

# The Erotic as Social Security

Joanna Frueh

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**E**ros is love, life force, or instinct, the lust for living. Social Security gives money, the erotic gives vitality, joy, and internal satisfaction. While America's elders—as designated by the Social Security system—receive practical subsistence, society offers them, as a group, even less erotic sustenance. In this situation women suffer differently from men, because female aging remains in American society what Susan Sontag called it in 1972, “a process of becoming obscene. . . . That old women are repulsive is one of the most profound esthetic and erotic feelings in our culture.”<sup>1</sup> Such “erotic feelings” are really thanatic, a kind of femicide or broadly sexual violence that, in regard to visual representation, absents old(er) women from the erotic arena and kills people's ability to imagine, let alone physically image, old(er) women as erotic.<sup>2</sup> Although menopause is becoming a popular subject—Gail Sheehy's *The Silent Passage: Menopause* (1992) has been a best seller, and I've heard ads on rock radio in my gym about menopause therapy—fitness authoritarianism, cosmetic surgery, and hormone usage, to eradicate dry skins and dry vaginas, loom as female imperatives, and menopause, which for Western women occurs at the median age of fifty, remains a powerful marker of aging.

Joan Collins and Jane Fonda, who are parodies of feminine sexuality, which American culture formulates as young and beautiful, sell the erotic; but their profession requires that, and their posthuman pulchritude is not an affordable or desirable model for all aging women.<sup>3</sup> Collins and Fonda try to maintain the look of the menstrual (child-bearing) years, culturally conceived as the erotic years. While the onset of menstruation is an erotic passage, and American culture deems women erotically appealing for the next thirty-five to forty years of their lives, the process of menopause initiates a woman into invisibility and extreme subhumanity.<sup>4</sup> Menopause would become an erotic passage if people used their capacity to eroticize everything—and I see this as a gift, not a gratuitous banality—in order to overcome their fear of flesh that moves. To give eros is to give social security, for the erotic is necessary to human survival.

Artists can give erotic social security to old(er) women; and women artists over fifty, on whom this article focuses, who explore aging and eros in their work or who understand their artistic process and product as erotic, are radical agents of change.

Female pleasure exists at the heart of old(er) women artists' representations of the erotic. While female pleasure has been an issue in feminist theory from the 1970s on, much writing on the subject, rather than articulating women's pleasure(s), has treated the problematic position of women within the theorized cultural dominance of the male gaze, and feminists have also debated one another about the positive and negative images and uses of pornography, which has been a primarily male business. Men, then, have been the chief producers and enjoyers of scopophilic pleasures, and erotic art is customarily made by and for men. Erotic art as a genre, like pornography, has concentrated on depictions of sex acts, and it manifests a fundamental realist compulsion, which is an explicit focus on looking at bodies. So the erotic in art has been categorized as not only male but also voyeuristic.<sup>5</sup>

To produce and understand the visually erotic as voyeuristic is limiting, boring, and not erotic-for-women. A feminist erotics requires a more subtle and complicated proliferation of pornography.

Carolee Schneemann, Joan Semmel, Hannah Wilke, and other women explored female pleasure in the 1960s and 1970s. Schneemann and Semmel continue that adventure today as old(er) women. Wilke did until her death in January 1993. Since innovation remains an art-historical criterion of genius, for both traditional and feminist scholars, Schneemann, Semmel, and Wilke, a matrilineage, deserve recognition for their origination of a feminist erotics and their charting, over decades, of female pleasure.<sup>6</sup> In “Sexuality, Modernism and Post-Modernism,” the last chapter of *Sexuality in Western Art*, Edward Lucie-Smith does not mention any of the three and cites Robert Mapplethorpe's homoerotic nudes as innovative. Lucie-Smith writes that one of feminist art's “primary objectives has been to question male sexual fantasies.” Although he does consider three women artists, his citing of a reactive goal coupled with the fact that he does not mention women artists anywhere else in the book renders, as usual, women's eroticism all but invisible.<sup>7</sup>

