

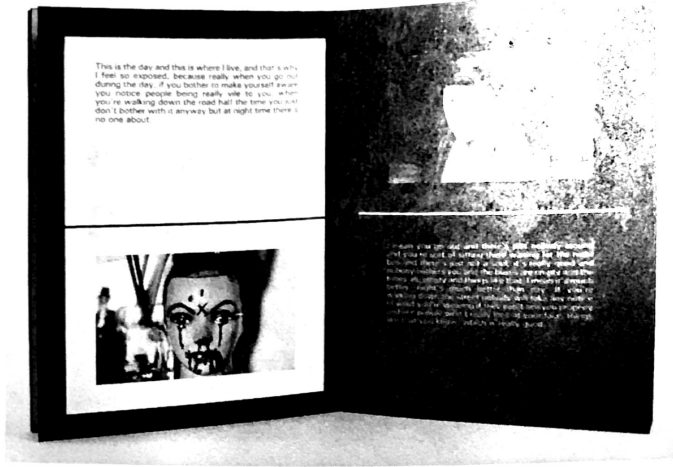
II

The Artist's Book as an Agent of Social Change

The books discussed here are conceived of as agents of political persuasion and as vehicles to advocate a change of consciousness or policy in some area of contemporary life. The concept of what constitutes a political work of art varies from artist to artist and there is much formal, aesthetic, and thematic variety in activist works. Many of these books function by revealing or commenting upon an existing situation in a way which offers a critical reading. These works are often narrative, descriptive, and embedded in personal experiences of individuals — and their agenda is to point to conditions of injustice, oppression, or discrimination. Others of these works provide information which is impersonal in nature and meant to be subversive or enlightening. Some deal with people living at the edges of society, powerless or marginalized. And finally there are activist works which use the book as a platform for social critique or as a means of advocating directly for specific policies.¹ But these books are self-consciously artists' books — they make use of elements of production to communicate their position in a way which invests heavily in aesthetics. Manipulation of images, text, and attention to format, layout, and binding all play a part in these works. The question of whether or not such works are effective in achieving social change belongs to the larger debate about the efficacy of art as a political instrument in contemporary culture. Expressing a point of view, making a vision or voice or position heard, and contributing to the ongoing discussion of politically charged issues is all part of the arena of public debate in which politics, ideology, and aesthetics overlap. These books foreground that aspect of their identity and are often produced primarily with a political motivation.

Personal Documentary Sensibility

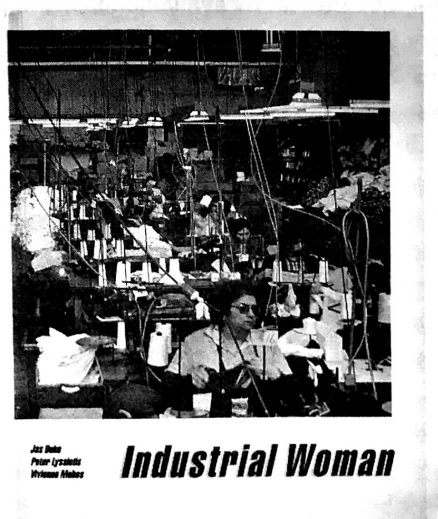
Stephen Willats' book *Cha Cha Cha* (Coracle, 1982) integrates a personal point of view and a documentary sensibility. Focusing on the gay



Stephen Willats, *Cha Cha Cha*, 1982

British punk scene and a club called the Cha Cha Cha, Willats makes a strikingly formal presentation of texts and images. The pages are divided, top and bottom, and each place takes on and maintains a specific identity through the course of the book. The top left page is the place for Willats' own narrative, the bottom left contains a photograph. The theme of Willats' texts are the fears, paranoias, and difficulties of being publicly perceived as gay. The anxiety of moments on the street, of being followed, threatened, or harassed are interwoven with a narrative of life "on the scene" of gay subculture. The text on the facing page, lower right, always belongs to a speaker whose photograph appears directly above it. The background of each page is black, the left is white, so that they make a striking graphic contrast, and the photographs which portray the costumed, pierced, decorated, and elaborately made-up figures on the left have an equally dramatic character to their self-construction. The graphic tone of the book is repetitive and formalized which allows the impact of the photographs and narratives to be maximized. The book resembles an album of private souvenirs and snapshots but has the identity of a documentary text infused with a personal viewpoint. There is no didactic message in Willats' piece, only a presentation of a particular segment of lived experience to which his work provides us access we might not otherwise have. Judgement and response are left to the reader who is given information which would not circulate readily (except as fashion) beyond the initiates to that scene.

Martha Rosler's book, *Service: A Trilogy* (Printed Matter, 1978) is clearly activist and documentary. *Service* is a collection of three different accounts of the experiences of women working in domestic service in the United States. All three are immigrants but each has different aspirations and her own background through which to process her experience. The book's structure is derived from postcards the women wrote to Rosler to describe the events of their lives. The temporal dimension of the work is collapsed in the synthetic final narrative, but the sequence of difficulties which these women encounter in trying to obtain payment for their work, support for their families, and their struggle with the basics of survival from a position of relative powerlessness are evident. The course of these women's lives and the choices they make within their restricted circumstances communicates with considerable poignancy and first-person voices give the narratives compelling conviction. The book is small, post-card-sized, not illustrated except for its black and white cover photograph of a woman working in a kitchen. Though Rosler introduces no commentary text, her editing and presentation demonstrates her proactive stance on the regulation of domestic labor. *Service* is a call for change.

