



Art and Politics
in the Age of
Enterprise Culture

GREGORY
SHOLETTE

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THE GRIN OF THE ARCHIVE

Haunting implies places, a habitation, and always a haunted house.

Jacques Derrida¹

The Ruins

The exhibition *Committed to Print* opened at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in early 1988, three months after the Black Monday stock market crash ended an unprecedented capitalist expansion, and just over two years before the dismantling of the Berlin Wall signaled the termination of the Cold War.² Curated by Deborah Wye, *Committed to Print* featured more than 130 political posters, graphics, and artists' books made both by well-known artists—including a geometric print by Frank Stella used to raise money for the Attica Legal Defense Benefit Fund and a grim silk-screen piece by Andy Warhol from his *Death and Disaster* series—as well as printed works by artists and artists' groups unknown to most museum-goers. Examples from the latter included a stenciled octopus street-graphic by Becky Howland announcing the illegally squatted *Real Estate Show* in 1980, or “The United States of Africa,” an historical map of American racism designed by Faith Ringgold to raise funds for herself, Jeane Toche, and Jon Hendricks who had been charged with desecrating the US flag during *The People's Flag Show* in 1971. *Committed to Print* garnered support from the American Section of the International Association of Critics who voted it the second most significant exhibition of 1987–88, second only to Anselm Kiefer's traveling retrospective. Not surprisingly arch-conservative Hilton Kramer denounced Wye's project, entitling his *New York Observer* review, “Show of Political Prints at MoMA Echoes the Bad Taste of the 1920s.”³ It was also heavily criticized from the Left for having lamentably left out AIDS activist graphics.⁴ All in all, the ideological stakes could not have been more transparent: who would come to narrate the cultural legacy of the 1960s and 1970s? Would it be those who sympathized or perhaps even participated in its radical critique of capitalism, imperialism, homophobia, and racism? Or would it be an increasingly strident conservative movement that had been historically sidelined by the New Left and the counter-culture? The appropriation of radical Left tactics, including those of ACT UP, by

the Right-leaning libertarian Tea Party suggests the latter has ultimately taken control of this historical narrative.

Included in Wye's exhibition was a searing anti-war graphic originally designed by members of the Art Workers' Coalition (AWC) in 1970. The offset poster reveals a gruesome mound of dead Vietnamese women and children slain by US soldiers. Originally photographed by Ronald Haeberle, AWC members superimposed the text *Q. And Babes? A. Yes, And Babies* over the image. Provocatively, AWC called upon MoMA to co-sponsor and distribute the work in support of a wave of national demonstrations decrying the US invasion of Cambodia and the shooting deaths of student protesters at Kent and Jackson State Universities that spring. Despite strong support from museum staff, the MoMA's board of directors officially refused the invitation, arguing that the poster's explicit political content was too far removed from the mission of an art museum.⁵ With help from the Lithographers Union, AWC finally printed *Q. And Babes? A. Yes, And Babies*, after which they staged an intervention at the museum by holding the grisly graphic aloft in front of Picasso's *Guernica*.⁶ Almost two decades later Wye officially displayed the contentious AWC graphic inside the institution that had rejected it, most likely for the first time. At least momentarily *Committed to Print* broke with the museum's staunch ideological separation of art from politics. Wye boldly exhibited a veritable core-sample of post-'68 dissident graphic artworks, organized the prints and posters into six contentious subject categories: Government/Leaders; Race/Culture; Gender; Nuclear Power/Ecology; War/Revolution; and Economics/Class Struggle/The American Dream. The most relevant of these categories for the thesis of this book is the show's final section on economics and gentrification. It included several printed artworks condemning real estate speculators and the relentless transformation of poor and working-class neighborhoods into neo-Bohemian zones of knowledge production. With the exception of AIDS activism, the signal feature of New York urban politics in the 1980s centered on opposition to new forms of privatized urban renewal being undertaken by municipal government in league with finance, real estate, and insurance capital. Ironically, the processes of displacement and gentrification that unfolded not only plagued the always precarious lives of artists, but artists themselves in turn fueled this very process. As Zukin, Deutsche and Ryan, and Smith have all shown, the presence of entrepreneurial cultural workers often unwittingly ramps up real estate values in economically ravaged urban neighborhoods, unleashing a series of rent hikes that eventually makes it impossible for artists to remain.⁷ As they move on to still more marginal locations and repeat this process, higher-income professionals move in to the newly "regenerated" neighborhood as the new "gentry." The Midnight Notes Collective has aptly described this phenomenon in terms of *new enclosures* that recapitulate Marx's concept of original or "primitive" accumulation: the forceful theft of peasant

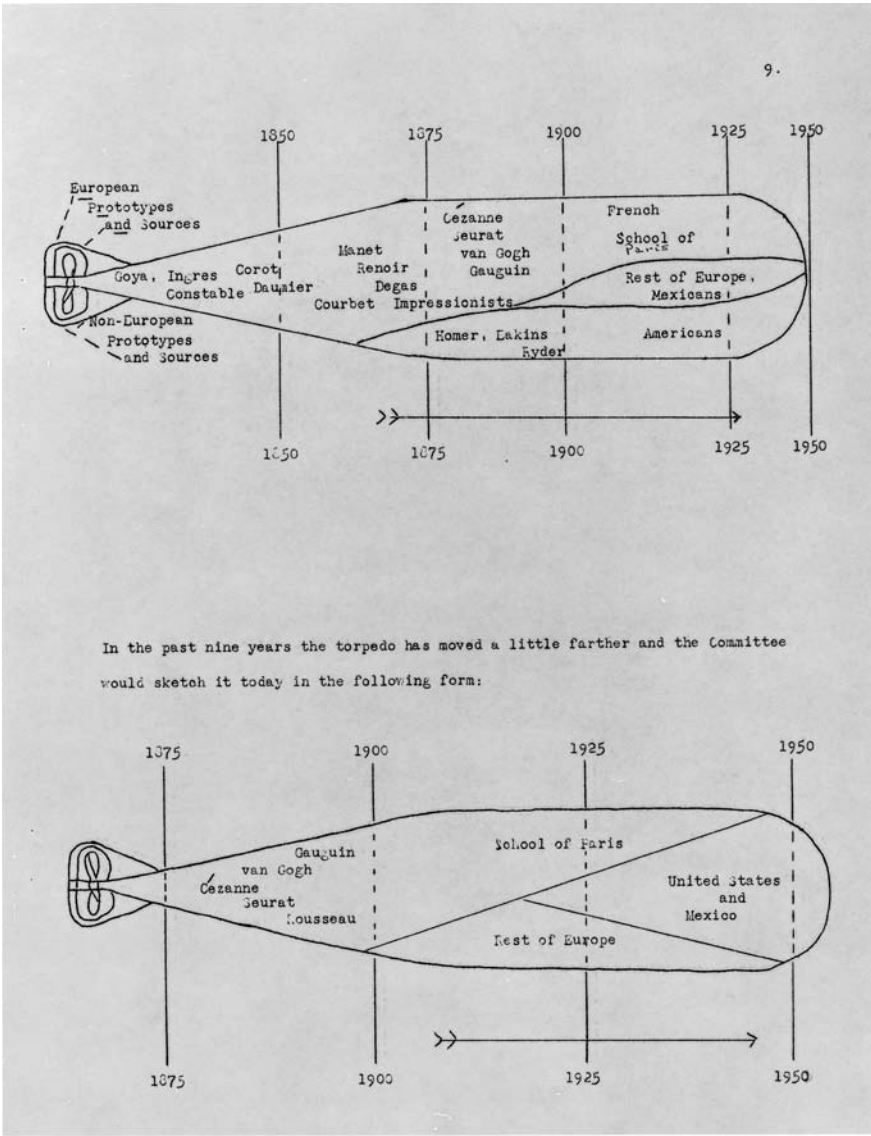
lands and commons in eighteenth-century Europe (and earlier) that simultaneously concentrated reserves of capital and created a new, property-less class, the proletariat.⁸ But what makes Wye's inclusion of anti-gentrification graphics especially notable is that by the late 1980s this process of new enclosures was not only inescapable, it was signaling the rise of what Neil Smith calls the revanchist city to come.⁹ Any doubts about this process or where the city was heading were soon erased by the ruthless eviction by police of homeless squatters and anarchists from Tompkins Square Park only weeks after the MoMA exhibition closed. Thus, while AWC's anti-war poster definitively marked politically engaged artists' domestic struggles against militarism and cultural elites in the 1960s and 1970s, *Committed to Print's* anti-gentrification graphics of the 1980s pointed to the systematic impoverishment, girdling, and revamping of domestic space that would eventually become emblematic of neoliberal urban policies at a global level. But this concept of new enclosures can and must be extended to include the instrumental harnessing of a whole range of life processes, including intellectual and artistic ideas, but also bodily organs, women's reproductive systems, genetic codes, even social affects, and, at least superficially, politically resistant histories. It is this last enclosure that leads directly to the enigma of the archive whose contradictions, gaps, and lacunae form a promissory note that if we want to know "what this will have meant," as Derrida explains, "we will only know tomorrow. Perhaps."¹⁰