Representations of the erotic by Schneemann, Semmel, Wilke, and other old(er) women help define and amplify erotic-for-women, which threatens the male-dominant culture that has suppressed it with an economy of love, lust, and desire that is excessively potent, in relation to men—two (vaginal) lips that continually speak to each other, flesh that

moves on flesh all by itself. The flesh that moves to its own rhythm is self-affirming and self-satisfied, authentically in love with itself. Numerous feminist writings, mothered by Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," first published in 1975, have denied women the authenticity of their own visual and bodily experiences and imprisoned women in the orthodox reductiveness of the male gaze. But the genuineness and legitimacy of the female gaze and its relation to other sensory and sensual pleasures is a basis for interpreting and analyzing old(er) women's representations of the erotic.<sup>8</sup> The exclusivity of erotic-for-men proves the existence of an anti-erotic society that does not tolerate differences. Within that configuration, erotic-for-women is a vehicle for change.

Erotic-for-women—"for women" meaning that women are producers and consumers—is erotic for oneself, auto-erotic autonomy whose power is both self-pleasuring and relational. Autoeroticism is apparent in self-exhibition and in looking at other women unclothed. Erotic-for-women loves the female body without discriminating against its old(er) manifestations. Self-exhibition may demonstrate the positive narcissism—self-love—that patriarchal eros has all but erased, and self-exhibition is a commanding statement. "Here I am. This is my body," an attitude apparent throughout Wilke's work and in Bailey Doogan's *Mea Corpa* (1992).

A reclining nude in the left panel of Wilke's triptych *INTRA-VENUS* (1992–93) is an assertion of erotic will. The 26-by-39½-inch color photo continues her self-documentation as erotic agent and object. As in *S.O.S.—Starification Object Series* (1974), in which Wilke, beautiful in her early thirties, poses in chewing-gum "scars" stuck to her body as symbolic display of psychic and cultural wounds that come from living in a body marked "woman," Wilke is a damaged Venus, this time by cancer and its therapies.<sup>9</sup> Intravenous tubes pierce her, and bandages cover the sites, above her buttocks, of a failed bone-marrow transplant. Her stomach is loose, and she is no longer the feminine ideal. "My body has gotten old," she said a little less than a month before the bone-marrow transplant, "up to 188 pounds, prednisone-swelled, striations, dark lines, marks from bone-marrow harvesting." Although an art historian could cite Renaissance martyr paintings as sources, she could also understand the figure as a contemporary woman, a woman who has lived through the pain of physical wounds and as the dark goddess Hecate at

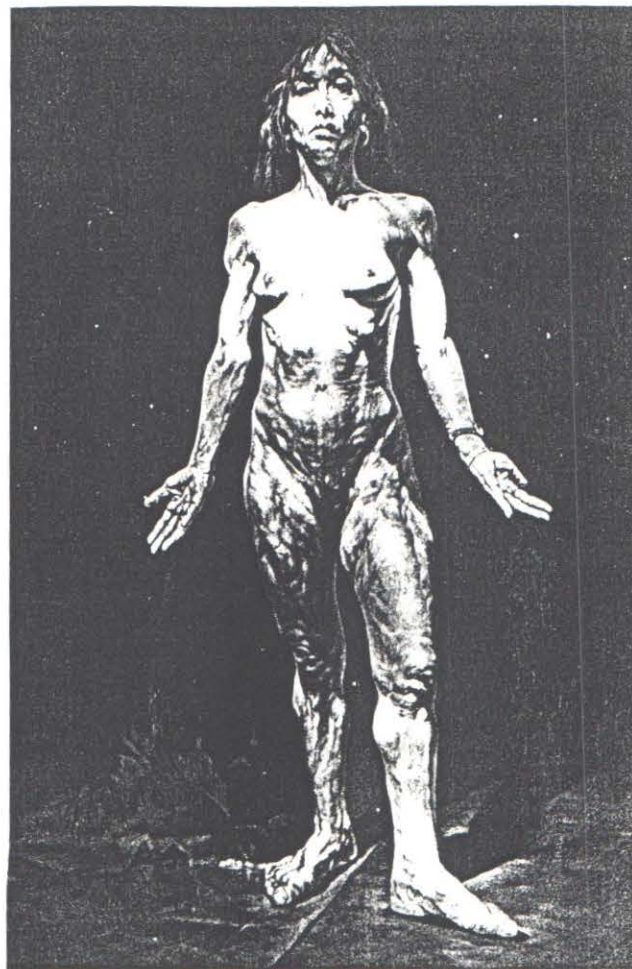


FIG. 1 Bailey Doogan, *Mea Corpa*, 1992, oil on linen, 72 × 48 inches. Collection of Mary Langford.