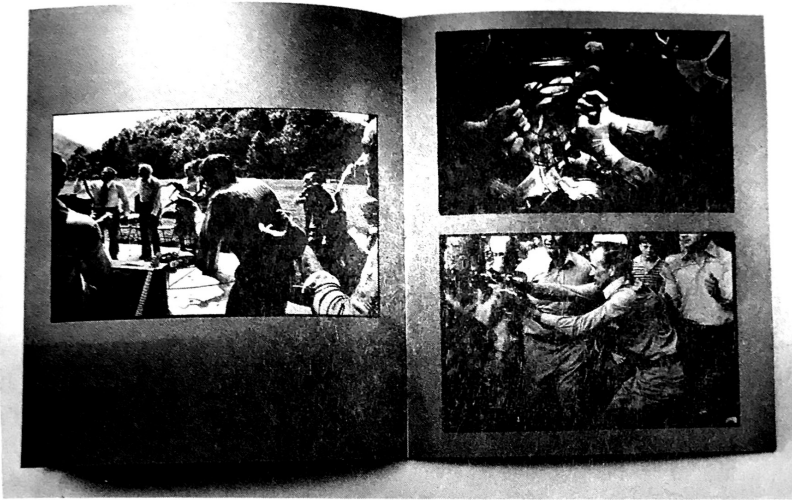


Duke, Lyssiotis, Mehes, *Industrial Woman*, 1986

Industrial Woman (1986) is a collaboration among three individuals: Jas Duke, Peter Lyssiotis and Vivienne Mehes. It was produced by the Industrial Woman Collective from a photographic exhibition of the same

title. This book "portrays a cross-section of some of the problems and experiences of working women in Australia." Drugs, maternity leave, sexual harassment, working on the line, health and safety, migrant women, and repetitive stress syndrome are titles of sections in the book. Each section contains photographs of specific women working. They are identified in their workplace and the nature of their job and their time in the industry in which they work is given. The text in the book is translated in every section into Turkish, Greek, Maltese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Serbian, and Croatian, all languages spoken in the workplace in the Australian factories in which these women work. The intended audience for this book is clearly not just the artworld. This book has a more straightforward documentary character than the work of either Rosler or Willats. Its binding and format are indistinguishable from that of a trade book and it no doubt was meant to function as one. But there are collages and typographically manipulated phrases on the pages which announce each section, as well as other editorial decisions, which make it evident that an art audience was also targeted as a likely interested readership. The book is clearly a cross-over book, one which takes advantage of the potential of books to be a widely distributed and readily available means of providing information. It makes very little intervention into or interrogation of the book form, rather, relies on its conventions to produce an effective communication. While much of the information in this book is compiled data, tying the specifics to individual women and their situations pushes the details into a personal realm where the effects of what is being described are grounded in testimonials of actual experience.

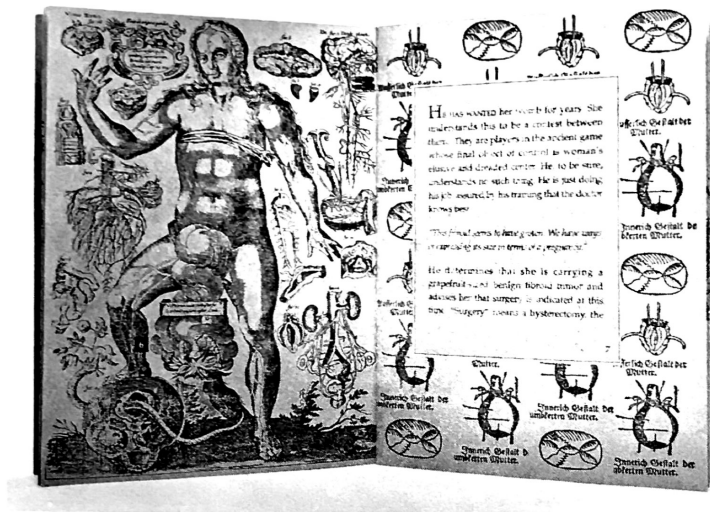
Bill Burke's *They Shall Cast Out Demons* (Nexus Press, 1983) transforms the documentary through his own personal experience. This work is so intimately imbricated in Burke's own vision of the medical profession which is the subject of the book that there can be no claim at all to neutrality in the work. The dedication, in handwriting on an otherwise blank page, is the only piece of Burke's own writing in the book. "Dedicated to my parents who, when I was five, told me we were going to church but took me to the hospital for a hernia operation instead." The other blocks of text either come from the Bible or from a book about the experience of the human body from the perspective of a surgeon: Richard Selzer's *Mortal Lessons* (Simon and Schuster, 1976). Burke uses photographs in a collaged sequence of single images but the effect is a book full of movement and action. In Burke's book the distinctions between the practices of



Bill Burke, *They Shall Cast Out Demons*, 1983

Western medical teams performing neurosurgical procedures and the activity of shamans among Hmong tribesmen in Laos or the activities of various Christian fundamentalists in ceremonies with rattlesnakes and copperheads are all interwoven as aspects of a single theme: medicine and faith. This calls into question the habitual terms which separate these subjects into different categories. Each image is intensely vivid, from those which show dramatic scenes of a brain open and exposed during surgery to those of an animal being slaughtered. The intensity of the spiritual drama of medicine and its grounding in cultural belief systems is continually reinforced by these images, and Burke's sardonic dedication to his parents remains as an invitation to see the blurred boundaries among these worlds. There is no obvious political agenda, no call for change of policy, in this book as there is in *Industrial Woman and Service*. Because of the personal aspect of Burke's work and its private revelations he demonstrates the non-neutrality of the documentary form while posing issues of cultural prejudice and belief. If Burke advocates anything it is that one suspend received patterns of thought about the body, the spirit, and the healing process. The power of this book derives from the strength of the photographic juxtapositions and Burke's attention to the structural effect of sequence.