Amongst the anti-gentrification graphics Wye included in *Committed to Print* were several works by members of PAD/D, who—myself amongst them—had spent the previous eight years fervently programming monthly discussions on art and politics, networking with activist and community organizations, publishing a newsletter, a monthly listing of Left cultural events known as Red Letter Days, and producing temporary public artworks denouncing US involvement in Central America, Reagan era anti-terrorist policies, as well as the gentrification of the Lower East Side, where the group's offices were initially located.¹¹ Between 1980 and 1988, PAD/D sought to establish an autonomous Left cultural sphere that would operate apart from both the commercial market and mainstream museums and not-for-profit spaces by networking non-art political activists and socially engaged artists and artists' collectives in the US, and eventually abroad. "We were disaffected with the direction of mainstream culture and fine art, and wanted to join our art directly with change-oriented politics," group member Jerry Kearns recently commented.¹² As its name implies, the group actively collected documents—posters, prints, photographic slides, announcements, news clippings, correspondence, mail art, drawings, and ephemera—related to the production of social and political art. The collection was initially housed in a small office rented from a Lower East Side community group called Seven Loaves that was part of the Nuyorican cultural center known as CHARAS/El Bohio, a former high school

with links to the Puerto Rican activists known as the Young Lords as well as the vigorous NYC squatters movement of the 1960s and 1970s.¹³

The aim of this archive was also political insofar as it was meant to serve as a pedagogical “tool-kit” showing artists how to combine cultural production with radical resistance. This sort of “archival activism” was what Lucy R. Lippard had in mind when she put out a call for artists in 1979 to send her documentation about their own political and social art.¹⁴ The request led to a flood of materials that, less than a year later, led to the formation of the PAD/D Archive and the group itself. It is ironic that the first “use” of this “activist” archive was by a mainstream cultural institution. Wye did research for her exhibition in the archive, borrowed posters and graphics for *Committed to Print* from the collection, and appears to have drawn inspiration for the show’s thematic schema from dozens of hand-written index cards that made up the archive’s pre-digital index system.¹⁵ Invented out of necessity by members of the PAD/D Archive Committee—primarily Barbara Moore and artist Mimi Smith, neither of whom had formal training in library science—this DIY cataloging system amounted to a continuously generated chain of subject categories that somehow aimed to link the diverse materials that regularly arrived at the PAD/D office for inclusion in the archive. Although Moore and Smith occasionally collected some ephemera themselves, even cutting posters off a city wall in one case, it was their policy that everything mailed or delivered to the group was to be labeled, indexed, and included within the PAD/D Archive (that is, everything with one exception, addressed later in the chapter). “An archive is not a qualitative thing,” explained Moore in a 2007 interview with the Chicago-based collective Temporary Services.¹⁶ Her comment underscores both the unfiltered nature and the sheer physicality of the collection’s 51.2 linear feet of documents. It was PAD/D’s own mission statement that set the only tone for the collection insofar as the group sought to amass a collection of “international socially-concerned art” defined in the broadest sense as “any work that deals with issues ranging from sexism and racism to ecological damage or other forms of human oppression.”¹⁷ At the same time, the extreme open-endedness and heterogeneity of the PAD/D Archive raises questions about the interplay of light and shadow that necessarily operates within the familiar spaces of the art world.

One year after *Committed to Print* the PAD/D Archive was officially donated to the MoMA Library, a gift that coincided with the founding of the Museum’s own extensive archives consisting of institutional records and other donated collections.¹⁸ But PAD/D’s entry into the Museum was made on condition that the collection was now closed to new additions, thus terminating its function as an ongoing pedagogical focal point for future art activists. One cannot help but speculate on what the Museum’s first director, Alfred Barr, would have made of this hodgepodge of self-defined radical artists lovingly entombed within the heart of his institution. Barr used the institutional weight of the MoMA and its Rockefeller



Digital Image ©2002 MoMA, N.Y.

Two of the sketches made by Museum of Modern Art director Alfred Barr to illustrate the art historical thrust of his collecting strategy. "Torpedo" Diagram of Ideal Permanent Collection. Alfred H. Barr, Jr. (1902–1981), Papers, 9a.7A. The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York. 1933. Location: The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, USA. Photo Credit: Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/ Art Resource, NY.

capital to singularly establish the dominant *telos* of post-war art following his visits to the 1920s Soviet Union and German Bauhaus. He even illustrated his vision of modernism, in a sketch, as a propeller-driven torpedo packed with artistic incendiaries from the School of Paris to the US and Mexican avant-gardes. Not surprisingly his sketch, now an archival document itself, shows the Americas at the very tip of the missile, providing Barr's concept of modern art with its forward momentum as well as tilting the art establishment away from Europe. But his hawkish diagram can also be read homologically in relation to the MoMA's own expansive future, a jet-propelled aesthetic economy with multiplying subdivisions for painting and sculpture, graphics, industrial design, photography, cinema, and of course the library plus its archive. For Barr, these various departmental provinces were supposed to coalesce inside one unified artistic household, and yet this imaginary sanctity never actually existed, not within the Museum, any more than in the artistic reality it sought to represent. Instead, internal divisions and dissent characterize institutional power in a museum, just as they do the most transitory of artists' groups and collectives, or the boldest of artistic movements. Notably, a familial relationship existed between PAD/D and its future host from the very get-go. During PAD/D's founding meeting in 1980, Clive Philpot, who was then director of the MoMA's Library, proposed the name "PAD" or Political Art Documentation. It was immediately accepted. Following this christening the group added "/D" for /Distribution to reflect its expanding activist mission. What happens then, when something that is supposed to be a supplement like a glorified filing cabinet tucked out of sight into the back of a closet or in an outer borough of a city, gradually begins to seep back out into the house? Or when the "prosthesis" of memory is no longer limited to stacks of half-forgotten posters, fading photographs, or yellowing papers but includes an ocean of digital material overturning customary metaphors such as the wax-covered "mystic writing pad" that Freud once used to illustrate the simultaneous presence and partial absence of memory? How does one explain the becoming political of the archive? While we are not yet ready to address this homely haunting (or its ethereal electronic emissions), clearly something new had already begun to take shape in the 1980s, something that emerged either in spite of, or perhaps thanks to, the rise of a society of unmediated personal risk and the corporate enclosure of the commons that would soon move from the local to the global.

In the months that followed *Committed to Print*, a wave of high profile "political art" exhibitions appeared in mainstream New York museums, galleries, and cultural spaces. Displaying political commitment at an institutional level was suddenly hip in the New York art world. The Guggenheim Museum organized its first major presentation of Soviet avant-garde art entitled *The Great Utopia*, followed by the widely denounced 1993 Whitney Museum Biennial whose curators were charged with surrendering themselves to a tide of fashionable "cultural radicalism."¹⁹

However, it was the short-lived series of programs by The Dia Foundation that preceded the Whitney “fiasco” that were especially innovative and influential. In 1989 Dia board member Yvonne Rainier convinced the organization to turn over its SoHo exhibition space first to the artists’ collective Group Material (who produced the exhibition program *Democracy*), and then to artist Martha Rosler and a group of housing activists who created three exhibitions collectively entitled *If You Lived Here*. Both projects also led to substantial scholarly publications rather than art catalogs. Dia has never again ventured into the terrain of art and politics.²⁰ Paradoxically however, even as these “radical” art exhibitions were being organized, the intellectual legacy of New Left culture with its promises of autonomy, democratic transparency, and collective experimentation had splintered into abject ruin. PAD/D also collapsed in 1988, the same year *Committed to Print* opened at the MoMA. Henceforth the group was destined to be interned within its own archival crypt right alongside the many other forgotten artists, authors, events, and groups PAD/D actively documented. As co-founder, Lippard later mused, “when PAD/D folded its tents in early 1988, the editorial in our magazine *Upfront* noted ruefully that we seemed to have ‘reached the end of yet another cycle of organizational energy’”; Lippard adds ironically that, “we were writing that farewell at the moment when so-called ‘political art’ was poised on the brink of the mainstream success.”²¹ But the group can also be said to have fallen victim to an overly ambitious collective mission as well as a steadily “draining resistance to a reactionary decade.”²² For as important as it is to recall Immanuel Wallerstein’s argument that the radical uprising of the late 1960s and 1970s transformed a range of Marxist assumptions about the role of ecologists, feminists, and other minorities who were no longer willing to wait for “the revolution” to seek justice, it is just as imperative to note Paulo Virno’s painful assessment of the same period as a defeated revolution against capitalism and wage labor.²³ Significantly, the majority of the documents in the PAD/D Archive date from the years following this “defeat.”

Into the Archive

“A Message To The Class of :00,” reads the caption above a photo-collaged factory worker sharpening an enormous set of industrial gears. “If You Liked School ... You’ll Love Work.” The man’s head has been replaced with the face of a timepiece. “Work:” the black and white flyer’s bold Helvetica type concludes “A Prison Of Measured Time.” Creased and dog-eared, the 30-year-old leaflet was produced by an experimental Left-libertarian “free-space” called the Anarchist Bookstore that was briefly located on Manhattan’s Lower East Side in the mid 1980s. No doubt the cheaply produced handbill was initially intended to be wheat-pasted on a boarded-up East Village tenement or distributed at a club or

art gallery. And then forgotten. Today it is entrusted to a pinkish-beige binder, one of hundreds that make up the PAD/D Archive: some 130 political prints and posters stored in flat files, and thousands of yet-to-be cataloged flyers, letters, periodicals, and other ephemera, packed inside 27 acid-free file cartons that sit on only a few shelves within the commodious MoMA Archive: a glacial-blue warehouse in Queens accessible only by appointment.²⁴ To the researcher, these “miscellaneous uncataloged” dossiers initially appear as a sea of tabs jutting up from corrugated boxes, each pencil-marked with the name of an artist, event, venue, or group primarily from the late 1960s to the mid 1980s. Some of these are familiar today, including groups such as ABC No Rio, Art Workers’ Coalition (AWC), Artists Placement Group (APG), Collaborative Projects (COLAB), Fashion Moda, Group Material, Gran Fury, Guerilla Girls, Social and Public Arts Resource Center (SPARC), or individual artists like Conrad Atkinson, Joseph Beuys, Daniel Buren, Leon Golub, Hans Haacke, Suzanne Lacy, Martha Rosler, Adrien Piper, Nancy Spero, or Marcia Tucker. There is even a folder on the left-wing Punk band The Clash. Still, most of the names are now obscure. Their titles range from the fairly descriptive and the matter of fact—Artists for Survival, Artists and Social Change in Ireland, Bay Area Artists for Nuclear Sanity, Artists Against Apartheid, Artists Call Against US Intervention in Central America, or even Artists for [Jesse] Jackson, and Artists for Mondale, to the enigmatic—Brooklyn Art Dump, Free Association, Foolish Productions, Temporary Insanity, to the preposterous—Barbarians for Socialism, Up Against the Wall Motherfuckers (Black Mask), and a weekend conference of Left-academic self-ridicule advertised as the Radical Humor Festival which was sponsored by the journal *Cultural Correspondence* at New York University in the Spring of 1984. To this third category we must add a single document about the Institute for Unknown Political Affaires (IUPA), two European artists—Karel Dudesek of Czechoslovakia and Bernhard Müller of Germany—who, disguised as American soldiers, crossed into Communist Poland in 1981 to meet with the free workers’ union Solidarność, and also mention a folder on the equally short-lived agit-prop group Union of Concerned Commies (UCC) whose members—mostly malcontent temporary office workers in San Francisco—later went on to publish *Processed World*, a zine dedicated to providing a “creative outlet for people whose talents were blocked by what they were doing for money.”²⁵

