advances in technology and mass culture. Every "American", be they "suburban, harassed housewife," "weary husband," or adolescents "bent on a good time" now had access to the "humanizing" effects of the arts by means of paper-bound reprints of the "best books of the ages", recordings of

⁷⁸So complained Clement Greenberg in one of the most prestigious liberal-socialist journals of the country. As cited in Paul Buhle, ed., Popular Culture in America (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. xvii. Ironically enough, many of the very critics who looked upon the absorption of contemporary art by mass culture as the means to art's destruction--Harold Rosenberg, Dwight MacDonald, and Hilton Kramer, for example--were themselves writing for mass-market periodicals or newspapers by the mid-sixties. Neil Jumonville, Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 156. For a fairly comprehensive listing of the writers associated with different magazines and newspapers circa 1965 see, "Art Establishment: Centers of Power," Esquire, v. 63, n. 1 (Jan. 1965): 44-45.

classical music, and reproductions of art masterpieces.⁷⁹ Such a position would find support in one issue of the *New York Times Magazine* --"there is no discrepancy between artistic excellence and the democratic ideal"--while another issue would contradict it by complaining that most of the population's dealings with culture were superficial and the arts were in danger of losing their cutting edge by becoming too democratic.⁸⁰ *Newsweek*, meanwhile, consistently revealed the consumeristic underside of the boom in culture, countering effusions about personal growth through artistic creativity with contemporary accounts of status-seeking through cultural participation.⁸¹

An interesting instance of a meeting of minds over the value of U.S. mass culture from what one would have expected to be quite oppositional sources is found in two reviews of Alvin Toffler's book, The Culture Consumers, however. In the account found in the December 4, 1964 *Nation*--and after a fairly scathing critique of

⁷⁹John F. Kennedy, "The Arts in America," Look, v. 26, n. 26 (Dec. 18, 1962): 110. It is interesting that Kennedy specifically mentions products frequently identified with the new leisure society and thus consumer culture. In so doing he acknowledges, albeit subtly, that one can now procure admittance to the arts through the mere act of consumption and that art, in fact, had become a material good.

⁸⁰The quotation is from William Schuman, "Have we 'culture'? Yes--and no," New York Times Magazine (September 22, 1963): p. 21+. The other article referred to is Marya Mannes' "They're Cultural, But are They Cultured?" New York Times Magazine (July 9, 1961): p. 12+.

⁸¹Karl E. Meyer, "Kulturvac 112B: 'You Can't Lick it. It Joins You,'" Newsweek, v. 61 (January 28, 1963): 26; "The Culture Business," Newsweek, v. 60 (December 3, 1962): 62.

Toffler's unquenchable optimism and a calling up of Dwight MacDonald as intellectual sparring partner--author Harris Dienstfrey focuses on the present-day cultural configuration of the United States. His appraisal: it is in the "essential and unique blending of the high and low [that] the heart of American higher culture lies."⁸² Such an assessment echoes that of the anonymous author of *Newsweek's* November 16, 1964 review entitled "Bread and Circuses."⁸³ Here too Toffler is criticized for his privilegedging of quantity over quality and Dwight MacDonald used as an example of the opposite extreme. Here too, somewhere between these two positions, "a vast middle ground remains to be conquered--and the garden we cultivate there must be both excellent and opulent."⁸⁴ High and low, excellent and opulent, quality and quantity--it is in what Dienstfrey describes as their "curious coupling"⁸⁵ that yet another position on mass culture is articulated and where some critics believe the future of a distinctive U.S. version of culture is to be found.

By the early sixties we thus find in the United States an ongoing debate over mass culture, the opinions on which are that it is good, bad, or redeemable; the themes--and stakes--of which are working concepts of consumerism, individualism, progress, nationalism,

⁸²Harris Dienstfrey, "The New Millions," The Nation, n. 199 (December 4, 1964), p. 467.

⁸³"Bread and Circuses," Newsweek, v. 64 (November 16, 1964): 105-106.

⁸⁴"Bread and Circuses," 106.

⁸⁵Dienstfrey, p. 106.

and democracy; and the underlying assumption of which is that, for better or worse, mass culture is quintessentially "American." Simultaneously, we also have a changing socio-economic and cultural situation wherein a much larger and more diversified public is exposed to art while definitions of what constituted art are undergoing serious transformations. It should thus come as little surprise that images of a mass-produced, brand-name soup created such a flurry of public discussion and that mass-market magazines framed pop with parameters such as subject matter, the changing role of the artist, and nouveau-riche collectors' avid interest in pop. In the heated debate over mass culture which was taking place in the U.S. in the late fifties and early sixties, art works which looked like the contents of U.S. supermarket shelves, artists who silkscreened brand-name logos onto canvas, and self-made taxicab entrepreneurs turned art collectors were certain to ignite sparks both within the art world and without.

CHAPTER TWO: MOCKING ADMIRATION

"Some critics have compared Roy's bold, stiff figures with the works of noted French painter, Fernand Leger. Others say Roy seems to be sitting on the fence, mocking the household gods and gadgets that Americans love, and at the same time viewing them with admiration. Still other people can't see much difference between Roy's outsized cartoons and ads and what is printed in the newspapers."

-*Life*, 1962⁸⁶

After drawing out general themes of pop coverage and then locating those themes within some of the relevant concerns of early sixties U.S. culture it appears that pop art's manifest challenge to traditional definitions of art and its conspicuous and complex associations with mass culture are key factors in the mainstream press' fascination with pop. In order to thoroughly investigate the historical significance of pop's representation in mass-market magazines in the United States between 1962 and 1965, however, we need to move beyond generalities to the specifics of how pop was portrayed visually and textually in magazines like *Life*, *Time*, *House and Garden*, and *Ladies Home Journal*.

Recognizing the complexity of both pop art and the magazines' production and reception, this chapter is unwilling to fall back on simple theories of affirmation to account for pop's "popularity". Instead, it challenges the theory that pop was widely covered by mass-market magazines because it reinforced the overwhelmingly consumeristic mindset such magazines were promoting and which was supposedly dominant in the culture at large. The counter-argument is

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⁸⁶"Something New Is Cooking," 120.

made by demonstrating that mainstream pop coverage was not so uniformly positive--either in regards to pop or the society it was imaging. To that end this chapter historically situates definitions of art and debates over mass culture crucial to an understanding of pop within a socio-culture structure undergoing rapid paradigmatic shifts. It is amidst the building blocks of such a structure--namely, amongst changing concepts of individualism, progress, democracy, and nationalism--that the common parameters of pop's representation in mass-market magazines take on even greater historical interest and significance.

That the consistent framing of pop art by communal parameters did not lead to a definitive mass-market magazine interpretation of it is obvious from the diverse and divergent representations of pop art found in these publications. In fact, another characteristic shared by the wide-range of magazines dealing with pop and which entwines itself around the frame constructed by these parameters, its tension pulling the frame out of shape, is a sense of ambiguity about pop's aesthetic worth. This is not to say that the magazines did not express opinions regarding pop; they certainly did and usually quite vociferously. But it is to point out that even when an article came out vehemently for or against pop there was always some tension, contradiction, or vague disclaimer present which prevented explanatory closure. At times the ambiguity was obvious as in Calvin Tompkin's remark, "art or not, it's food for thought."⁸⁷ At other moments it was much more subtle--images that were not satisfactorily accounted for by the text, a certain

⁸⁷Calvin Tompkins, "Art or not, it's food for thought," Life, v. 57, n. 21 (Nov. 20, 1964): 143.

turn of phrase or chosen adjective, or ironic titles and photograph captions which altered the picture's initial impact.

Similar to pop art's newsworthiness, however, such ambiguity is not simply attributable to pop's questionable artistic value. This thesis posits that the tensions, vacillations, and irresolutions present in mass-market magazine coverage of pop is indicative of underlying anxieties and uncertainties over what pop art's form and content so garishly illuminated--contemporary U.S. consumer culture. Beginning with a brief description of the significant economic and aesthetic shifts the U.S. magazine industry underwent in the late fifties and early sixties and an outline locating mass-market magazines' place in the mass culture debates, this chapter then proceeds to take apart the actual material representations of pop found in magazines such as *Time*, *Life*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *House and Garden*. Through both textual and visual analyses I shall demonstrate that fundamental concepts of the U.S. socio-cultural structure--progress, individualism, democracy and nationalism, concepts which themselves were undergoing revision due to contemporary debates on consumerism and mass culture--play an integral role both in explaining the complex mixture of ridicule and admiration characteristic of mass-market magazine representations of pop and in accounting for the widespread interest this new art form generated.

THE CULTURE INDUSTRY, SIXTIES STYLE

Like most media-related businesses in the 1950s and early 1960s, the growth of the magazine industry was exponential. As high school education, white-collar employment, and increased leisure time became the norm for many members of the white middle class, these

individuals began to devote more money and more time to purchasing and reading a wide variety of periodicals.⁸⁸ As circulation figures rose the actual proprietorship of these periodicals became concentrated in the hands of a few large publishers.⁸⁹ Paralleling changes in the radio and television industries, wherein the number of stations grew dramatically while the number of networks actually shrank,⁹⁰ editorial control of the major U.S. magazines became the exclusive property of groups like the Curtis Publishing Company (*Saturday Evening Post*, *Holiday*, *Ladies Home Journal*) and Henry Luce's Time-Life Inc. (*Time*, *Life*, *Fortune*, *Architectural Forum*, *House and Home*, *Sports Illustrated*).

⁸⁸Although the actual number of magazines did not increase substantially from 1955 to 1965 (from 260 to 275 titles) the circulation of existing magazines did develop steadily over the same years. In 1955 one-issue circulation was 166,286,858; by 1965 it had expanded to 211,659,541--an increase which cannot be explained solely by population gains. The source of these figures is the Audit Bureau of Circulations. ABC reports on general and farm magazines (excluding comics) for the first half of each year as compiled by the Magazine Publishers Association (MPA). Roland E. Wolseley, The Changing Magazine: Trends in Readership and Management (New York: Hastings House, 1973) p. 138.

⁸⁹For more on the consolidation of the U.S. magazine industry in the first half of the twentieth century see James Playstead Wood's, Magazines in the United States, 2nd ed. (New York; Ronald Press Co., 1956), p. 326ff.

⁹⁰In 1950 there were four television networks and 107 stations with a broadcast revenue of \$105.9 million. In 1960 there was one less network and 423 more stations with a broadcast revenue of \$1268.6 million. In 1950 there were seven radio networks and 2143 stations with a broadcast revenue of \$443.1 million. By 1960 there were only four radio networks but 3470 stations with a total broadcast revenue of \$591.9 million. Statistical Abstract of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1962), p. 521.

In an effort to keep advertisers--the source of mass-market magazine revenue and many of whom were considering making the switch to television⁹¹--magazines became increasingly attractive physically with more pictures, improved reproduction, and the use of more generous display. Type faces were modernized, new logo types replaced traditional ones, margins disappeared with the increased use of bleed (taking the image or text to the very edge of the page) for colour and picture pages, and expanded areas of white space were considered eyecatching because they were restful to the overloaded eyes and minds of potential readers. In her work on the visual culture of the 1950s and 1960s, Ima Ebong describes these changes as a movement towards the magazines becoming literally "televisual". "Layouts," for example, "were bolder, even garish, with lettering forced to become metaphoric of the complex audio-visual address of color

⁹¹Advertisers wanted to reach the largest market possible and television was seen as the key to success in that endeavour. While the cost of advertising on television was high, the guarantee of huge audiences made it worth the large financial investment. Working on the cost per page per thousand formula, magazines with high circulation figures such as *Reader's Digest* and *Life* had become almost prohibitively expensive by the late fifties with a black and white page advertisement costing \$26,500 and \$21,775 respectively. Centrespreads, two and four colour pages, and advertising inside the front and back covers would be even more costly. Consequently, when advertisers who wished to reach nationwide audiences had to make the decision between television and magazines, they invariably put their money where the greater number of potential consumers were--television.

television [and] rapid visual messages were induced by juxtaposing often wildly contrasting images."⁹²

Although understanding that they could not transfer the aura of television directly to their own media, magazines did try to simulate television's stylistic approach to substance. Articles were shortened and sharpened to facilitate reading and to balance the quickness of impression provided by the accompanying photography and a greater variety of short features were introduced. In fact, a major part of the appeal that mass-market magazines were attempting to create was speed of coverage.⁹³ In competing with their up-to-the-minute media sibling, mass-market magazines came to stress timeliness over in-depth analysis. A heavy accent was increasingly placed on the "now"--how to look, buy, know, be, and live in the rapid current of contemporary existence. Consuming was the key to success in this endeavour and promoted as the way of life in most commercial U.S. magazines as poet/critic Randall Jarrell caustically observed in 1959.

When one finishes *Holiday* or *Harper's Bazaar* or *House and Garden* or *The New Yorker* or *High Fidelity* or *Road and Track* or--but make your own list--buying something, going somewhere seems a necessary completion to the act of reading the magazine. Reader, isn't buying something, or fantasy-buying an important part of your and my emotional life? (If you reply, No, I'll think of you

⁹²Ima Ebong, "The New Visual Culture," in Definitive Statements. American Art: 1964-66 (Providence, RI: Brown University, 1986), p. 67.

⁹³J. P. Wood, p. 331.

with bitter envy as more than merely human; as deeply un-American.)⁹⁴

The consequence of this overwhelming concern with consumption was, according to certain social theorists, a sensationalizing of the news and arts and a homogenizing of the magazine's contents. One example of such criticism would be Dwight MacDonald's now-famous description of *Life* magazine.

The same issue will present a serious exposition of atomic energy followed by a disquisition on Rita Hayworth's love life; photos of starving children picking garbage in Calcutta and of sleek models wearing adhesive brasseries; an editorial hailing Bertrand Russell's eightieth birthday (A GREAT MIND IS STILL ANNOYING AND ADORNING OUR AGE) across from a full-page photo of a matron arguing with a baseball umpire (MOM GETS THUMB); nine color pages of Renoir followed by a picture of a roller-skating horse; a cover announcing in the same type two features: A NEW FOREIGN POLICY, BY JOHN FOSTER DULLES and KERIMA: HER MARATHON KISS IS A MOVIE SENSATION."⁹⁵

The outcome, say these same critics, is a "single, slushy compost," a degrading of the important rather than an elevating of the unimportant. In the case of art, for example, while initially it might seem culturally efficacious to have nine colour pages of Renoirs, "that roller-skating horse comes along, and the final impression is that both Renoir and the horse are talented."⁹⁶

⁹⁴Randall Jarrell, "A Sad Heart at the Supermarket, " in Norman Jacobs, ed., Culture for the Millions? (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 99.

⁹⁵MacDonald, Masscult and Midcult, p. 13.

⁹⁶MacDonald, Masscult and Midcult, p. 13.

And MacDonald could confidently assert that that was the final impression left on a *Life* reader because for him, as for most left theorists, viewers/readers of mass culture passively absorbed what the magazines put before them and what the magazines put before them was supposedly a kind of cultural pabulum in which it was impossible to discriminate between "authentic" culture and entertainment. In the most extreme version of such a view, modern mass culture is seen as administered and imposed from above (magazine monopolies would be found here) on masses who are manipulated into believing false needs are their own when in fact all culture is standardized, organized, and administered for the sole purpose of serving as an instrument of social control.⁹⁷ Exchange value dominates use value as function is replaced by packaging and advertising; art works become commodities and commodities become aestheticized.⁹⁸ An art like pop which played right into this confusion of values would, following the logic of mass culture theorists such as MacDonald, be readily welcomed by the disseminators of the mass cultural ooze, chief among them mass-market magazines.

Which is in fact what happened, argued art critics such as Barbara Rose and Peter Selz.⁹⁹ People were drawn to the bright, easily-

⁹⁷Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 121.

⁹⁸Huyssen, p. 21. For a further analysis of the aestheticization of commodities and the commodification of art see Frederic Jameson, "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture," Social Text, n. 1 (1979), p. 139ff.

