2003

Un voyage vers une photographie feminine: The gender politics of body and space

Panizza Ruth Allmark

Edith Cowan University

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Un Voyage vers une Photographie Féminine:
The Gender Politics of Body and Space

Thesis submitted by Panizza Ruth Allmark BA (Honours) for the requirements of Doctor of Philosophy (Media Studies) in the Faculty of Communications and Creative Industries, Edith Cowan University.

JANUARY 2003
USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.
ABSTRACT

In 1999 I embarked on a photographic journey to various cities around the world. The photographs produced are the results of my critical attention as a woman and a feminist to the issues concerning gender, travel and landscape aesthetics.

This dissertation is an analysis of my documentary photographs. I am interested in ways in which my photographs correspond with the French feminist theories of Hélène Cixous and Lucy Irigaray on écriture féminine. Their work on the politics of the body has been influential in my journey towards a photographie féminine. Moreover, I also incorporate the feminist work of cultural and travel theorists such as Elizabeth Wilson, Janet Wolf, Trinh T. Minh-ha, amongst others, in my 'writing the body'.

A photographie féminine places an emphasis on the primacy of the féminin. My use of the term féminin is different from a masculine construct of the feminine. Instead, it resists the masculine closure of representation and attempts to depict féminin heterogeneity and féminin desire repressed by the Law of the Father. Importantly, it is also concerned with using and reworking the masculine myths and metaphors of the feminine. As such, much of my photography involves reframing found advertising images of women in the city, as well as self-representations. A photographie féminine also shares a number of similarities with postmodern documentary photography, such as self-reflexivity, a concern with power relationships and the nature of images and their circulation as well as the production of images that use irony as a political device.

The concept of gendered spatiality is also central to this study. In the first chapter I describe my journey photography, linking the traditions of travel and landscape aesthetics to feminist theories of the body. In particular, I discuss my 'politics of location' which highlights the significance of gender and race in regards to 'how I see the world' as well as discussing my approach in reading the photographs.
In the following chapter, *Wanderlust*, I examine the work of various journey photographers who have had an impact on my own practice. I also discuss the masculine proclivity of travel, the notion of exile and marginality in which travel becomes a route for self-reflection.

In the third chapter, *In/her Space*, I explore my experience of travel and the issues that influence my use of space. I emphasise women's spatial mobility, my lived experience and how the camera is an extension of my subjectivity.

In *Urban Exposures*, the fourth chapter, I describe the counter-aesthetics of the uncanny. Unlike the categories of the beautiful and the sublime, which follow a masculine discourse of containment and aestheticisation, the uncanny aims to disrupt masculine boundaries and divisions. I associate the uncanny in the reading of my photographs which involves the reframing of found images of women in the city. Moreover, through the trope of the *femme fatale* I examine the images of women in the city space, their profane sexuality and Kristeva's notion of the abject.

Finally, in *Reclamation* I conclude that my *photographie féminine* represents a re-conceptualisation of the landscape from just a place to see to a more interactive space relating to a *feminin* experience. In this chapter the gender politics of body and space is represented through my documentary photographs of the J18 anti-capitalist rally 'Reclaim the Streets'. I compare and contrast my work to the photographs and reports of the mainstream press covering the event. Furthermore, I discuss how a *photographie féminine* may provide a counter-discourse to imperialising patriarchal representations.
Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
(ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text: or
(iii) contain any defamatory material

Signed: Panizza Ruth Allmark

Date: ............
Acknowledgements

To my über ühl love

I wish to express my sincere thanks to those who have helped me towards completing this research.

First and foremost I sincerely appreciate the direction, guidance and the professional expertise of Dr Rodney Giblett who encouraged me immensely. I also wish to acknowledge the kindness and support of Max Pam. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Alison Bartlett, whose écriture féminine work inspired my project, for her outstanding praise of my thesis in its 'pure' form which gave me extraordinary faith in my work.

I also appreciated the assistance of Dr Katrien Jacobs, Dr Alan McKee, Melvyn Allmark, Elaine Cooke and Sue Gilks. Thanks also for the constant encouragement and support from Ruchi Permattana, the valuable critical insights from Gil Bradley as well as the formatting assistance from Renae Desai. Special thanks also for the advice from my associate supervisor Professor Robyn Quin and the encouragement from the many staff and students of the School of Communications and Multimedia of Edith Cowan University.

I also wish to acknowledge the support of the many people I have encountered on my journey, who encouraged and participated in my photographie féminine.
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Chapter One:

The Departure

Almost everything is yet to be written by women about femininity: about their sexuality, that is, its infinite and mobile complexity... not about destiny, but about the adventure of such and such a drive, about trips, crossings, trudges, abrupt and gradual awakenings, discoveries of a zone at one time timorous and soon to be forthright. (Cixous, 1976b, p. 885)
Travel is associated with masculine power. Travel accounts deploy narratives which are predominantly written by, and for, the universalised white or Western middle-class male traveller (Housee, 1999, p. 137). Various books of travel and landscape resonate a masculine discourse with statements such as, “we must not forget that man is a protagonist in the landscape: it is his territory, the product of his work and his journeying” (Magnum, 1997, p. 141). Moreover, “it is as if men are unable to resist the temptation to colonise, to appropriate, to measure, to control and to instrumentalise all that they survey, reducing the horizon” (Grosz, 1995b, p. 56). Histories of travel make it clear that women have never had the same access and opportunities as men (Wolff, 1995, p. 121). For example, the corpus of travel literature and travel theory generally makes an intrinsic connection with patriarchal ideology, relegating to the margins the divergent travel experiences of women. As such, the imperialism of travel is gendered male and the ideological gendering of travel as male which, according to Wolff (1995, p. 127), both impedes female travel and renders problematic the self-definition of, and response to, women who do travel.

Furthermore, the history of popular travel photography is a story about the depiction of the Other¹, which includes women, the land and its inhabitants. The mapping of territories of desires, together with the drawing of boundaries, involves an effort at mastery over the landscape. It promotes the divisions between self and other and, particularly the need to achieve it, is a masculine position. Man has claimed, as Ann Rosalind Jones (1985, p. 348) asserts, “I am the unified, self-controlled centre of the universe. The rest of the world, which I define as the Other, has meaning only in relation to me, as man/father, possessor of the phallus.”

¹ I am particularly referring to mainstream travel photography such as in National Geographic.
As a counter-discourse, my travel work and my encounters as a woman and journey photographer, attempt to traverse divisions. My journey is bound up with the feminist project of understanding identity and positionality. It is a poetics of displacement in which I engage in. This is in opposition to the masculine linear narratives of the unified self and the essentialist conceptions of place. Furthermore, my work follows Virginia Woolf's 1938 famous pacifist enunciation of a gendered standpoint declaring, "in fact, as a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world" (1992, p. 313).

My ventures, as a tourist and documentary photographer, have involved travelling to cities across the continents of North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. They are an attempt to articulate Woolf's (amongst other feminist critics, such as Luce Irigaray's and Hélène Cixous') notion of spatiality and their imaginings of a different relation to professional life that would reflect the social and political values women have acquired as a result of their exclusion from power. To be excluded from power entails limitation or containment within boundaries. Significantly, the blurring of boundaries is an important point of reference in terms of my positionality, which I will examine later on a personal and social level because it yields to the way I conceive the world. Moreover, the boundaries that I explore and confront in this thesis consist of geographical areas, political viewpoints as well as linguistic and cultural traditions which are mainly associated with a masculine economy or, in other words, phallocentrism. I also suggest along with Janet Wolff (1995, p. 9) that for the woman traveller "who has left home, it seems to be the case that displacement (deterritorialisation) can be quite productive" in the generation of new perceptions of space and the discovering of new forms of self-expression.

Following many feminist artists, my study involves theoretical and personal reflections concerning sexuality, politics and representation. In particular, my work draws critical attention to the issues concerning gender and
landscape aesthetics. It is important to consider that the "landscape was a subject to which women photographers came late not only for practical reasons - heavy equipment, arduous travel conditions - but also because in the tradition of the genre they - their bodies - are the subject" (Davidov, 1998, p. 11). Moreover, Lucy Lippard (1995, p. 380) asserts that "men have dominated the field of landscape photography just as men have dominated the land itself" and, more importantly, the calmer, more intimate approach that women photographers adopt is not valued and their work has failed to impress the art and journalism masculine-oriented markets. These gender issues are brought together in my enactment of the much-cited feminist phrase 'the personal is political'.