Joan Lyons' *The Gynecologist* (Visual Studies Workshop, 1989) also has a medical theme but here a personal text is central to the book's struc-

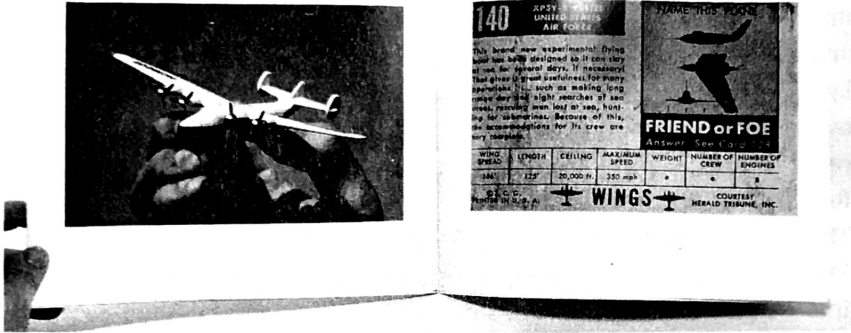


Joan Lyons, *The Gynecologist*, 1989

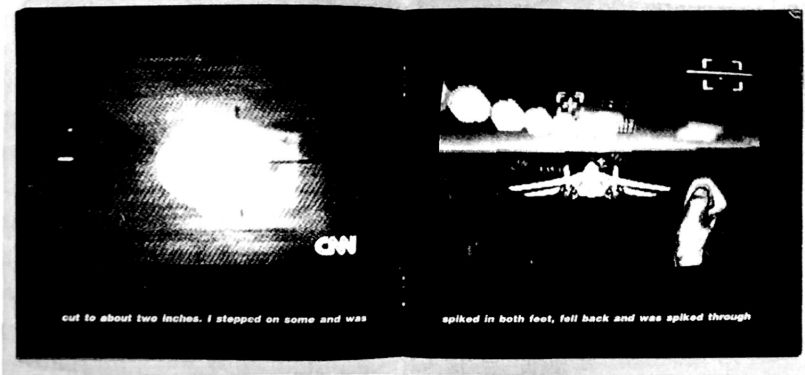
ture. Lyons's narrative recounts her dealings with her male gynecologist who has been "for years" suggesting surgery to remove her uterus, ovaries, and cervix as a solution to various female troubles. The power struggle Lyons recounts is all too familiar to women who contend with the pressures of the American Medical Association in its generally white and male embodiment. The story is about power and the asymmetrical way in which cultural structures grant authority over an individual body. In this sense the book has much in common with Burke's disclosure of the cultural biases underlying the construction of medical authority. However, Lyons's sensitivity to book structure is very different aesthetically from Burke's aggressively suggestive arrangements. *The Gynecologist* is small and printed on warm, rich brown paper with black and opaque white ink. Lyons maximizes the effect of the color of paper through her design, manipulating it to function as a third tone in the palette which includes the two inks. The book's formal values echo the books of 17th- and 18th-century printers with large margins, small text blocks, and relatively large well-led type. This design complements the images in the book which are reproductions of woodcuts and engravings from medical books printed in the last five hundred years (the earliest is from 1495). Medical ignorance is presented as the basis of decisions about women's lives: authoritative drawings of the way the uterus was supposed to be structured range from cornucopia forms to those resembling rubber thimbles.

Lyons has aestheticized these into borders, images, endpaper designs so that the book swarms with rich visual material loaded with condemning information. Point by point, decision by decision, this book and Burke's articulate sequence through carefully nuanced structures — but whereas Lyons establishes a strict format, Burke varies his opening by opening. The overriding message of *The Gynecologist* is seductively presented, Lyons's resistance to pressure vindicated, and her "Afterword" contains a strong feminist assessment of the AMA's attitude toward women's medicine. There is no question that this book, with its images of calipers, intrauterine apparatuses, and bizarre images of the female anatomy serves to inform women and thus give them back, if not control over their own bodies, at least support for negotiating with rather than submitting to medical authority.

Two other books which have interesting parallels with each other on a completely different theme are Larry Walczak's *American History Lessons* (Walczak, 1979) and Brad Freeman's *SimWar* (Varicose, 1991). Both deal with the boyhood image of masculinity in relation to the American military. Both deal with contemporary issues of war and unreality, the concept of the "game" as a military culture. Walczak incorporates photographs from family albums: images of the artist as a child playing Davy Crockett and wearing a coonskin cap are juxtaposed with images of the historical figure. This juxtaposition of historical myth with childhood fantasy continues when pictures of him playing soldier, lining his toy militia up in the wrinkles of the bedclothes, are contrasted to photographs of military equipment, personnel, training, and battle formations. The "lessons" are clear, the saturation of boyhood with the military image as a romanticized masculine ideal. This ideal is normalized through games and fantasies, reinforced through the telling of history and only later questioned, pulled out of the psyche, and examined. Personal information also runs through Freeman's *SimWar*, though part of its focus is the more recent Gulf War of 1991. Rather than analysing historical myths Freeman's book contains an autobiographical narrative and a parallel set of images. As a teenager Freeman, the son of a military officer, spent time in a military hospital during the 60s recovering from an accidental injury. The hospital was receiving American soldiers wounded in Vietnam. The reality of their experience completely transformed his adolescent view of war and any images of heroism or glory were utterly dispelled by the grim realities. This narrative runs along the bottom of the pages and against a black



Larry Walczak, **American History Lessons**, 1979 background. Above this are frames which echo the shape of a television screen in which appear images from video war games, Flash Gordon films, wounded soldiers, and the Gulf War images of battle which were regularly broadcast on television during the conflict. By this juxtaposition Freeman reveals the sense of unreality which popular culture activities communicate about war and its effects. The "simulations" prepare children to participate in warfare, blurring the boundaries between on-screen activity and the news reports displayed on television broadcasts. Walczak's work is in the style of a children's book — type laid out next to black and white images in imitation of a text while Freeman visually engages the reader with the paradoxes of what is presented. Both books use the personal position as a means of criticizing militarism within an American context and each also uses materials from outside their direct personal experience to frame that critique.