⁹⁹"But worst of all, of course, is the ghastly if unforeseeable irony that the public really does love [pop]: they look at it, talk about it, enjoy it as they never have abstract painting." Barbara Rose, "Pop in

recognizable, humourous images; nouveau-riche collectors who knew nothing about art could be both unthreatened and avant-garde in purchasing it; and the media rallied behind it as one of their own and because it was entertaining, slightly shocking and a great relief after the excesses of abstract expressionism.¹⁰⁰ This line of argument then typically goes on to list the formal elements of pop which supposedly account for its widespread reproduction in magazines. Technically its resemblance to commercial art made it perfect for illustration. Similar to advertising, images were reduced to their most basic, sign-like essences. The use of primary colours was attractive, text was bold and the imagery recognizable. Commodity as art. It was fun, it was undemanding, it was an art of easy, painless humour that affirmed bourgeois consumeristic values in both form and content. No wonder

Perspective," Encounter, v. 25 (August 1965): 59-60. Peter Selz, "Pop Goes the Artist," Partisan Review, n. 30 (Summer 1963): 313-316.

¹⁰⁰Author and keen social observer Tom Wolfe (with tongue firmly planted in cheek describes this situation:

Pop Art absolutely rejuvenated the New York art scene. It did for the galleries, the collectors, the gallery-goers, the art-minded press, and the artist's incomes about what the Beatles did for the music business at about the same time. It was the thaw! It was spring again! The press embraced Pop Art with priapic delight. That goddamned Abstract Expressionism had been so solemn, so grim . . . 'Shards of interpenetrated sensibility make their way, tentatively, through a not-always compromisable field of cobalt blue--How could you write about the freaking stuff? Pop art you could have fun with.

Tom Wolfe, The Painted Word (New York: Bantam, 1975), p. 83.

magazines such as *Time* and *Life* were so quick to celebrate it. An important part of the machinery that creates art fashion, in choosing to represent pop art so frequently, asserts Selz, these magazines are saying forget critical examination and "let us, rather, rejoice in the Great American Dream."¹⁰¹ But are the representations of pop art in these magazines so single-mindedly pro-pop? Pro the "American Dream"? Or are there in fact a number of distinctive leitmotifs running through the overall composition which preclude a totalizing harmonic incorporation?

To return to *Life's* June 1962 coverage of pop, "Something New Is Cooking" for example, pop is here predominantly portrayed as a kind of gag, or at least misguided rendition of everyday life which some people with a lot of money are willing to buy. Photographs such as that of Roy Lichtenstein sitting happily underneath his "giant cartoon" images of spray cans and romance comic heroines (selling for \$400 to \$1200, remember) lend credence to such a reading. (figure 2) Yet, in the actual text one also finds descriptions of "assembly lines" of pies and cakes which "march" across the canvas and artists who are angry about "radioactive skies and silver wood-grained wallpaper," aspects of pop that are more likely to make one think of contemporary social debates on increased mechanization in the workplace and nuclear testing than inane jokes.¹⁰² Perhaps by locating recurrent themes such as these as

¹⁰¹Selz, "Pop Goes the Artist," 315.

¹⁰²For example, "The Economy: New and Exuberant," *Time*, v. 81 (May 31, 1963): 58, discusses the effects of increased mechanization on the underskilled and undereducated in the context of a booming economy. There is a plethora of articles on nuclear testing in mass-market magazines in the early sixties in light of increased above-ground testing in the Soviet Union, France's pulling out of NATO, and

elicited by the parameters framing pop art in mass-market magazines we can discover if pop was more than a catchy advertising jingle for a consumeristic lifestyle--and if so, what particular tune was being played.

PROVOCATIVELY PROSAIC

Mass-market magazines were quick to pick up on the challenge to artistic tradition that pop art offered in large type with headlines like *Life's* "You think this is a supermarket? No, hold your hats . . . it's an art gallery," *Readers Digest's* "Pop Art, Shmop Art," and *Ladies Home Journal's* "Can this be art?"¹⁰³ In these articles pop's relationship to the subject matter of daily life was presented as one of great intimacy, if not deceptive familiarity. In *Time's* "At Home with Henry," for instance, the Scull's apartment is described as "so cluttered with art derived from familiar objects that frequently guests pick up an ordinary cigarette box and ask who the artist was."¹⁰⁴ Obviously not an uncommon occurrence for in *Life's* "You Bought It, Now Live With It," under an image of family friends examining Ritz crackers displayed in a jewel box, the tale is told of how these very crackers appealed to Moe,

revelations that U.S. testing in New Mexico posed possible health hazards. See for example "Allies and the Test Ban," Newsweek, v. 62 (August 5, 1963): 19.

¹⁰³"You think this is a Supermarket?" Life, v. 57, n. 21 (Nov. 20, 1964): 138-139; Leo Rosten, "Pop Art, Shmop Art, Leave Me Alone," Reader's Digest, v. 87, n. 524 (Dec. 1965): 174; Emily Genauer, "Can this be Art?" Ladies Home Journal, v. 81 (March 1964): 151.

¹⁰⁴"At Home With Henry," 40.

the Krauschar's dog, who "polished them off without comment."¹⁰⁵ The somewhat disconcerting familiarity of pop's content was locatable not only in collector's homes, however. In galleries that resembled supermarkets and in museums where the art consisted of canvases with television sets and towel racks attached to them the divisions between art and non-art, high and low, became ever more confusing.¹⁰⁶

It was in fact pop's conspicuously vernacular imagery--movie stars, comic strips, convenience foods, suburban homes, brand-name products--which was the first topic of discussion in mass-market magazine articles with adjectives like banal, commonplace, supramodern, vulgar, familiar, commercial, ignoble, and American employed to describe it. The underlying theme of all of these descriptions, however, was pop's contemporaneity. As *Life* art critic Dorothy Seiberling observed in 1964 regarding Lichtenstein's choice of subject matter, "he has magnified, and thus made inescapably visible, the most crassly materialistic and adolescent aspects of modern society."¹⁰⁷ For better or worse, pop highlighted the technological and consumer-oriented aspects of contemporary U.S. existence and pop artists were seen to be, in *Time's* estimation, "in touch with life."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵"You Bought It, Now Live With It," 58.

¹⁰⁶In her *Ladies Home Journal* article on pop, Emily Genauer's opening sentence alludes to the provocative allusion subject matter of pop. "One afternoon, in the Washington Gallery of Modern Art, I sat in front of a painting for an hour, watching television. It was an astonishing experience." Genauer, 151. The work she goes on to describe is Tom Wesselmann's *Still Life with Live TV*, (1963).

¹⁰⁷"Is He the Worst Artist in the U.S.?" 83.

¹⁰⁸"They Paint, You Recognize," 47.

"It's not a statement of what the world could be, or will be, or was, or should have been," claims collector Robert Scull in a 1964 *Time* article,

It is a statement of what is, an art that will show who and what we really are and what we really thought long after we are all gone, because it holds up in one bright, luminous and concentrated thing . . . all the dispersed elements that go to make up our lives.¹⁰⁹

In looking simply at the Scull's collection as represented in mass-market magazines, the dispersed elements that pop held up included, among other things, suburban landscapes, plaster people, flags, tires, stoves, cars, and pop bottles.¹¹⁰ Besides traditionally being considered *kitsch* by the art world, such subject matter made up the visual environment and probably much of the aesthetic experience for a large proportion of the U.S. population in the 1950s and 1960s.¹¹¹ In direct contrast to the interior monologues of abstract expressionism, pop art

¹⁰⁹"At Home with Henry," 45.

¹¹⁰This list of pop subject matter was garnered from works in the Scull's collection such as Rosenquist's *Silver Skies* (1962) and *Early in the Morning* (1962) and Tom Wesselmann's *Great American Nude Number 30* (1962) as represented in "Can this be art?" 151-155.

¹¹¹Alan Solomon also makes this point in declaring pop the appropriate aesthetic for the sixties in his, "The New Art," *Art International* v. 7, n. 7 (Sept. 25, 1963): 37-41. While Solomon presents an interesting case for pop's challenge to aesthetic norms in a "post-Freudian" world, his reading of the social impact of pop's imagery radically differs from my own. See especially his pp. 37-38.

dealt in the more extroverted and impersonal subject matter associated with the mass media and contemporary daily life.

And yet, while pop's subject matter was impersonal in that it was often mass-produced and without history, by the sixties the products of mass technology had come to be thought of as "American" as it was in the U.S. that most of these goods were both produced and consumed. For example, in a work such as James Rosenquist's *The Lines Were Etched Deeply on Her Face* (1961) one is confronted by parts of a typewriter keyboard, a barbequed hot-dog, a jean-clad dancing pair of thighs, a woman's face, and a disc-shaped object. (figure 5) Generic enough "western" imagery today perhaps, but in the early sixties barbeques, secretarial pools, rock and roll, and billboard advertising all signalled contemporary "America."

As Robert Scull alluded to, however, it was not just what was held up by pop art but how it was held up that was also significant--"one bright, luminous and concentrated thing". Renouncing most of the conventions by which fine art had been made previously, pop paintings were produced using commercial techniques and industrial media which resulted in imagery consisting largely of bright colours, simplified forms, and intense, shallow space. These formal characteristics were themselves often viewed as signifiers of contemporaneity, and thus, the United States. For example, in discussing the magnification of objects in James Rosenquist's billboard-like imagery in the April 15, 1963 issue of *Vogue*, Aline B. Saarinen draws a direct connection between the use of commercial techniques and the visual experiences of contemporary U.S. life.

As we speed in cars and planes, as we are bombarded with movie and television close-ups, as we rifle through magazines, we are confronted everywhere with the enlarged detail. For all of us the fragmentary view is the usual twentieth-century experience.¹¹²

In art magazines, however, critics like Michael Fried and Barbara Rose did not see much value in the kind of links between formal properties and daily existence that Saarinen found provocative.¹¹³ Although both of these critics acknowledged that pop art had certain formal values, they also felt pop's form was irredeemably overwhelmed by its content and thus predicted that the present interest in pop would not outlast its initial period of production and flurry of magazine coverage.¹¹⁴ In their minds, pop was too dependent on current societal myths and would, for that reason, be unintelligible or dated to subsequent generations of viewers. Thus, while Fried might register "an advance protest against the advent of a generation that will not be as moved by Warhol's beautiful, vulgar, heart-breaking icons of Marilyn

¹¹²Aline B. Saarinen, "Explosion of Pop Art," Vogue, v. 141, n. 8 (April 15, 1963): 136.

¹¹³See, for example, Barbara Rose, "Dada Then and Now," Art International v. 7, n. 1 (Jan. 25, 1963): 22-28 and Michael Fried, "New York Letter," Art International v. 6, n. 10 (Dec. 20, 1962): 57. The latter is a review of the first Warhol show held at the Stable Gallery. Although Rose and Fried had numerous aesthetic differences it is interesting that they shared, as did many established art critics, an initial antagonism to pop that bordered on the obsessive.

¹¹⁴"I am not at all sure that even the best of Warhol's work can much outlast the journalism on which it is forced to depend," declared Fried in *Art International* in 1962. 57.

Monroe as I am", it was with a clear and rational logic that he predicted pop's passing.¹¹⁵

The form of pop art--its colour, shape, size, and flatness--was discussed in mass-market magazines from the outset, however, albeit in relation to commercial art rather than formalist categories.¹¹⁶ While the commercial art backgrounds of many of the artists--Warhol and Rosenquist especially¹¹⁷--were included in most of the initial

¹¹⁵Fried, 57. Fried made a similar argument in discussing a 1963 Lichtenstein show at the Castelli Gallery. "The kind of criticism that I would level against Lichtenstein is not that his paintings are ugly or that their content is vulgar: it is, rather, that they are trivial This is not to say that Lichtenstein fails to give pleasure: on the contrary, he is one of the most amusing artists working today: but I remain unconvinced that he is something more." Michael Fried, "New York Letter," Art International v. 7, n. 9 (Dec. 5, 1963): 66.

¹¹⁶A comparison/contrast of art magazine and mass-market magazine coverage of pop art in the years 1962-65 would make an illuminating study, but unfortunately it is beyond the scope of this investigation. As a quick aside, however, it is interesting to note that when pop's formal properties and the techniques used to represent them were discussed in fine art magazines pre-1965 it was also in reference to commercial art yet almost always in a deprecating manner. See for example, "The New Interior Decorators," Art in America, v. 53, n. 3 (June 1965): 52-61. From 1965 on, pop gains credibility in the art world *per se*, its form now discussed in terms of that most revered of formalist characteristics--flatness. See, for example, Robert Rosenblum, "Pop Art and Non-Pop Art," Art and Literature 5 (Summer 1965): 80-93.

¹¹⁷See, for example, "Something New Is Cooking," 117. Warhol continued to work as a commercial artist until as late as 1964. His career as a free-lance commercial artist was a successful one, earning him several major design awards and over \$65,000 a year (in 1964 dollars). Brian Wallis, "Absolute Warhol," Art in America, v. 7, n. 3 (March 1989): 27. As a billboard painter and card-carrying union member, Rosenquist's commercial art career did not quite carry the cache of designer Warhol's. Such humble beginnings did not prevent him from being one of the most financially successful pop artists, however.

magazine coverage of pop, it was the application of commercial methods to the production of high art which technically distinguished pop artists from the most successful U.S. artists to date, the abstract expressionists, and which was a focal point of much magazine discussion.

In fact, in *Life's*, "Is He the Worst Artist in the U.S.?", Lichtenstein's artistic methods are the *raison d'être* of the article.¹¹⁸ With the help of step by step illustrations and text the reader discovers that Lichtenstein starts with scenes taken from comic books, which he sketches, then machine-projects to the size he wants and traces onto his canvas. (figure 6) From there he "simulates" photoengravers dots with a metal screen and paint roller, undotted parts of the picture being masked with paper. He completes the image by painting in the letters and black outlines. The article then observes that Lichtenstein often sets up a series of related paintings by means of a production line method--doing all the sketching, then dotting, then painting on a

For a thought-provoking argument on art world discomfort with Rosenquist's imagery and technique due to class bias see Judith Goldman, "A Lot to Like," in James Rosenquist: The Early Pictures (New York: Rizzoli, 1992): 10-11.

¹¹⁸"Is He the Worst Artist in the U.S.?" Life, v. 56, n. 5 (Jan. 31, 1964): 79-83. A very interesting comparison on the issue of "creativity" or "genius" could be made between the representation of Lichtenstein's working method in this article and that of Jackson Pollock in "Is He the Greatest Living Painter in the United States?" also in Life, v. 28 (Aug. 3, 1949): 42-47, especially in light of Pollock's rise to preeminence (and notoriety) in the mainstream press due to his drip technique. See also, "Chaos, damn it," Time, v. 56 (Nov. 20, 1950): 70-71.

number of works simultaneously--thereby saving both time and effort.¹¹⁹

Noting the questionable nature of Lichtenstein's practice in its subtitle, "*Life* visits a controversial pioneer of pop art," the article ends with a section of text called "The artist has some answers." If the phototext section's emphasis could be described as focusing on Lichtenstein's actual working method, this latter section of text is devoted to the ideas behind such a method. In response to the three questions most asked of him--why does he choose subject matter that is so banal, does he actually transform his source material, and is it art--Lichtenstein sidesteps straightforward answers, provoking readers/viewers into thinking about what his images portray. "I take a cliché and try to organize its forms to make it monumental . . . The difference is often not great, but it is crucial." "The closer my work is to the original, the more threatening the content."¹²⁰ Dorothy Seiberling, author of the article, believes a large part of the power of Lichtenstein's work is due to his use of commercial illustration techniques. By means of their impersonality and associations with mechanical mass production--"eliminating not only all painterly handiwork but [also] originality and uniqueness"--he leaves the viewer

¹¹⁹Both the worker versus artist and easy versus skilled dichotomies present in *Life's* representation of Lichtenstein's working method find their counterparts in an advertisement for wood finish which shares the last page of the article. Individuals in the advertisement are depicted applying the finish with a roller while the copy proclaims that it is so easy to learn that "anyone," not just professionals, can do it.