Several vertical files also contain printed materials on late 1960s and 1970s ultra-left political groups including the art-oriented Anti-Imperialist Cultural Union organized by African-American poet Amiri Baraka, but also an extreme militant faction of the Black Panther Party known as BLA or Black Liberation Army which sought to establish a break-away African-American nation in the Southwest United States. But even here a connection to cultural radicalism exists, one born out by the archive. In a separate folder are documents about the

Madame Binh Graphics Collective: an all-white, all-female poster-making cadre that served as the cultural “arm” of the May 19th Communist Movement, one of several militant organizations like the Weather Underground that splintered off from Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Members of Madame Binh (and members of May 19th) were eventually sent to federal prison on charges that they assisted the BLA in the armed robbery of a Brinks armored car in 1981. The stolen cash was to be used to purchase weapons for the coming anti-imperialist revolution. According to a former member of the graphics collective, Mary Patten, even when the group was faced with the daily grind of prison life they did not stop producing oppositional culture, “we created ‘prison art’ with permitted materials—collages made from torn-up magazines, toothpaste substituting for glue ... we made portraits of fellow-prisoners [and] mobilized a veritable cottage industry to make drawings, cards, paintings, and paper quilts for our annual ‘crafts sale for human rights.’”²⁶

One PAD/D folder documents an infamous political rouge, for lack of a better term, by the cryptic street artist William Depperman, whose minutely typed broadsheets once plastered city walls indicting the CIA with assassinating kung-fu actor Bruce Lee and the US government with bioengineering the AIDS virus. There are also materials in the archive with no specific relationship to art and politics per se, such as binders for the 1980s music venues Club 57 and the Mudd Club, or one for the NGO the World Wildlife Fund. Some material documents public art projects of experimental urbanism similar to *Archigram*. One pamphlet sports a grainy black and white image of a crowded Amsterdam square from 1970 dominated by a massive tubular inflatable artwork by Eventstructure Research Group. Only one other uncataloged folder contains information about this group in a different corner of the MoMA Library, however a quick Internet search reveals ERG was a late '60s Dutch collective interested in “notions of perception related to space, time and media.” Nevertheless, a substantial portion of the archive’s content is not so easily traceable even using current information technology databases. Hundreds of binders are filled with documents sent to PAD/D by individual artists. Most reveal work directly engaged with issues of aesthetics, politics, and society, but here and there are folders for artists who produced abstract or formalist painting and sculpture. In general, few of these individuals (or groups) ever achieved serious visibility like those names mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.²⁷

A good portion of the PAD/D Archive contains an assortment of collectively self-published journals, pamphlets, and catalogs, including anti-catalogs. “Smashing the Myths of the Information Industry” is a modest sized orange-colored “cat-a-log” printed by the then emerging alternative media collective Paper Tiger Television in the mid 1980s. Founded by Dee Dee Halleck and rooted in the media criticism of Herbert Schiller, Paper Tiger remains one of the few groups still operating

today.²⁸ Another “uncataloged” file folder contains a stout, palm-sized directory of anti-authoritarian organizations by an anarchist study group in Berkeley called International Blacklist, still another binder contains a single bound issue of poetry and sketches by residents of the Augusta Mental Health Institute Psychiatric Center in Maine. Several now obscure Left cultural journals from the 1970s and 1980s are archived—*Incite* (Canada), *Black Phoenix* (UK), *Cultural Correspondence*, *The Fox*, and *Red Herring* (New York)—most of which have since folded, with the exception of *Left Curve* out of Oakland. But there are also a host of politically playful publications including zines by *Artpolice* from Minneapolis, *CONTROL* out of London, and an early 1980s Situationist-inspired newsprint publication from Long Island New York called *FREEZE & SCREAM*, its yellowing back cover featuring a *détourned* Steve Canyon comic-book panel of a woman shouting at a befuddled, square-jawed man: “It’s simple Steve: why don’t you and your boys just get the fuck out of El Salvador!”

Among other scarce publications in the PAD/D Archive is *Presencia de México en la X Bienal de París 1977*, a mutinous “counter-catalog” produced by four radical Mexican collectives: grupo Suma, Tetraedro, Taller de Arte e Ideología, and Proceso Pentágono. After members of Proceso Pentágono came to believe the Paris Biennale organizers were planning to undermine the Leftist intent of their artwork with critical essays by anti-Cuban expats, all four groups organized their own exhibition catalog. Proceso Pentágono was known for staging mock kidnappings and automobile accidents on the streets of Mexico City as a public protest against the rise of a generic and bureaucratic urban modernism: highways and housing projects cutting residents off from neighborhoods, public spaces, and potential sites for gathering and demonstrating. Now brittle and yellowed at the edges, the archived copy of the Biennale Countercatalog testifies to a collision, one of many, in which artists registered their antagonism towards institutional power in print form.²⁹ A comparable story sits inside another folder marked *an anti-catalog*. Published the same year as the Mexican counter-catalog, *an anti-catalog* was collectively produced by a group of politicized artists and art historians associated with Artists Meeting for Cultural Change (AMCC) in New York. The cover designed by artist Joseph Kosuth offers a text-only manifesto that explicitly calls into question the neutrality of art scholarship and its cultural institutions.³⁰ Directly inspired by the ground-breaking cultural analysis of John Berger’s *Ways of Seeing* book and television program, *an anti-catalog* stridently offered its own critical rejoinder to the Whitney Museum of American Art’s Bicentennial exhibition of 1976 in which the organizers planned to represent 200 years of American visual culture using John D. Rockefeller’s collection of white male artists (plus one woman and one black painter). The dissident publication also applied social art history scholarship, typically associated with T. J. Clark’s work on nineteenth-century France, to an American context, and perhaps for the

first time. In an implicitly linked archival folder sits a letter signed by some 75 artists including Vito Acconci, Harmony Hammond, Howardena Pindell, Alan Sekula, and Linda Nochlin protesting the “removal” of editors Max Kozloff and John Coplans by the owners of *Artforum*, presumably for publishing Marxist-inspired art criticism by writers such as Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, two of the scholars involved in an *anti-catalog*. The Mexican counter-catalog, the AMCC counter-catalog, and the firing of the *Artforum* editors all took place in 1977.

Much of the material in the PAD/D Archive amounts to a call for action and participation, including an open invitation to participate in the re-creation of a Chilean People’s Mural on West Broadway in SoHo that was eventually carried out October 20, 1973, one month and eight days after democratically elected Chilean President Salvador Allende was toppled on September 11 by General Augusto Pinochet in a CIA-backed coup. Likewise, several documents by Iranian Students Association ask for “Solidarity with 100,000 Political Prisoners against the fascist regime of the shah.” There are also attempts to link art and labor either by treating artists as cultural workers who can refuse to produce, or by linking artists with labor unions. “Would you like to take part in a strike of artists?” begins one brief communiqué tucked inside a folder binder marked *Art Strike*. Dated May 15, 1979, the one-page, typewritten proposal originated nine years after the short-lived *New York Art Strike Against Racism, War, and Repression*, and three years after a call out of London by Gustav Metzger for a three-year artists’ work stoppage (between 1977 and 1980) to bring down the art world because a “refusal to labor is the chief weapon of workers fighting the system.”³¹ But this later call for artistic inaction was intended as a more subjectively based protest against “the art system’s unbroken repression of the artist and the alienation from the results of his practice.” The petition goes on to instruct its recipient: “For Artists Only!” “No Publishing,” and is signed by the enigmatic Goran Đorđević of what was then known as Yugoslavia.³² Linking artists with other workers was also the aim of “Revolt Music,” a dance party held at the Machinists Union Hall in downtown New York City by the collective Group Material featuring 100 guaranteed “danceable hits” by The Clash, James Brown, Aretha Franklin, and Poly Styrene that “demonstrate sexual, class and racial consciousness and the furious desire for social change.”³³ Similarly, in 1982, critic Lucy Lippard and artist Candice Hill-Montgomery organized an exhibition entitled *Working Women, Working Artists, Working Together* for the Bread and Roses art gallery, a cultural center founded by activist Moe Foner for the District 1199 Health and Hospital Workers Union. Among the artists featured in the exhibition were Ntozake Shange, Cecilia Vicuña, Vanalyne Greene, Jerri Allyn, and Mierle Laderman Ukeles, who was herself a frequent collaborator with the New York Department of Sanitation workers. But Ukeles is also the author of a remarkable 1969 manifesto entitled *Maintenance Art—Proposal for an Exhibition*, which reads in part:

C. Maintenance is a drag; it takes all the fucking time (lit.)

The mind boggles and chafes at the boredom.