Brad Freeman, **SimWar**, 1991

Impersonal Information

Patricia Tuohy's **American Information** (1982) is one of the most straightforward books of information which one could imagine. It is the size of a small travel guide and is jammed with entries covering every aspect of American life. Every aspect of American life — or at least every aspect which seems to carry some link to the image of America as a mythic notion: the history of the pledge of allegiance, the story of Robert Oppenheim, and lists of the number of rivers, roads, and miles of highway in the United States. However, this is not a standard almanac and it profiles a selective image of national identity through its process of editing. Whether "information" itself can have a national identity (what is "French" information, for example) or is merely a factor in constructing that identity, Tuohy is at pains to provide the means whereby data can be construed as contributing to an image of American life. The book is not so much flat or neutral as it is poker-faced in its attitude, providing a large compendium of data with an unstated purpose. This book is more of a document than an agent of change. It serves as a foil against which supposedly impersonal information can be reexamined in other artists' books.

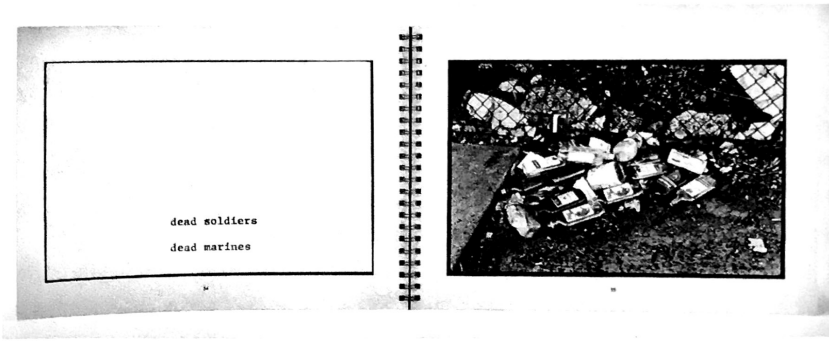
For example, Hans Haacke's revelation of information is never without a clear agenda. **Der Pralinenmeister (The Chocolate Master)** (Art Metropole, 1982) is based on a portrait of Peter Ludwig first exhibited in seven diptychs at Paul Maenz Gallery in Cologne in 1981. Like many of Haacke's exhibitions since the late 1960s, its intention is to reveal information as a means of disclosing and analyzing the structures of power. In particular, Haacke is interested in the way corporate capitalism is complicit with forms of repression in the cultural arena. The texts of the seven pairs of posterlike images reproduced in this work are translated into English and printed on pages which alternate with the photographs of the originals. The work covers many aspects of the business and personal life of Peter Ludwig. The first panel gives biographical information about Ludwig's position — as head of the firm of Leonard Monheim (a company he entered when he married Monheim's daughter). His art collection is extensive, and information about its loaned works, which are exempt from property taxes, and his place on the boards of various galleries and museums in Europe and the United States is presented. The facing page details the treatment of workers, mainly women, in the factories which produce his line of "Regent" chocolates. The women are underpaid, over-regulated, their private lives supervised and interfered with, and their



Hans Haacke, *Der Pralinenmeister*, 1982

working conditions and pay is substandard. The juxtaposition of these revelations about Ludwig's art activities and the conditions of the industries from which he derives the wealth which funds his multi-million dollar collection continues. Ludwig's denial that there are cultural politics in the artworld becomes increasingly shrill as the book proceeds. He repeatedly insists that art manifests the highest aspirations of culture and that his collection was motivated by the desire to preserve German culture from foreign investors or sales which might disperse it. Haacke's techniques are designed to display contradictions and leave them unresolved, which he does. The extension of the process used in this analysis also resonates outward. The reader is left with the sense that if these are the machinations which lie behind a chocolate magnate's image, they are also those which would be revealed in a study of the heads of automobile, electronic, pharmaceutical, and other corporations — and this is the impact Haacke wants. This book is neither innovative nor structurally complex, instead, Haacke uses the book form to reproduce information and circulate it widely. In this respect it is closer to the sensibility of *The Industrial Woman* than to *SimWar* or *The Gynecologist*.

Another work by Martha Rosler, *Three Works* (Nova Scotia School of Art and Design, 1981), is not only a complex documentary but also a critical investigation and commentary on the nature of the documentary pho-



Martha Rosler, **Three Works**, 1981

tograph. Rosler's work takes apart the category of **impersonal** information, thus demonstrating its basic fallacies. Rosler is intent on showing the means by which documentary photographs produce their meaning and how such meanings are changed through context and use. The book contains three sections, the first a piece on Chile, the second on "The Bowery in two inadequate descriptive systems," and the third a long essay and study on documentary photography. Each makes very different use of the book's horizontal (8 by 11 inch) format and the coded material of heavily coated paper used for publishing photographs.