¹²⁰"Is He the Worst Artist In the U.S.?" 83.

wondering if his works are parodies, ironic gestures, or avant-garde art.¹²¹

Certainly a dilemma for which there are no easy solutions in a world wherein impersonality, unoriginality, sameness, and mass-production could easily call up images of a technologically-dominated, industry-regulated, environment. In taking as their subject matter the "tawdry" products of mass culture, pop artists had already threatened their status as "serious" artists.¹²² To then employ the techniques of the mass media fully put into question the nature of their undertaking. Tension which arises from the similarity of Lichtenstein's and other pop artist's working methods to physical, mechanical production frequently underlies the magazines' presentation of pop. In a September 1963 *Life* article celebrating the growing art market, for example, Wesselman's four by five foot *Still life No. 16* is headed by the title "Billboard Art for the Home." (figure 7) The accompanying text makes direct reference to both the technique and subject matter of the image when it describes potential purchasers as presumably not the same "people who object to this sort of thing when it obscures the view along a highway."¹²³ Indeed, one of the necessary results of contemporary billboard advertising was the obstruction of vistas to which this description refers. And that which was being advertised--7-up, Libby's fruit cocktail, plastic roses, cigarillos--was made in

¹²¹"Is He the Worst Artist In the U.S?" 83.

¹²²The description of mass culture's products as tawdry comes from the 1952 Partisan Review symposium on the state of American culture, "Our Country and Our Culture". See Chapter One, n. 55.

¹²³"Sold Out Art," Life v. 55, n. 12 (Sept. 20, 1963): 128.

factories increasingly dotting the countryside. Goods such as those found on billboards and in suburban kitchen cupboards were mass-produced by veritable fleets of human beings who in their daily labour, if they were fortunate enough to have a job, had less and less connection with the final product.

While industrial progress obviously had advantages, it also contained a number of drawbacks which were becoming more and more obvious by the early sixties. Fifteen years after the second world war, increased automation had led not only to a predicted and valued increase in production but also to near-recessionary unemployment rates. Even while exultating over the booming economy, weekly newsmagazines such as *Newsweek* and *Time* could not ignore the human cost of certain technological advances. "Automated elevators, automated stock-room machinery, automated steel mills and countless other devices are turning the underskilled and the undereducated into unemployables".¹²⁴ Multiplying unemployment in that part of the population which had little chance of ever gaining the necessary skills to find new jobs meant rising levels of poverty. In 1960, between 40 and 50 million U.S. citizens--one-third of the population--were living below the poverty line while close to the same number was living in substandard dwellings--3 million in shacks, hovels, and tenements; 8.3 million in deteriorating housing; and 4.3 million in homes lacking

¹²⁴"The Economy: New and Exuberant," 58. For more on this issue see George Lipsitz, Class and Culture in Cold War America (New York: Praeger, 1981) and Michael Harrington, The Other America (New York: MacMillan Co., 1962), pp. 12ff.

essential plumbing facilities.¹²⁵ Technology had not provided better lives for these people; in fact, it had worsened their chances for better lives. Apparently "progress," that key pillar of the U.S. socio-cultural structure, was not without its debilitating side effects.

Both pop's techniques and subject matter as represented in mass-market magazines were representative of a "progressive" post-WWII United States-- industrialized, advanced, automated.¹²⁶ U.S. industrialism had begun to be looked on favourably post WWII because, according to U.S. accounts at least, it was predominantly due to the military might of the United States, "the arsenal of democracy," that freedom had been preserved.¹²⁷ Postwar experience with aid programs bolstered such reasoning by seeming to indicate that political democracy was difficult to establish and preserve unless certain minimum standards of affluence could be maintained for a significant proportion of the population. Consequently, industrialism, since it was the most efficient producer of wealth in the modern world, was no

¹²⁵Harrington, p. 1 and p. 139. Figures are derived from the 1960 census.

¹²⁶In the High and Low catalogue Varnedoe and Gopnik make much of the nostalgia element of pop, that is, that pop artists utilized advertising for consumer products of the forties and fifties, rather than the sixties, for their work. Varnedoe and Gopnik, pp. 335-347. While I do not deny this element in early pop art, it is not as prevalent as the High and Low authors make it out to be, and certainly not in evidence in the art works shown in mass-market magazines.

¹²⁷Thomas L. Hartshorne, The Distorted Image: Changing Conceptions of the American Character Since Turner (Cleveland: Cleveland State University, 1968), p. 192.

longer regarded as the enemy of democracy, but as its strongest bastion.¹²⁸

The success of the cultural explosion discussed earlier was partly a result of this changed attitude to industry. Culture became an intrinsic element of consumer society, a commodity among other mass-produced commodities. Yet with a difference, for culture as image was omnipresent.¹²⁹ It saturated society with signs and messages in the form of television, radio, film, newspapers, magazines, and billboards.¹³⁰ It secured a familiar and acceptable place for technology in the realm of the everyday visual field. And it was a sign of progress. As represented in mass-market magazines pop took an active part in this signification inasmuch as it utilized industry-related methods of production and re-presented the "products" of U.S. industry--pop bottles, factory-farm turkeys, typewriters, presidents, movie stars--as they were displayed on television and billboards and shown in newspapers and magazines. When looking at pop art viewers of mass-market magazines saw not just any products but those which had a recognized place in their contemporary, technologically-advanced, everyday life.

But it was pop art's particular blend of form and content that rendered the imagery so compelling visually. In works such as Lichtenstein's *We Rose Up Slowly* (1964) and Warhol's *One Hundred*

¹²⁸Hartshorne, p. 192.

¹²⁹Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black and Red, 1983), paragraphs 35-53.

¹³⁰Frederic Jameson, "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture," *Social Text*, n. 1 (1979), p. 139.

Campbell Soup Cans (1962), benday screen printing and silkscreen reproduction, respectively, produce a much more provocative image than the same content presented in a more traditional manner could hope to offer. (figures 8 and 9) Playing with mass media connotations in terms of both subject matter--comic books and supermarket shelves--and technique, these works were, in the words of Henry Geldzahler, assistant curator of American Painting and Sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, "immediately contemporary."¹³¹

As alluded to earlier, a crucial aspect of this contemporaneity was its "Americaness." In a 1965 *House and Garden* discussion of Tom Wesselmann's *Bathroom Collage Number 1* (1963), for example, Mrs. Leon Kraushar (we never learn her first name) makes just such a connection. "I love that painting because it shows a woman looking the way women look here, today, in America, not fat and old-fashioned like Renoir's nudes. She is truly contemporary."¹³² The Kraushar's new home, which is the focus of the *House and Garden* article, is depicted not only with pop on its walls and installed in its rooms, but as containing the latest models of colour television, bathroom fixtures, living room furniture, and kitchen appliances. The geometric lines, precise order, and decorative colour all bespeak "tasteful modern design". Mr. Kraushar accentuates this impression by describing his

¹³¹Geldzahler, as reported in the transcripts of a symposium held at the Museum of Modern Art in December 1962 and moderated by MOMA curator of painting and sculpture, Peter Selz. "A Symposium on Pop Art," *Arts Magazine* v. 37, n. 7(April 1963): 37.

¹³²du Plessix Gray, 162.

tastes as "not modern, but supramodern."¹³³ Be it by means of U.S. women's bodies or U.S. consumer goods, an equation thus comes to be made between three supposedly distinct characteristics: contemporaneity, "Americanness", and technological progress.

"Supermarket food is so American," remarked Calvin Tomkins in a *Life* article entitled "Art or not, it's food for thought" which was part of the "American Supermarket" exhibit coverage.¹³⁴ Tomkins could confidently state this and effortlessly have heads nodding in agreement with him because there was a general recognition that supermarkets and the food in them, as they existed in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, had no comparison anywhere else in the world. And the reason they had no comparison was because the U.S. technological know-how which produced the mass quantities of canned meats, frozen vegetables, and sugar-coated cereals which filled their lengthy aisles, bulging freezers, and specials bins were not to be equalled. So what "If the frozen-in-flavor of wax beans sometimes turns out to be the flavour of wax; this is all part of the world's highest standard of living."¹³⁵ "America" still meant progress because, for much of the twentieth century, the U.S. visibly led the industrialized world in the areas of technological research and development which gave rise to

¹³³du Plessix Gray, 158.

¹³⁴"You think this is a Supermarket?" 143.

¹³⁵"You Think This is a Supermarket?" 143. Calvin Tomkins goes on in the article to describe Warhol's paintings of Campbell Soup cans as the archetypal twentieth-century nightmare. "Up and down narrow aisles between high walls of brand-name uniformity, with the lights glaring down and the canned music boring in, as we search desperately for one can of Cream of Mushroom where every label reads Tomato."

major societal changes. Since the material results of such changes were a large part of daily U.S. life, progress, contemporaneity, and "Americaness" became readily and rapidly conflated.

Mass-market magazine coverage of pop artist Robert Rauschenberg's win at the 1964 Venice Biennale had also blurred distinctions between the concepts of progress, contemporaneity, and U.S. nationalism.¹³⁶ Controversy over the win and cultural differences between Europe and the U.S. were typically the hook set to draw readers into an article that would then go on to discuss and illustrate Rauschenberg's works, career, and philosophy. Cited as the "founder" of pop art in *Life's* "Art Pops In," Rauschenberg is described as giving "us a picture of his America, which he loves."¹³⁷ With works such as *Monogram*--"a stuffed angora goat standing inside an auto tire"--and techniques like silkscreening which allow him to "reproduce" images any size he likes, *Life* writer Rosalind Constable believes Rauschenberg to be saying "Take another look at 'ugly' America . . . there is more beauty in it then meets your eye."¹³⁸

In 1964 the phrase "ugly America" aided in calling up William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick's best-selling book of five-years earlier, The Ugly American.¹³⁹ Ostensibly a fictionalized account of U.S.

¹³⁶For a detailed analysis of Rauschenberg's win and the controversy around it see, Laurie Monahan, The New Frontier Goes to Venice (University of British Columbia, unpublished Master's thesis, 1985).

¹³⁷"Art Pops In," Life, v. 57, n.2 (July 10, 1964): 68.

¹³⁸"Art Pops In," 68.

¹³⁹William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, The Ugly American (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1958).

foreign service in Asia, the book's main thesis was that the U.S. was losing Asia to communism because U.S. commodities, not U.S. values/ethics/ideas, were being promoted. The book received both fame and notoriety for its delineation of the excesses and abuses of representatives of the U.S. government abroad and played a significant role in ongoing questioning of U.S. foreign policy in the late fifties and early sixties. In her drawing on this association, Constable subtly attempts to counter recent questioning over the direction U.S. culture had taken of late and reaffirms its good and "beauty."

Rock and roll, radios, pop bottles, billboards, news photographs--it is all of these elements of daily life that Rauschenberg endows with magical properties, argues Constable. For her, Rauschenberg is "a kind of Noah, shepherding into his ark everything he thinks worth salvaging in contemporary America."¹⁴⁰ In so doing, he is not making a social comment, however. Rather, his juxtapositions are aesthetic statements, holding together "marvelously" and possessing an "extraordinary elegance." In putting items from everyday life in his works, asserts Constable, Rauschenberg invites us to look at them again. Underlying this aesthetic assertion, however, Constable is also suggesting that viewers realize how significant these items are as part of a U.S. identity.

The association of Rauschenberg's work with more than aesthetics and, in fact, a U.S. way of life, was a point frequently made in reports on the Biennale.¹⁴¹ U.S. writers repeatedly countered the scorn of

¹⁴⁰"Art Pops In," 68.

¹⁴¹See Monahan for more on Biennale coverage.

European critics by claiming jealousy of the U.S.'s high standard of living as the fuel that fired descriptions of Rauschenberg's work as "grotesque pieces of junk and cans."¹⁴² In the U.S. coverage Rauschenberg is pictured as a lanky Texan who made it (a quarter page photo of the smiling winner adorns the opening page of *Life's* "Art Pops In" article, for example). His creativity and wittiness in using items of contemporary existence to make aesthetic statements is cited again and again as taking the air out of stuffy, elitist (read European) art traditions. Through his incorporation of the rectangular compositions of cubism and drips and swoops of abstract expressionism, however, Rauschenberg still remains within certain artistic conventions.

Not so with the pop artists predominantly pictured on the pages of mass-market magazines between 1962-65. Wesselmann's two-dimensional nudes sprawled across suburban landscapes were as far from Renoir's frolicking nymphs as Rosenquist's huge canvases covered with typewriters, automobiles, and assorted body parts were from David's history paintings. In technique as well one could still argue for Rauschenberg's hand playing some role in creating the splashes, blurred edges, and rough textures characteristic of his work. The flatness, uniformity, and precision of Lichtenstein, Rosenquist, Wesselmann, and Warhol's work consistently resisted such interpretations, however.¹⁴³

¹⁴²"Art Pops In," 65.

¹⁴³Other pop artists included in the 1964 Venice Biennale were Jasper Johns, Claes Oldenberg, and Jim Dine. In contrast to the artists consistently represented in mass-market magazines, these artists, albeit to varying degrees, all fulfill concurrent constructions of creativity more adequately.

Because pop artists are viewed as operating via their brain and hands rather than their mind and passion they do not comply with the mystique of the tortured artist fervently creating, be it in front of an easel or on top of raw canvas laid on the floor. Andy Warhol's hiring of "assistants" to produce silkscreened work at his Factory was the epitome of this dichotomy of production and creation. Even in producing a commissioned portrait of Ethel Scull, Warhol did not work from his own photography (or any other person's for that matter) as the transfer for the silkscreen. As Scull herself recounted in a 1964 *Ladies Home Journal* article, Warhol took her to some automatic snapshot machines in Times Square and kept two booths going for over an hour.¹⁴⁴ From the more than 300 shots Warhol then selected 35 which were enlarged, silkscreened and inked to produce *Ethel Scull 35 Times* (1963). Other than the choice of machine-made photographs (and one cannot be sure how that was accomplished as Warhol was notorious for his haphazard selection style which at times included having others do his choosing for him) the entire process was mechanical and could have been done by anyone, not necessarily an Artist.

In her telling of the story Ethel Scull's privileges Warhol as artist, however; only an artist would be so crazy, so creative, as to think up and then do such a thing. It was the novelty of the idea that mattered (Scull had expected to be taken to "Avedon or somebody like that" when Warhol told her he had made a date with a photographer). The very

¹⁴⁴Genauer, 154. This anecdote was recounted in numerous mass-market magazine articles on pop, for example "At Home with Henry" and "You Bought It, Now Live With It." Warhol would repeat this portrait technique numerous times over the next few years, including for a cover of *Time*, v. 85, n. 5 (Jan. 29, 1965).

unconventionality of method, materials, and final product bespoke not only uniqueness, in its own fashion, but also contemporaneity. In a world where "new and improved" were qualities held in high regard, the artist who produced such work would be sure to achieve a certain amount of social recognition and accompanying artistic status.

Despite Scull's assertion, however, how far Warhol, and by proxy, the rest of the pop artists, were in fact from the traditional idea of the creative artist was a staple of much magazine coverage and a point ironically made in the May 15, 1964 issue of *Time*. In a brief article entitled "Boxing Match," a *Time* reporter recounts how Warhol, an artist "who won fame painting picture's of Campbell's Soup cans," had a carpenter make 120 Brillo-size boxes and ordered a silkscreen stencil of the Brillo design. Warhol and his assistants then stencilled the design on all the boxes for a show at Manhattan's Stable Gallery where they sold for \$300 each. In the paragraph immediately following this statement the article introduces James Harvey, an artist who regularly shows his "muscular" abstract works at the Graham Gallery yet who still "labors as a commercial artist" in order to make ends meet. The significant connection between the two artists is made (as is the article's punchline) when the reader is acquainted with Harvey's keen interest in keeping up with the newest in art production and his visiting of the latest Warhol exhibit. "What he saw made him choke back an impulse to start a paternity suit. For it was Harvey who a few years ago designed the original Brillo box."¹⁴⁵

The language used to describe Warhol's course of action--having someone else make the boxes, ordering a stencil--versus Harvey's--

¹⁴⁵"Boxing Match," *Time*, v. 83, n. 20 (May 15, 1964): 56.

"drawing his inspiration from religion and landscapes rather than supermarkets", producing "muscular" works--is loaded. So too are the images which accompany the piece--Warhol trapped or possibly lurking behind tall stacks of Brillo boxes, Harvey, in a larger photograph, kneeling in an almost reverential posture before a huge abstract canvas which appears to be a male figure holding his arms exuberantly wide-open. The effect one is left with is of Harvey, the creative individual, as having been unfairly treated (precisely by whom is unclear although art world tastemakers are implied) while Warhol, who comes across as part-slick shyster and part-machine, gains art world fame.