The culture confers lousy status on maintenance jobs = minimum wages,
housewives = no pay

Ukeles' declaration about feminism, labor, and cultural criticism forms part of a pink thread that runs throughout the PAD/D Archive right alongside resistance to gentrification and military intervention in Latin America. No More Nice Girls, Dykes Opposed to Nuclear Technology, Women's Art Registry of Minnesota (WARM), Women's Caravan "S.A.C.," and Spinsters Ink (one of the first lesbian literary publications in the United States), Seneca Depot October Action Coalition, Everywomen Press—folder after folder testifies to a feminist cultural militancy that not only opposed patriarchal authority, but also broader issues of value accumulation and production. As Julia Kristeva insists, what was at stake in the revolt of May '68 wasn't replacing bourgeois society's values by other ones, but instead "contesting the very principle of Value, i.e. power, lack, life as process of production and work itself."³⁴



Ready to Order? by The Waitresses was a 1970s site-oriented conceptual art work that took place in several restaurants around Los Angeles, CA, over a seven-day period. The performance project presented vignettes at lunchtime followed by evening panels focused on issues of women's work, female stereotypes, sexual harassment, and the relationship between food and money. Pictured from left to right: Denise Yarfitz, Jamie Wildman, Jerri Allyn, Anne Gauldin, Patti Nicklaus, Leslie Belt in Lafayette's Café, Venice, CA, 1978. Image courtesy Maria Karras.

Material in the PAD/D Archive documents several feminist art groups who explicitly questioned the invisibility of women's "naturalized" service labor within the art world. "See Red Women's Workshop" produced dozens of agitational and educational silk-screen prints and political cartoons in London throughout the mid 1970s into the 1990s. Some of these graphics attacked Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's cuts in social welfare, or called for support of "our Irish Sisters in Armagh Jail," but many posters dealt directly with women's suffrage such as one that demanded equal pay with men by proposing women should refuse to feed, sleep with, or do housework for them until economic justice was achieved. A similar feminist economic critique fueled the photographic collective Hackney Flashers, an East London-based group whose projects "Work and Wages," and "Who's Holding the Baby?" questioned the social construction of femininity and motherhood through a semiotic critique of gender representation.³⁵ Similarly deconstructivist, the Berwick Street Film Collective (BSFC) worked with artist Mary Kelly in 1975 to produce *Nightcleaners*, a 90 minute 16 mm film inspired by Brecht's theory of alienation that sought to take critical exposition to another level by serving in a media campaign to unionize women office cleaners in London.³⁶ Performance art using surreal props was the preferred tactic used in Los Angeles by a group of women who had collectively waitressed for "a total of fourteen years."³⁷ In order to address abusive treatment of service workers the group's inaugural press announcement states that starting April 25 until May 1, 1978, "we will waitress again," as a group of artists, The Waitresses. Inspired by feminist educational programming at the Woman's Building—an autonomous non-profit started in 1973 by politicized women artists in Los Angeles—The Waitresses staged guerrilla theater in restaurants and café's that served up stories about their experiences as service workers. The group later co-conceived "The All City Waitress Marching Band," several dozen food servers drolly demanding "equal pay for equal work" in lockstep and aprons, and in 1982 founding members Jerri Allyn and Anne Gauldin went on to establish Sisters of Survival (S.O.S.), a quartet of rainbow-colored "nuns" who performed skits and teach-ins about the dangers of nuclear power and military technology, and whose work appeared in the artists' book section of *Committed to Print*. Except for Allyn members of The Waitresses later abandoned the fine arts to pursue theater, graphic design, yoga instruction, and in the case of one former Waitress, the life of a Buddhist nun.

The PAD/D Archive also contains materials documenting the better-known feminist art collective the Guerrilla Girls. In the spring of 1985 the pseudonymous "girls" organized a sustained street-poster campaign mixing dry humor and cold statistics to publicly condemn the world's "retrograde attitudes towards women artists." Strategically placed in the SoHo art district one graphic blatantly listed 20 commercial galleries that showed "no more than 10% women artists or none at all."³⁸ Almost immediately the group was sought after to give public talks,

especially in university settings or alternative, non-commercial art spaces. In order to protect themselves from recrimination within the small quarters of the art industry, members of Guerrilla Girls disguised for these public appearances by wearing plastic Gorilla masks. In the months and years that followed the posters name more names, steadily pressuring an art industry that nom de guerrilla Freda Kahlo described as “one of the last unregulated industries.” Which is why the group, who often describe themselves as “the conscience of the art world,” can be described as an economic art lobby made up of small cultural manufacturers seeking a greater share of a given market. From a slightly different perspective, however, their guerilla campaign amounts to a seemingly fantastic demand that their labor—mostly unwaged and unrecognized—along with that of other women artists and people of color, should be properly remunerated within the symbolic and material economy of high art. Resistance to the secondary status of “women’s work” did not begin in the 1980s. Nor was it always aimed at the commercial art world. Issues of gender and labor arose even within Left-leaning cultural groups such as AWC. As Julia Bryan-Wilson points out, some of the more active women members of AWC wandered away from the group around 1971 in order to form their own feminist organizations including Women Artist’s in Revolution (WAR), or the Ad Hoc Women Artists’ Committee, or Women Art Students and Artists for Black Artists’ Liberation. But since it was mostly women members who had “naturally” been doing much of the administrative and secretarial work, this defection crippled AWC’s organizational structure.³⁹

What would an equitable distribution of labor mean within a cultural economy like that of the art world? If realized, it would completely upend the existing structure of art market valorization. Economics becomes politics. As Federici explains, the 1970s wages-for-housework campaign in Italy and elsewhere sought to raise consciousness about the unrecognized role of women under capitalism, but it was also a critical strategy aimed at many Leftist and Marxist theorists who similarly ignored women’s essential reproductive economic function.⁴⁰ Perhaps these gender-based criticisms are best illustrated by the provocative and playful work of Carnival Knowledge, a little-known feminist art collective who, a few years before the Guerrilla Girls, audaciously explored the imagery and politics of female sexuality without regard to reproductive demands using elaborate installations inspired by the vernacular of the side-show and the circus. Posters, correspondence, and several sketches of unrealized projects by Carnival Knowledge reside in the PAD/D Archive, including documents about their collaboration with Times Square porn-workers Annie Sprinkle and “Sexaphonist” Dianne “Moonmade.” One exhibition of female erotic art entitled “Second Coming” provoked a censorious attack by Jerry Falwell’s fundamentalist Christian group Moral Majority. The show featured a mocked-up image of the conservative televangelist Falwell installed in a kissing booth, as well as an interactive artwork

modeled on the popular Mr. Potato Head toy entitled “Build your own Dildo Erection Set.” In response, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), now led by Reagan appointee Frank Hodsoll, punished alternative space Franklin Furnace for daring to host such a sex-positive display. Nevertheless, insofar as a group of women artists were vilified for openly and playfully displayed interest in their own sexual pleasure without regard to child-bearing or motherhood, this early and overlooked skirmish in the coming culture wars signaled a fateful paradigm shift few feminists or Leftists could have predicted at the time. In hindsight, this relatively obscure moral condemnation can be seen as part of a sweeping rightward strategy to “re-encircle” and delimit the social gains made by feminists and others during the uprisings of the 1960s and 1970s. Key elements of this reactionary program included a call for a return to “family values,” the political defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and the fostering of an increasingly well-organized and violent campaign against abortion clinics.

Much of what the Right feared is now sheltered within the PAD/D Archive, and much of what is in the archive documents an unprecedented rebellion by the offspring of well-fed, well-educated workers who angrily rejected the patriotic expectations and stultifying working conditions associated with their parents’ world. Carnival Knowledge, Hackney Flashers, Heresies Magazine Collective, Guerrilla Art Action Group, Black Emergency Coalition, Alliance for Cultural Democracy—the artists and groups represented by the PAD/D Archive chronicle a complex artistic response to this radical shift that involves not only explicit expressions of political dissent, but also a desire to liberate the communal, creative, and sexual dimensions of social being. According to Virno, this rebellion represented the “first revolution aimed not against poverty and backwardness, but specifically against the means of capitalistic production, thus, against wage labor.”⁴¹ Nor were these rising democratic expectations confined to the privileged classes or elite universities. By the end of the 1960s, lower-middle and working-class college students at Kent State in Ohio and Jackson State in Mississippi staged militant anti-war protests. In May of 1970 both campuses became the site of military repression against activists leading to six deaths and dozens of injuries. Street fighting between students and police outside the Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1968 signaled a level of near-revolutionary intensity that soon developed counterparts in Germany, Mexico, Italy, and most especially France. Meanwhile, industrial leaders and traditional labor unions were beset by a new generation of rank-and-file workers who insisted on being more than a pair of hands on an assembly line. They wanted the democratic and cultural changes taking place around them reflected on the shop floor. This was particularly strong amongst public employees in the US who launched a series of strikes in the late 1960s and early 1970s unlike anything witnessed since the 1930s.⁴² But rebellion was also taking shape in industrial cities such as Detroit,