My work is an exploration of a feminist approach in which I draw critical attention subversively to the female body in the urban landscape. Central to my work is the relationship between women and the city. A key text that I draw upon for my impetus is Elizabeth Wilson’s (1992) *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women*. Wilson (1992, p. 157) claims that the male-female dichotomy damagingly translates itself into a city culture as pertaining to men. As such, women have become a symptom of disorder and a problem: the "sphinx in the city" (1992, p. 157). Moreover, like the sphinx women represent what is feared and desired by men. In particular, for many male writers the presence of women posed the problem of order, partly because they symbolised the promise of sexual adventure. This promise was converted into a general moral and political threat because for women it offered a tentative escape from patriarchal relations, associated with domesticity.

However, although there may be a certain freedom, there is also an over sexualisation in the city in which women without men symbolise the menace of disorder and become the objects of a voyeuristic spectacle who are
vulnerable to harassment. As such, for women and girls personal safety is a critical issue. Isaak (1996, p. 19) asserts the common lament "that the streets have never been available to women in the same way they have been to men... and the streets of most major cities today may be more dangerous for women than they ever have been." Also particularly for the tourist, it is not only gender that is a matter of distinction but the perceived economic class and race/ethnicity that could also be a point of contention which can give rise to hostility. Furthermore, women as the subject of fascination and scrutiny, in which sexual difference is the central definer, is further exaggerated by the representation of young women in advertising material on the streets. The public display of women who represent a commodified sexuality further places the image of a young woman as firmly within a 'realm of pleasure', an object of the gaze, devoid of any real power (Wilson, 1992, p. 48). In other words, the dominant way of seeing is from the point of view of an authoritative, privileged, and male position which renders the female as passive. Hence, in the real and representational sense women are constructed and framed within the constraints of a masculine economy.

Wilson (1992, p. 11) argues that it is time for a new vision and a new 'feminine' voice in praise of cities. "It is necessary", she asserts, "to emphasise the other side of city life and to insist on women's right to the carnival, intensity and even the risk of the city" (Wilson, 1992, p. 10). As such, in my work I am trying to find a 'new' vision and a 'feminine' voice to disrupt the masculine economy of closure and boundaries. I employ a counter-aesthetics that involves "feminine sentences", which according to Wolff (1990, p. 10), is a modality in which women "find ways to intervene in an excluding culture, and to articulate their own experience." I attempt to achieve this through my notion of travel which operates in two ways. It is both literal –in which I have left home for my research – and epistemological – it tries to describe knowledge and experiences in a different way, as contingent and partial (Wolff, 1995, p. 118). Furthermore, as a woman photographing images of 'woman' there is a sense of
intimacy, "a certain overpresence of the image" in which I am "the image" (Doane, 1991, p. 22). As such, my work follows Trinh T. Minh-ha's notion of the 'insider'. She asserts that:

The moment the insider steps out from the inside, she is no longer a mere insider (and vice versa). She necessarily looks in from the outside while also looking out from the inside. Like the outsider, she steps back and records what never occurs to her, the insider, as being worth or in need of recording. But unlike the outsider, she also resorts to non-explicative, nontotalising strategies that suspend meaning and resist closure. (Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1991, p. 74)

I view the cosmopolitan aspects of the city as a setting for a voyage of discovery and subversion. In particular, through my documentary photographic practice I attempt to present, ironically, the 'disorder', contradictions and the spectacle of women's presence in the city. Although there are male street photographers that may photograph similar content, they do not work from the position of the 'insider'. For example, I travel through a "terrain from which women have historically been excluded, negatively inscribed, or if they entered, existed at 'risk'" (Isaak, 1996, p. 32-33). I record observations of my journey through cities which to me resonate similar paradoxes in regards to my position as a young woman who may be the object of the male gaze, and as a photographer who can be empowered through utilising the gaze of the camera. Through my photography, I try to reframe found images of women on the street to destabilise the masculine 'realm of pleasure' of the gaze, in order to move beyond the limiting visual boundaries of the image. The boundary edges are metaphorically blurred and the found images are photographed in a broader, sometimes contradictory cultural context. Moreover, in the reading of the photographs I also acknowledge the cultural history of romanticism, orientalism and patriarchy and its effects on men, women and journey photography.

The photographs in this thesis are mimetic souvenirs. They are not an 'objective' representation of an actual time and place. Rather, the
photographs are the subjective products of my journey experiences as a young woman trying to negotiate a critical position within a traditionally masculine genre. The images are both descriptive and interpretive. I follow the tradition of ‘personal’ documentary photographers and use the camera to record my experiences. Slater (1983, p. 98) claims that:

The camera as an active mass tool of representation is a vehicle for documenting ones conditions (of living working and sociality; for creating alternative representations of oneself and ones sex, class, age-group, race etc; of gaining power of analysis and visual literacy) over ones image.

In particular, my work adheres to Slater’s remarks concerning the politics of representation. Furthermore, as documentary photographs “they provide an account of events that have their own existence outside the frame of the photograph” (Price, 1997, p. 101). The image does not stand alone; the photograph is a record of a given time. It is embedded in the history of the place and the memories that surround it. McGrath (1996, p. 264) asserts that:

Because photography is a medium which seems to be purged of all traces of its production and because it offers us so much to see, most writing on photography concentrates on this world as seen through photographs as if it were a transparent medium, rather than concentrating on how those images are produced.

She then points out that what interests her “is the precisely those gaps, those oversights”(1996, p. 264). It is the gaps and the oversights that I try to address in a feminist reading of my photographs, in which the intertextuality of the image is foregrounded, including my memory of its production.

In this thesis the accompanying text seeks to locate my work as following a feminist approach in its critique of women’s position. I also realise that the photographs are open to be read in many ways, but by utilising a partial intentionalist approach I hope to provide a context to discuss how as a western feminist woman I see the world. The strength of my thesis is that, as the photographer, I am writing ‘my body’. I am drawing on some of the
experiences encountered when a photograph was taken and incorporating this into an analysis of the content within the photograph.

My approach is not directed towards a masculine linear analysis, rather it follows a divergent narrative form as suggested by a number of theorists such as Berger, Benjamin, Barthes, Burnett, Cixous and Evans. For example, Evans (1996, p. 40) argues that:

The narrative form which photography can employ is memory, a field in which different times coexist because memory, as an aspect of unconscious life, does not conform to linear conceptions of time... It involves the recollections of historical, social and personal memory.

Berger (1997, p. 46) further elaborates that normally photographs are used in a very unilinear way – they are used to illustrate an argument or to demonstrate a thought, and very frequently used tautologically so “the photograph merely repeats what is being said in words.” However, he argues that “memory is not linear at all” (1997, p. 46). As previously asserted, my photographs are mimetic souvenirs. They are reminders of a particular place and time, they relate to memories. Berger (1997, p. 46) states that memory works radially, “as it draws from an enormous number of associations all leading to the same event.” Evans (1997, p. 40) asserts that Berger’s radial method is concerned with the photographic event’s rehabilitation into “areas of desire, contradiction and self-reflexivity.” Moreover, Berger claims “if we want to put a photograph back into the context of experience, social experience, social memory” which is the reason d’etre of my journey, then “we have to respect the layers of memory” (Berger, 1997, p. 46).

My photo-narrative follows this radial method. It acknowledges desire, contradiction and involves self-reflexivity which resembles the variable contexts of my experience. Experience, as Benjamin explains, is “indeed a matter of tradition, in collective experience as well as private life. It is less the product of facts firmly anchored in memory than of a convergence in memory of accumulated and frequently unconscious data” (1968a, p. 157).
Furthermore, my reading of the images may be associated with the two fundamentally different types of interests in photography that Barthes (1984) describes, which is the studium and the punctum. Primarily, photographs have a studium, which involves a generalised cultural interest. More importantly in regards to my reading of the photographs is the notion of the punctum, a detail in the photograph which triggers a personal subjective response. In relation to the photographs it could be something such as the positioning of the female body within the image, which I can relate to. For example, in the image of 'woman' I can see fragments of myself. Barthes (1984, p. 45) asserts that the “punctum has the power for expansion. This power is often metonymic.” In the photographs that I produced and interpret there is a relationship of contiguity, of metonymy between the political and the personal.