the crossroads of life and death. Wilke has called her work "curative" and "medicinal," and she has said that "focusing on the self gives me the fighting spirit that I need," and "My art is about loving myself."<sup>10</sup> The *INTRA-VENUS* nude shows Wilke within—intra—the veins of Venus, a lust for living in the artist's blood.

Although Wilke resuscitates the boneless, erotic look developed by Giorgione and Titian, making herself, as usual, into a classical nude, she is not female body as erotic trophy. This is because she characteristically proves that the body's boundaries are liminal and insecure—most recently through vivid and explicit pathos—and because, more than ever, she affirms I AM WHO I AM. Bodily insecurity paradoxically becomes erotic social security, as does the ruin of the classical nude.

Doogan also participates in that destruction. Some viewers see the figure in *Mea Corpa* (fig. 1) as Ivan Albrighesque, decaying before their eyes. Others critique her muscularity and flat stomach as operating within contemporary fitness standards and thus not permitting old(er) women to be flabby or fat. Both interpretations remove the figure from classical nude territory and her sources, from sword-belted, large feet, wristwatch, creased knees, lean forearms,



FIG. 2 Joan Semmel, *Green Field*, 1992, oil on canvas, 69 x 68 inches. Collection of the artist.

and undereye shadows denote a portrait—of an old(er) and specific person—that allows the individuality of human bodies.

*Mea corpa, mea culpa*: My body, my guilt. Women have assumed culpability for their bodily uniqueness, but the subject of *Mea Corpa* stands confidently, in a pose whose source is the resurrected Christ. Graceful and dignified, she offers her body in a new kind of seduction that raises old(er) women's real bodies from the erotically deadening universalism of Western art's female nude, which is rooted in the perfect body type and fashionable clothing of particular periods.<sup>11</sup>

Erotic-for-women concentrates tactility. Whereas Mapplethorpe's "innovative" nudes are sensuous because of lighting and printing, and the eye can only graze a surface of skin—this distancing through scopophilic pleasure is conventionally erotic—*Mea Corpa*'s subject, contoured in almost photographic clarity, opens a corporeal world far more profound than skin-deep. For Doogan reveals tendons, muscles, and spiritual/erotic energies that course within and beneath flesh in an epiphany of what Schneemann has manifested throughout her art and calls the "ecstatic body."

Joan Semmel's *Overlays Series* (1972–92) (fig. 2) treats the palpability of erotic pain rooted in loss. Old(er) women, clothed in bread buttocks, lumpy contours, sloped shoulders, large abdomen, and unselfconscious display, stand, sit, and stretch over heterosexual couples engaged in intercourse. Semmel has combined what she calls her "fuck paintings," the originals from the early 1970s, with old(er) figures from her sauna and shower and locker-room paintings (1989–91). In the *Overlays Series* the young(er) copulating figures loom

large, as loved and lost sex do in memory, and they give the viewer entry into an arena of identification with the weight and gestures of body-on-and-in-body contact, physical pressures and caresses that feel real, unlike the touches and penetrations in conventional erotica. Colors and merging bodies unite the figures in each painting in a flesh-dense scenery.

Some old(er) women do not regret the absence of sexual relationships in their lives. In answer to "What are positive/negative aspects of aging?" on the questionnaire I sent to one hundred women artists over fifty, one respondent wrote: "Positive. I feel I have 'completed' my sexual life with men (I am not a lesbian)—as though the storm is over—leaving me calm and centered and without yearning. I like men, even love some of them, but have outgrown the need for that form of intimacy." Other old(er) women, also without sex partners, tire of the frustrating search for men. "My friend Lillian and I," one artist told me, "say when we were younger, we'd go to the ends of the earth to be with a man. Now I wouldn't cross the street."