The issue of fame is an important one in discussions of the changing face of the art world in the sixties. Though initially used ironically in both art magazine and non-art publications' coverage of pop, as the sixties progressed the title "the New American Dreamers" seemed more and more appropriate as a description of pop artists and not only in terms of their choice of subject matter but also in regards to their social positions as artists. According to a 1962 *Life* article, each artist developed independently, oblivious of the others' ideas and works.¹⁴⁶ It was the art critics, gallery owners and media who quickly formed "pop" artists into a movement.¹⁴⁷ Indeed, one of the results of the mass media's increasing coverage of art was to establish readily-

¹⁴⁶"Something New Is Cooking," 115.

¹⁴⁷In a 1965 *Esquire* article Leo Castelli acknowledges that he did not take on all the pop artists that came to him but encouraged other galleries to show them in order to create the sense of a movement and to build up the enthusiasm of collectors, museums, and the press. Elkoff, 112.

identifiable names, to manufacture art world celebrities.¹⁴⁸ Such a shift in the conditions of reception led to a corresponding shift in the artist's production of their own self-image. As Irving Sandler has recently observed, "responding to their new notoriety and with the new opportunities to achieve wealth, celebrity, and tastemaking power, avant-garde artists of the sixties began to act more like successful 'professionals' than 'bohemians', more like doctors and lawyers."¹⁴⁹

Unlike the artists of generations past, pop artists did not profess to embrace poverty and alienation. They actually seemed to thrive on the success the elaborate machinery of dealers, critics, museums, magazines, and collectors kept producing. And their works sold for higher and higher amounts. Prices that established abstract expressionist artists had only begun to garner by the late fifties, pop artists were making within two years of their first showing. As noted in *Time's* "Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace," "Wesselmann can sell a collage for \$2,500; a Claes Oldenburg *Floorburger* is priced at \$2,000; and James Rosenquist can fetch as much as \$7,500 for a painting."¹⁵⁰ Like the growing ranks of white collar employees, pop artists were

¹⁴⁸Just as it was at the forefront of what *Time* described as a second "Renaissance" economically, the U.S. was also playing a Renaissance-like role in altering the social status of artists. "A Second Renaissance," *Time*, v. 80 (July 13, 1962): 34. For more information on the interdependence of the media and its new stars see Anthony Haden-Guest, "The Celebrity Syndrome," New York/World Journal Tribune, 26 March 1967, p. 28.

¹⁴⁹Irving Sandler, American Art of the Sixties (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), p. 95.

¹⁵⁰"Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace," 66.

"getting ahead" faster and more visibly than even their most recent predecessors.

This concept of "getting ahead" was a pronounced part of U.S. life by the early sixties and intimately connected to a thriving consumer ideology and significant shifts in the makeup of the employment sector. Indeed, by the late 1950s, the United States' economy was basically a "service economy" with most employees engaged in professional capacities or in distributive or promotional occupations. The number of sales clerks, office workers, and advertising personnel was on the rise while the number of individuals engaged in labour was in sharp decline.¹⁵¹ The widespread implementation of automation, the merger of small businesses into large corporations, and increased educational opportunities all played a role in this transmutation of the employment sector from predominantly blue collar to overwhelmingly white collar.

Due to this socio-economic upheaval many traditional signifiers of class differences could no longer be trusted. Such a situation was certainly enviable in many respects both on the macro and on the micro political levels. Yet it also left people anxiously uncertain of their place in the new and rapidly-changing order of things. As the central figure of Saul Bellow's 1959 bestseller novel, Henderson the Rain King, observed, "Nobody truly occupies a station in life anymore. There are displaced persons everywhere."¹⁵² Through discriminating

¹⁵¹Statistically, in the ten-year period from 1947 to 1957, the number of factory operatives fell four percent, the amount of clerical workers grew 23 percent, and the salaried middle class expanded by 61 percent. Statistical Abstract of the United States (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1962), pp. 457-58.

¹⁵²Saul Bellow, Henderson the Rain King (New York: Viking, 1958).

consumption, however, one could at least purchase some peace of mind by making a downpayment on a place in the new social order.¹⁵³

In addition to fostering a sense of identity, consuming also played a significant role as proof of one's freedom of choice and thus was a national vocation. As an economist once put it, "a citizen casts a vote every time he [sic] makes a purchase,"¹⁵⁴ and in 1963, *Time* noted with approval, U.S. consumers were marching to the polls in record numbers. Described as "noble," "free-spending," "a hero," or "life-enriched," the contemporary consumer was the focus of much public interest and discussion as she/he was viewed as making the mythic American Dream more tangible by buying a colour or second television set, going out for dinner and a play, or redecorating the family home.¹⁵⁵

Increased consumer spending was also the guarantee of a healthy economy which in turn was an important selling point for the democratic-capitalist way of life. Certainly for that section of U.S. society which had recently experienced unprecedented material and cultural growth, consumer culture was an unqualified success. In

¹⁵³"Today the currency into which all values tend to be translated is no longer money but appraisal by the peer-group. And this value, much more patently than money, is subject to booms and busts on manifest socio-psychological grounds The appraisal of the peer-group is always stated, in the final analysis, in terms of a consumption preference." David Reisman, "The Talk of the Town: The Socialization of Consumption Preferences," in Kenneth S. Lynn, ed., The American Society (New York: George Braziller, 1963), p. 232.

¹⁵⁴"The Free-Spending Consumer," Time, v. 82, (August 23, 1963): 61.

¹⁵⁵"The Noble Consumer," Time, v. 81 (Feb. 22, 1963): 67; "The Free-Spending Consumer," 61; "The Economy: New and Exuberant," 56; "The Life-Enriched Consumer," 55.

furnishing the latest of material products at affordable prices, it fostered a sense of progress. In allowing for both the act of choosing from amongst a huge variety of consumer goods and the resulting display of purchases made, it gave one the chance to express one's individualism. And inasmuch as it appeared to be a nationwide phenomenon, it was both democratic and patriotic. In the context of an ongoing cold war this was not a contribution to be neglected.

And politicians did not in fact let consumption's individualistic/nationalistic significance slip, but rather, fastened on to it. As Elaine Tyler May has observed in a recent study, in "one of the most noted verbal sparring matches of the century," then Vice-President Richard M. Nixon returned time and again to the issue of choice in his effort to outdo Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in the historic battle of opposing ideologies which came to be known as the "kitchen debate."

To us, diversity, the right to choose, . . . is the most important thing. We don't have one decision made at the top by one government official. . . . We have many different manufacturers and many different kinds of washing machines so that the housewives have a choice. . . . Would it not be better to compete in the relative merits of washing machines than in the strength of rockets?¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶Elaine Tyler May, Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era (New York: Basic Books, 1988) pp. 16 and 17, respectively. Ehrenreich is another recent historian who locates affluence as the "ultimate rebuttal to the Soviets" in the context of the kitchen debate. Barbara Ehrenreich, Fear of Falling (New York: Pantheon, 1989), p. 33.

While in emphasizing choice Nixon no doubt wanted to favourably contrast what was viewed as the strengths of the U.S. system of free enterprise and individualism against the constraints of communism, his focus on *consumer* choice is telling. By 1959, in a country wherein the monopoly sector had completed the translation of economic wealth into political power¹⁵⁷ and most governmental decisions were made by an expert elite,¹⁵⁸ the act of consuming was in fact one of the few actions left to individuals through which they could exercise their choice and see concrete results. In government speeches, addresses, and reports, the freedom to consume became synonymous with freedom, period, thereby promoting a kind of pseudo-individual state by means of a bargain-basement veneer of democracy.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷Lipsitz, pp. 7-8.

¹⁵⁸At a press conference in 1962 John F. Kennedy reinforced this concept of government by experts as appropriate to the times. "The fact of the matter is that most of the problems . . . that we face are technical problems. They are very sophisticated judgements, which do not lend themselves to the great sort of passionate movements which have stirred this country so often in the past. [They] deal with questions which are now beyond the comprehension of most men [sic] . . ." Quoted in Christopher Lasch, The Culture of Narcissism (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1978), p. 77.

¹⁵⁹*As the democratic model grows ever less relevant to the location of political power, its forms of expression change, moving away from an emphasis on the politics of issues, towards the politics of style, as a means of further disguising its loss of political power." Richard Maltby, Harmless Entertainment: Hollywood and the Ideology of Consensus (Metuchen, N.J. : Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1983), p. 233. Politicians themselves recognized the importance of style over issues in the newly-dawned media age. For instance, John F. Kennedy's election campaign was an example *par excellence* of politician as commodity. Kennedy markedly improved in the polls after four television debates with Nixon, an occurrence which has since been attributed not to

Although initially distancing itself from the consumer boosting of the Eisenhower administration through emphasizing the seriousness of the cold war and the need for engagement, the Kennedy team was quick to learn that the New Frontier would require washing machines as well as rockets if it was to "get America moving again".¹⁶⁰ After introductory restraint and notable confrontations with big business--verbally and legislatively attacking the price-hiking magnates of the steel industry in 1962 being the apogee--President John F. Kennedy changed his approach and framed economic policies which would create a stable environment for corporate prosperity and expansion.¹⁶¹ This

Kennedy's superior debating skills but to the poor choice on Nixon's part of wearing a suit whose colour of grey blended in so well with the television studio's walls. "The Processed Politician has finally arrived," observed veteran news reporter Eric Sevareid. Ronald J. Oakely, God's Country: America in the Fifties (New York: Dembner Books, 1986), p. 416. For more on Kennedy's close and knowledgeable relationship with the mass media see, Joseph P. Berry, John F. Kennedy and the Media: The First Television President (Lanham, N.J.: University Press of America, 1987).

¹⁶⁰William E. Leuchtenburg, The Troubled Feast (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1983), p. 117. This opposition to the values of consumer society made manifest under the auspices of the Eisenhower government is evident in many of John K. Kennedy's early speeches. Throughout the 1960 election campaign, for example, Kennedy continually underlined the distinction between public interest and private comfort, stressing the "softness" of the Eisenhower administration -- a softness that was costing the U.S. its rightful place in world power politics. In his acceptance speech at Los Angeles he clearly indicated that such hedonistic wallowing in the excesses of consumerism would not be on the agenda of the New Frontier. The New Frontier, said Kennedy, "sums up, not what I intend to offer the American people, but what I intend to ask of them. It appeals to their pride, not their pocketbook." Leuchtenburg, p. 130.

¹⁶¹For popular acknowledgement of Kennedy's attitude change see "The Economy: New and Exuberant," 57. For a critical and historical analysis

shift in attitude signalled to the business community Kennedy's growing awareness that if the U.S. was to be a successful contender in the cold war a strong national economy was vital and that, in the early sixties, the source of such strength was the profits derived from consumer spending.¹⁶²

By the early sixties one of the areas in which consumer spending had increased dramatically was in purchases of art. Indeed, the role of pop art as a supermarket art in a super art market was a consistently topic of interest in mass-market magazine articles both on pop and the art market in general. "SOLD OUT ART," "More Buyers Than Ever Sail Into A Broadening Market," claimed *Life* magazine in its September 1963 overview of the U.S. art market. While art's popularity embraced the products of all schools it was "pop' art, the sometimes witty, often defiant reproduction of humdrum gadgets of daily life," however, that was "the newest best-seller."¹⁶³ This point is brought home not only by the introductory text but also by pop's visual domination of the layout.

of the Kennedy administration's actions regarding the business community, both within the legislature and out, see Allen J. Matusow, The Unraveling of America (New York: Harper and Row, 1984).

¹⁶²Not to be disregarded when examining the Kennedy government's changing position on the value of consumption is the fact that the U.S. populace did not seem especially receptive to policies of restraint and admonitions regarding their spending habits. In the 1960 election Kennedy's victory margin in the popular vote was the smallest since 1880, providing little indication that the country was in a heroic mood or prepared to give either candidate a decisive mandate. By appealing to people's pride versus their pocketbook Kennedy had overlooked the significant reality that the source of pride for many U.S. citizens did indeed reside in their pocketbooks.

¹⁶³"Sold Out Art," 125.

Out of fourteen images pop was represented in six, forming a noticeable trend against the disparity of the other images which ranged from Picasso prints to "harmless little oils of rather inferior flowers."¹⁶⁴ Subtitles for the pop works like "Colorful Fare To Chew On," and "Frameup for the Mad Scientist," were not alone in their punning on the relationship between money and art either. Explanatory text adjacent to each image followed through on the subtitles' witty tone--Thiebaud's "fare" selling for "up to \$3000 per helping" while Lichtenstein's mad scientist "was framed--only for real and then he was sold."¹⁶⁵

Yet another example of the mainstream press' focus on pop's "commodified" subject matter and phenomenal financial success is the six-page 1964 *Life* article on the Paul Bianchini Gallery's "American Supermarket" show, "You Think This Is A Supermarket? Hold Your Hats, Its An Art Gallery!" Consumers/viewers are depicted in a double-page colour spread, poring over assorted goods which include a series of enameled hot dog displays by Roy Lichtenstein, a James Rosenquist painting advertising a "Noxema \$100,000 Be-Beautiful Contest," and a Wesselmann still-life depicting a freshly-roasted Butterball turkey. (figure 10) As the author of the article remarked, however, "the lady shoppers would have good reason to cluck over the high cost of living--\$27 for a hunk of swiss cheese, eggs at \$144 a dozen, loins of pork for \$49."¹⁶⁶ That is why we had to hold on to our hats. While the items

¹⁶⁴"Sold Out Art," 125.

¹⁶⁵"Sold Out Art," 128, 129.

¹⁶⁶"You think this is a Supermarket?" 138.

depicted might look like groceries they were actually art, and the prices proved it.¹⁶⁷ Of course it was easy to be confused when commercial artist Mary Inman's replicas of meat and cheese, usually found in grocers' and distributors' show windows, were sold beside everyday 2/35 cents cans of Campbell's soup which were signed by Andy Warhol and selling quickly at \$6 the can.¹⁶⁸

In fact, it was pop's apparently intimate relationship with the world of finance that was one of the major areas in which pop art as a movement raised problems for traditional definitions of art. Contemporaneous theories of art believed its function was to "re-humanize" a modern population whose everyday existence had been reduced to a means-end activity.¹⁶⁹ How then were images that actually accentuated the foundation of such activity--namely capital--humanizing? How were they art? Pop's public appeal, its artists' commercial art backgrounds, and its collectors' capitalistic professions all pointed to a more obvious relationship between art and

¹⁶⁷For a visitor to the gallery during the show's run, the supermarket atmosphere was undoubtedly heightened by the "soothing and meaningless Muzak-type harmonies...piped through a sound system, interrupted now and then by an announcer intoning unadvertised specials." Rublowsky, p. 174.

¹⁶⁸The confusion grows as Inman's "Meat Case"(1964) was in Leon Kraushar's constantly-expanding pop art collection by 1965, and her piece "Ice Cream Sundae # 1"(1964) was included as fine art, not commercial art, in the Milwaukee Art Center's 1965 exhibit, Pop Art and the American Tradition.

¹⁶⁹Proponents of this position are too numerous to list here but see Rosenberg and Manning-White for some examples. For a rigorous theorization of this position see Peter Burger, Theory of the Avant-Garde (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p.48.

capital than had existed previously in bourgeois art, a relationship which hinted at contemporary concerns regarding materialism.¹⁷⁰ In zeroing in on this problematic in its consistent reference to the commodity status of pop, mass-market magazine coverage promoted the commercial and fashionable aspects of pop as signifiers of contentious contemporary concepts of consumerism, individualism, and nationalism.

The most extreme manifestations of this were two related articles in the February 26, 1965 issue of *Life*. The first, "Far-Out Refrigerators," makes patent the relationship between art and commodity in its subtitle, "Even Pop Art is Used to Dress up New Models." (figure 11) The introductory sentence, "In their push to make the U.S. a nation of two-refrigerator families, manufacturers have forsaken the functional look for the far-out--even resorting to pop art,"¹⁷¹ reiterates this point with the additional reminder of U.S. supremacy in regard to commodity production and consumption. In how many other countries in 1965 could a family even dream of owning two refrigerators? Indeed, the need for a second fridge in den, playroom, or living room is not raised as an issue in the article. Rather, what is stressed is that in their appropriation of the look of pop, manufacturers are accommodating the modern lifestyles of contemporary consumers (the article is in the "Modern Living" section of *Life*). As Jack Straus, head of Macy's department store, explains, "Our economy keeps growing because our ability to consume is endless. The consumer

¹⁷⁰I am invoking Burger's distinctions between sacral, courtly, and bourgeois art in my use of the latter term. Burger, pp. 47-54.