Burnett (1995, pp 70-71) suggests that:

> the boundaries of the photographic print are in part shaped by the distance of the spectator from it. The closer one gets to the print, the more the boundary is disrupted. The print has not changed but our relationship to it has.

In the reading of the photographs I attempt to broaden the textual boundaries. This may be related to the power of the punctum and is inextricably linked with my subjective investment as the producer of the photographs. As such, I acknowledge the difficulty in reading the photographs from a critical objective distance. Hence, the photographs “becomes a trigger, not for a specific repertoire of already given meanings, but for a performance of meaning more oral than visual (in the sense that the photograph must be ‘spoken’ about – the visual must be given a verbal explanation)” (Burnett, 1995, p. 50). The reading of the photographs as mimetic souvenirs involves drawing upon my recollections of the space and time surrounding the making of the photographs (which may exist outside the borders of the frame). It involves what Cixous calls (1997, p. 23) interchanges of text which constitute a weaving. It involves the notion of
movement in which she asserts (1997, p. 28) that “there ought then to be a metaphorical grouping, or collection that stems at once from registers of transport, but also that always goes through the first of the means of transport which is our own body.” Acknowledging my corporeality, the boundaries of the photographs expand into a wider field of meaning enriched by my subjectivity and my attention to gender politics.

My attention to gender and cultural politics is an ethical feminist photographic practice\(^2\). It is an experiential approach. I describe my study as a journey towards a *photographie féminine*. It is documentary photography in association with the French feminist concept of an *écriture féminine*, which traces a *féminin* writing of the body. My work as a tourist and photographer does not follow white bourgeois heterosexual masculinities. Particularly, it is in contrast to masculinist rationality which “assumes a knower who believes he can separate himself from his body, emotions, values, past and so on, so that he and his thoughts are autonomous; context-free and objective” (Rose, 1993, p. 7). I follow the path of women artists and Australian feminist photographers whose work since the 1980s parallels strategies in women’s writing (Rachjman, 1986, Moore, 1991). According to Moore (1991, p. xiii), “feminist photography, like *écriture féminine*, has sought to invent feminist as an etho-poetic practice. The feminist photographer is the subject of ethical invention and intervention.” My work continues the etho-poetic journey in my analysis of the imperial of travel as masculine and acknowledging that language itself is a body function. Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989, p. 36) asserts that “we do not have bodies, we are our bodies... we write – think and feel – (with) our entire bodies rather than only (with) our minds or hearts.” Furthermore, we speak from embodied experiences, which is cultural, as embedded in representation, in language. Moreover, I acknowledge that our experiences of ourselves, which

\(^2\) Moore (1991, p. 150) asserts that “the consideration of feminist photography as an ethical practice also enables us to link photography with other areas of feminist cultural politics.”
is mediated through our cultural positioning, has been appropriated and imaged by men (Sellers, 1996, p. 6).

Importantly, in this thesis in 'writing my body', I use the word *feminin*, which is a French term which encompasses or blurs the boundaries between the English words 'female' (a biologically given) and 'feminine' (the culturally acquired characteristic of womanhood). Moreover, I use the term *feminin* to distinguish it as a 'feminine' feminine, rather than the commonly ascribed 'masculine' feminine that entails a patriarchal construction, which is woman as man sees her. In Lacanian psychoanalysis the 'masculine' feminine is evoked in the patriarchal symbolic order, "structured as it is around the primacy of the Phallus as the signifier of difference," which "allows men to misidentify with the position of the Other, that is, the control of the Phallus and the satisfaction of desire, a position not available to women on account of their status as always already being castrated" (Weedon, 1999, p. 83). In other words, sexuality is based on a masculine norm privileging phallic sexuality with its consequent devalued and castrated account of the feminine (Campbell, 2000, p. 55). Hence, women's position in the symbolic order is determined by lack and the only positions open to women are male-defined.

My use of the *feminin* is also associated with Luce Irigaray's (1985a) interpretation of Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic theory in which the *feminin* refers to the pre-Symbolic or the Imaginary. Irigaray's psychoanalysis offers a way of empowering women by encouraging them to escape the patriarchal ordering of language which occurs in the Symbolic. I follow Irigaray who, like Cixous, offers a position for women directing them to their untapped resources of a sensory and bodily experience.

Resistance to the Symbolic, however, according to theorists such as Cornell (1991), is not about creating a feminine utopia outside of the Symbolic, but about working with the existing myths and metaphors of the feminine to bring out the excluded, abject status of the feminine into representation. It is
about *jouissance*, which is concerned with dissolving the subject/object dichotomy. It involves evoking the creative possibilities associated with the multiple sexuality of women in contrast to the singular, linear, phallic libidinal economy of men. Hence it offers the potential to explore paths repressed by the Law of the Father.

According to Lacan, the Imaginary is a kind of specular prison from which boys are liberated when they resolve the Oedipal complex and enter the Symbolic Order – the realm of language and selfhood and the Law of the father. Lacan (1977, p. 311) suggests that the Law is repressed desire. In the Lacanian construction of a gendered subjectivity with its primacy of the phallus, a severe ‘lack’ of power and control is attributed to the female. Girls have a problematic process of dealing with the phallus and may remain behind in the Imaginary because they have not overcome the Oedipal phase. Irigaray differs from Lacan because she identifies a female imaginary which is not considered an entrapment, or repressive, but where there may be untapped possibilities. In the realm of the Imaginary there are no fully formed concepts, as opposed to the Symbolic with its association with (masculine) language and its fixed structures and binaries.

The Imaginary produces illusory images. The Imaginary is evoked in my practice. I am not trying to create a new language, but rather I am trying to develop work that produces the performance of the Imaginary. I follow Judith Butler’s (1993) and Drusilla Cornell’s (1991) reading of Irigaray in which they centre on the performative power of language and in which the Imaginary reworks the (masculine) myths and metaphors of the feminine. Also relevant to my photography is Campbell’s (2000, p. 239) insistence that, like Michel de Certeau’s walking in the city and Walter Benjamin’s dreaming, the Imaginary can be seen as a kind of experiential dreaming of our daily lives. She insists that “our bodily interaction with objects, buildings, commodities, films and books constitute an immersion or dreaming that
oscillates with more reflective moments where active reading and narrative reconfiguration can take place” (Campbell, 2000, p. 239).

My photograph follows this feminin approach because it involves my interactions with the built environment and is concerned with the ambiguity and the refusal of binaries which is associated with the Imaginary. It is about "reimagining and contesting” cultural myths through my photographic practice (Campbell, 2000, p. 241). By uniting divergent dichotomies in my photographic framing I try to destabilise the structure of dualist thinking and separation, which is indicative of a masculine position. For example, a key feature of my documentary photographs is the use of the blurring of boundaries between symbolic categories, such as the sacred and the profane. It involves destabilising binary oppositions. I am following Irigaray’s suggestion that to speak as a woman involves speaking from a position in the middle of the binaries. It involves, as Grosz (1989, p. 132) points out, “affirming both poles while undoing their polarisation.”

My visual diary tries to include some of the struggles and tensions associated with the feminin in particular, its place as the marginal, the peripheral and the repressed. At the same time, this study explores notions of subversion. In my work I am rejecting both the detached 'objectivism' of popular travel photography and cinematography, as well as the conventional terms of landscape aesthetics in western art. My journey does not follow the modernist tourist quest for the sublime, the beautiful and the picturesque which are associated with masculine aesthetics. This quest is associated also with a romantic search for Otherness, dominated by the interest in surface appearances and concerned with maintaining a subject-object division. Moreover, Elizabeth Bohls (1995, p. 65) asserts that “aesthetics argues without arguing. Its vocabulary of visible surfaces represents power relations as natural and unchallengeable precisely by casting them as irrelevant to the compelling business of the quest for beauty through the senses and imagination.” My journey does not adhere to this masculine
discourse. Instead, I read my work as presenting a feminist counter-aesthetic of the uncanny, which is an indeterminate and potentially ominous space. The work evokes noise and pollution. It attempts to cause a disturbance. Borrowing the term ‘dirt’ from Mary Douglas (1966, p. 35), my work is littered with the concept of dirt as “a matter out of place.” As such it embraces the use of irony, the transgression of boundaries and the promotion of ambiguity.