The first piece interweaves accounts of current events and human rights violations in the political climate of Chile just following the assassination of former government minister and economist, Orlando Letelier in Washington D.C., in September 1976. Rosler's use of material gathered in interviews, conversations, and research follows the conventions of political journalism and makes its impact through those means. In the second work on the Bowery, however, the conventions are taken apart. Language and photographic image are separated dramatically, each placed on the page within a hard heavy black border. And the attempt to describe the lower end of The Bowery in New York City through either system is shown to be "inadequate" for several reasons. First the two systems never seem to match up to each other. The black and white photos carry aesthetic value, the words have a poetic effect, and neither adequately describe the situation because they are fundamentally outside of the realities of the lived experience of the Bowery. Representation is fraught with problems, Rosler is asserting, because it cannot adequately show these realities and because it speaks for and displaces the people for whom what is shown is a lived experience.

These issues are taken up more explicitly in the critical essay which forms the final section: "in, around and afterthoughts (on documentary photography)." Here Rosler discusses various famous (and not so famous) documentary photographs and their relation to the circumstances in which they were produced and used. Rosler's argument is that many photographic works produced by "reformers" were as much about the preservation of the status quo as they were about changing or improving the condition of those photographed. The balance of power which positioned the underclass or disenfranchised individual was not changed by the document, and often the few changes sought in actual conditions merely quelled or prevented social unrest. For instance, Rosler gives details about the ways in which the story of Florence Thompson, the woman whose image became Dorothea Lange's "Migrant Mother", has been systematically excluded from the photograph's history and use (not to mention from any profits it generated through reproduction). Rosler examines Lange's interactions with the woman at the time the photograph was taken, the response of later critics and historians, as well as Roy Stryker's own agenda in demonstrating the power of American workers to triumph over adversity through determination and hard labor.² Rosler's book thus progresses from a documentary type of piece (but one which acknowledges Rosler's role and her relation to the events described rather than a neutral voice claiming authoritative objectivity) to a deconstruction of documentary techniques through creative and critical means. Rosler's awareness of the codes of photographic publication give this work its effect since its physicality neutralizes its artistic character through simple layout and format techniques.

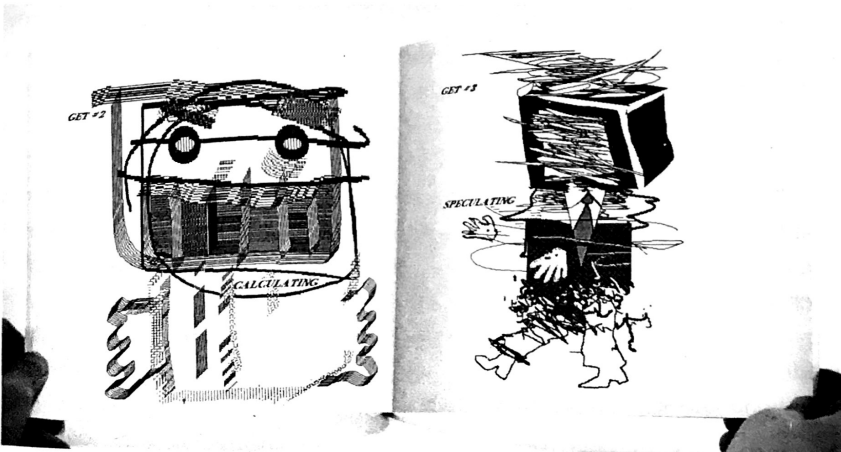
Critical or Analytic Works

Finally, there are many artists for whom a book creates an opportunity to focus critical attention on contemporary culture. Miles de Coster and Paul Rutkovsky have both produced works which address consumerism and media images. De Coster's book *Television* (Nexus Press, 1985), like his earlier work on money *Iconomics* (Nexus Press, 1984), is graphically complex. Elaborate printing of background patterns and photographic images appropriated from television history accompany a text which discusses the development of television formats and mythology. De Coster's work was heavily researched and elaborately scripted. From this informed point of view, De Coster analyses television as the most recent extension



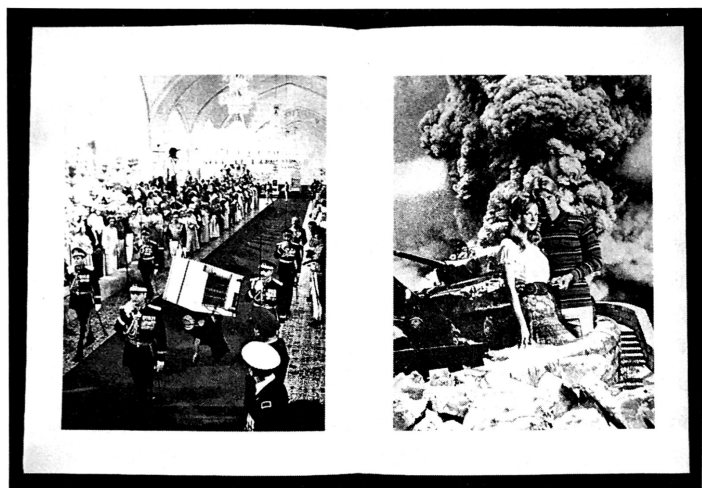
Miles DeCoster, *Television*, 1985

of the long history of communication media (images of cuneiform writing and other artifacts provide a visual point of reference for earlier systems). Printed in three colors, red, blue and black, the book maximizes their potential through the use of screens, separations, and other design manipulations.³ A blend of history and creative writing, of documentary evidence and original insight, De Coster's work is synthetic and analytical. He is critical of television as a commercial industry and as a cultural product, though his in-print versions of on-screen images also display his fascination with the medium. Rutkovsky's *Get More* (Visual Studies Workshop, 1986) is more savage and wild in format than De Coster's book. Produced on a Macintosh, again in the early days of low-resolution printers and jaggy type and images, Rutkovsky's rather crude collection of images and statements (limited to phrases a word or two in length) serves as an