¹⁷¹"Far-out Refrigerators," *Life*, v. 58, n. 8 (Feb. 26, 1965): 55.

goes on spending regardless of how many possessions he [sic] has. The luxuries of today are the necessities of tomorrow."¹⁷² Although not created by self-proclaimed artists, the fridge fronts are considered pop because of their taking on of non-appliance guises. Just as pop art looks like soup cans, comic strips, or advertisements, these fridges resemble playing cards, English sentry guardboxes, and oriental armoirs. Just as pop art sells for unprecedented amounts, these fridges cost 50 to 100 percent more than standard models.¹⁷³

This theme of consumerism becomes entangled with the complexities of nationalism and individualism in the second *Life* article (this one in the "Fashion" section), "Styles too are pushed further out by pop." In this piece, which consists predominantly of three-quarter page fashion images with brief descriptions followed by a socio-aesthetic analysis courtesy of *Life* art critic Rosalind Constable, pop becomes the means by which U.S. youth become "hipper" than their European counterparts.(figure 12) The "mundane" objects which pop artists "love to glorify" screen-printed on plain shifts are described by Londoner and model Jill Stuart as a threat to those "invading far-out styles, the French ye-ye's and her hometown Chelsea look.". Through wearing pop art (which Constable views as a goldmine for commercial designers as long as they "stay away from the corner gift shop and spend more time in the supermarket,"¹⁷⁴) U.S. youth claim their generation and nationality as a distinct group.

¹⁷²"Great Shopping Spree," *Time*, v. 85 (Jan. 8, 1965): 50.

¹⁷³"Far-out Refrigerators," 56.

¹⁷⁴"Styles too are pushed further out by pop," *Life*, v.58, n. 8 (Feb. 26, 1965): 66.

Individualism by means of consumer choice was also a theme of the original pop collectors, however. Collector Robert Scull was adamant in the belief that an art collection should make a personal statement. "It shows as much about the collector as it does about the artists. A man reveals himself in it."¹⁷⁵ On a similar note, just as the rationale behind the Kraushars building their house was to get away from "the conformist ranch-style look" they felt was dominating suburbia, Leon Kraushar's rationale for selling his original collection of Dubuffet, Francis, Calder, and the Cobra school and buying pop was because pop symbolized his way of life.¹⁷⁶ And Scull and Kraushar's way of life was, despite their wealth, that of regular "guys", a point vividly brought home by the photographs accompanying the articles. For example, in *Time's* "At Home with Henry" Ethel Scull is pictured seated on Robert Scull's lap, "laughing it up" while in *Life's* "You Bought It, Now Live With It" the most famous collectors of pop--the Sculls, Kraushars, and Harry Abrams--are shown eating breakfast, washing up in the bathroom, lolling on beds and sofas, and watching television. (figure 13)

The pop collectors' homes were frequently the site for both the photography and discussion of pop in mass-market magazines. In *House and Garden's* May 1965 article, "The House That Pop Built," for example, the text emphasizes the individualistic aspects of home building and decoration--mixing antiques with ultramodern architecture, sacrificing a dressing table in order to make room for a

¹⁷⁵Genauer, 153.

¹⁷⁶du Plessix Gray, 162.

painting, “getting away from the conformist ranch-style look” of suburbia. While most *House and Garden* readers were probably not major art collectors, there was still a part of their life experiences accounted for in this article--that of identification through home decoration. Who the Kraushar’s are comes out very clearly in their decor choices. Full-page photographs depict their new home as a kind of living art gallery. (figure 14) Art works imaging newspaper headlines, sliced bread, soup cans, and brillo pads are integrated into the home’s modern architecture and design. Descriptions accompanying the illustrations consist of a mixture of interior design notes and pop art identifications. “Hanging over the older son’s bed is a large painting by Birillo; works at right are by Cy Twombly and Roy Lichtenstein. Ottoman converts into a bed for overnight guests; African drums serve as tables.”¹⁷⁷ Pop is presented as an integral element of a “supramodern” decorating scheme--“they’re the only part of the decor that interests me,” claims Leon Kraushar--and the Kraushar’s lifestyle. The title of the article, “The House That Pop Built,” brings home these points in typical double-entendre pop fashion.

In her work on U.S. families in the cold war era Elaine Tyler May has identified the affluent suburban home as the symbol of the U.S.’s commodified way of life in the fifties and early sixties.¹⁷⁸ The suburban home offered even more than the opportunity to exercise one’s individuality through consumer choice, however. Suburbia itself played a significant role in maintaining the concept of grassroots democracy

¹⁷⁷du Plessix Gray, 162.

¹⁷⁸May, p. 181.

in a society in which an elite of experts and technocrats actually held the reins of power. In *Time's* June 20, 1960 cover story, "Suburbia, U.S.A." a similar observation was made by Don C. Peters, president of a large Pittsburgh construction company and chairperson of the board of supervisors of suburban Pine Township.

The American suburb is the last outpost of democracy, the only level left on which the individual citizen can make his [sic] wishes felt directly and immediately. I think there's something idealistic about the search for a home in the suburbs. Call it a return to the soil. It's something that calls most people some time in their lives.¹⁷⁹

In a society in which efficiency is a priority and every other influence calls for their absorption within a larger metropolis, the suburbs were the last hold out. In one metropolitan area alone there would be literally hundreds of local suburban governments, each maintaining their own police force, fire station, health department, and library. These local governments also retained the authority to enact ordinances, hold elections, zone land, raise taxes, grant building licenses, borrow money, and fix speed limits.¹⁸⁰ The justification for this legal independence rested on the longstanding U.S. conviction that small political units represent the purest expression of popular rule, in other words, grassroots democracy. While noted suburban sociologist

¹⁷⁹"Suburbia U.S.A.," *Time*, v. 75, n. 25 (June 20, 1960): 15.

¹⁸⁰Robert C. Wood, *Suburbia: Its People and Their Politics* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1958), p. 10.

Robert C. Woods saw the persistence of this vision of suburbia as a deplorable fear of change and "symbolic protest against the great organization and the large society,"¹⁸¹ for inhabitants of suburban homes it apparently was an important semblance of political power in a society in which traditional forms of political activity and influence were the privilege of a powerful few.¹⁸²

Not everyone viewed suburbia as the last remaining outpost of democracy in action, however. For William Whyte, Jr., author of the bestselling The Organization Man (1956), within its structure lay the possibility of just the opposite. While Whyte admits to there being many variations among suburbs, he also finds that "there is an unmistakable similarity in the way of life."¹⁸³ The result of a number of factors--similar careers, yearly earnings, family ideals, proximity of dwellings--suburbanites tend to spend a lot of time keeping up, or down, with the Jones.¹⁸⁴ Because suburban communities are tightly knit (bonded by the social ideals of "belongingness" and "togetherness") consumption practices came to be regulated, consciously or not, by group preferences. What appears to be individual participation in civic activities, for example, may actually be a prerequisite activity for that individual to fit successfully with the

¹⁸¹Robert C. Wood, pp. 301-302.

¹⁸²For a useful critical review of the literature on suburbia post-WWII to the late sixties see, Scott Donaldson, The Suburban Myth (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

¹⁸³William H. Whyte, Jr., The Organization Man (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956).

¹⁸⁴Whyte, pp.312-314.

"group." Hence suburbia's role as the seedbed of so many consumption trends--air conditioners, hi-fis, hula-hoops, PTAs, and so forth.

A number of mass-market magazine articles viewed pop's "success" in a similar light--as a signifier of conformity and trendiness. In *Time* magazine's 1963 article "Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace," for example, pop is viewed as "in" fashion, its artists, the "new bandwagon"; the galleries involved, "profit-minded"; and its collectors of "whatever's new," gullible.¹⁸⁵ Subtitles announcing the banality of pop's treatment of its subject matter--"Butterscotch Pie" and "Off the Billboard"--and its ambiguous role as art--"Which is the Flag?" and "What is Art?"--are visually reinforced with images of Claes Oldenburg's huge fabric hamburgers, James Rosenquist's fragments of typewriters, Jasper Johns' painted flags, and Roy Lichtenstein's comic book heroes.¹⁸⁶(figure 15) The difference between art and the everyday is effaced both textually and visually and pop is censured for its inhumanity. Commenting on Warhol's now-famous quotation, "I'd like to be a machine, wouldn't you?" the article's unnamed author sarcastically responds, "Obviously, most people want to be human beings and to look at human art."¹⁸⁷ Needless to say, pop was not considered a human art. The author then concludes the review by condemning the "fashionable"

¹⁸⁵"Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace," *Time* v. 81, n. 18 (May 3, 1963): 65-68.

¹⁸⁶More specifically, images of art works included in this article are: Wesselmann's *Great American Nude #10*, Oldenburg's *Floorburger*, Rosenquist's *The Lines Were Etched Deeply On Her Face*, Lichtenstein's *Live Ammo*, an untitled Rauschenberg combine painting, Dine's *Coat*, Jasper Johns' *Flag on Orange Field*, and Warhol's *Marilyn Monroe*.

¹⁸⁷"Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace," 68.

people who embrace pop, that avant-garde public "hungry for more and more avant" and ever-fearful of being labelled philistine. It is because of people like these, says the *Time* writer, that "pop artists are in the chips,"¹⁸⁸ the implication being both that pop artists were undeserving of such financial success so early in their careers and that money was being carelessly gambled by fashion-conscious collectors.

The collectors responsible for the pop artists' monetary achievements had an interesting relationship to art and capital themselves in that generally they were represented in mass-market magazines as individuals undestined for success who had made something of themselves by making a lot of money in business--the "American Dream" at its most basic.¹⁸⁹ That these collectors had more than an aesthetic interest in pop was a point frequently, albeit at times subtly, raised in mass-market magazine coverage of the collectors. In a February 1964 *Time* article on the Sculls, for instance,

¹⁸⁸"Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace," 66.

¹⁸⁹As alluded to earlier in this paper, the most influential of the pop collectors, Robert C. Scull, paid his way through nine years of part-time college by painting signs and made his fortune as owner of a fleet of taxicabs, and the individual with the largest collection of pop art, Leon Kraushar, was an insurance broker. Other major collectors were Italian industrialist, Giuseppe Panza di Biumo; corporate lawyer, Leon Manuchin; book publisher Harry Abrams; and Richard Brown-Baker, the only major collector to have a "modest" private income with which to fund his collecting. It is interesting to note, however, that it was predominantly the collections of businessmen Scull and Kraushar which were discussed in mass-market magazines. Whether this was due to individual collectors' differing desires for privacy or publicity or editorial decisions made by the magazines themselves is an aspect of mainstream pop coverage I have yet to ascertain.

"A.T. & T on the Walls" is one of three subtitles,¹⁹⁰ while in *Life's* July 1965 look at three major pop collectors, "You Bought It, Now Live With It," Leon Kraushar's explanation of pop's significance for him employs yet another corporate analogy. "Pop is the art of today, and tomorrow, and all the future. These pictures are like IBM stock, don't forget that, and this is the time to buy, because pop is never going to die. I'm not planning to sell my IBM stock either."¹⁹¹

It was because of their ready spending on what they saw as the aesthetic equivalent to major corporation stocks that many art critics designated these new-rich collectors as one of the key reasons for pop's flooding of the art scene. Viewed in *Encounter* in 1965 as solely interested in pop's "publicity potential" and "trading value," collectors like Scull and Kraushar were implicated in the blatant commodification of art and the discrediting of any critical role for pop.¹⁹² Obviously,

¹⁹⁰"At Home with Henry," 40. In the section of the article under the "A. T. & T" heading, the history of Robert Scull's art collecting and commissioning is given. It begins with the story of how he sold his first acquisition, a spurious Utrillo purchased for \$245, for \$55 profit. In the paragraph preceding this section we had discovered that such collecting--and financial shrewdness--must run in the family as the Scull's eldest son buys "junior-sized examples" of pop by means of installments from his allowance.

¹⁹¹"You bought it now live with it," 58.

¹⁹²Barbara Rose, "Pop in Perspective," *Encounter*, v. 25 (August 1965): 59-60. Peter Selz, Curator of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in the early sixties, also publically commented on the questionable motives behind certain collectors' interest in pop. "The Philistine who always enjoyed reading the comics but never admitted it can now have enlargements of them on the wall and be considered as avant-garde as the first de Kooning collector." Peter Selz as quoted in Brian O'Doherty, "Vanity Fair: The New York Art Scene," *Newsweek* v. 65 (Jan. 2, 1965): 56.

there is also an unacknowledged struggle to retain power going on here. Traditionally, it had been the galleries and critics that made the choices that determined what was "hot," in both an aesthetic and market sense.¹⁹³ In the case of pop art, however, collectors were its principal champions and primarily responsible for the media and financial success of the pop movement.¹⁹⁴

Yet while pop art was the newsworthy art movement in the first half of the sixties, not all of its practitioners were given equal billing. As far as galleries and art journals were concerned, pop art meant work by a wide assortment of artists--Rauschenberg, Johns, Chamberlain, Lichtenstein, Marisol, Dine, Indiana, Oldenburg. In mass-market magazines, however, the choice was somewhat more limited. While the works of a number of artists were mentioned, as we have seen, the images which were consistently represented and discussed across a range of mass-market magazines and over a number of years were principally the production of four artists--James Rosenquist, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, and Tom Wesselmann.

Part of the explanation for the focus on these specific artists may be found in an examination of how the coverage of pop art is related to coverage of the collectors of pop art. Within the realm of mass-market

¹⁹³This is not to imply that aesthetic and financial success could practically be separated, albeit their conceptual disjunction was a fundamental tenet of much art world discussion.

¹⁹⁴For more on the direct involvement of pop art collectors in the success of pop art see Rublowsky, pp. 154-167. Describing the effect media coverage of pop had on the art world, one observer likened it to "a team of anthropologists in a Stone Age village; under their [the mass media's] observation, the art world has changed." Alan Levy, The Culture Vultures (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1968), p. 202.

magazines, it was predominantly the works that these collectors had purchased that were lavishly illustrated and accompanied by anecdotal texts. In articles such as *Life's* 1965 "You bought it now live with it," *Time's* 1964 "At Home with Henry," and the *Ladies Home Journal's* 1964 "Can This Be Art?" magazine photographers and writers went into the homes of the collectors, most often the Sculls, to get a take on pop.¹⁹⁵ Once inside they were usually confronted with works from a variety of artistic movements but the dominant theme was pop, and in particular, the works of Lichtenstein, Wesselmann, Rosenquist, and Warhol.

Their reporting and thus a mass-market magazine reader's vision of pop art was not limited solely by the dominance of the works of a limited number of pop artists, however. A further circumscription of pop's presence in mass-market magazines was taking place in that only *specific* works of these *specific* artists were being purchased by collectors and thus photographed and discussed. For example, while works by Warhol and Rosenquist were in all the major pop collections there is never any mention of images such as Warhol's *Red Explosion* (1963) or Rosenquist's *For the American Negro* (1962), even though both works had been exhibited publically. It is pieces such as Rosenquist's *Silver Skies* (1962) or Lichtenstein's romance-comic figures which recur time and again on the art pages of mass-market magazines.

And yet, while the subject matter and form of the pop images portrayed in mass-market magazines is of a similar theme--namely, images of contemporary consumer society often rendered using

¹⁹⁵As noted in Chapter One, in mass-market magazines' discussions of pop art the titles of the articles themselves--"At Home with Henry"--often attest to the context being one of the art's purchase and appreciation by pop art collectors.

commercial reproduction techniques--such commonality does not necessarily result in homogeneity of the imagery itself or opinions of it.