where the Ford manufacturing plant and other automobile factories are located in a predominantly African-American city. There black workers organized militant trade unions including the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) and ELRUM (the Eldon plant version of DRUM). Both groups were connected to the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which has been compared to the *Comitato Unito de Base* ("United Rank-and-File Committee") organizations in Italy in 1968.⁴³ Radical unionists repeatedly shut down plant production throughout the mid to late 1960s in a series of coordinated wildcat strikes. They also made contact with their radical union counterparts in Turin, Italy.⁴⁴ However, the seriousness of this insurrectionary threat is perhaps most clearly measured by the coordinated level of repression against these activists by the US government through organizations such as COINTELPRO, one of the domestic counter-intelligence programs set up by the FBI and charged to "expose, disrupt, and otherwise neutralize" such groups as the Black Panthers, but also other factions of the New Left, the peace movement, and anyone the government perceived to be an enemy social order.⁴⁵ These covert government operations took place against a background that included the murder of Malcom X in 1965, the killing by police and FBI agents of at least ten members of the Black Panther Party between 1965 and 1966, and the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in the spring of 1968, days before he was to lead a multiracial "Poor People's March" on Washington aimed at creating an alliance between the civil rights movement, militant unions, and Leftists seeking greater economic and political justice. Despite these setbacks, capitalism and US imperialism appeared to be at a disastrous crossroads. The American military had been defeated by a peasant army in Southeast Asia, the Nixon Whitehouse toppled by the Watergate conspiracy, and the US and much of the industrial world was enduring a prolonged financial crisis brought about by the over-accumulation of capital and a crippling oil embargo organized by third-world Arab nations. The catastrophe continued to unfold. As late as 1979 two US-backed regimes, one in Nicaragua and one in Iran, were defeated by popular insurrections, as a major insurgency emerged in the US client state of El Salvador. This was the same year a near-meltdown at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant demonstrated to many that an environmentally destructive world order was in rapid and dangerous decline. But while expectations for radical political change rose, even spreading to the center of the liberal Democratic and Labor parties in the US, UK, and elsewhere in the industrial West, the grass-roots liberation struggles of militant labor unions, blacks, feminists, gay liberation activists, Chicanos, Asians, Native and African-Americans were entering a phase of factionalization and organizational decline. Aside from the sizable protests associated with the international anti-nuclear movement, and a smaller, though still tightly organized level of resistance to US military activity in Central America, the era in which the Left could boldly mobilize mass demonstrations was over. By

the early to mid 1980s it was not capitalism but the New Left which had imploded as a powerful new conservatism spectacularly demonstrated its authority with Ronald Reagan's decertification of the striking Air Traffic Controllers Union in 1981, and Margaret Thatcher's breaking of the National Union of Mineworkers strike a few years later.

For Italian Autonomist Marxists like Virno and Antonio Negri, as much as for radical feminists, council communists, and similar anti-centralist Leftists including many of the artists represented in the PAD/D Archive, the failed revolution of the 1960s and 1970s was but another articulation of a longstanding desire to break with both the disciplinary routines of capitalism, and the socializing regimes of patriarchal authority. Neither the first, nor the last, this rebellious wave of rising expectations would reassert itself in the late 1990s, however, not before a new socio-economic regime emerged whose salient features, as we have seen, include the amplification of global "surplus" populations, labor redundancies, and individual risk, the implementation of novel workplace disciplines based on flexibility, "creativity," and individual entrepreneurship, and the enclosure of public spaces, histories, and even affects by private, corporate interests. Julian Stallabrass and Chin-tao Wu have written persuasively about the corrosive effects such "risk society" has had on artists and art institutions; Benjamin Buchloh branded the return of figuration in the 1980s a politically regressive backwards slide; and British critic John Walker went so far as to implicate arts administrators in the rightward shift, writing that "some curators who had supported political art in the 1970s welcomed a resurgence of traditional art forms," adding that the 1981 Royal Academy's exhibition *New Spirit of Painting* was an all-male affair that treated the feminist art movement as if it had never happened.⁴⁶ And yet as much as the 1980s epitomizes the defeat of Left politics and the rise of enterprise culture, it also bore witness to a new regime of socially oriented artistic interpretation. Henceforth, the aesthetic formalisms long associated with dominant post-war critics such as Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried were unconditionally replaced not only by so-called neo-expressionist painting, but also in general by an interpretive artistic vocabulary based on social history, cultural identity, even value to a specific community. So total was this transformation that today it is virtually *de rigueur* to attach some external meaning or narrative—national, biographical, communal, and on occasion political—to even the most abstract and autonomous of artworks. This "new," post-modern, post-'80s artistic paradigm was in fact long in the works, a culmination of what Grant Kester calls the "post-Greenbergian diaspora" of the 1960s and 1970s most visibly reflected by the political art of Hans Haacke, Leon Golub, and Martha Rosler, as well as the frequently performative work associated with Allan Kaprow, Suzanne Lacey, and Adrian Piper in the US, or with Joseph Beuys, Gilbert and George, and Viennese Actionism in Europe.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, it fell to the decade of the 1980s to demarcate

this passage that, as one standard art historical reference book bemoans, infected the art world with a “deep unease,” producing a feeling that “the old system which had governed the development of modernism almost from its beginning was starting to disintegrate.”⁴⁸

No doubt this process of disintegration was hastened along not by the specific radical art practices documented in the PAD/D Archive but by the very presence of its potentially unlimited scope and heterogeneous content. The haunting of the institution begins with what it shelters, often in spite of itself. Still, whether or not the deep unease signaled by the 1980s represents an oblique triumph of post-’68 cultural activism is a question that cannot be separated from the rise of the decade’s unabashedly entrepreneurial art world, variously described by even its advocates as glitzy, careerist, and cynical.⁴⁹ “At the beginning of the 1980s, a dozen years after the cultural revolution of the 1960s, there was a boom in neo-expressionist painting that signaled “the end of the rich period of experimentation, analysis, and social engagement,” writes Hans Haacke, who goes on to point out that with the election of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher and the dismantling of the welfare state many of these neo-expressionists also flourished in a climate of “mutually profitable collaboration.”⁵⁰ And yet this was also the moment that content in one form or another, and often of a political or critically social nature, was allowed back into the corridors of the art world. Therefore, perhaps, it is O. K. Werckmeister’s term “Citadel Culture” that most unambiguously summarizes the aesthetic imagination of an era typified by the recondite policies of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, but also Brian Mulroney in Canada, and Roger Douglas in New Zealand among others.⁵¹ “At the moment of their greatest ‘economic success’,” Werckmeister comments, democratic, industrial societies produced “a culture contrived to exhibit the conflicts of those societies in a form that keeps any judgment in abeyance.”⁵² Perhaps even more than the memory-haunted streets of West Berlin, it was the ersatz Bohemia of art, commerce, and gentrification that took root in New York City, which most clearly exemplifies the rise of this 1980s citadel aesthetic.

Cultural Enclosures and Trickle-Down Bohemia

Long known for its militant trade unions, Left-leaning politics, and non-conformist populace, New York City’s fiscal crisis provided the new conservative movement with an opportunity to reign-in organized social dissent. This was accomplished primarily through a radical structural adjustment of the city’s liberal welfare economy. According to David Harvey, New York in the late 1970s represents the first application of University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman’s ultra-free-market or “neo-liberal” policies.⁵³ While the city’s famed 1975 bailout was meant to foster a good business and tourist climate, its long-term agenda redirected

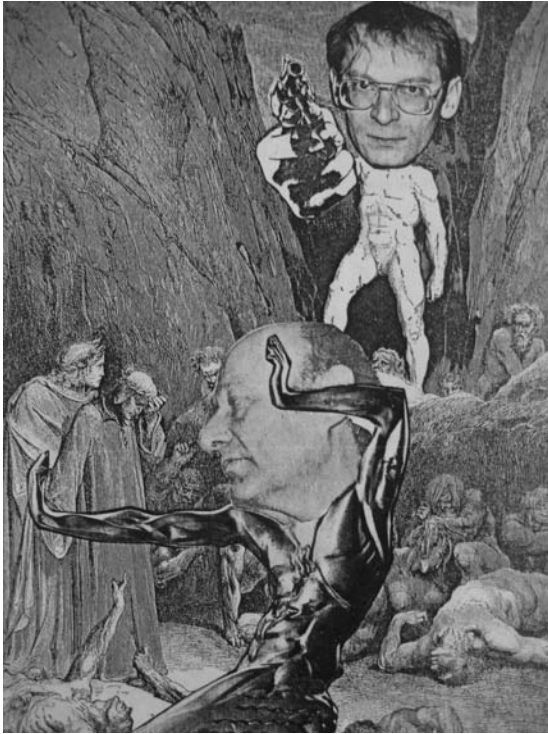
public resources away from social services and into the private business sector while effectively draining support from housing activists and other community-based groups. In this sense, the neoliberalization of New York City was like a “velvet” version of Chile’s brutal political and economic “normalization” in 1973. Just as Nixon’s cut-off of financial aid to Allende’s Leftist government set the stage for Pinochet’s right-wing coup, so too were New York City’s poorest neighborhoods systematically encircled, quarantined, and defunded by banks and other lending agencies. In many places this financial withholding or “redlining” literally reduced entire blocks to rubble. Essential services including schools, transportation, and hospitals were cut to a minimum. This sustained process of dispossession and demolition was followed by the restructuring of city life around notions of risk-taking and entrepreneurship, including real estate and financial speculation, but also cultural ventures that sent prices for contemporary art to new heights. The *I Love New York* campaign was launched to make the crime-plagued streets attractive to tourists, and by the mid 1980s businesses were also returning to the city, not, however, in the traditional blue-collar manufacturing area, but instead in the so-called F.I.R.E. sector: Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate. An incoming wave of young, white professionals, many of whose parents had fled the inner city for suburbia years earlier, moved to low-rent neighborhoods within close commuting distance from Wall Street. Like the shock troops of a new, “creative” working class, these incoming “gentry” absorbed and regurgitated the dissident culture they found in the city—including rap, hip-hop, graffiti, street art and break dancing—while simultaneously, though largely inadvertently, driving up rents, and pushing out poor and working-class residents. The PAD/D Archive is replete with references to the city’s housing crisis in places like Spanish Harlem, the South Bronx, Hell’s Kitchen, and the Lower East Side.