The chapters are organised according to a feminin language and feminine spatiality, which is not linear, but plural and fluid. I suggest that my work has less to do with providing definitive conclusions in regards to a feminin photographic practice and more to do with raising questions about what this might entail. I do not solely rely on the theories of French feminism, but use their seminal work as a departure into ‘writing the body’. Moreover, I also incorporate theories from feminist geography such as the work of Gillian Rose and the work of travel and cultural theorists such as Caren Kaplan, James Clifford, Janet Wolff, Elizabeth Wilson, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Edward Said amongst others to produce a feminist reading of the photographs. I consider my work to be interdisciplinary as it draws on theories from travel, geography, art history, photography and feminist discourse. I follow a Cixousian approach in writing which involves presenting ideas which are open, rather than a masculine argument which aims at closure. Although Cixous’ approach has been criticized as “often frustrating, leading to qualifications, tentative propositions, and ambiguous conclusions”, Shiach argues “that the other element of her strategy which involves the construction of an alternative practice of writing offers some relief” (1991, p. 15). In particular, an alternative practice which tries to avoid the ethical problems associated with masculine writing and photography is what I attempt to present. Moreover, I suggest that my journey towards an écriture féminine is not completed and remains in process.

\[3\text{ For example, Cixous’ (1976) } Laugh \text{ of the Medusa and Irigaray’s (1985) } This \text{ Sex Which is Not One.}\]
Importantly my writing style, which touches upon issues, then fleetingly moves on to others, is an example of my feminin thought processes and 'celebrates' the French feminist Luce Irigaray's speculative suggestion that a woman barely separates from herself some chatter, an exclamation, a half secret, a sentence left in suspense – when she returns to it, it is only to set out again from another point of pleasure and pain (Irigaray, 1985b, p. 29). The writing style is, as Irigaray suggests, about returning to the "intimacy of that silent, multiple, diffuse touch" which for women has been an approach that is traditionally repressed and feared within the linearity of a masculine economy(1985b, p. 29).

The first chapter is titled 'Wanderlust' in which I present accounts of masculine journey photography as well as feminist landscape photography. In particular, I emphasise the position of a woman's sense of place and the notion of exile. Following this, the next chapter, 'In/her Space', focuses on the politics of gendered travel. I address feminine modalities and spatiality drawing on my photographs and anecdotal notes from my journey. In particular, I examine my politics of location and my position as a woman and a tourist. The third chapter, 'Urban Exposures', explores the notion of feminin spatiality within the theme of the city. In this chapter I discuss my subversive photography of the built landscape exploring the counter-aesthetic of the uncanny and the historical and contemporary public positioning of women within western art history. I particularly discuss the figure of the femme fatale represented in images found in the city. Finally, in 'Reclamation' the themes of the politics of body and space are woven together in a textual tapestry concerning my participation and photography at a major political 'reclaim the streets' anti-capitalist rally in London in 1999. In particular, I am emphasising another side to city life and following Wilson's assertion of "women's right to the carnival" (1992, p. 10). Moreover, this chapter involves an exploration of the themes associated with photographie fémininine in comparison to popular mainstream press photography of the event.
My work is an exploration of a feminin sense of space, which attempts to disrupt the masculine schema of containment. The concept of gendered spatiality is critical to this study. Moreover, this style of thesis with its focus on the blurring of boundaries can be attributed to my personal encounters and experience which can be referred to as a ‘politics of location’. The term ‘politics of location’ addresses the limits of a global notion of feminism and the associated universalisation of ‘woman’. Kaplan (1996, p. 162) claims that the examination of the politics of location is a useful way to articulate particular concerns, interests and investments in an issue. It is historicized and multiple. Furthermore, my location can be described as “a series of locations and encounters, travel within diverse, but limited spaces” (Clifford, 1989, p.182). It involves the articulation of difference. It is a way to negotiate the claims of the particular and the universal. Importantly, as Kaplan (1996, p. 162) asserts, “it is in the complex and often paradoxical practices of a ‘politics of location’ that the postcolonial and postmodern discourses of feminism emerge as intertwined subjects of criticism. Drawing upon these issues related to the politics of location, I will briefly discuss the cultural and social nexus that has influenced my work.

In this thesis I highlight a gendered spatiality through my particular ‘politics of location’ which is that of a young female photographer from a culturally mixed Australian background. I am the product of the post-war diaspora of European and Asian immigration. I am situated between the binaries between white (anglo) and Other. In some situations I am considered white, at other times ethnic or in academic terms defined as a ‘woman of colour’.

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4 The term ‘politics of location’ was first used by Adrienne Rich in the 1980s to deconstruct the hegemonic uses of the word ‘woman’ within the context of U.S. racism and elite academic feminist practice.

5 My parents migrated to Australia in the 1960s (during the notorious White Australia Policy). They belonged to the British, European and Anglo-Burmese diasporic community who lived in Burma.

6 Weedon (1999, p. 160) asserts that the general term ‘woman of colour’ may include both black and non-Anglo Others. Furthermore, she refers to ‘black feminism’, “which is a broader inclusive term” in her reference to the work of women of African descent and women who are not defined as white (1999, p.160).
Moreover, my question of cultural identity in the context of travel or mobility can be seen, according to Wollen (1994, p. 189), as “displaced, nomadic, multiple or hybrid.” He asserts that this approach locates identity in a historically given experience, “the given of social and/or geographically mixing” (1989, p. 189).

However, Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989, p. 6) claims that with the growing ethnic-feminist consciousness that the writer is “driven into situations where she is made to feel she must choose from among three conflicting identities.” Writer of colour? Woman writer? Or Woman of colour? Which comes first? Where does she place her loyalties?” In addressing this discord I consider that my gender is a primary signifier in my travel discourse, because my focus is on sexuality and the city and particularly on women’s precarious position on the streets due to their traditional position as ‘objects of the gaze’ (Berger, 1972, Wilson, 1992, Wolff, 1989).

In ‘writing the body’, I am writing from the position and experiences of a western academic woman. However, I also acknowledge that this position is also constructed by my complex relations to ethnicity which defines my creative work. I also share the politics of many women of colour “who have a strong sense of the diversity and mobility of forms of power; their politics sees mobility as vital, when the struggles to be waged are so necessarily complex, given the shifting structures of capitalism, masculinism, racism and so on” (Rose, 1993, p. 12). Sandoval (1991, p. 23) refers to this mobility as an “oppositional consciousness”, which she suggests is “comprised of seeming contradictions and difference, which then serve as tactical interventions in the other mobility that is power.” I suggest that this "oppositional consciousness" can be found in my work, particularly in my references to French feminist thinking which I will discuss in a later section.

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8 Trinh T. Minh-ha claims that “Imputing race or sex to the creative act has long been a means by which the literary establishment cheapens and discredits the achievements of non-mainstream women (1989, p. 6).
Furthermore, I am also speaking from a middle-class tourist position. The way I am perceived does influence my interactions with others and the way I perceive myself. In my encounters, either I have a sense of belonging/conforming to, or I am differentiated as an outsider/Other. Generally, in my travels through various cities which are multicultural and diverse, I found more similarities than differences between myself and others, therefore, my self-positioning in each of the locations did not alter. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that my travelling self is positioned within a range of racial and sexist discourses that refer most notably to attitudes that are the effects of modern Western colonialism that have been generated since the fifteenth century (Weedon, 1999; Said, 1978).