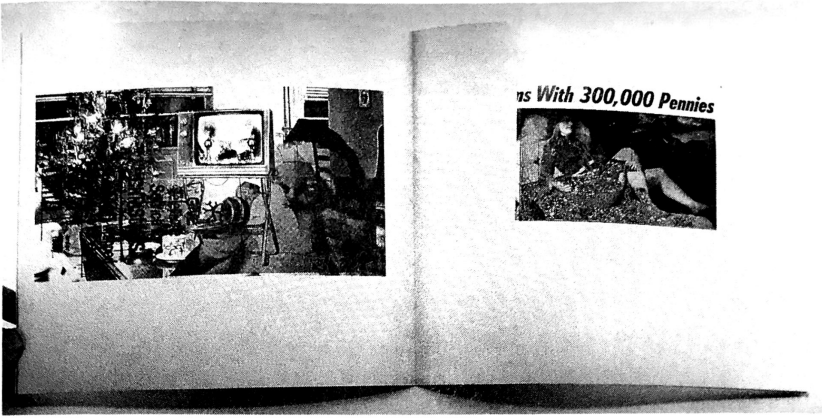
Paul Rutkovsky, *Get More*, 1986

indictment of what he calls "the buy or be sold environment." Rutkovsky's equation of economic status with survival continues his investigation of the commodity condition of contemporary life begun years earlier in *Commodity Character* (Visual Studies Workshop, 1982). In *Get More* the computer's identity in this cycle of spectacularization, reification, and commodification is explored. This feels more like a scrapbook of early imagemaking experiments on the Mac than a work with developed sequencing or structure. The damning tone of Rutkovsky's title message is enhanced by the book's technical primitiveness.



Peter Lyssiotis, *The Products of Wealth*, 1982

The thematic focus on the ideology of contemporary life takes many forms in artists' books. All three of the following books use a variation on the structure of the photographic portfolio to build their critical commentary. The first of these is Peter Lyssiotis's *The Products of Wealth* (1982) which is a small eight-page pamphlet of black and white photocollages which have been reproduced. The images juxtapose affluence and destitution, violence and materialism, wealth and misery. Again, the use of the book format is determined by its relatively inexpensive capacity to reproduce material which can circulate widely — the messages in the images are clear, and though the book is not a substantial publication, it presents a media-based gestalt, a reading of the cruel paradoxes of late capitalism. The second book is more developed as an object and a work: Scott Hyde's *The Real Great Society Album* (Bayonne Publishing Company, 1971). It is composed of Hyde's photographs, multiple exposures (done in the camera



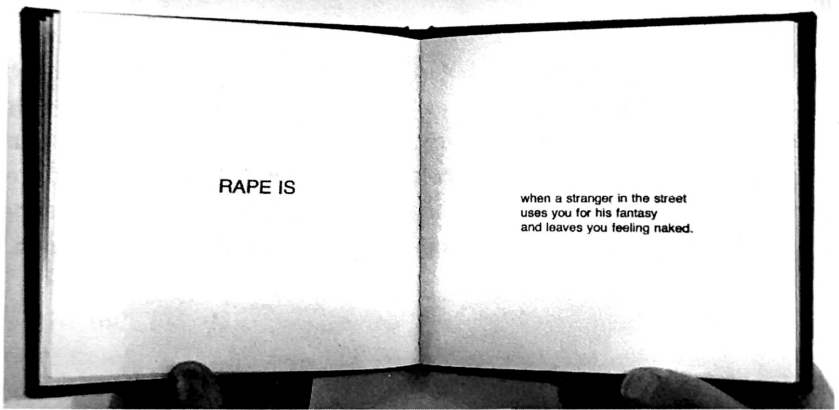
Scott Hyde, *The Real Great Society Album*, 1971

and darkroom) which reveal contradictions similar to those pointed out by Lyssiotis. But Hyde's imagery is limited to America in the years of and immediately following Lyndon Johnson's presidency (the title is taken from the phrase Johnson used to describe his domestic programs). Lyssiotis's work, by contrast, feels global, displaced from specific locations, and terrifyingly without history — as if the images exist in an eternal present of social horror. Hyde though using a straightforward portfolio format, pays attention to sequence: the relations among images are structured formally as well as thematically so that the book moves forward in a series of unfolding linkages. Lyssiotis's pages remain static and self-contained.



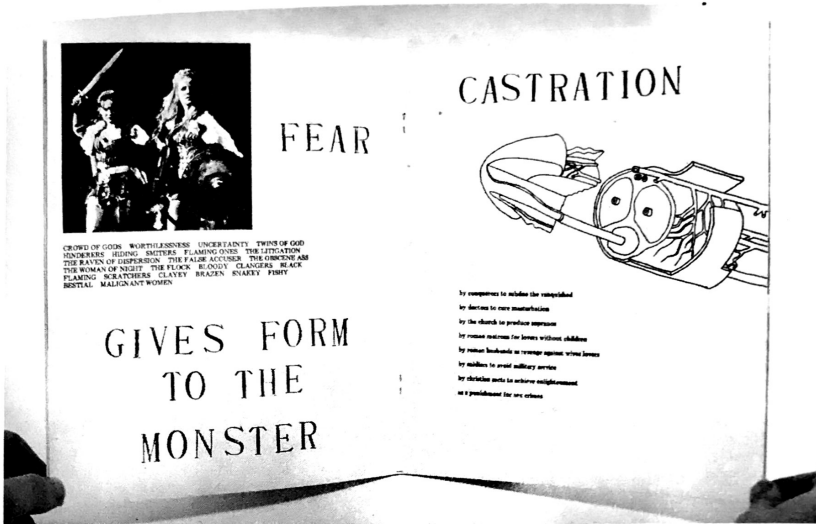
Clifton Meador, *Great Men of the Modern Age*, 1982