“Because of the mayor’s lack of interest, we are abandoning parts of the city. We are the only city in the world that has ruins that are only 50 years old,” intones one of several surrealist influenced photomontage flyers in a dossier labeled “Food Stamp Gallery,” then managed by a now obscure artist named Vinny Salas. The artist’s advertisements for his “gallery” consisted of impenetrably dense collages deriding the decline of city services, gentrification, and Mayor Ed Koch. One of these Max Ernst-like visual satires shows the smiling head of the Mayor grafted onto a hormone-pumped male torso touting an illegal handgun. Salas’ caricature of Koch, who oversaw the first phase of New York’s neoliberal structural adjustment, is also an allusion to Bernhard Goetz, the so-called “Subway Vigilante” who wounded several young men, crippling one, after they allegedly tried to rob him on the number 2 train. Goetz was carrying an unlicensed weapon and briefly served prison time. In a city beset by crime Goetz became an instant folk hero to conservative members of the National Rifle Association (NRA). Meanwhile, foreshadowing successor Rudy Giuliani’s infamous praise for the motorist and

off-duty officer who shot and wounded a homeless “squeegee-man,” Koch sided with Goetz’s acquittal on murder charges (though he denounced his vigilantism), even as the Mayor simultaneously condemned the indictment of a police officer who shot to death an unarmed African-American woman, Eleanor Bumpers, as she was being evicted for falling four months behind in her rent. Passionately manic, the forgotten collagist’s humorous juxtapositions of high and low cultural references also carries over to the amalgamated title “Food Stamp Gallery,” insofar as it fuses the opulence of high culture to a government relief program. In fact, the actual “gallery” was a street-level window display case located in “Spanish” Harlem on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. No doubt Salas’ fanciful conceit was also a parody directed twelve subway stops south at the pseudo-Bohemian fanfare known as the “East Village Art Scene.”

Real estate speculators began promoting a portion of the crime-ridden Lower East Side—which was known to its large Latino population as *Loisaida*—under the moniker East Village.⁵⁴ Not an entirely new invention, but one aimed at attracting more affluent renters through an association with the safer Greenwich Village. Hard hit by decades of financial disinvestment the streets of the Lower East Side resembled a semiotic war zone. Tattered wall posters covered landlord-abandoned buildings. Made brittle from daily exposure to weather and layered applications of wet announcements, this “image brawl,” as PAD/D members Miriam Brofsky and Eva Cockcroft once described it, formed a nearly illegible pelt of faded type and bleached colors publicizing Punk bands such as the Meat Puppets, Big Noise, and the Slits, or calling for protests against the CIA, or simply staging notices from people offering services, selling off possessions, or looking for rideshares to other cities.⁵⁵ Here and there a local schizophrenic ranted in fine point type not far from an equally feverish-looking flyer by Jenny Holzer, one of countless young artists drawn to the cultural and visual bedlam of the area. By the mid 1980s the East Village had not only become a favored destination for the new F.I.R.E workforce, but enterprising commercial art galleries garrisoned themselves within this ethnically diverse, though financially impoverished neighborhood, all of which added inflationary pressure on residential and commercial rents. At its height in the mid 1980s, the so-called East Village Art Scene consisted of over 100 art dealers primarily fixated on paintings featuring an assortment of cartoon characters, graffiti, and pornographic imagery. “The American dream’s dark underside, its evil twin, its inner child run amok,” is how one contemporary curator later described the alleged youthful subversiveness of East Village Art.⁵⁶ Outwardly, this campy Bohemianism seemed exactly the opposite to neoconservative pieties concerning private property, sexual abstinence, and family values.

On the one hand, this new art scene was like a seductively lurid counterpart to the glitzy *I Love New York* campaign. It attracted its own congregation of niche businesses especially in the fashion, food service, and leisure industries. With



A photocopied collage (top) by Vincent Salas, founder of the Food Stamp Gallery, shows New York City Mayor Ed Koch as a dancing Anubis strutting before subway vigilante gunman Bernhard Goetz; and International Blacklist (bottom), a directory of anarchist organizations published by the Anti-Authoritarian Studies & Blacklist Group from Berkeley, CA, both from the early 1980s and just two of the thousands of items stored in miscellaneous uncataloged materials that make up part of the PAD/D Archive at the MoMA in NYC. <http://arcade.nyarc.org/search~S8>. Images courtesy Vincent Salas and Gregory Sholette.

capital flowing from Japanese and German art collectors and an unprecedented expansion of art museums underway in the United States, the demand for fresh artistic products had never been greater. On the other hand, it was a new cultural paradigm turned profoundly inward on itself in which the performance of “deviancy” appeared radical, and the avant-garde’s long relationship with Left politics virtually abandoned. But this citadel culture had its detractors, including the late Craig Owens, as well as critics Rosalyn Deutsche and Cara Gendel Ryan who wrote prophetically in 1984 that the East Village Art Scene was financed by big capital as a “war of position against an impoverished and increasingly isolated local population.”⁵⁷ The rise of the “revanchist city” in the aftermath of this battle is taken up in the next chapter. Meanwhile, a few artists, like Salas, identified enough with those being displaced to critically engage with this new cultural franchise and the politics it represented.

A binder in the PAD/D Archive documents one group of artists who lodged their protest against the Koch administration in the early hours of January 1, 1980, by squatting a “warehoused,” city-owned building on Delancy Street and installing an exhibition denouncing landlords and local gentrification just hours before police shut their intervention down later that same day. The Real Estate Show would eventually become a local cultural center known as ABC No Rio, but not until after a well-publicized visit by German art superstar Joseph Beuys shamed the Mayor into providing the artists with a venue for their critique.⁵⁸ Other artist-run associations including Collaborative Projects (COLAB), Group Material, and Fashion Moda (located in the South Bronx) exhibited work critical of urban policies favoring the wealthy and so-called “reverse white flight,” although more often than not this protest was expressed indirectly, through thematic art exhibitions focused on hip-hop culture, suburban sensibilities, or the fate of “homeless” animals living on city streets. Gentrification and urban dissolution were also recurring themes in the paintings and collages of Anton Van Dalen, Jane Dickson, David Wojnarowicz, and John Feckner, whose South Bronx street stencils “DECAY” and “BROKEN PROMISES” spray-painted on an abandoned tenement building were later appropriated in an act of *counter-détournement* by Ronald Reagan’s presidential campaign—standing in front of Feckner’s accusatory graffiti, the soon to be elected governor of California railed against the failed urban policies of “tax and spend” liberals. Published on the cover of the *New York Times* this photo-op revealed a signature trait of citadel culture, the enclosing and annexing of indigenous, sometimes illegal forms of resistance such as stencils, graffiti, and street art for commercial or politically reactionary interests.

PAD/D launched its own critical *détournement* of the East Village Art Scene, *Not For Sale* (NFS), in April of 1984, “throwing up” four illegal street art galleries: The Discount Salon, Another Gallery, The Leona Helmsley Gallery

and, somewhat prophetically, the Guggenheim Downtown. Christened with cans of Banner-Red and Krylon spray paint this quartet of fictive exhibition venues were in reality the disheveled walls of several derelict buildings, temporarily commandeered by a group of interventionist artists who sought to draw local residents, including artists and art dealers, into a public debate about their role in the gentrification of the neighborhood. The “exhibitions” consisted of illegally posted hand-painted posters, photocopies, and silk-screen prints decrying the displacement of low-income residents while calling on artists to become involved in local efforts to prevent real estate speculation. New York’s Mayor Ed Koch is pictured by PAD/D member Jerry Kearns dancing as the city burns behind him; a two-meter tall, hand-cut poster by an unknown artist shows a hydra-headed speculator who appeared to be stalking local real estate options; and a colorful screen graphic by Michael Corris and Mary Garvin extolled squatting or communally refurbishing buildings deserted by landlords (the majority of properties on the Lower East Side in the early 1980s had been commandeered by the city because of non-payment of taxes by building owners). One smaller street flyer by Ed Eisenberg was entitled “Reaganomic Galleries.” Its message sought to link the President’s infamous trickle-down economics—that first, failed attempt to positively brand American neoliberalism—with the ersatz Bohemianism already emerging around the alphabet streets South of 14th Street and East of the Bowery. The NFS Project—which takes up several document binders in the PAD/D Archive—was inspired in part by Loraine Leeson and Peter Dunn’s Docklands Community Poster Project in London, another anti-gentrification public work with records in the collection. Officially, the NFS Project opened at the “Guggenheim Downtown,” the windowless façade of a vacant tenement on the corner of 10th Street at Tompkins Square Park, itself the site for numerous clashes with authorities since the mid 1800s. On hand were local housing activists to register voters and encourage neighborhood resistance to gentrification. Four years later, Tompkins Square’s homeless, gathering in ever greater numbers as rents rose in the city, became both audience and participants when Polish artist Krzysztof Wodiczko rolled out his homeless vehicle into the park: a mobile unit for sleeping, storage, and cooking. Months later the park would become the site of what the *New York Times* described as a “police riot.” By 1988 the city’s homeless population had reached over 30,000, and Tompkins Square Park had become a tent-city filled with hundreds of literally *dispossessed* New Yorkers.⁵⁹ One August evening this encampment, along with groups of anarchist protesters, punks, and skinheads also “squatting” in the park, was forcibly evicted by police in a mêlée that spilled violently into nearby streets and businesses.⁶⁰ Police were videotaped attacking not only their initial targets from the park, but people eating and shopping in the posh restaurants and shops of the gentrified East Village. After the riots the park was closed for a complete renovation that brought it more into line with

the ever more prosperous neighborhood surrounding it. For both activists as well as the new “gentry,” the Tompkins Square event came to represent a pivotal turning point in New York’s future.⁶¹ During this four-year interval between the homeless evictions and the reopening of the refurbished park, East Village artist David Wojnarowicz had died of AIDS, graffiti writer SAMO turned art world mega-star Jean-Michel Basquiat had died of a drug overdose, and most of the art galleries had vanished, largely victims of escalating commercial rents they had helped inflate. At the same time neither PAD/D nor its archive of political art, any more than the exhibition *Committed to Print*, had done anything to slow down the rise of an increasingly global citadel culture that, true to its paradoxical nature, even created a modest opening for a representational handful of “political artists” within its new, entrepreneurial Bohemianism.