No one feels lukewarm about it. Like Richard Nixon, the old Brooklyn Dodgers, and birth control, "pop art" has its enthusiasts, including collectors who are paying twenty and thirty thousand dollars for some of it, and its violent detractors, including some of our most respected critics. The battle lines, however, are not neatly drawn nor the reactions predictable. Even within the Museum of Modern Art, there is no party line. The curator of paintings is explosively contemptuous of "pop art" but the Director of Collections is studiously interested -- and the trustees have bought half a dozen.¹⁹⁶

Similar to the Museum of Modern Art and the art world in general, mass-market magazines had no party line on pop. As we saw in this chapter, in their imaging of pop art mass-market magazine articles often focused on pop's deceptive similarity to everyday life. Yet these same texts would also show and talk about the collectors who were spending unprecedented sums for these goods as art. One issue of *Time* would totally pan pop while nine months later, another issue would

¹⁹⁶Aline B. Saarinen, "Explosion of Pop Art," *Vogue* v. 141, n. 8 (April 15, 1963): 86. Pop artist Andy Warhol had a slightly more dichotomous view of the situation. "The people who really like art don't like the art now, while the people who don't know about art like what we are doing." Warhol in a June 1964 interview with Bruce Glaser on radio station WBAI, New York. Carol Anne Mahsun, ed. Pop Art: The Critical Dialogue (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), p. 152.

conclude with a quotation from Robert Scull ardently defending pop.¹⁹⁷ Magazines such as the *Saturday Evening Post*, which had traditionally disdained or avoided art that seemed at all experimental, were now calling for the support and encouragement of those practicing artists who were providing images of the contemporary United States.¹⁹⁸ In the same *Time* article, in fact in the same paragraph, in which artist Max Ernst is cited comparing pop to the feeble bubbles of flat Coca-Cola, architect Philip Johnson, "whose architecture is the essence of elegance" is quoted describing pop as "'the most important art movement in the world today'".¹⁹⁹

This omnipresent ambiguity of mass-market magazine coverage is evidence of the challenging task the magazines had on their hands. Exhibited by commercial galleries and major museums, purchased by private collectors and renown art institutions, and analyzed in art magazines and formal symposia, pop art was an object of some artistic note and thus could not be summarily ridiculed or dismissed. At the same time, however, pop art did consist of images of hamburgers, brillo boxes, spray cans, and luncheon meats, subject matter which hardly seemed worthy of aesthetic contemplation. Consequently it appeared that one could neither simply mock nor admire pop art. In admiring it one could be viewed as an aesthetic philistine, confusing art and fashion, while in mocking it one ran the risk of mocking an

¹⁹⁷Respectively, "Pop Art-Cult of the Commonplace," and "At Home with Henry".

¹⁹⁸Frederick Breitenfeld, Jr., "Who Says I'm Uncultured?" Saturday Evening Post, v. 235, n. 27 (July 14-21, 1962): 10.

¹⁹⁹"Pop Art-Cult of the Commonplace," 66.

avant-garde art movement as well as mass culture, contemporaneity, and their intimate link with hegemonic constructions of "America" in the early sixties. The result of this dilemma was a mass-market magazine coverage full of tensions, vacillations, and contradictions, which may best be summed up as a kind of mocking admiration. The argument of this paper is that such an appraisal was not only relevant to pop's aesthetic worth, however, but also to what pop's form and content had so brightly illuminated--contemporary U.S. consumer culture.

CONCLUSION: WAKING UP FROM THE DREAM

In the spectacular society in which, as Charlotte Willard noted in *Art in America* in 1964, television, newspapers, and magazines increasingly gave the "average" U.S. citizen a ringside seat from which to view "the self-immolation of Buddhist monks, beaten Freedom riders, [and] dismembered bodies on holiday highways,"²⁰⁰ pop was an active performer. Still, while some pop art may have dealt with the "homogenization" of issues which resulted from the integration or flow of graphic images of such events with sitcoms and advertisements for deodorant, the face of pop that was unwaveringly proffered to mass-market magazines' readership was, according to the glamour-loving standards of the mass media, winningly attractive. It was not bombs nor blacks that one saw on the art pages of *Time* and *Life* but, as architect and pop collector Phillip Johnson happily sighed, "pretty girls and pop bottles."²⁰¹

And yet, this does not necessitate that the representations of pop found in mass-market magazines are affirmative of U.S. consumer society in the early sixties. As demonstrated in the previous chapter there were sufficient tensions, contradictions, and provocations present in mainstream pop coverage to make one either look again or a

NOTES

²⁰⁰Charlotte Willard, "Dealer's Eye View, " *Art in America*, v. 52, n. 2 (April 1964): 127-130.

²⁰¹As quoted in "Pop Art-Cult of the Commonplace," 66.

little closer at those images of beer cans, brillo boxes, and bathrooms--and at what they signified. While mass-market magazine coverage did not set pop up as a revolutionary art movement, neither did it portray pop as a successful advertisement for a consumeristic lifestyle. Rather, through consistently framing pop in terms of subject matter, technique, the changing image of the artist, the art market, and private collectors in its success, mass-market magazine reporting of pop provoked questions over pop's symbiotic relationship with mass culture. True, the questioning rarely became pointed but a subtle uncomfortability does begin to show itself in the characteristic ambiguity of the responses.

While presented as originating from aesthetic concerns, that uncomfortability actually emanates from mixed sentiments over the value of consumer culture and the changes it had wrought in U.S. society by the early sixties. With the reign of mass culture did individualism actually thrive or disappear altogether? Did technological progress mean continual advancement or a widening gap between the have and have-nots? Was democracy experiencing its truest practice in U.S. history or had the government in fact become a modern-day oligarchy? Most significantly perhaps, was mass culture itself--and the culture with which it was most closely associated, namely that of the United States--the means of improving the overall quality of life or was it in fact a great leveller, the outcome of which was quality being submerged in a morass of quantity?

Sitting in their suburban ranch homes with the backyard barbeque fired, the front lawn freshly mowed, the freshly-washed clothes spinning in the dryer, the kids sitting attentively in front of the colour television, the kitchen well-stocked with canned and packaged goods,

and the car parked in the two-door garage, in the late fifties and early sixties a larger percentage of the U.S. population than ever before had material grounds for believing that the American Dream and all it promised could become reality. The advertising and complimentary content to which they were exposed in mass-market magazines provided support and encouragement of the myth through furnishing ready-made, full-colour examples of how to live the ideal/idyllic U.S. lifestyle. One might make fun of some of the foibles of a contemporary consumer society--the frozen-in-flavour of wax beans being wax, for instance--but ultimately one admired consumer culture and all it provided. By 1965, however, it was becoming more difficult to sustain such admiration, mockingly or otherwise. The fabric of the American Dream was no longer simply fraying at the edges but coming apart at the seams as discontent with its texture and quality was beginning to be voiced both at home and abroad.

Both consumed and consuming, the visions of consumption which littered mass-market magazines' visual portrayls and textual discussions of pop art--brightly-coloured images of pop bottles, canned goods, spray cans, and hamburgers--were thus provocative not simply on the level of artistic "impurity" but also on that of the status of consumer products as integral elements of the American Dream in the sixties. As pop collector and publishing magnate Harry Abrams observed regarding pop artists in a 1965 issue of *Life*, "They're giving us a new way to look at things, to notice what's around us they've opened our eyes."²⁰² Between the covers of mass-market magazines from 1962-65 it was a vision of a United States beginning to

²⁰²"You Bought It Now Live With It," 60.

experience doubts about the possibly prohibitive costs of a consumeristic way of life to which one's eyes were opened.

The counter-culture and student movements did not spring fully-formed out of Camelot in the mid-sixties afterall. Disaffection and discord evident in the fifties' racial struggles, growth of the Beat movement, and rock and roll, as well as other tensions which lay just under the surface of an aggressively conformist, wealthy, middle class, were the seeds of discontent which would burst forth in the second half of the decade as a full-blown questioning of the values of contemporary U.S. society. The concepts of individualism, progress, democracy, and nationalism which had taken form in the post-war period were then loudly challenged by student protestors, civil rights activists, the Vietnam war, the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, the ecological movement, women's liberation, and so forth.

While pop art's presentation in mass-market magazines certainly did not spark off any revolutions on its own, the tensions it revealed about contemporary U.S. consumer society play an active role in the ongoing questioning of the values of that society taking place in the sixties. Hence I have to disagree when a writer like Genauer in *Ladies Home Journal* claims that pop art has received so much attention because "we can look at [pop] as if it were a reflection in a distorting mirror at the circus, and laugh. We can pretend that this is really distortion, that we are in a circus." While laughter certainly is a part of one's experience of pop as presented in mass-market magazines, there is a self-mocking quality to it that is clearly grounded in the realities of everyday life in the early sixties U.S. and that has no place in the fantasy world found under the Big Top.

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APPENDIX 1: POP ART IN MASS-MARKET MAGAZINES 1962-65

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Something New Is Cooking

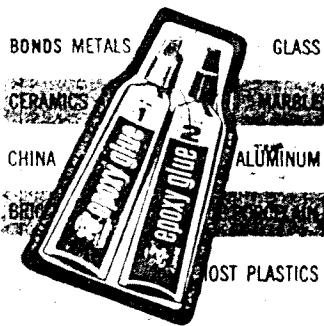
Cooking up new art is as easy as pie—or so it would seem from the latest variety served up by some U.S. painters. Inspired by commonplace, mass-produced aspects of everyday life, they are faithfully filling their canvases with everything from baked goods to billboard beauties and comic strips.

The creators of this provocatively prosaic brand of art have been lumped together under various labels: Commonists, Vulgarists or, ironically, the New American Dreamers. But each artist developed independently, oblivious of other contributors to the "movement." While painters around New York and New

Jersey have focused on images from commercial art (following pages), Wayne Thiebaud in California has concentrated on cafeteria goodies. Assembly lines of pies and cakes march across his canvases. Glaringly illuminated, Thiebaud's desserts seem deserted, a lonely calorie crowd untouched by human hands. To the 42-year-old artist, his paintings are both "criticism and celebration." He is offended by the impersonal sameness that results from displaying things "in great gobs." But he is attracted by the "beauty of the fluffy pies," and also their taste. "I eat chocolate pies," he confesses, "and enjoy them—sometimes."



[fig. 1] "Something New is Cooking," *Life*, v. 52, n. 24 (June 15, 1962): 115.



MIRACULOUS EPOXY GLUE

**Does
what
no
other
glue
can
do!**



Mend broken bone china



Repair glass ashtrays



Fix broken toys



Mend pots and pans



Attach bathroom fixtures



Seal leaks in pipes



Mend eyeglass frames

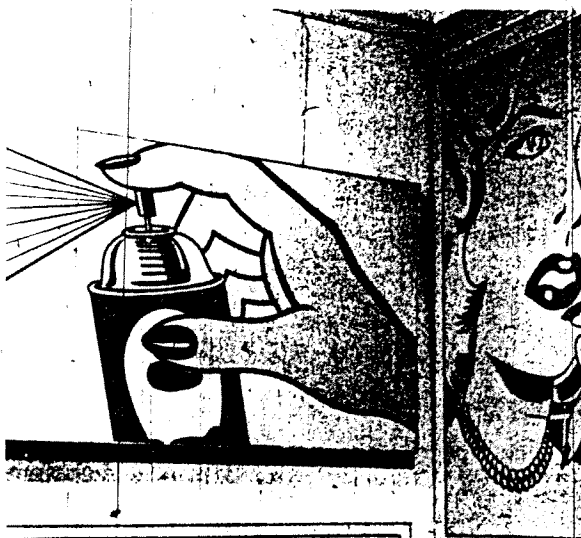
Don't replace them... repair them! Repair them with Elmer's new Epoxy Glue. Repair metal, glass, ceramics, bone china, marble, dinnerware, brass and most hard plastics. Elmer's Epoxy Glue bonds nonporous surfaces for good. Bonds them so permanently they can be boiled in water! That's because Elmer's Epoxy is no ordinary glue. To activate its supergluing properties, just mix the two tubes and apply with handy applicator. A gluing miracle happens! The molecules of the epoxy fuse with the molecules of the surfaces being joined. The bond is lasting. Clear and transparent. Weather-proof. Stronger than new. So when something breaks, cracks, or chips—don't replace it—repair it. Do it with Elmer's new Epoxy Glue. Pick up a handy blister pack today. A product of The Borden Chemical Company, 350 Madison Avenue, New York 17, New York. (Available in Canada.)

ART CONTINUED

Giant cartoons, \$400 to \$1,200

Fascinated by popular Americana, Roy Lichtenstein used to paint parodies of Washington crossing the Delaware and Wild West Indian fights. Sometimes he sneaked a cartoon character into an abstract painting. "This led me to wonder," says Roy, who is 39 and teaches now at Rutgers University, "what it would be like if I made a cartoon that looked just like a cartoon." The oversized works below are the result. Along with portraits of household gadgets like spray cans they were recently exhibited in New York. The show sold out completely at prices from \$100 to \$1,200.

Some critics have compared Roy's bold, stiff figures with the works of the noted French painter, Fernand Léger. Others say Roy seems to be sitting on the fence, mocking the household gods and gadgets that Americans love, and at the same time viewing them with admiration. Still other people can't see much difference between Roy's out-sized cartoons and ads and what is printed in the newspapers. But Roy says he shifts things around a bit to get a more esthetic effect. At any rate they hang now in several important private collections, along with revered De Koonings and Picassos.



WHY, BRAD DARLING, THIS PAINTING IS A MASTERPIECE! MY, SOON YOU'LL HAVE ALL OF NEW YORK CLAMORING FOR YOUR WORK!



you'll take a million steps this summer

make each one more comfortable in

Wigwam socks

For Every Sport... and Everyday Wear, Too!

For soft, smooth, and comfortable wear

Lighter weight, same color

Packaged separately, helpful gift sock for men and women

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TOY HOUSE TOYS

TOY HOUSE approved TOYS are play tested... by children. They're carefully chosen for safety and sustained play-interest... inexpensive, too! Look for the famous TOY HOUSE label in food and drug stores and many other places.

AGE GROUP: 3-5 YEARS

TOY HOUSE

LOOK FOR TOY HOUSE LABEL

[fig. 2] "Something New is Cooking," 120.

ART



SIQUEIROS

Breaking the bars.



DANCER (1963)

Paintings from Prison

Mexico's patriarchal painter, David Allaro Siqueiros, found guilty of Communist rabble rousing during some 1960 riots, is serving his fourth year in prison, with at least two to go. But locking up Siqueiros in a cell in Mexico City's Black Palace prison does not mean locking up his energy. Carrying out an old ambition, he has organized a baseball team, with himself at first base, which plays in the prison yard. And he steadily paints little pictures that sell at \$1,500 apiece. This month Manhattan's New Art Center Gallery is showing 16 Siqueiros paintings, ten of them done in his 15-ft. by 7-ft. home.

Though he says that his eyesight is growing weaker in his dim cell, Siqueiros still wields a dancing brush that creates images somersaulting and swirling far from a prison courtyard. His jail-made *Dancer* wishfully wraps a cape of anatomy around a vaulted pole. His forceful, lavender-colored *Mother and Child* casts the swaying shadow of a madonna into a posture of freedom. In keeping with the size of his studio, the paintings are small, their message is that the great talent, having been put in the cooler, is frozen.

Nonetheless, the work serves Siqueiros' purpose. "My painting has always been that of a free man," he says. "Even though my painting is that of a man in jail, I break my prison bars by painting land, cape, and beautiful days."

At Home with Henry

Just across Fifth Avenue from Manhattan's Metropolitan Museum, the U.S.'s amplest conservatory of time-tested art is a hothouse of the newest and least tested. It is the apartment of Robert C. Scull, the world's most avid collector of Pop art or, as it is more generously called, New Realism.

The Sculls, in most respects a normal, unpretentious, upper middle-class American family, live with Pop, sleep with it, eat with it, relax with it, and love it. They are not, however, bitter cultural rebels, ready to dynamite the Corinthian columns of the Met. At least Met Director James Rorimer does not think so. He enjoys going to the Sculls' for dinner and finding out how avant a garde can get.

Plastered Pulse. Among Rorimer's special kicks is encountering in the lobby a life-size plaster cast of one of the Met's curators, Henry Geldzahler, made by Sculptor George Segal. For the Sculls, the plastered Henry (*top picture opposite page*) has become a household name.

Scull likes to feel Henry's pulse. "How pale you look," he murmurs. Scull's three boys chat with Henry and use him as a talisman of good luck for exams at school.