The realities of postmenopausal desire, as active in freedom or fatigue from the hunt as in directed and frustrated longing for sex, challenge the cultural constructions of old(er) women as sweet grandmothers and ridiculous and voracious hags. The haggard old(er) bodies in the *Overlays Series*, like the sex partners, are not invitations to witness dainty, "feminine" pleasures or the fantasies of sordid appetites. Those formulas of female desire make it manageable. Haggard, according to *Webster's New World Dictionary* (1988), means "untamed; unruly; wild . . . wild-eyed." Semmel uses her wild eyes so that the *Overlays Series*, like the original "fuck paintings," confronts the viewer with the profundity of passions.

The tactility of visual erotic-for-women bears a relation to the diversification and complexity of a woman's bodily pleasure. Her indiscriminate eroticism is different from a man's, at least within the construction/constrictions of female and male pleasures as we know them. For man's eroticism is visually dependent. He can see his genitals without a mirror, whereas a woman cannot see hers that way. His looking takes in everything, so the world becomes his erotic field, focused on and through the sight of his own body part. His lips and hands are extensions of his eyes, the primary erotic organs, that take pleasure in knowing-through-seeing what's there. His visual taking in is both greedy and receptive, like a mouth taking in a second tongue, like a cunt taking in a cock, yet this receptiveness is a sovereignty that is imperious, a disengagement.

Without a mirror, a woman makes her genitals real by touching them. Her hands move all over her body, realizing its textures, shapes, and pleasures. Such arousals, such layings on of hands, combined with the internal embrace of two lips, determine her whole body as erotic organ. Touch goes deeper than skin and surface contours, and reaches

visceral depths. Her hands are everywhere: they touch soul-inseparable-from-the-body.

Tactile/textural erotics operate as overlays, intricacies, and densities that condense and compound experiential richness and that appear in works that one would not at first call erotic. May Stevens's *Sea of Words* (1990–91) (fig. 3) carries the viewer into and away on a fluid field of women's words—Virginia Woolf's and Julia Kristeva's—that she has written three layers deep. Four rowing women, small and spectral, haunt the sea, punctuate its waves and eddies of pleasure like points of heightened sensation in the everywhere-ness of erotic abandon. At once lost and found in words, which are the erotic embrace of women's language, the rowers, between passivity and activity, are buoyed by the infinite richness—the sea seems endless and bottomless—of female tongues. In *Sea of Words* Stevens quotes from Woolf's *A Writer's Diary*, "I want to keep the individual and the sense of things coming over and over again and yet changing," like women's orgasms, like one's awareness of the paradoxically prosaic richness of living, like the singleness and resonance of words brush-strokes in a sea of sentences pigment. All in all the linguistic passages describe an erotic passage in which, to quote from Kristeva's section, women's "right to *jouissance* is uncontestable."

Erotic-for-women luxuriates in the play that is a part of both *jouissance* as artistic process and experiences that do not end as one ages. Stevens, born in 1924, says, "My work has an erotic richness it did not have when I was younger. I feel

that art is sexual," not as in the paintbrush-as-penis model, but in terms of sensual sensitivity: "I stroke and stroke and stroke," Stevens describes her ever-greater awareness of "the importance and danger of touch," relating it to an encounter with a male student in his twenties, who, at the end of a term, thanked her for her teaching. She kissed him on the cheek and they embraced, and she wondered, "If he can touch me, smell me, feel my warmth, is he also aware of cutting through the age barrier and was [the encounter] sexual?"<sup>12</sup>