The Crypt

The documents within the archive effectively “speak the law” as Derrida implores, establishing an economy of interpretation that falls under the regulation of the household (*oikos*), and “its laws of domesticity.”⁶² Likewise, the very *archivalization* of post-’68 radical art by the various museum households of the art establishment could have only been made possible once any actual threat to institutional authority had fully passed, that is to say, once the spirit of a militant, confrontational Left culture with its promises of autonomy, democratic transparency, and collective solidarity, had fallen into irreparable ruin. And yet this familiar space of the household, be it an archive, museum, library, or the entire cultural economy, is not just the site of domestic disputes and struggles—internecine battles over art world turf or resistance to patriarchal and racial privilege—it is also where ghosts inevitably return, unannounced and unwanted. A significant question therefore asserts itself: What role does such a rebel archive play within an institution such as the MoMA, especially given the fact that PAD/D’s repository of social and political art was premised on animosity towards institutional authority itself? For if on the one hand the museum’s loving interment testifies to the generosity of the institution, it also reveals on the other hand a capacity to exert power “all the way down,” into the finest of details and historical shadows. At the same time, the very presence of such an archive, with its prodigious index of forgotten but self-selected names, projects, groups, actions, and so forth, attests to the fact that opposition to established cultural hierarchies is not in the least uncommon. Still other factors come into play, including the familial nature of this particular entombment by the MoMA Library. Whatever internal disputes or expectations the acquisition of the PAD/D Archive may have generated within the museum remains unknown; however, we might read this minor, generally unnoticed supplement to the proper historical canon as an internal mark or bruise

alluding to a far larger corpus of excluded cultural production. As curator and critic Simon Sheikh has perceptively observed, institutional memory requires the omission of certain subjects, not because of willful acts of exodus or rebellion, as many artists would like to think, but because “expulsions at the very center of institutions ... allow them to institutionalize?”⁶³ Which is to say the supplemental, even redundant archive of radical art does not belong to some fantastic world apart, but is instead fully inscribed within the institution’s ideological architecture as a necessary if mute presence filled with micro-histories, resistant practices, and partially submerged “outlaw” memories. One thing is clear, in the intervening years since, no exhibition as politically charged as *Committed to Print* was ever again attempted by the museum.

The Grin

In the weeks leading up to the May 1968 events in Paris, filmmaker Chris Marker recalls a meeting with Louis Althusser. “For him, as for others, Revolution was in the air, and had to be, like the grin of the Cheshire Cat.” Marker adds that while the brilliant Marxist theorist would always see that grin, “He wouldn’t (nor would anyone) ever see the Cat.”⁶⁴ Of the scores of materials and documents delivered to PAD/D between 1980 and 1988, the only submission rejected by the Archive Committee was a folder containing several woodcut prints of house cats. Sometimes however, a grin is all one has to work with.

38. Stallabrass, *Art Incorporated*, 183.
39. Tom Peters, quoted by Stefan Stern in "A Guru Aims High on Prozac," *New Statesman*, December 18, 2000; Thomas Hoving quoted in Wu, *Privatising Culture*, 127; and the Amazon.com product description for a book by John Howkins, *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas*, Penguin Business Press, 2002; www.amazon.com/Creative-Economy-People-Money-Ideas/dp/0140287949
40. Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, Verso, 2007.
41. Cited in Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, "The New Spirit of Capitalism," paper presented at the Conference of Europeanists, March 14–16, 2002, Chicago, pdf file, 16; www.sociologiadip.unimib.it/mastersqs/rivi/boltan.pdf
42. See Andrew Ross, *No-Collar: The Humane Workplace and Its Hidden Costs*, Temple University Press, 2004, and Brian Holmes, "The Flexible Personality: For a New Cultural Critique"; www.16beavergroup.org/brian
43. Richard Florida, *Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*, Basic Books, 2003.
44. Florida and his Creative Class Group (CCG) offer policy advice for mayoral administrations and urban planners interested in improving community competitiveness and "urban regeneration." See Richard Florida's website: Creative Class: the source on how we live, work, and play; www.creativeclass.com
45. Angela McRobbie, online document at Be Creative (Der Kreative Imperativ), dated August 2001; www.k3000.ch/becreative/texts/text_5.html
46. These themes will be addressed again in Chapter 5.
47. Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, World Publishing Co., 1946, 136.
48. Kennedy made these remarks, on October 26, 1963, at Amherst College in Massachusetts; two years later President Lyndon Johnson signed the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act, thus creating The National Endowment for the Arts.
49. For a critical debate on the neoliberalization of education in Europe see the edu-factory collective's web journal at www.edu-factory.org/edu15. Figures on US Student Debt including art schools (whose average tuition is about \$120,000 for an undergraduate, BFA degree) are published annually by The Project on Student Debt, October 2008, <http://projectonstudentdebt.org>. (Note, that in the aftermath of the fiscal crisis, President Obama did sign into law a degree of student debt relief beginning July 1, 2009.)
50. Alaka Wali, Rebecca Severson, and Mario Tongoni, *Informal Arts: Finding Cohesion, Capacity and Other Cultural Benefits in Unexpected Places*, Chicago Center for Arts Policy at Columbia College, Chicago, Illinois, June 2002.
51. John Roberts, *The Intangibilities of Form: Skill and Deskilling in Art After The Readymade*, Verso, 2007, 159.
52. A very rough stab at estimating this would begin with the sales of hobby supplies estimated to be in the 20 to 30 billion dollar range annually by the industry (Craft & Hobby Association Press release found at www.chamembernetworking.org/cms), as well as those new types of art supplies used by both professional artists as well as amateurs. For example, Lyra Research, Inc. estimates that sales of an ink-jet printable canvas paper were estimated to double between 2005 and 2010 (see their "Fine-Art Ink Jet Media Market Assessment, report, August 1, 2006 at http://lyra.ecnext.com/coms2/summary_0290-441_ITM)
53. The AWC's demands to museums and the art establishment are enumerated in Lucy R. Lippard, "Biting the Hand: Artists and Museums in New York Since 1969," in

- Julie Ault, ed., *Alternative Art New York: 1965–1985*, University of Minnesota Press, 2002, 79–120.
54. Letter from *Group Material* to local residents, dated December 22, 1980, quoted in Jan Avgikos, “*Group Material* Timeline: Activism as a Work of Art,” in Nina Felshin, ed., *But is it Art?*, Bay Press, 1995, 85–116. The exhibition’s name “Aroz con Mango” is a Cuban expression for “What a mess.”
 55. Charles Leadbeater and Paul Miller, “The Pro-Am Revolution,” November 11, 2004, pdf file, 67; www.demos.co.uk/publications/proameconomy
 56. See Charles Leadbeater, “Privatise the Universities!,” *New Statesman*, November 22, 1996.
 57. Yochai Benkler, *Wealth of Nations: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*, Yale University Press, 2006, 53.
 58. Kristen Fischer, *Creatively Self-Employed: How Writers and Artists Deal with Career Ups and Downs*, iUniverse, Inc., POD publishing site, 2007; Rob Austin and Lee Devin, *Artful Making: What Managers Need to Know About How Artists Work*, foreword by Dr. Eric Schmidt, Prentice Hall Publishers, 2003.
 59. Alan W. Moore, “Political Economy as Subject and Form in Contemporary Art,” *Review of Radical Political Economics*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2004, 472.
 60. Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds*, Verso, 2004, 40.
 61. Walter Benjamin, “Theses on History,” in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, Schocken Books, 1969. See also Esther Leslie, who compares Benjamin’s sense of time and possibility for historical redemption to cinematic montage and its sudden, remarkable juxtapositions (Esther Leslie, *Walter Benjamin: Overpowering Conformism*, Pluto Press, 2000).

Chapter 2

1. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz, University of Chicago Press, 1995, 86.
2. *Committed to Print: Social and Political Themes in Recent American Printed Art* was on view at MoMA from January 13 to April 19, 1988, and included a catalog published by the Museum.
3. *New York Observer*, February 22, 1988.
4. For criticism of the exhibition’s exclusion of AIDS-related graphic imagery see Douglas Crimp and Adam Rolston, “AIDS Activist Graphics,” in Ken Gelder, ed., *The Subcultures Reader*, Routledge, 1997, 439–42.
5. See Francis Frascina, *Art, Politics, and Dissent*, Manchester University Press, 2000, 182–3.
6. The action took place on January 3, 1970. *Guernica* was then still on loan to the MoMA on condition that it not be returned to Spain until democracy was reinstated in the country. Franco died four years later, but the painting only left the Museum for Madrid in 1981. An excellent and detailed history of events surrounding the AWC poster can be found in Amy Shlegel’s essay, “My lai: ‘We lie, they die’,” *Third Text*, vol. 9, no. 31, 1995, 47–66.
7. Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982; Rosalyn Deutsche and Cara Gendel Ryan, “The Fine Art Of Gentrification,” *October*, 31; Winter 1984, 91–111; Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*, Routledge, 1996.