Clifton Meador's *Great Men of the Modern Age* (1982) is slightly more enigmatic than the other two books discussed and his conception derives more intimately from the structure of the printed book. If Hyde and Lyssiotis use the page as a field for the presentation of single images, Meador makes his pages in the book design process. Meador's work alternates texts and photographs of clothing laid out to make a dummy figure in the grass, each configuration accompanied by a caption on a facing page which identifies the "type" depicted: "warrior", "trendsetter", "scholar." The imagery is inseparable from the printing process — screen pattern and stripping have been used to construct the design of type and imagery not merely to reproduce an image. What these works share is their use of material culture and its capacity to produce meaning through the "stuff" of clothing, guns, dishware, automobiles, and gendered bodies. Their common theme of the "great" society foregrounds the "winner-take-all" morality of contemporary capitalist culture.



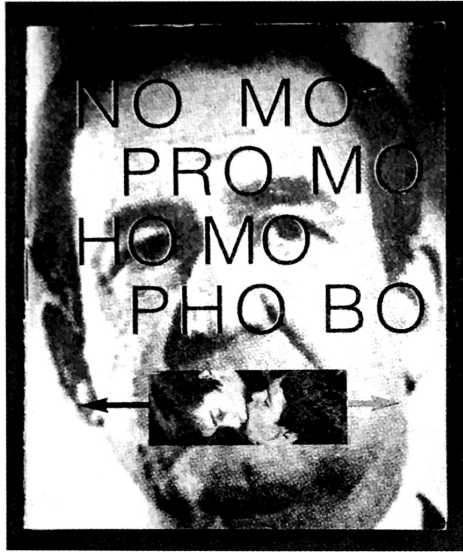
Suzanne Lacy, *Rape Is*, 1973, NYPL

Sexuality, mores, and forms of violence and prejudice are topics which have been well-served by various artists' books. A crucial early work in this vein was Suzanne Lacy's *Rape Is* (Women's Graphic Workshop, 1973) which expresses the political sensibility of the first wave of the 1970s women's art movement. Designed to raise women's consciousness through showing the range of behaviors which constitute rape, rather than obfuscating and concealing it behind layers of false moralization and judgement, Lacy's book was effective and groundbreaking. As an artist's book it communicates compelling issues directly. The cover of the wrapper bore a paper seal the reader was required to break in order to read



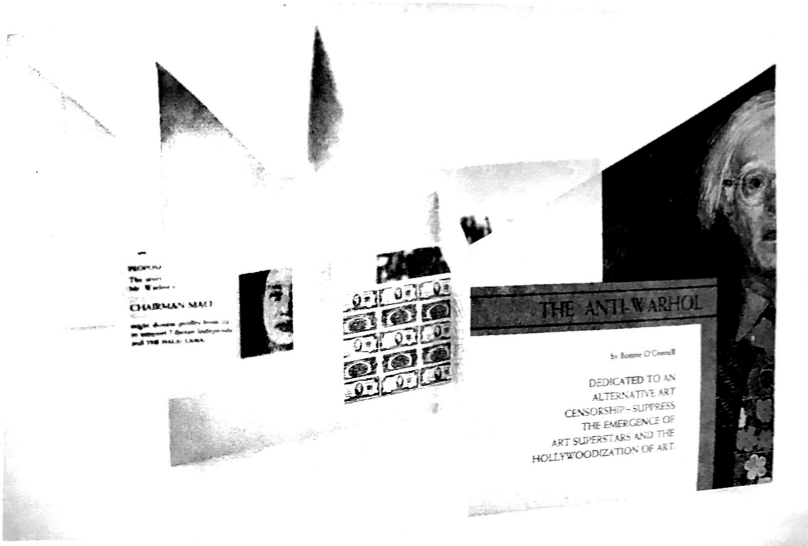
Linda Neaman, *Sex and Monsters*, n.d.

the book, and the end sheets were printed in a solid, deep, blood-red ink. Each opening has the statement "Rape is" on the left page while on the facing sheet is a description of situations women find themselves in on a regular basis — from physical to psychic and emotional harassment. The theme of sexual behavior and social prohibitions or phobias is at the center of Linda Neaman's, *Sex and Monsters* (Hallwalls, n.d.). Neaman's book is not as graphically clear or politically direct as Lacy's. It contains a blend of new age occult earth-mother graphics, popular culture images of Hollywood amazons and starlets, and texts which inscribe aspects of sexual phobias from various identified sources in a hodge-podge intended as consciousness raising. The work's major intention is to show the ways in which eroticism is demonized and sexual repression internalized and turned into anger or other destructive emotions. Suggestions of the eternal feminine, or mythically feminine, ("in the rites of Malekula, the monster Le-hev-dev, as a negative power of the feminine, is also associated with the spider") intersperse with other texts and images which display aspects of sexuality from biological and physiological functions ("In 1677 Leeuwenhoek discovered spermatozoon") to social and cultural events (photographs of a woman accused of "murder in self defense"). *Sex and Monsters* resembles a workbook, its large black and white pages and its page by page treatment of themes gives it a self-help or instructional-pamphlet look — no doubt exactly what Neaman intended.