In my travel writing I take into account that the identification of skin colour and phenotype with culture is often a primary feature of racialised thinking (Weedon, 1999, p. 174). The way I am perceived does have an effect on the way I negotiate space within a masculine sphere. As discussed earlier, women are often the targets of unwanted attention. However, their sexuality is further exacerbated by racial and cultural stereotypes. Housee asserts a binary between women travellers and Asian women:

Framed within polarised positions in the dominant local patriarchal code, women travellers (usually white) are seen as loose and promiscuous. At the same time, Asian women are often seen as pure, innocent and to be protected in a perverse manner which suggests the control fantasy of desire and possession. (1999, p. 146)

The ‘seductive’ sexualities in which I may be perceived as a woman are also further intensified by my work as a street photographer. The camera, like a magnet, draws attention towards me. There is often the returned gaze. When in possession of the camera it seems to invite the opportunity for people to approach me, as it is a starting point for a conversation. Hence my affability is heightened. Thus, as a woman photographer, it seems more difficult to maintain anonymity in the streets than as a male photographer and flâneur who anononymously “gazes at the city” (Ramu, 1995).
What I find interesting is that sexuality in the field of vision extends not only to the subjects of the camera's gaze but to the photographer and the photographic practice. Not only has gendered racial identity been sexualised and given specific cultural attributes, but photography also has been categorised in racial/cultural terms and may be divided between masculine and feminine economies. The binaries in terms of race and styles of photography were reproduced, for example, in the abstract for the seminar, 'Hot and Cold', for PhotoEspaña 99. It begins by establishing that:

In the contemporary panorama there are two very different ways of understanding photographs: the first, the 'cold attitude' more objective and involving distance from reality, is connected with conceptual exposition, and the second, the 'hot attitude' is more inclined to a more heterodox (unorthodox) use of formal perspectives, less preoccupied with the coherence of languages and their stylistic rigour. In brief, the first would be the photography carried out in Europe, especially in Germany and the United States, while the second would be that practised in Latin America and the Mediterranean world. (PhotoEspaña 99)

In the abstract, binaries are constructed. The differences between the photographic strategies of emotion and reason are given a cultural/national identity and fall into stereotypical racial characterizations. In addition, the strategies of emotion, passion and unorthodoxy, promoted by PhotoEspaña99 for their overall theme Sangre Caliente (Hot Blood), are also evident in the Surrealist movement and its association with the feminine and the unconscious. It is also replicated in the longstanding symbolizations of femininity which Cixous and Irigaray outline in their early work. Furthermore, 'passion' and emotion are also the characteristics of the non-white other, particularly the sensuality of the exotic female. For example, Doane (1991, p. 209) asserts that "Freud's use of the term 'dark continent' to signify female sexuality which is a recurrent theme in feminist theory" is historically related with the non-white woman being the signifier of excessive, incommensurable sexuality.

I acknowledge the absurdity of the binaries that have been constructed and in this thesis it is with 'wry' humour that I address the flow of Sangre Caliente
which, according to my cultural associations with the exotic feminine, I should possess. Moreover, I share in the utterances of personal documentary photographers in which photography may be seen as a space of unavoidable decadence, involving laughter and the fear of judgement. Furthermore, it involves the awareness of loss that occurs in the task of translation and the perplexities associated with a 'politics of location'. In particular, parody, laughter and humour can be seen as a strategy for political intervention in which I address a 'double consciousness' related to identity (Isaak, 1996). It involves acknowledging patriarchal discourses and reflecting them back in magnified proportions.

Clifford (1997, p. 46) considers that identity is a processual configuration of historically different elements - including race, class, culture, gender and sexuality - different combinations of which may be featured in different conjunctures. He questions, “What components of identity are ‘deep’ and what ‘superficial’? What ‘central’ and what ‘peripheral’ elements are good for travelling and what for dwelling?” (1997, p. 46).

The acknowledgment of complexity that informs Clifford’s inquiry is important. Furthermore, I unite with him in his response that “questions like these do not lend themselves to systematic or definitive answers; they are what cultural politics is all about” (1997, p. 46). Perhaps a text should be more about presenting questions than providing conclusive answers, and perhaps it is useless “to trap women in the exact definition of what they mean, to make them repeat (themselves) so that it will be clear; they are already elsewhere in the discursive machinery” (Irigaray, 1985b, p. 29). As such in a sense I try to avoid “the (masculine) desire to limit and control meaning which is both reductive and serves to corroborate the patriarchal status quo” (Sellers, 1996, p. 14). Thus this also follows Trinh T. Minh-ha’s (1991, p. 73) ‘insider’ who “resorts to non-explicative, non-totalising strategies that suspend meaning and resists closure.”
Particular to the style of this thesis and the reading of my images is a notion of the blurring of boundaries. Furthermore, as a photographer I take pleasure in the blurring of boundaries and juxtaposing contrasts within the photographic frame. This may be described as a practice of hybridity which is indicative of my politics of location. As such, Kaplan’s (1996, p. 128) assertion that the practice of hybridity that diaspora entails "establishes ‘transregional’ identities through contemporary technologies and new critical histories" seems to apply to my work.

Furthermore, Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) whose work *Borderlands* addresses her lesbian and diverse historical/cultural positioning on the Mexican U.S. border, suggests that women who are racially and ethnically mixed, referred to locally as *mestizas*, are in a position to challenge and move beyond the binaries that structure racism, ethnocentrism, sexism, and heterosexism. This is perhaps, according to Doane (1991, p. 234), because the mixed raced woman represents a figure of an epistemological quandary and "signifies potential confusion of racial categories and the epistemological impotency of vision" in which allows her access into other worlds. Doane (1991, p. 233) discusses the issues of the figure of ‘tragic’ mulatta (or mixed race woman) in cinematic representations in which she argues that she is "usually delineated as caught between two cultures and her dilemma is seen as irresolvable in any satisfactory way." This is because her skin colour allows her economic and cultural opportunities within a ‘white’ world which would otherwise be denied to her. However, grasping these opportunities produces anguish in denying her own cultural heritage. Although I concur that being caught between the racial binaries can produce angst, especially when a racial/cultural hierarchy exists, I agree with Anzuldua that it does offer the potential to challenge racial and cultural essentialism, particularly because one’s social identity is so complex and it cannot be reduced to simple binaries. Interestingly, Anzuldua’s comments on moving beyond the binaries of ethnocentrism, and Doane’s reference to positive social opportunities seem pertinent to my experiences, in which I did not
experience any overtly negative behaviour despite travelling through very distinct geographical locations.

Arbor (2001) also highlights a similar positive notion of transcultural interactions. In her reading of Jamaican mixed-raced autobiography of Mary Jane Grant Seacoles' ([1857] 1984) *Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands*, Arbor asserts that the notion of mixed race is a "complex process of adaptability negotiated at the intersection of white and black colonial travel and out of the unique conditions of gendered 'coloured' identity" (Arbor, 2001, pp. 263-26). Moreover, my strategies may be associated with the work of Anzuldua who draws on the theories of Mexican philosopher Jose Vascocelos in a consideration of a *mestiza* consciousness, which aims to break down the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner (1987, p. 80). This post-colonial work, similar to Homi Bhabha’s (1994) notion of ‘third space’, is about the questioning of borders and boundaries. Furthermore, Clifford (1997, p.37) also asserts that the border experience, such as in the work of Anzuldua, "is made to produce powerful political visions: a subversion of binarisms, the projection of a ‘multicultural public sphere (versus hegemonic pluralism)."

The *mestiza* consciousness is also similar to the work of French feminist Hélène Cixous in her struggle between cultures (masculine/feminine) and the way she also foregrounds her diverse background in her work. She states, "I was born at/from the intersection of migrations and memories from the Occident and Orient, from the North and South (1994a, p. xv). Cixous’ approach involves the ‘principle of duality’, questioning the use of labels and distinct categories and her texts interweave with her own story. She considers that writing can exceed binary logic, and it is due to her sense of

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8 Jose Vascocelos envisaged a fifth race embracing the four major races of the work, who asserts that "from this racial, ideological, cultural and biological cross-pollination, an 'alien' consciousness is presently in the making – a new *mestiza* consciousness" (cited in Anzuldua 1987, p. 77).

9 "Hélène Cixous was born in Oran, Algeria, in 1937, of a Spanish/French/Jewish father and German/Jewish mother. She grew up speaking German and French, though she also heard Spanish and Arabic" (Sellers, 1994a, p. xxvi).
'homelessness' exile that it is in writing that she has "adopted an imaginary nationality which is literary nationality" (Cixous, 1997, p. 204). Cixous asserts that "perhaps I resist exile, which is fundamental and initial for me, by working incessantly at reuniting. I sense that when I write, nothing satisfies me more than to reunite extremes, to reunite the orient and the occident, the north and the south, black and white, the icy cold and the boiling" (Cixous, 1994b, pp. xviii-xix). Similarly my works also attempts to bring together distinct binaries.