8. Midnight Notes Collective, "The New Enclosures," in *Midnight Oil: Work, Energy, War, 1973–1992*, Autonomedia, 1992; www.midnightnotes.org/newenclos.html. See also Harvey's *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, and Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, Picador Press, 2008.
9. See Chapter 3.
10. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 36.
11. More about these ambitions can be found in a series of interviews with former group members Jerry Kearns, Barbara Moore, Janet Koenig, and Gregory Sholette published in Temporary Services, *Group Work*, New York, Printed Matter, 2007; see also my "A Collectography of PAD/D: Political Art Documentation and Distribution: A 1980's Activist Art and Networking Collective" (2001), available at www.gregorysholette.com/writings/writing_index.html
12. Temporary Services, *Group Work*, 88.
13. Located on Avenue B, between 8th and 9th Streets on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, CHARAS/El Bohio took over the abandoned public school building when real estate values were nonexistent in this part of the city. Together with the Nuyorican Poets Café, the center served as a key part of New York's Puerto Rican cultural Diaspora, thus the amalgam Nuyorican: New York City, plus Puerto Rican. In 1998 Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's administration evicted the center's tenants and sold the building to a private developer who has subsequently allowed the empty structure to deteriorate. In the wake of the latest fiscal crisis new efforts are under way to reclaim El Bohio as a local public institution.
14. See Chapter 1, note 4.
15. A yellow legal pad in the PAD/D Archive lists 70 items loaned to Wye from the collection between August and November of 1986, about three years before it was donated to MoMA.
16. Temporary Services, *Group Work*, 86.
17. PAD/D, *1st Issue*, February 1981.
18. Moore and Smith worked on the collection for 14 years with occasional assistance from Kate Linker, Carol Waag, and Michael Anderson. The PAD/D Archive was officially donated to the Museum on May 26, 1989. The MoMA Archive in which it is housed was established the same year. Soon after, the Franklin Furnace/Artist Book Collection was added, which focuses on a similar time-period of New York City's cultural activity though without the explicitly political framing.
19. "Like so many other institutions entrusted with preserving and transmitting culture, the Whitney has responded to the tide of cultural radicalism by total surrender." (Roger Kimball, "Of Chocolate, Lard, and Politics—1993 Biennial exhibit, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York," *National Review*, April 26, 1993.)
20. For an excellent investigation of these programs see (Under)Privileged Spaces: On Martha Rosler's "If You Lived Here..." Nina Möntmann, in the *e-flux* online art journal at http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/89#_ftn11
21. Lucy R. Lippard, "Archival Activism," *The Museum of Modern Art Library Bulletin*, no. 86, Winter 1993/94, 4.
22. Ibid.
23. Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Essential Wallerstein*, New York Press, 2000, 363; Paulo Virno, *Grammar of the Multitude*, trans. Isabella Bertolotti and James Cascaito, Semiotext(e), 2004, 110–11.

24. An index to the PAD/D Archive is viewable at <http://arcade.nyarc.org/search~S8> and appointments to visit it, or other collections within the MoMA Archives, can be made online at <http://moma.org/learn/resources/archives/index>
25. See "Some History of Processed World" at www.processedworld.com/History/history.html, as well as *Processed World Bad Attitude: The Processed World Anthology*, Verso, 1990.
26. See, by former group member Mary Patten, *Revolution as an Eternal Dream: The Exemplary Failure of the Madame Binh Graphics Collective*, Half Letter Press (booklet forthcoming 2010).
27. This conclusion is based on a partial alphabetical sampling of the individual artist files found in the PAD/D Archive followed by an online search of any recent career activity. In no way definitive, this research does suggest, however, that at least two thirds of the Archive's named entries—individuals and groups—are like dead letters with no substantial presence in today's highly networked art world.
28. For more about Paper Tiger Television see Jesse Drew, "The Collective Camcorder in Art and Activism: 1968–2000," in Stimpson and Sholette, eds., *Collectivism After Modernism*, 94–133; and Ernest Larsen, "When the Crowd Rustles the Tiger Roars," *Art Journal*, vol. 54, no. 4, Video Art, Winter, 1995, 73–6.
29. See Rubén Gallo, "The Mexican Pentagon: Adventures in Collectivism During the 1970s," in Stimpson and Sholette, eds., *Collectivism After Modernism*, 163–90.
30. From the cover of an *anti-catalog*, *The Catalog Committee of Artists Meeting for Cultural Change*, New York (self-published), 1977.
31. Metzger's entire ART STRIKE 1977–1980 manifesto is reproduced online at www.thing.de/projekte/7:9%23/y_Metzger%2Bs_Art_Strike.html
32. There are no precise records of who produced or managed this simulation, although Mr. Đorđević's name is clearly linked with the project. Đorđević later served as the doorman and docent for *Salon de Fleurus*: a Borgesian fantasy-space concocted in downtown Manhattan in which replicated modern artworks collected by Gertrude and Leo Stein in the early twentieth century for their Paris apartment at 27 rue de Fleurus filled several rooms of a rented townhouse in the 1990s. A more detailed description of *Salon de Fleurus* can be found in Michael Fehr, "A Museum and Its Memory: The Art of Recovering History," in Susan A. Crane, ed., *Museums and Memory: Cultural Sitings*, Stanford University Press, 2000, 57.
33. The complete play list is found in Julie Ault, ed., *Show and Tell: A Chronicle of Group Material*, Four Corners Books, 2010, 38–41.
34. Julia Kristeva, *Revolt She Said*, Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents series, 2002, 26.
35. "Hackney Flashers Collective: Who's Still Holding the Camera?," in T. Dennett, D. Evans, S. Gohl, and J. Spence, eds., *Photography/Politics: One, London, Photography Workshop*, 1979.
36. At the time *Nightcleaners* was produced, the BSFC included Mary Kelly, Marc Karlin, James Scott, and Humphry Trevelyan.
37. The Waitresses (1977–85) founding members included Jerri Allyn, Leslie Belt, Anne Gauldin, Patti Nicklaus, Jamie Wildman, Denise Yarfitz, and Elizabeth Canelake; later Anne Mavor, Anita Green, and Chutney Gunderson Berry joined the group. The All City Waitress Marching Band premiered in Pasadena, California in 1979, and was re-staged in Los Angeles and Bronx, New York as part of a series of exhibitions focused on feminist art history. Besides Allyn and Gauldin, Sisters of Survival (S.O.S.) consisted of artists Cheri Gaulke and Sue Maberry.

38. Kahlo is quoted in Meredith Tromble, "The Guerrilla Girls Make Art Herstory (Again)," *The Gate*, February 26, 1998; www.sfgate.com/eguide/profile/arc98/0226guerilla.shtml. The group's first, pseudonymous, press release explicitly naming 20 commercial art dealers who "show no more than 10% women artists" is reproduced in Ault, *Alternative Art New York*, 73.
39. Bryan-Wilson points out that it is thanks to the routine administrative activities of AWC members like Lucy R. Lippard and Virginia Admiral that the AWC's extensive archives even exist at all, see Julia Bryan-Wilson, *Art Workers*, 160.
40. See Federici, "Precarious Labor."
41. Virno, *Grammar of the Multitude*, 110–11.
42. American Social History Project, *Who Built America? Volume Two*, 597.
43. Chris Aronson Beck, Reggie Emilia, Lee Morris, and Ollie Patterson, "Strike One to Educate One Hundred," Chapter 2, first published in 1986 by Seeds Beneath the Snow; available at www.kersplebedeb.com/mystuff/italy/strike_one_2.html
44. See Dan Georgakas, "Revolutionary Struggles of Black Workers in the 1960s," *International Socialist Review*, no. 22, March–April 2002; www.isreview.org/issues/22/black_workers.shtml
45. See "Supplementary Reports on Intelligence Activities (Book IV); Final Report of the Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, United States Senate, Government Printing Office" (1976), 87. Related transcripts of FBI COINTELPRO memos can be viewed at <http://whatreallyhappened.com/RANCHO/POLITICS/COINTELPRO/COINTELPRO-FBI.docs.html>
46. John A. Walker, *Left Shift: Radical Art in 1970s Britain*, I. B. Tauris, 2002, 255.
47. Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, University of California Press, 2004, 9.
48. Edward Lucie-Smith, *Movements in Art Since 1945: Issues and Concepts*, Thames and Hudson, revised and expanded edition, 1995, 218.
49. One *New York Times* Arts and Leisure section writer acidly described the 1980s art world as a "show biz—stock market mentality ... whose products share the volatility of, say, pork belly futures" (Grace Glueck, "What One Artist's Career Tells Us of Today's World," *New York Times*, December 2, 1984, 1).
50. Pierre Bourdieu and Hans Haacke, *Free Exchange*, Stanford University Press, 1995, 99–100.
51. O. K. Werckmeister, *Citadel Culture*, University of Chicago Press, 1991.
52. *Ibid.*, 4.
53. See Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.
54. Often accredited to Nuyorican poet Bittman "Bimbo" Rivas, the term *Loisaida* entered into the cultural wars over who would control the Lower East Side in the 1980s: the city and real estate speculators, or the area's various housing and community activists. The complexity of this ethno-cultural landscape, or "lumpenography" as Luis Aponte-Parés described the Puerto Rican experience in New York, is taken up in relation to other forms of Latino expression by Yasmín Ramírez in *Pressing the Point: Parallel Expressions in the Graphic Arts of the Chicano and Puerto Rican Movement*, an exhibition catalog from el Museo del barrio, 1999.
55. Miriam Brofsky and Eva Cockcroft, "The Politics of Street Painting," *Upfront*, nos. 6–7, Summer 1983, 7.
56. Dan Cameron's introduction to his 2004 exhibition *East Village: USA* is available at www.newmuseum.org/exhibitions/387. A more complex rendering of East Village