Scott McCarney, *No Mo Pro... 1992*

Scott McCarney's *No Mo Pro Mo Ho Mo Pho Bo* (Visual Studies Workshop, 1992) is a good example of an artist's book motivated by topical concerns. McCarney's work is both a response and a protest, a means of registering anger and of using it for education and lobbying. The small pamphlet consists of a heavy weight paper cover, printed with an image of Patrick Buchanan (right-wing pundit and former press secretary to Ronald Reagan) and the title. Inset into Buchanan's face, just over his mouth, is a photograph of two men kissing. Buchanan appears "to speak" their kiss, to embrace it, and to be silenced by it simultaneously. Inside the pamphlet is a single sheet of folded paper stapled to the spine. Bright pink, it opens into several quadrants, each with a quote from a political conservative with a prominent public profile — such as Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association, accompanied by a homophobic quote taken from various sources which McCarney identifies in his colophon. Underneath these texts and images are "negative" images of men involved in erotic acts.⁴ The graphic characterization gives these an elusive character and underscores their stigma within the public arena of right-wing and fundamentalist Christian rhetoric. As a small pamphlet, folding down to less than 4 by 5 inches this is an ephemeral and topical use of the book format to make a timely point in the spirit of 18th- and 19th-century satirical pamphlets.

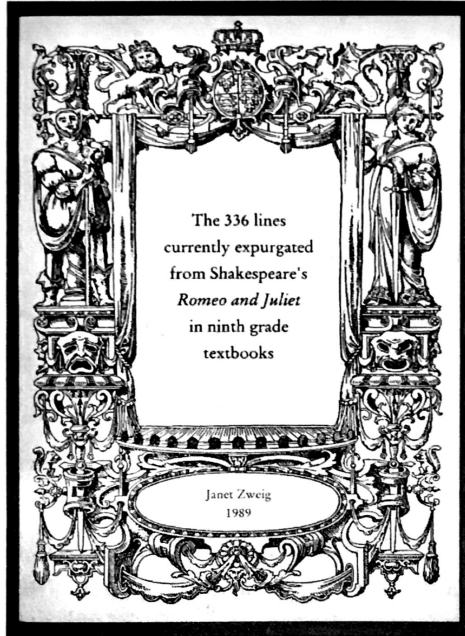


Bonnie O'Connell, *The Anti-Warhol Museum*, 1993

Bonnie O'Connell's *The Anti-Warhol Museum* (Nexus Press, 1993) makes use of a complex structure as the basis of a critique of artworld politics. In particular, she takes aim at the blind eye which cultural institutions and art stars often turn on the issues of contemporary injustice and suggests that the resources generated in the artworld be recycled to serve a broader community. The accordion-fold book is cut so that the work stands up in a star shape with panels both inset and out-thrusting. Each panel contains one part of a proposal for "The Socially Responsible Disposal of Warholia." The well-known icons of Warhol's work — from Coca Cola bottles to Campbell's soup cans and images of Chairman Mao — are juxtaposed with specific suggestions such as: "Insitutions or collectors holding versions of Warhol's Soup Cans should sell them to fund programs that will Feed the Hungry." A panel following the soup can imagery makes a succinct statement on the number of American households dependent on food stamps and statistics on the demand for food assistance to the homeless. O'Connell's work uses the striking graphics of the commercial art world and a modified book structure to question the values embodied in the Andy Warhol quote with which the book opens: "Money is the moment to me, money is my mood."

The Activist Book Examines Censorship

Janet Zweig's small publication *The 336 lines currently expurgated*



Janet Zweig, *The 336 lines....*, 1989

from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in ninth grade textbooks (1989) is an activist artist's book which deals with issues of censorship. Her subject matter is the mutilation of the text and its reconstituted appearance as a seamless published work meant for junior high school instruction. The most successful acts of censorship are those which efface the marks of their own activity. This is acknowledged by Zweig, and she is reinserting those marks of erasure into the pristine form of the edited versions of classics which are used for teaching purposes. The lines which are expurgated read strangely out of context, and the prurient minds which found in them nuances likely to excite teenagers to blush, giggle, or respond to their mild, archaic sexual innuendos were clearly more informed (and possibly less experienced) than the students who would have read these snippets aloud. In an age in which AIDS is a major fact of life, the idea of keeping the sobering words "Prick love for pricking and you beat love down" from the eyes of sexually aware and active teens seems old fashioned and naive. Zweig is not so much intent on paying particular attention to these censored phrases as she is in showing how odd it was to do so in the first place. Replacing them within the original text seems to defuse their stigmatized charge — but it also returns sexuality to an inte-

gral place within Shakespeare's text and the textuality of adolescent life. Zweig's point is that books themselves are a site of ideological and political contest. The first page contains a brief note on "Directions for use." It says: "Xerox this book so that the words are printed on only one side of the sheet. Cut out the lines and replace them in your textbook where they belong in the play. Pass the book on to another student." Zweig is stating that the material of the book, its printed textual form, can be used as a stage for effective activism. Here the book is the agent for social change as well as a site for intervention.

1 There are independent presses dedicated to alternative publishing whose work often resembles or overlaps with some of the works which will be discussed here, such as South End Press in Boston or the New Press in New York City. The main difference between the works of these presses and that of the artists whose books are featured in this section is in their format and structure. Artists' books use complex or creative solutions whose expense, aesthetic component, and often personal inflection distinguish them from the works of presses which feature straight text, photographic images, or instructional drawings.

2 Roy Stryker was the director of a program established in 1935 to make a rural photographic survey within the Farm Security Administration, which was part of F.D. Roosevelt's 1935 Resettlement Administration.

3 The book calls for a comparison with Philip Zimmermann's *Interference* which is far more successful graphically. De Coster's design sensibility has a commercial bookletish aesthetic to it while Zimmermann is able to generate an original effect from pre-press screen manipulations.

4 This use of a negative to code the homoerotic as an absent or inverted space in American culture is a feature of the paintings and photomontages of the late David Wojnarowicz in his work from the 1980s.