Erotic-for-women is free play, fluid age-appropriate identity, smiles and laughter that do not occur in the pornographic iconography of subjects whose sex is so serious that it is silly. Anne Noggle's *Stellar by Starlight* series, begun in 1980, pictures Noggle and two young men, all naked and frolicking in soap bubbles and the vapor of dry ice. Best known for the merciless documentation of her face-lift in 1975 at age fifty-three, Noggle has continued to photograph what she calls "the saga of the fallen flesh," often with daring humor and sensuality. In one of the *Stellar by Starlight* photos (see p. 14) Noggle, in tiara and eyeglasses, emerges from an at once mystical and steamy atmosphere, arms spread overhead to form a V-shape with her torso, in a gesture of victory and heavenly worship. Noggle herself is the deity, the star, Venus risen anew, reincarnated in an unexpected body. The men seem awestruck. A wonderfully manic delight animates Noggle's face, her breasts are luscious, and as artist she creates an atmosphere reminiscent of the lighthearted seductiveness and seductions in Rococo paintings and of bathtub play as a

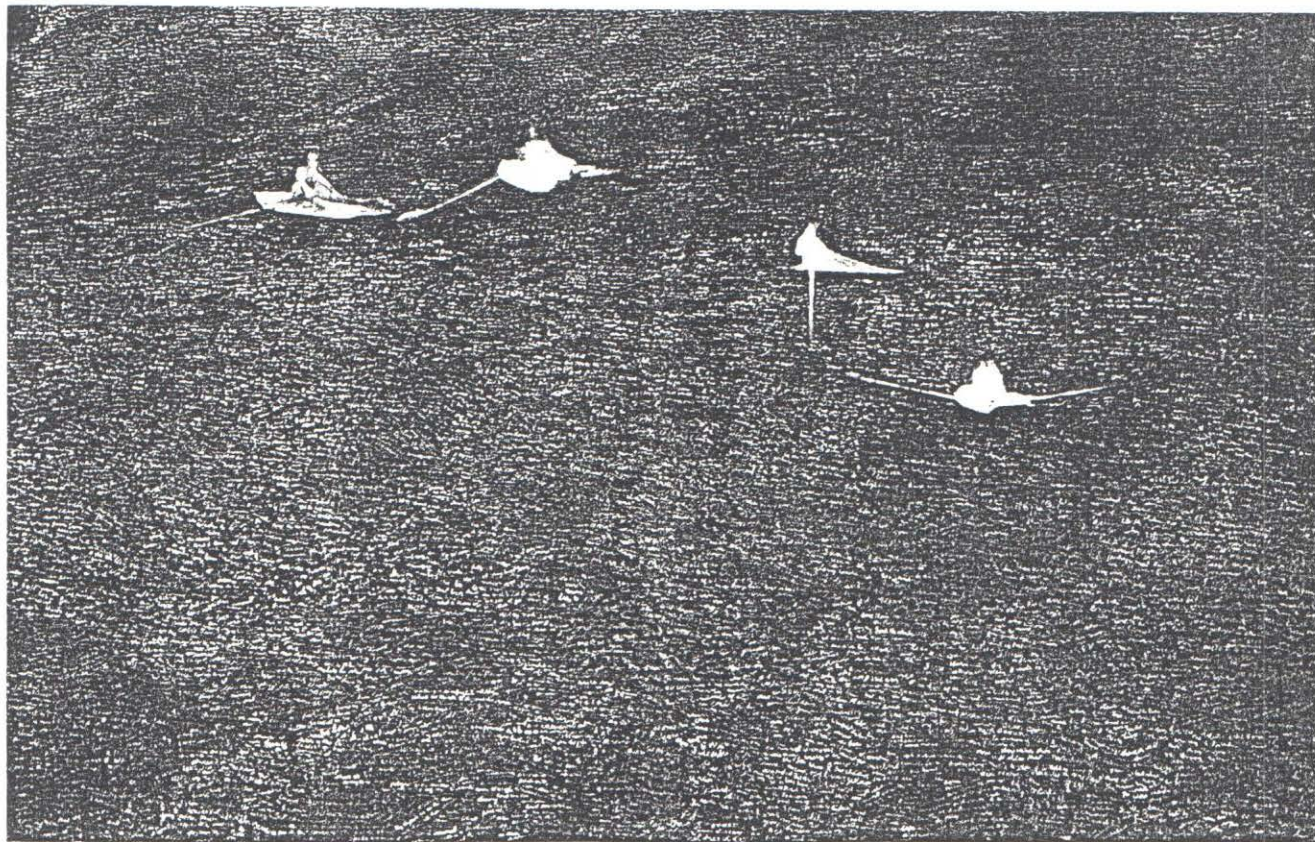


FIG. 3 May Stevens, *Sea of Words*, 1990–91, acrylic on unstretched canvas, 84 × 132 inches. Collection of the artist.