Moreover, the similarity between the mestiza consciousness and Cixous' oeuvre is the questioning of the function of Western (masculine) analytical reasoning which uses "rationality to move towards a single goal" and the utopian vision, which is not produced by hierarchal oppressive power relations but a focus in which difference is valued and respected (Anzuldua, 1987, p. 79). Furthermore, MacGillivray (1994, p. xxi) asserts that that there has been a turning to the strategies of French feminist thought in contemporary feminist concerns "with how to speak, write and read class and sexual differences, and with how to make political and theoretical discourses from the place of, with a space for, these differences". It is with this consciousness that I try to place my work. My emphasis is also that 'woman' (particularly the young 'woman') within patriarchal discourse is sexualised and it is this emphasis on sexuality and the sexualisation of myself and of other images of women within the urban landscape that I attempt to negotiate with in this thesis. I argue that there are feminin ways of

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10 For example Jan Campbell's (2000) and Weedon's (1999) work is concerned with the crossroads between (linguistic) theory and (bodily) practice. They discuss feminist, queer and postcolonial theory and its relationship in the corporeal theories of Luce Irigaray, Kristeva and Cixous. Weedon's work in particular looks at the question of difference across the full spectrum of feminist theory. Similarly, Ashcroft (1988) addresses the intersections of theoretical strategies of French feminism, which would benefit both post-colonial and feminist discourses. Vice (1998, p. 173) also asserts that the future of psychoanalytic theory with feminism (particularly French feminism) seems very rich... It underlies recent developments in lesbian theory and gender studies.
experiencing space that differ from, or move beyond, masculine structures of representation.

Ways of Experiencing

The term ‘landscape’ refers to a construct, an organisation of space that historically is a record of masculine values and actions. In particular, the proliferation of photography in mass culture has played an important role in producing and circulating the ideals of travel and the landscape from a masculine point of view. My work, however, is self-reflexive and attempts to be subversive. It privileges qualities attributed to the feminin and female, which is ahistorical, rather than a ‘masculine’ feminine.

Isaak (1996, p. 15) highlights the vexed question of essentialism which arises whenever an attempt is made to establish a visual practice that escapes patriarchal specularisation and that attempts to produce a specifically feminin mode of writing that is not female mimicry of male discourse. Indeed, it is difficult to avoid essentialising, when describing the feminin, because it is a mode of being as well as a discourse. Nevertheless, in this study the feminin is a site of political agency. It is about re-working the myths and metaphors of the feminine. In my photography there is a “defamiliarisation of female iconography” which attempts to destabilise the masculine structure of the look (Doane, 1982, p. 82). My work also draws on Elizabeth Grosz’s (1995a, p. 53) notion that “to claim women’s difference from men is to reflect existing definitions and categories, redefining oneself and the world according to women’s own perspectives.” This re-definition also acknowledges the embodied experiences of being a woman which is marked by race, class, age, amongst others attributes. I suggest that my journey towards a photographie féminine is a counter-discourse to imperialising patriarchal representations.
I acknowledge that gender is integral to the status and social position of the subject. Photographic critic Fisher (1996, p. 158) asserts that documentary (as a form of enunciation) requires a subject positioned in gender. "The photographer is never neuter. But someone who produces from the place of 'man' or 'woman' " (Fisher, 1996, p. 158). The experiences of the body result in different perceptions and sensations with the notion that gender is a lived process of interactions, situations and gestures in the world. Importantly, "skin colour, class and gender are all social attributes which are inscribed onto bodies; and part of women's sense of oppression, of confinement, is their awareness of that process" (Rose, 1993, p. 145). Furthermore, this self-awareness has particularly influenced my photographic practice.

Although there is not a clear-cut stylistic division between work produced by males or females, there are degrees of difference in approaches that may be related to corporeality. For example, geographer Doreen Massey (1994) asserts that there is a distinct phenomenology of western feminine body comportment, mobility and spatiality in which choices in deportment that are made are influenced by the scrutiny of the general male spectatorial gaze. Rose (1993, p. 144) elaborates on this argument asserting that there is a confinement by space and into spaces that women have to negotiate with. As previously discussed, Lippard (1995, p. 380) claims that female photographers generally approach the landscape from a more intimate perspective in comparison to their male counterparts.

Art historian Griselda Pollock (1988) also argues that in the histories of art there are different gendered visions. She asserts, "we cannot ignore the fact that the terrains of artistic practice and of history are structured in, and structuring of, gender power relations" (Pollock, 1988, p. 55). It is the masculine gaze that has shaped aesthetic discourse. Indeed, as Deborah Bright (1996, p. 335) surmises, "the art of landscape photography remains so singularly identified with a masculine eye."
Acknowledging these views, this study addresses the issues of female mobility, spatiality, visual representations and the aesthetics of journey photography in regards to travel and the city from a feminin position. Importantly, when I embarked on the photographic journey I was not aware of the theories of an écriture féminine. I was interested in producing personal photographs (which were later to become public) that documented my movement through space and the travelling process itself. The photographs produced are examples of how, as a western middle class woman, I see the world. I followed the common features of feminist methodology as well as the characteristics of art/documentary photography, which includes the emphasis on the validity of personal experience as well as self-reflexivity. In particular, I follow a range of (predominantly male) documentary photographers who:

emphasise self-revelations and self searches, along with intuitively knowing the right moment to photograph. Almost unanimously, photographers in the documentary tradition say that it is in a search for placing oneself that people find out who they are and how they are connected to each other. Style is necessary but secondary. (Lacks, 1987, p. 35)

I was also aware of the politics and processes of documentary photography relating to the power relationships between the photographer and the subject and the difficulty in avoiding the mastering gaze of the camera. I was especially concerned with the ethics of representation in trying to avoid exploiting the subject of the photograph (Solomon-Godeau, 1991; Tagg, 1988).

My camera was a utensil used for feminist consciousness raising. I wanted to produce photographs that stimulated a sense of tension that reflected my ethical concerns. My photography does not fit into popular or mainstream conventional aesthetic frames. I did not embark on an expedition to make ‘beautiful’ images and to search for picturesque scenery in the traditions of travel journals such as National Geographic. I was not concerned with exoticisation. Instead, there was a travelled awareness. Following the
traditions of subjective photography, I was interested in street photography and documenting my relational space which was often an amalgam of various signs of capitalism.

There were times that I did mimic the ‘touristic’ photographs of ‘sunsets over the landscape’ which, I acknowledge, is part of the baggage of travel associated with romanticism and is a constantly repeated discourse in holiday travel brochures. My photography oeuvre also included images of postcard stands that deliberately focus on the ‘romantic’ discourse of tourism. I also follow Sekula’s (1981, p. 22) argument in seeking to avoid simple deterministic conclusions and the notion that “as a social practice photography is no more a ‘reflection’ of capitalist society than a particular photograph is a ‘reflection of its referential object’.” Photographs get meaning from their cultural context. Sekula (1981, p. 7), acknowledging Roland Barthes’ comments on the ‘polysemic’ character of the photograph, further asserts that “any given photograph is conceivably open to appropriation by a range of ‘texts’.” My photographs are open to be read under different theoretical frameworks and their placement within gallery and institutional politics and contexts may alter my intended purpose. Indeed, the determinant connections between textual production and sexual difference are not always self-evident (Moore, 1991, p. 127).

Trinh T. Minh-ha (1993, p. 166) asserts that “every spectator mediates a text to his or her own reality.” I consider that reading promotes creative and productive possibilities. In the reading of the photographs, the punctum is triggered. As Barthes (1984, p. 55) claims, “what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there” is important. In the reading of my documentary photographs I am trying to position them within a feminist practice of my ‘lived’ body, or in other words, within an embodied experience. I try to find my feminin trace within the photographs in this thesis and this is further supported by my application of a feminist theoretical discourse concerning women, sexuality and space.
Although I may follow the well-trodden steps of male journey/street photographers, I suggest that my experiences and concurrent visual documentation have more in common with women travellers than with male ones. I am following what Sellers (1996, p. 10) asserts might “be the ultimate aim of écriture féminine which is to induce us to re-examine our connection to the world”. I do this using the conventions of subjective documentary photography (which have been shaped by a masculine gaze). But in the visual content and in the reading of my photographs I am seeing with a “doubleness of vision — irony, parody, satire, humour and mimicry” which Battersby argues “is a necessary part of gazing as a female within a culture that adopts the male viewing position as the norm” (1994, p. 93).