Beyond the foyer, the walls are a vir-

tual tapestry of contemporary art; the furniture, mostly antique except for braces of modern Mies and Eames chairs, cowers in the center of the rooms to make place for paintings. Even Scull's eldest son, Jonathan, 15, covers the walls of his room with his own collection of junior-sized examples of Pop that he buys by installments with his allowance. The apartment is so cluttered with art derived from familiar objects that frequently guests pick up an ordinary cigarette box and ask who the artist was.

A.T. & T. on the Walls. New York, born Robert Scull, 48, paid his way through nine years of part-time college by painting signs, ran his own industrial design firm through the 1930s. He and his wife Ethel, whom everybody calls "Spike," lived in a one-room flat a few blocks from the Museum of Modern Art and regarded its paintings as theirs. "Nearly all of our entertaining was held in the penthouse of the museum," Scull reminisces. Then Scull acquired a fleet of taxicabs, some real estate, and started making money.

His first art acquisition was a spurious Utrillo, bought at auction for \$245. "I felt as though I had bought all of A.T. & T.," he recalls. When he became aware that it was a phony, he sold it fast—for \$55 profit. He decided after that to gamble with undeniably authentic contemporaries. Nowadays, says Scull, "I spend Sundays prowling through the upper stories of fish wholesale buildings, the back alleys of Brooklyn tenements. I don't presume to know a great work of art from a so-so effort. I simply buy what I feel I want to own, and I live with these things. I just love them."

The Sculls have commissioned 15 new paintings during the past ten years, including several family portraits. Andy Warhol, when asked to do a portrait of Ethel, put her in an automatic snapshot studio in Times Square and fed heaps of quarters into it. "Now start smiling and talking," said the artist.



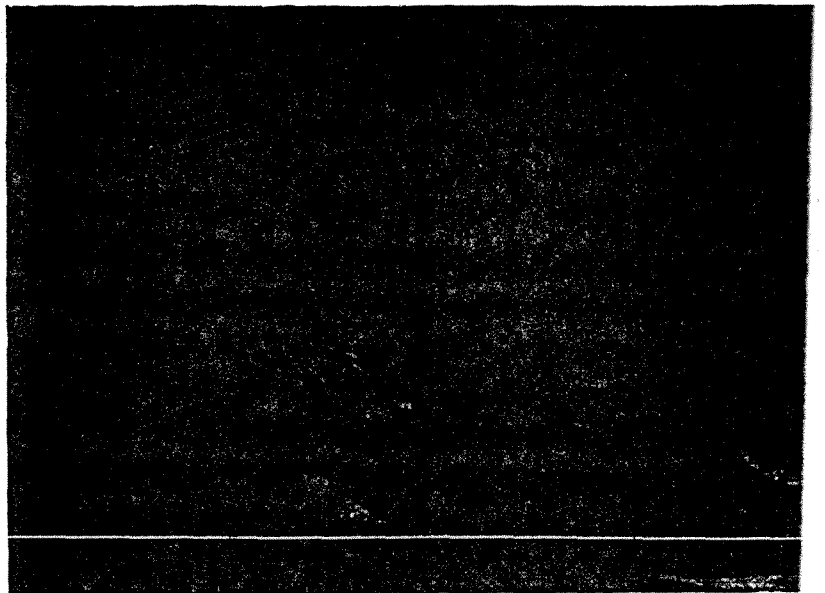
COLLECTORS ETHEL & ROBERT SCULL
Laughing it up.

[fig. 3] "At Home with Henry," *Time*, v. 83, n. 8 (Feb. 21, 1963): 40.

'Changing our idea of what taste is'

Harry Abrams is no patron-come-lately to the art world. He is a graduate of the Art Students League and president of a flourishing firm which publishes more than 200 art books a year. It took pop a while to wend its way through Abrams' apartment. It started in the guest room, spilled out into the hall, jumped over to the library and finally crept into the living and dining rooms. Every potential pop purchase now gets a tryout in the living room, where it has to rub frames with such competition as Picasso, Chagall, Modigliani and Monet. "If it holds its own in this company for 10 days or so," says Abrams, "I keep it."

He finds that plenty of pop art does hold its own, including a tiny, wheeled sculpture by Jean Tinguely that rolls around the guest room floor, and a painting in the hall which includes a real clock mounted sideways. "I've never been afraid of new things or afraid to change my mind," Mr. Abrams says. "I like to think of myself as collecting the great things of today. Someday, maybe some museum will be glad to have my collection. Who knows?"



One of the thrills of collecting contemporary art, Harry Abrams believes, is being surrounded by "art that's alive." His daughter-in-law, Susie Abrams (above), feels that some pop art is just a little too alive. She finds sleep in the Abrams guest room, amid George Segal's plaster *Artist's Model* and Marisol's wood sculpture, *Bicycle Riders*, a trifle fitful. "Sometimes," she shudders, "I wake up in the middle of the night and there are all those people, just there." At left, Abrams watches a television set which is part of a Tom Wesselman work called *Still Life with Live TV*. "Whether the TV is on or off," says Abrams, "the painting is different every time I look at it." Over his right shoulder is *The Parachutist* by young British pop artist Gerald Laing. At right, maid Cleo Johnson takes a sideways reading on a clock which is part of a painting by Rober Rauschenberg. The clock works

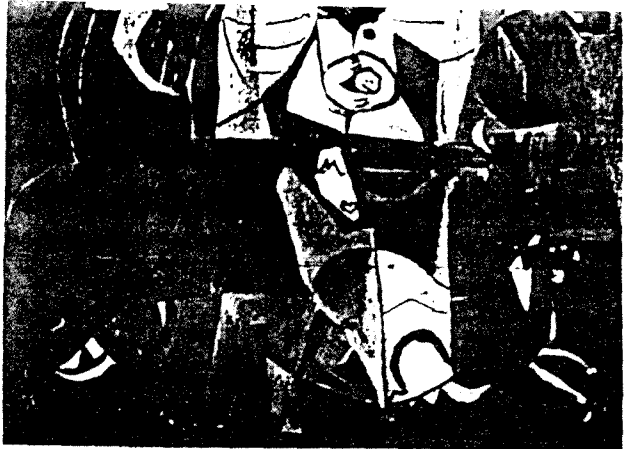
What is it like to live with pop art? It's like trying to explain why someone likes to live with a Cézanne or a Renoir. You just can't explain it. It's being involved in the excitement of an art that's really contemporary—whether it's pop, op, or the shaped canvas. These young painters are so filled with vitality and ideas—

they've taken things around us and added something of their own. They're giving us a new way to look at things, to notice what's around us. They may even be changing our whole idea of what taste is. Before we know it, they'll be the old ones and we'll be on to something else, but in the meantime they've opened our eyes.

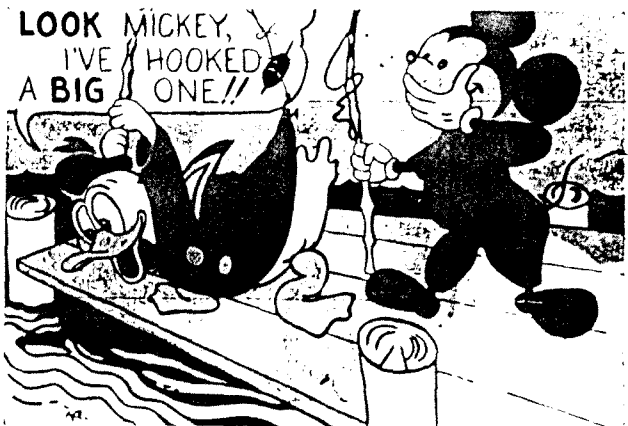


[fig. 5] James Rosenquist, *The Lines Were Etched Deeply On The Map of Her Face.*, 1962.

fig. 6] "Is He the Worst Artist in the U.S.?" *Life*, v. 56, n. 5 (Jan. 31, 1964): 80.



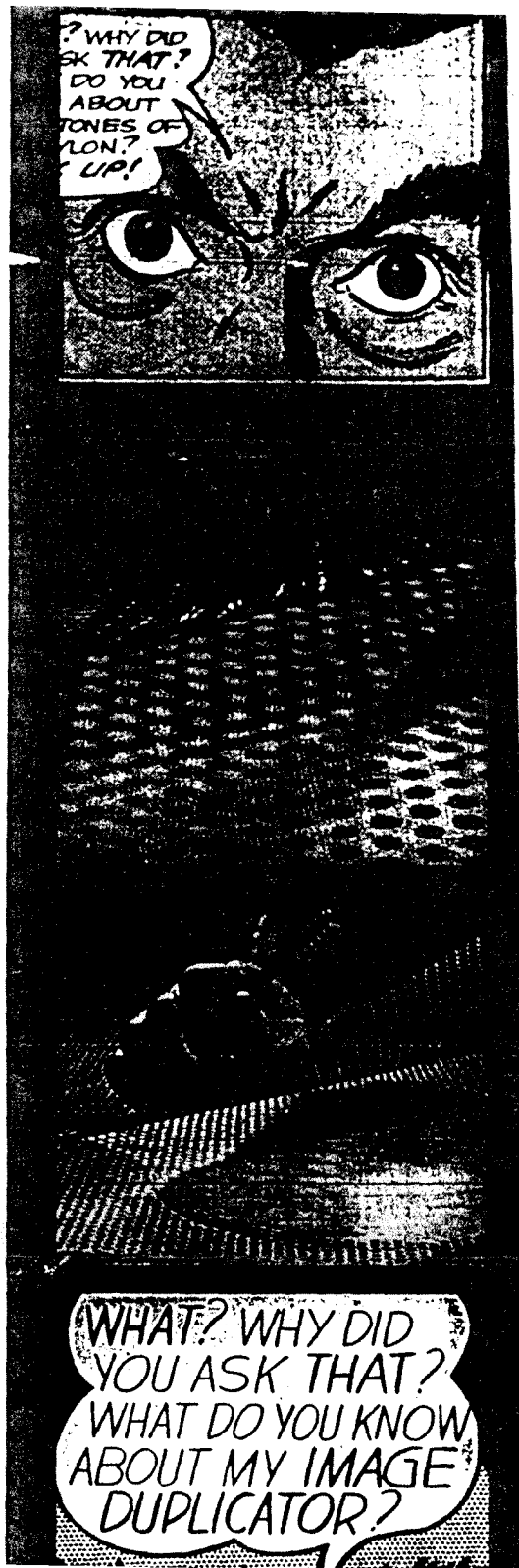
In 1951 Lichtenstein transferred American artist William Rimmer's *Immigrant Train* into a Picasso-like style (above). Later he tried out variations on Disney cartoons (below).



... and this is
how he does it

At the outset of his career, Lichtenstein was engrossed in 19th Century Americana. He liked painting cowboys and Indians in modern art styles. Gradually he worked his way into 20th Century Americana like Mickey Mouse and G.I. Jell-O gun wrapper. In 1961 Lichtenstein began to play with

size he wanted and traced it onto his canvas (*far right*). To simulate photoengraver's dots, Lichtenstein had a metal screen on the canvas, spread oil paint over the screen with a roller and rubbed the paint through the holes with a toothbrush (*to and from top*). Undotted parts of the picture were masked with paper (*third from*

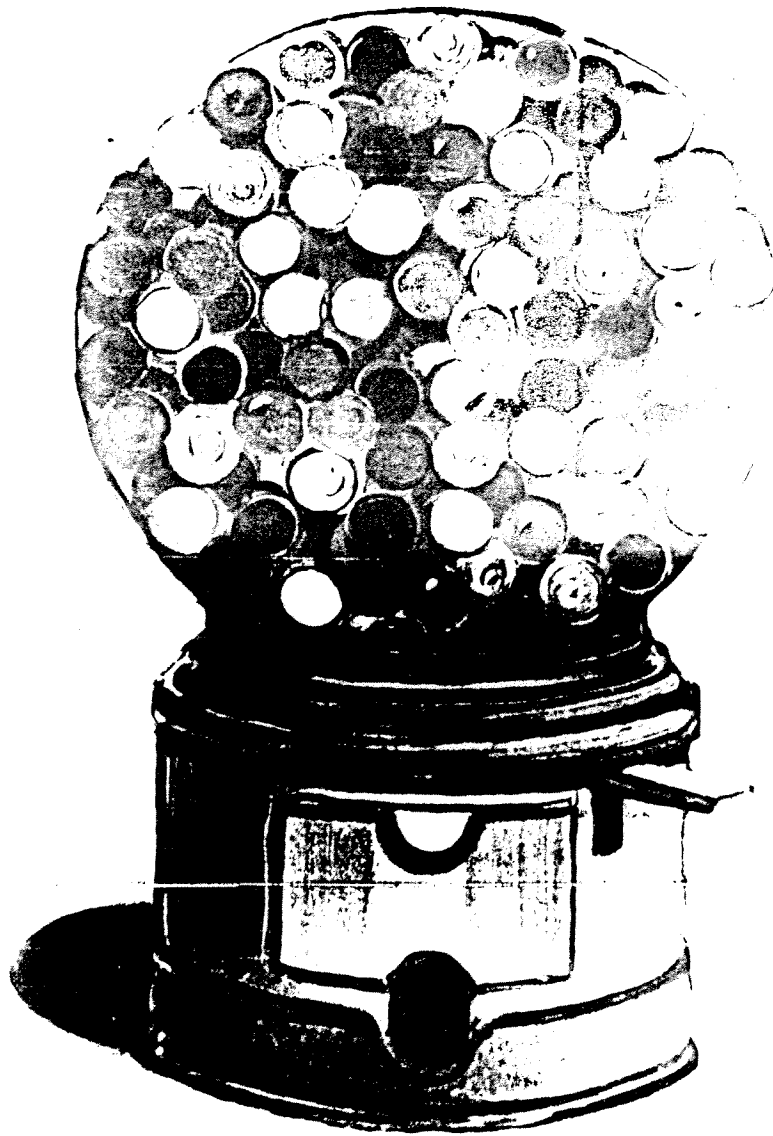
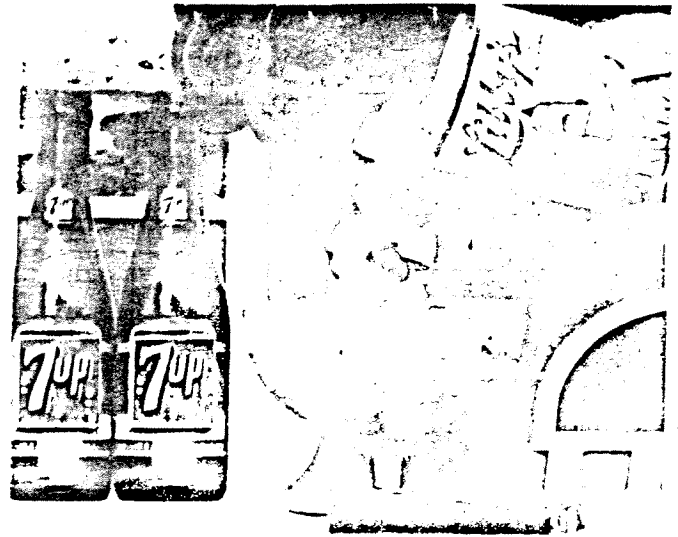


BILLBOARD ART FOR THE HOME

When you want to make a statement in your home, there's nothing more effective than a billboard. And now, with the advent of the new "Billboard Art" series, you can have the look of a billboard in your home. The new "Billboard Art" series is a collection of 12 different billboards, each featuring a different design. The designs range from abstract to realistic, and each billboard is made of a durable material that can be hung on any wall. The new "Billboard Art" series is a great way to add a touch of art to your home.

COLORFUL FARE TO CHEW ON

When you want to make a statement in your home, there's nothing more effective than a billboard. And now, with the advent of the new "Billboard Art" series, you can have the look of a billboard in your home. The new "Billboard Art" series is a collection of 12 different billboards, each featuring a different design. The designs range from abstract to realistic, and each billboard is made of a durable material that can be hung on any wall. The new "Billboard Art" series is a great way to add a touch of art to your home.