FIG. 4 Barbara Hammer, still from *Nitrate Kisses*, 1992, 16-mm film.

kid. She also reminds a viewer of the history of relationships between old(er) women and young(er) men, whose meanings and success have been varied, a history that in Europe claims the writer Colette and the noblewoman-courtesan Ninon de Lenclos as two of its stars.<sup>13</sup>

Erotic-for-women free play is the conflation of porn and eros and the fluidity of gender, both apparent in Barbara Hammer's feature-length film *Nitrate Kisses* (1992) (fig. 4). She devotes much of the opening to a lesbian couple in their seventies having sex. Nitrate celluloid is explosive, and Hammer explodes the myth that older women are neither sexy nor sexual. Hammer has spoken about ageism in the lesbian community and her experience going to bars and being ignored because she was an old(er) woman.<sup>14</sup> Graphic and lyrical, *Nitrate Kisses* shows the old(er) women, as it does younger lesbian and gay couples, in playfully charged sex. As the camera kisses bodies and watches unhurriedly heated undressing, varieties of touch on wrinkled skin, cunnilingus, and manual penetration, the viewer's eye-body knows the feel of pubic hair, loose flesh, the movements and weight of soul-inseparable-from-the-body pleasures.

Hammer's touch sees erotic play(fulness) as delicate attentiveness and intensive passion. She presents the voyeuristic spectacle of sex acts, which is the focus of conventional erotic art and pornography, in a documentary rhapsody that deflates feminist arguments distinguishing the erotic

from the pornographic on the grounds that pornography negates emotion and maximizes sensation. In *Nitrate Kisses* feeling as tactility and feeling as emotional connection are inseparable. The old(er) couple's facial expressions of pleasure are far removed from the conventional pornographic film subjects' dogged exaggerations of ecstasy. Defamiliarizing conventional erotic art's constraining realism by actualizing pleasure, Hammer provides a feminist erotics that reinvents and redefines pornography.

People often think of old(er) individuals as obsolete, boringly lost in their past, literally and figuratively out of touch, but *Nitrate Kisses's* old(er) lesbians clearly live in a contemporary world: the women use latex gloves and one wears thong underwear. Thong underwear is self-adornment, which projects a visual fiction that, like theatrical costume, drives sensory events. "Style for old women has been a receding, a style of fading away," says Doogan, but self-adornment as play creates a glamorous visualization of the body that stems from style as erotic will.<sup>15</sup> Erotic-for-women is making a spectacle of oneself, and it fashions a self-conscious celebration of a woman's desiring and desirability. Such dressing up must assume polymorphous and unstandardized proportions if it is to disrupt women's preoccupation with menstrual-years models of feminine beauty. Woman-as-spectacle fascinates and disturbs many feminists, but Georgia O'Keeffe's nun- and monklike "habits" and Louise Ne

elson's ethnic butch/femme drag were a far cry from professional sex queens' regalia, whose formulaic eroticism, for some feminists, calls into question the sex icon's erotic inventiveness.<sup>16</sup>

Rachel Rosenthal provides supreme satisfaction for the lustful eye. Charming in fatigues (*L.O.W. in Gaia*), unnerving in black evening gown and white makeup (*Was Black*), riveting in bright, windswept tunic and pants (*KabbaLAmobile*), imperial in a heavy, waistlength necklace of carved skulls and chunky stones and three thick bracelets on one forearm (*Pangaeian Dreams*; fig. 5), Rosenthal, head shaved, voice ranging from bellowing to bell-like and floating or rushing from her mouth into a viewer's ears and nose and down to her diaphragm, frustrates age and gender expectations. She is crone, clown, soldier, wizard, witch, dandy, and diva, who uses the display and visual wonder that are traditional elements of theatrical costume to create a timeless, not ageless/menstrual image. The timeless image is ripe with an ordinary humanity that refuses to be mediocre and that knows meaningful dressing up is not simply for the stage but also for the performance of the unending rite of erotic living.