Holland (1997, p. 107) suggests that personal photographs are “treasured less for their quality than for their context and for the part they play in confirming and challenging the identity and history of their users.” In the taking, editing and selection of photographs for this study I chose images that appealed to my feminin sense of ‘aesthetics’, or more precisely the counter-aesthetics of the uncanny which evokes notions of the repressed. The uncanny is associated not only with transgression but also with the feminin because it shares the same characteristics of indeterminacy, ambiguity and is in contrast to the masculine modalities of authority and closure (Cixous, 1976a; Giblett, 1996). Furthermore, the images convey a sense of uncanny horror, a disruptive play and irony in terms of mainstream photographic conventions. They seem to fit into what Isaak (1996) refers to as the “revolutionary power of women’s laughter” in which she describes the political theory of laughter as a metaphor for transformation and subversion. It involves the notion of jouissance as a libidinous feminin pleasure which involves “the joy of disrupting or going beyond established, or fixed meaning into the realm of non-sense” (Isaak, 1996, p. 3).

Battersby (1994, p. 93) refers to a feminist ‘aesthetic’ which should concerns itself with female gazers. Although she outlines various feminist visual tactics, it would be more advisable to use the term ‘counter-aesthetic’ to refer to work that does not follow a masculine discourse.
I describe my work as a journey, as it involved a progression. Moore (1991, p. xii) asserts that the feminist photographer’s political character “is forged along the way, in the course of a series of important discursive struggles.” During my travels I was constantly analysing the photographs taken and was trying to develop a more critical photographic approach that would document my experiences as a feminist, rather than as a modernist tourist. My interactions as a woman, and particularly a woman of colour, were quite different from that of a white male modernist tourist. Particularly, in male-defined spaces, such as in the confrontation of pornographic images of women in the street (in which the subjects were often ‘exotic’ women), I felt a heightened gendered/cultural awareness and the photographs are the products of this sensitivity. As a feminist photographer, I was the “subject of ethical invention and intervention” (Moore, 1991, p. xiii). I often searched for ambiguities and, like many documentary photographers, I preferred to make my photographs sur le vif (on the spur of the moment) in the street. In my work I argue that the ‘simple’ act of pointing the camera and pressing the shutter is a politically engaged act. Furthermore, Solomon-Godeau (1995, p. 310) asserts that it is in the politics of self-representation that we may glimpse the utopian possibility of a work of equally empowered, heterogenous and different subjectivities. However, she also draws attention to the difficulties that I am experiencing in navigating the legacy of bourgeois individualism that exalts the individual producer, and to the risk of totalising or universalising the category of ‘woman’ as equivalent to the plurality and difference that constitute the category of women. Nevertheless, my attempts at self-representation is a way to try to empower and locate myself within various spaces.

A hallmark of post-modern and feminist research seems to be the investigator’s continual testing of the plausibility of theories against her/his own experiences. In my attempts to negotiate a critical position and to communicate my journey towards a photographie féminine I will be drawing
upon the work and styles of the French feminist theories of Hélène Cixous and Luce Irigaray. Even though they have distinctive agendas, their deconstructive approach to language, based on a feminin economy, involves a transgression and confusion of boundaries and can be associated with my analysis of my photography as well as with my writing style. Their texts, like my photographs, also draw attention to the body and to sexuality. Their work offers a clear account of female subjectivity and language. They are interested in texts that draw attention to processes of representation, which they consider often reveal sex-specific subjectivities. The emphasis is that 'woman' has functioned within the discourse of patriarchy as passive, as marginalised, as the Other. However, women need to utilise their marginalised position to search for a 'voice' that will penetrate phallocentricism, or, in other words, the masculine language. This 'voice' I consider, is about challenging the symbolic, rather than inventing a new form of 'speech'. In this thesis I acknowledge that an écriture féminine is the desire for women to speak with meanings that are corporeal and tactile as well as conceptual.

As a feminist photographer I am concerned with what is involved in writing or producing as a woman, as a subject positioned within the social and historical networks of power. In my explorations as a researcher, I am drawn to the analysis of femininity by Cixous and Irigaray. They seem to describe the social and intellectual characteristics that I project, such as a reluctance towards linear logic and definitive conclusions. Moreover, it is the ambiguity and vagueness which has been a long standing symbolisation of the feminine that I often embrace. As discussed in an earlier section, this is a tactic used by women of colour as an "oppositional consciousness" involving contradictions to destabilise authority (Sandoval, 1991, p. 23).

Writers such as Rita Felski (1989) as well as Tori Moi (1985) have criticised French feminist work for an implied essentialism and for valorising the female over male, the feminine over the masculine. Another criticism is that
the (self) preoccupations of French feminism obscure not only history but the material power relations which language reflects. However, I consider that an *écriture féminine* overcomes the gender blindness of modernist production and offers an opportunity to recognise difference which may be understood as a social structure. This difference, I suggest, goes beyond the universal notion of 'woman' to acknowledge differences in class, religion, sexualities, race and so on. This is particularly pertinent because *écriture féminine* also involves "the inscription of that which is repressed within history and culture" (Sellers, 1996, p. 130). What is repressed within white masculine culture, is not only women but also non-heterosexual, non-white identity, and ethnic diversity. Although the French feminists have been criticised for their universalisation of the category of woman, which implies white bourgeois femininity, their theories of dissent have been developed by a number of writers. For example, Ashcroft (1989, p. 23-35) considers that there is a cross-fertilisation of ideas and shared theoretical concerns between French feminist theories and post-colonial discourse. Moreover, Cooper (2000), has applied queer theoretical analysis to challenge the exclusive association between the feminine and heterosexuality which has traditionally been associated with their work. Cooper considers that queer theorists' critical reception of Irigaray's texts do not attempt to read her category of the *feminin* in any one, particular way. This follows the work of Cornell (1991), Butler (1993) and Whitford (1991) who refuse essentialist readings of Irigaray's work and focus on the performative power of 'female' mimicry and *feminin* textual practice.

There are, however, some valid concerns in regard to the celebration of the 'feminine' that Felski raises. She asserts that the features of an *écriture féminine* are an indication of a cultural shift away from analytical and discursive modes as well as the blurring of the distinction between practice and theory. However, Felski claims that the advocates of *écriture féminine" frequently fail to theorise the crucial contextual and intertextual dimension of recent women's writing" (Felski, 1989, p. 35). Another concern is that the
celebration of feminine sexuality tends to be separate from social contingencies. Moreover, the celebration of the ‘feminine’ (or feminin) desire as plural, spontaneous, chaotic and mysteriously ‘other’ itself reiterates and is easily assimilated into a longstanding cultural symbolisation of women in western society” (Felski, 1989, p. 37). In a patriarchal view this symbolisation of women is seen pejoratively.

However, Cixous and Irigaray promote the discursive formation of women's bodies. They claim that when women are in touch with their unconscious desires, acknowledging the ‘plural’ zones of pleasure in their sexual bodies, their fluidity, multiplicity and ambiguity may be a source of power and untapped potential in terms of writing. The point being is that female sexuality is not seen as a negative, and as something to be repressed. Rather, it is seen as a source of celebration that can promote different forms of expression, instead of the linearity that patriarchy commands.

Fluidity offers the potential to resist models of stability, which claims heterosexuality, patriarchy and western ideology as its origin. Shiach (1991, p. 15) asserts that Cixous' theory of feminin writing provides an escape from systems of cultural, religious, sexual and linguistic oppression. Furthermore, identity is acknowledged as historically constructed and thus can be reviewed. Cixous (1997, p. 51) promotes this challenge insisting that it is we, “with our language, who make the law. Who draw the borders and produce the exclusions.” Penrod (1996, p. 31) also insists that “for Cixous, there is no destiny, no nature, no essence.” Thus we may have the power to blur these boundaries and promote inclusion.