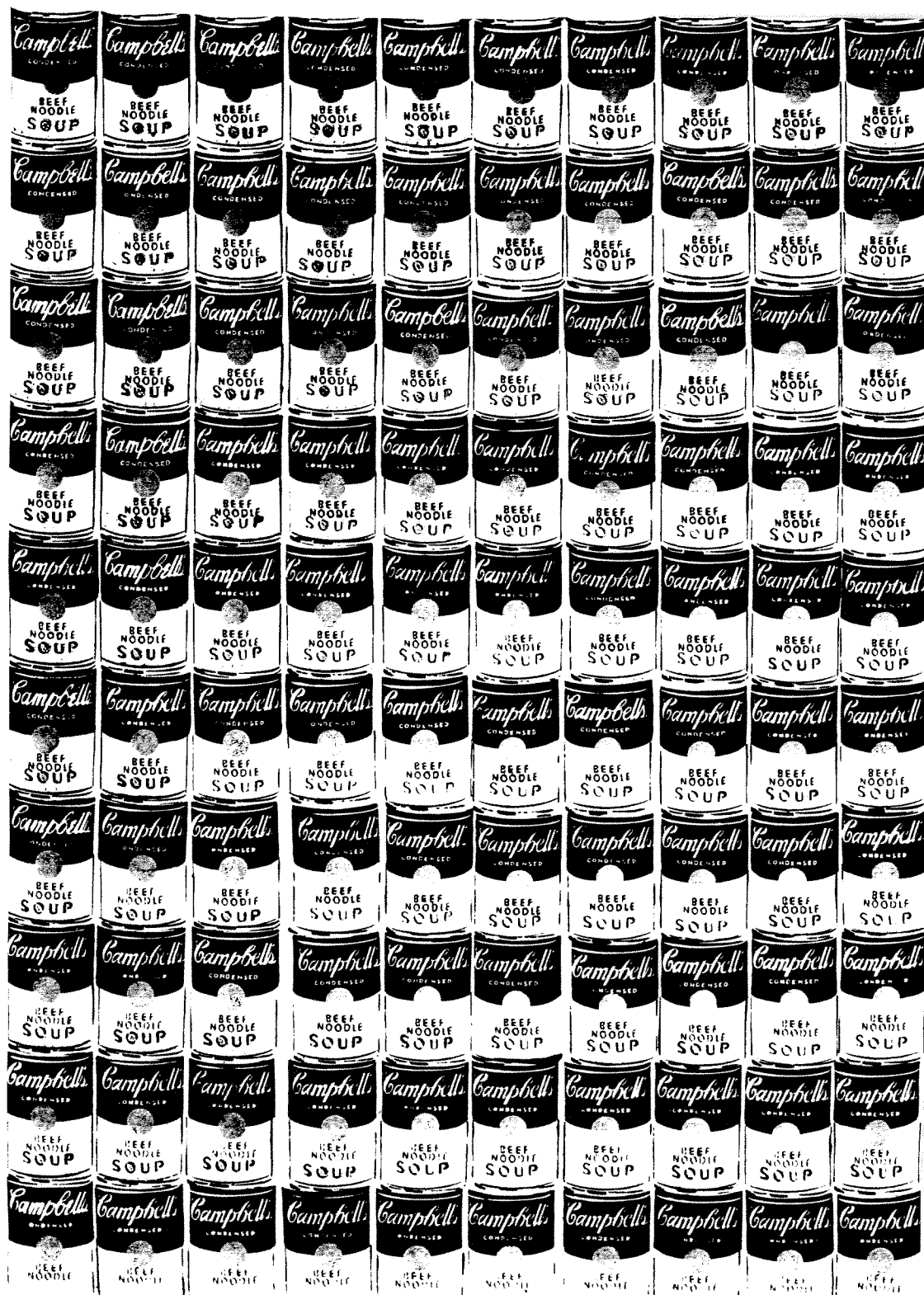


[fig. 7] "Sold-Out Art," Life, v. 55, n. 12 (Sept. 20, 1963): 128.

WE
ROSE UP
SLOWLY
... AS IF
WE DIDN'T
BELONG
TO THE
OUTSIDE
WORLD
ANY
LONGER
... LIKE
SWIMMERS
IN A
SHADOWY
DREAM ...
WHO
DIDN'T
NEED TO
BREATHE...



[fig. 8] Roy Lichtenstein, *We Rose Up Slowly*, 1964.



[fig. 9] Andy Warhol, *100 Campbell Soup Cans*, 1962.

you think this is a

SUPERMARKET?



[fig. 10] "You Think this is a Supermarket?" Life, v. 57, n. 21 (Nov. 20, 1964): 138.

[fig. 11] "Far-out Refrigerators," Life, v. 58, n. 8 (Feb. 26, 1965): 55.



Even Pop Art Is Used to Dress Up New Models

Far-out Refrigerators

[fig. 12] "Styles Too are Pushed Further Out by Pop," *Life*, v. 58, n. 8 (Feb. 26, 1965): 64.

SMALL WONDER



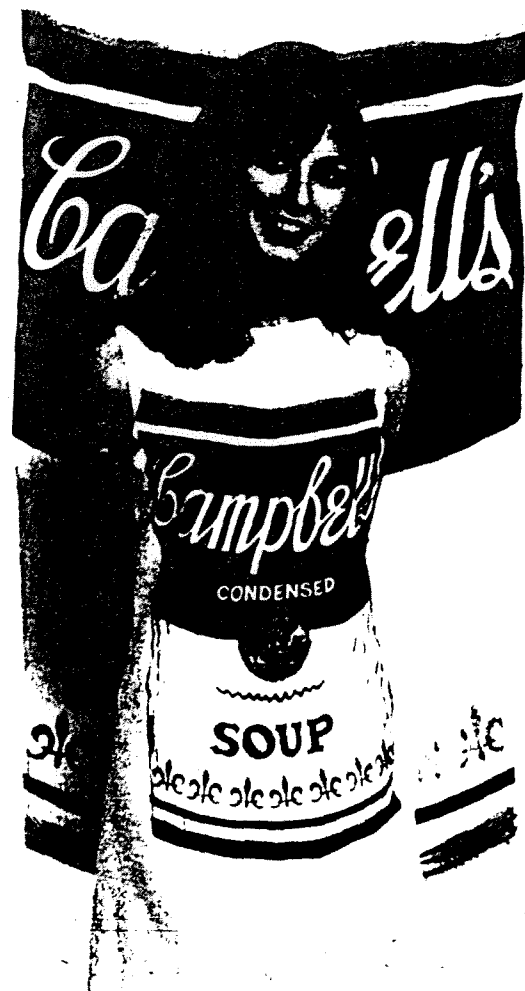
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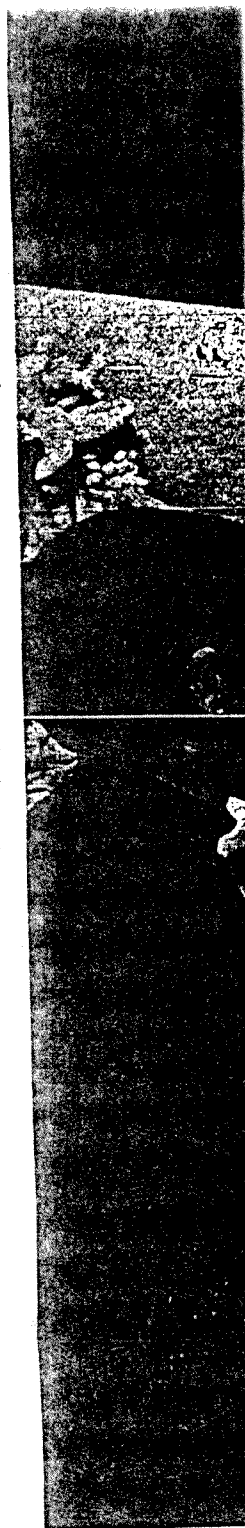
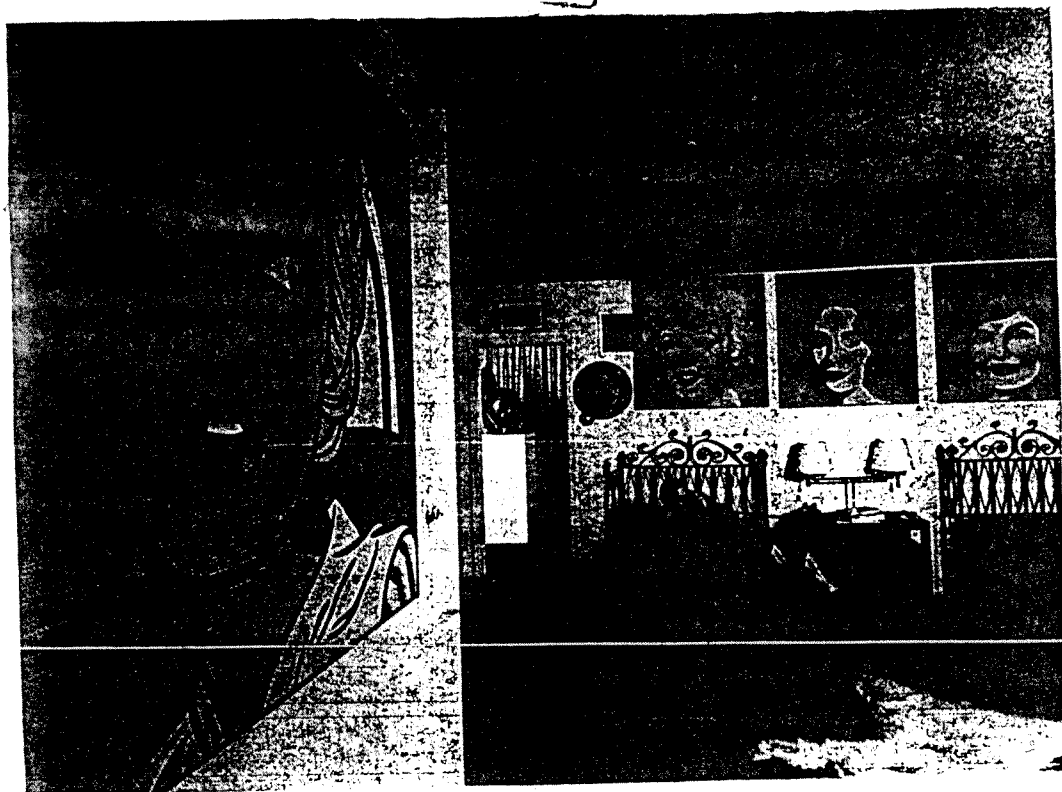
This small wonder has a reputation as big as all get-out. It's a pure and simple mechanical miracle that reaches 80 with ease—in fact, ran non-stop Los Angeles to New York in a record 46 hours, 45 minutes. What else is new? Well, this is a sports sedan that seats four of you and then delivers the punch line: a rear seat that folds down to create a station wagon with 19.75 cubic feet of space. In fact, the only thing small about the Imp is its pint size appetite—up to 40 miles to the gallon.

POP STYLES

You can bring the first
course to dinner
on your dress

Some of the most famous pop art prints are Andy Warhol's portraits of Campbell's soup cans. He has made 17 editions of this familiar but unusual food, and he sold them for \$1,000 each. He also made photographs (actual 17½ cans) of tomato soup, selling them at \$6 each. But this dress by Crazy Horse costs only \$16.





'I just know they're there'

Leon Kraushar was first smitten by pop art two years ago when he came upon a painting forthrightly titled *Hand with Sponge*. His wife was unimpressed. "I told him," she says, "that if he wanted to see a hand with a sponge he could always watch me."

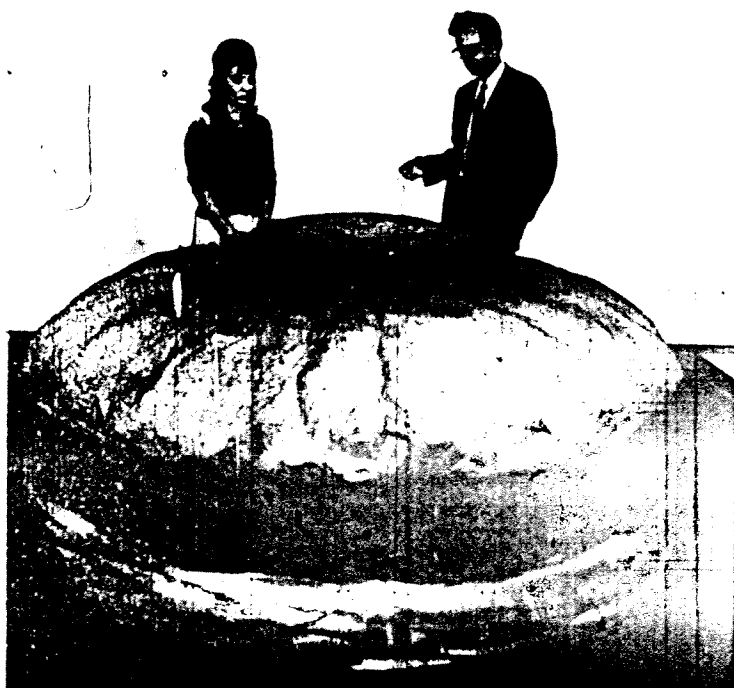
But Kraushar was hooked. He promptly began replacing his sizable contemporary collection with such pop treats as Claes Oldenburg's oversized painted plaster baked potato, which rests on the dining room table, and George Segal's plaster cast of a jazz combo. To make room for more, he is expanding his seven-room house on Long Island. "Around four in the morning," says Mr. Kraushar, "I come into the study and smoke three or four cigarets. I don't even look at the pictures. I just know they're there — and that I have the best and the biggest collection in the world."

Roy Lichtenstein's *Frightenedness* stares from the wall (top) as Kraushar lolls beneath a gallery of well-known beauties by Andy Warhol. Family friends (above) scrutinize Ritz crackers in jewel box. (Crackers also appealed to the Kraushar schmauser, Moe, who polished them off without comment. The artist replaced them.) In dressing room (right), Kraushar washes up as Tom Wesselman's *Great American Nude* does likewise in a panel with real tile and toilet seat. At top right, the Kraushars entertain art dealer Ben Birillo (right) amid stacked Brillo boxes by Warhol, jazz combo by Segal.





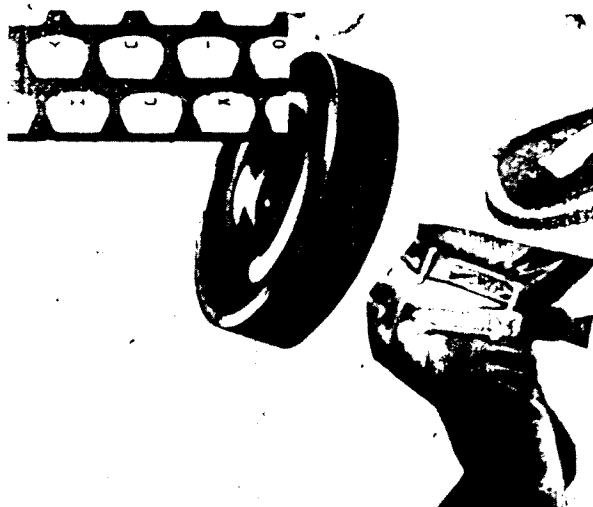
[fig. 14] du Plessix Gray, Francine. "The House That Pop Built," House and Garden, v. 127, n. 5 (May 1965): 159.



OLDENBURG'S "FLOORBURGER"



GOLDEN, THE "TAKE COVER"



LONGINES: THE TIME WELL CHARGED, COPY ON THE PLY

...the most popular of the new art forms, the pop art, is a new kind of art that is based on the everyday objects of life.

Some people say that it is a new kind of art, but others say it is just a new kind of painting. But the pop art is not just a new kind of painting, it is a new kind of art that is based on the everyday objects of life.

A person of British nationality, the artist of the pop art is a person who is interested in the everyday objects of life. He is interested in the things that we see every day, and he wants to show them to us in a new way.

The pop art is a new kind of art that is based on the everyday objects of life. It is a new kind of art that is based on the things that we see every day, and it is a new kind of art that is based on the things that we use every day. It is a new kind of art that is based on the things that we see every day, and it is a new kind of art that is based on the things that we use every day.

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...the most popular of the new art forms, the pop art, is a new kind of art that is based on the everyday objects of life.

Off the Billboard: ...the most popular of the new art forms, the pop art, is a new kind of art that is based on the everyday objects of life.

[fig. 15] "Pop Art--Cult of the Commonplace," Time, V. 81, N. 18 (May 3, 1963): 66.