In *The Change: Women, Aging, and the Menopause* Germaine Greer writes that many women upon entering the process of menopause get their hair cut, go on an adventure, or change their style.<sup>17</sup> Old(er) women's styles of erotic will, which manifest polymorphous lust for living, diminish or vanquish the invisibility that much of the literature on the change, and many of the artists whom I interviewed and who responded to my questionnaire, say comes with menopause. Greer's point suggests that menopause is a passage of revelation, to oneself and others, of pleasure and risk, whose simultaneous presence indicates the workings of eros.

Leila Daw's art treats the climacteric and the paradox of pleasure and regret in passage from one phase of life to another with equanimity and farsightedness. Since the early 1980s she has used acrylic, pencil, bronzing powders, metal leaf, mylar, foil, and other mixed media on paper and canvas in order to create maps that replicate the terrain in regions where she has lived—St. Louis and Boston—and traveled, by car, plane, and imagination, such as the American desert West. Though Daw has only passed through or over desert on the way to and from California, mappings of dry land, richly brown and creviced, began to appear in her art, to Daw's surprise, in 1989. Her characteristic rivers and other wet lands occurred concurrently, and she titles one 1989–90 work *Pre Sent*. Daw typically equates land and human body, and in *Pre Sent* (fig. 6) she unconsciously recorded her own menopausal passage, which ended in 1991.



FIG. 5 Rachel Rosenthal, *Pangaeian Dreams*, 1990, performance at Santa Monica Museum of Art.



FIG. 6 Leila Daw, *Pre Sent* (detail), 1989–90, mixed media on paper, 66 × 34 inches. Private collection.

Who could live in such a place?<sup>18</sup> I meditate on wasteland and aridity. Mappings of my body run with gleaming waterways and wetlands transfigured into creviced riverbeds russet like a memory.

The present has been pre-sent, as has the gift of age.  
Experience marks beauty.

The desert has a history of scarcity and limitation, and the desert has its gifts. Saints underwent tortures and transformations in the desert, for dryness is severe, yet sensuous, and sexy—the blunt nakedness, for dirt itself lies bare, the fleshy and prickly plants diverse ways of absorbing and retaining moisture. I never think of the desert as dried up, but rather as a locus of boldness and revelation.

#### Notes

1. Susan Sontag, "The Double Standard of Aging," *Saturday Review* (September 23, 1972): 37.
2. Jill Radford writes: "Femicide, the misogynous killing of women by men, is a form of sexual violence. Liz Kelly has defined sexual violence as 'any physical, visual, verbal or sexual act' experienced by a woman or girl 'at the time or later, as a threat, invasion, or assault, that has the effect of hurting or degrading her and/or takes away her ability to control intimate contact'"; see Jill Radford, in *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, ed. Jill Radford and Diana E. H. Russell (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992), 3; and Liz Kelly, *Surviving Sexual Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 41. I use the word older throughout this article, because age is relative and because I do not want to deny old age. Although Baba Copper, *Over the Hill: Reflections on Ageism between Women* (Freedom, Calif.: Crossing Press, 1988), 75,

- criticizes "the prissy category of older," photographer Anne Noggle said in an interview with the author, July 3, 1992, "Old sounds like end."
3. In *Post Human* (Pully/Lausanne: FAE Musée d'Art Contemporain, 1992), 19, Jeffrey Deitch writes: "The matter-of-fact acceptance of one's 'natural' looks and one's 'natural' personality is being replaced by a growing sense that it is normal to reinvent oneself."
4. The theme of invisibility runs throughout the literature on women and aging and recurs in the comments and statements of women artists over fifty. From June 1992 to January 1993 I mailed 100 questionnaires to American women artists over fifty; 61 artists responded. I also interviewed women artists over fifty who deal with aging and/or the body in their work. The consensus in the literature and the questionnaires is that at age fifty or so a woman becomes invisible. According to many feminists, culture determines men as human and women as subhuman. That, along with postmenopausal women's culturally constructed defeminization, makes them more subhuman than menstrual women. One of the many feminist considerations of women's subhumanity appears in Cheri Kramarae and Paula A. Treichler, *A Feminist Dictionary* (Boston: Pandora Press, 1985), 199–200.
5. See Landa Nochlin, "Eroticism and Female Imagery in Nineteenth-Century Art," in *Woman as Sex Object: Studies in Art, 1730–1970* (New York: Newsweek, 1972), 9; and Joyce Kozloff, *Patterns of Desire*, introduction by Landa Nochlin (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1990), 11, for remarks about conventional erotic art. *Caught Looking: Feminism, Pornography, and Censorship* (East Haven, Conn.: Long River Books, 1992) is a collection of pornographic pictures and essays on the possibilities of female pleasure in conventional pornography. Authors repeatedly critique WAP (Women Against Pornography) and WAVPM (Women Against Violence in Pornography and the Media).
6. Feminists who affirm the relevance and importance of genius are Christine Battersby, *Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), and Wendy Slatkin, *Women Artists in History: From Antiquity to the 20th Century*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1990).
7. Edward Lucie-Smith, *Sexuality in Western Art* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1991), 261. The women Lucie-Smith discusses are Judy Chicago, Cindy Sherman, and Sylvia Sleigh.
8. Two key feminist explorations of women's eroticism are Luce Irigaray, "This Sex Which Is Not One," trans. Claudia Reeder, in *New French Feminisms: An Anthology*, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (New York: Schocken, 1981), 99–110; and Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," in *Sister Outsider* (Trumansburg, N.Y.: Crossing Press, 1984), 53–59. Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen 16* (Autumn 1975): 6–18, was reprinted in *Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation*, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984), where it was widely read. Recent considerations of the female gaze include Lorraine Gamman and Margaret Marshment, introduction to *The Female Gaze: Women as Viewers of Popular Culture*, ed. Lorraine Gamman and Margaret Marshment (Seattle: Real Comet Press, 1989), 1–7; and Cassandra Langer, "Transgressing *Le Droit du Seigneur*: The Lesbian Feminist Defining Herself in Art History," in *New Feminist Criticism: Art, Identity, Action*, ed. Joanna Frueh, Cassandra Langer, and Arlene Raven (New York: HarperCollins, 1994).
9. See Joanna Frueh, "Hannah Wilke," in *Hannah Wilke: A Retrospective*, ed. Thomas H. Kochheiser (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1989), 51–52, for a discussion of *S.O.S.—Starification Object Series*.
10. All of Wilke's statements are from telephone interviews with the author, May 11, 1992, and January 9, 1993.
11. Joanna Frueh, "Bailey Doogan: Reconciliation," in *Artists of Conscience II* (New York: Alternative Museum, 1992), 25–31, examines Doogan's treatment of aging women.
12. All of Stevens's statements are from an interview with the author, June 13, 1992.
13. Lois Banner, *In Full Flower: Aging Women, Power, and Sexuality: A History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), documents and contemplates relationships between older women and younger men in European history.
14. See the interview with Hammer, "Queer Explosion: Kera Bolonik Detonates Barbara Hammer's Landmark *Homo Cinema*," *QW* (October 18, 1992): 38.
15. Interview with the author, June 21, 1992.
16. See Belinda Budge, "Joan Collins and the Wilder Side of Women: Exploring Pleasure and Representation," and Shelagh Young, "Feminism and the Politics of Power: Whose Gaze Is It Anyway?" in Gamman and Marshment, *The Female Gaze*: 102–11, 173–88, for feminist considerations and conflicts about sex queens Madonna and Joan Collins.
17. Germaine Greer, "No Rite of Passage," *The Change: Women, Aging, and the Menopause* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 32–55.
18. *Who Could Live in Such a Place?* is the title of one work in Daw's "menopausal" series.

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