Sellers (1991, p. 160) claimed in the early 1990s that “as we approach the twenty-first century, designated by some as the dawn of the millennium of women, I believe the theories and writing of French feminism can be seen as

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12 The Surrealist movement in the early twentieth century also focused on revealing the feminine and the unconscious, to defy the logic of the rational mind, “in order to question what is saw as a morally bankrupt world” (Fer, 1993, p. 183)
pioneering and inspirational." In particular, Sellers calls for an alliance between the material propositions of Anglo-American feminisms and the (self) questioning of French feminism. The alliance suggests that there may be ways of recognising the wide range of diversity that exists thereby moving beyond the homogeneity of a reducible set of attributes. As MacGillivray (1994, p. xvi) asserts, the "call for a plurality of voices, for alterity within subjectivity, and for political solidarity within difference" evident in Anglo-American tests are all notions long held by French feminists like Cixous.

Moreover, I follow Bartlett (1998, p. 2) suggesting that my politics of location in, and as part of, 'Australia' has also had an impact on my practice of reading and writing. Interestingly, Winter (1997, p. 215-216) asserts that the popularity of French feminism in Australia shows no considerable signs of waning. She also insists that it needs a connection to the experiences of women and the world. Bartlett (1998) makes this alliance in her work associating Australia women writers with French feminist practices of *écriture féminine*. Importantly, Bartlett also suggests that the cultural conditions of living in middle-class Australia is an asset in the appropriation of 'imported' feminisms. She draws on Susan Sheridan's comments that Australian feminists are concerned with the "rewriting of their discourses in different circumstances" (Bartlett, 1998, p. 2). I attempt this in my journey towards a *photographie féminine* in which I utilise the French feminist term 'write the body' in a composition woven with a range of theoretical discussions. I am not trying to 'create' a feminine photographic utopia. Rather, I am attempting to highlight the *féminin* aspects in my photographs, in particular its relationship to how, as a western middle-class woman, 'I' see the world.

Moreover, the recent re-readings of French feminism have also addressed the difficulties in the task of translating French into English in which the

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13 Bartlett (1998, p. 2) also acknowledges that the cultural conditions are not homogeneous and that he had found very little to connect the writing of Aboriginal women with French feminist theories, "given the very different cultural formations and material conditions in which, as indigenous people, they live and write in Australia."
nuances of vocabulary concerning sex/gender and the complexities of the work are not directly translatable (Simon, 1996, p.86-110). Writers such as Cooper (2000), Campbell (2000), Cornell (1991), Whitford (1991) and Sellers (1994) argue that there has been an (un)necessary criticism of essentialism, the hierarchical binary constructs between male-female and masculine-feminine, and the conflation between female/feminine that has been associated with the work of Cixous and Irigaray. Moreover, as Sellers (1991, p. 3) asserts "much of the play disappears in translation." It cannot be reduced to one position. In terms of my research I consider that the French feminism and the concept of écriture féminine:

raises questions about the relations between politics and writing, the dimensions and implications of sexual difference, the possible interactions between philosophy and literature, and the tenability of an identity based on ethical, textual, and political difference from dominant social relations. (Shiach, 1991, p. 2)

Furthermore, the range of possibilities and the fluidity that is evident in an écriture féminine can be related to the queer notion that 'that identities are not fixed and do not determine who we are'. I consider that queer theory, which seeks to destabilise the binary understanding of sexuality (heterosexual/homosexual) and to question the naturalness of the prevailing categories of sexuality, can be associated with some of the theoretical formulations in French feminism. For example, Cixous acknowledges bisexuality and the notion of the blurring of boundaries in which she challenges dominant forms of subjectivity. She insists that the masculine and feminine are both part of our psyches. Indeed, 'writing the body' offers opportunities to recognise that our sexualities are complex stories and our given to us in many different ways. 'Writing the body' involves a chorus of voices that celebrate difference and diversity. Sellers (1996, p. 13) insists that "for Cixous, écriture féminine involves the inscription of that which is repressed within history and culture." Cixous' autobiographical writings stress her own sense of not belonging - of being the outside of many different cultures. This leads to her nuanced focus on the many forms of otherness, not just those based on gender (Shiach, 1991, p. 8). For
example, Cixous' range of texts is concerned with the historical annihilation of the other, in particular by colonising attitudes.14

The postcolonial theorist Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989, p. 36) also acknowledges Cixous' work asserting that women should "write your body." She concedes that what is silenced and repressed is often associated with women - their bodies, their voices, their desires, which amounts to a denial of their subjectivity. Moreover, acknowledging the complexity of identity is also a way of denouncing the global sisterhood that post-colonial theorists, such as Spivak, critique in their readings of French feminism in which "certain seeming generalisations are being advanced about women's role as subject for history" (Spivak, 1992, p. 69). I consider that writing the body is not an attempt to speak on behalf of, but is an agency for marginalised people. Cixous also explores some of the difficulties in trying to find a voice which can be related to issues of identity and complexity in postcolonial discourse. She says:

But I was born in Algeria, and my ancestors lived in Spain, Morocco, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Germany: my brothers by birth are Arab. So where are we in history? I side with those who are injured, trespassed upon, colonised. I am (not) Arab. Who am I? (1986, p. 71)

The strength of my photographie féminine is that it not only involves a 'celebration' of feminine sexuality, but also acknowledges the contextual and social contingencies that are crucial to my analysis. For example, I am attempting to convey data from my visual diary. As such, the date and place are included in my analysis of the photographs. Even if I may essentialise, I try to consider the ethics of sexual difference in which, Irigaray (1993a, p. 6) asserts, "we need to reinterpret everything concerning the relations between

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14See Cixous (1994) Manna: For the Mandelsstams For The Mandelas and Cixous (1994) The terrible but unfinished story of Norodom Sihanouk, King of Cambodia. Spivak (1992, p. 71), however, argues that in Cixous' Indian and Indonesian plays "her take on the complexity and hybridity of so-called postcolonial nations is shaky", and her work with Theatre de Soleil "can be seen as perpetuating a kind of inspired, too admired ethnography."
the subject and discourse, the subject and the world.” I try to achieve this by acknowledging my own particular cultural positioning. Furthermore, I tactically place the body in, and against, multiple discourses, such as the discourses of advertising and religion.

I argue that although Irigaray and Cixous do ‘celebrate’ a cultural symbolisation of a type of ‘classic’ female behaviour, such as subjectivity and non-linear thinking, which are regarded pejoratively by (masculine) culture, they present these attributes as a positive feature in an attempt to subvert phallocentrism. Within a phallocentric order, woman is cast in the position of other, produced by language that guarantees man’s higher status. She is positioned as other to what man is not. In contrast, the feminin is not an attempt to impose a constricting definition on women. It is a celebration of “a way of being, thinking and speaking that allows for openness, plurality, diversity and difference” that is often repressed within a masculine economy (Tong, 1992, p. 219). It attempts to challenge the single, self-referential viewpoint decreed by western masculine law (Sellers, 1996, p. 15). It involves acknowledging and becoming part of further struggles for affirmation. I consider that openness, plurality, diversity and difference are values that reflect a consciousness of an ethical practice, which is shared with the voices of those that exist in the margins of a white heterosexual male economy. A feminin economy gives space for, and recognition of, the other. It is an opportunity to move beyond the segregation of binaries and it attempts to dissolve the hierarchies that exist. Moreover, this seems to draw on Wolff’s (1995, p. 124) assertion that the “notion of feminine identity as relational, fluid without clear boundaries seems more congruent with the perpetual mobility of travel than the presumed solidity and objectivity of masculine identity.”

My travel experiences are deeply implicated with a feminin modality. My journey also entails a subversive political movement concerning Cixous’
concept of flying. The French word 'voler' also means to steal. Cixous (1976b, p. 887) asserts that for women:

the point is not to take possession in order to internalise or manipulate, but rather to dash through and to 'fly'. Flying is woman's gesture - flying in language and making [language] fly. We have all learned the art of flying and its numerous techniques; for centuries we've been able to possess anything only by flying; we've lived in flight, stealing away, finding, when desired, narrow passageways, hidden crossovers.

For Cixous, the metaphor of flying describes the revolutionary potential of women and of feminin writing. Writing is a journey, a taking off in flight. Irigaray also presents similar ideas.

Irigaray (1985b) discusses a subversive fluid movement in the 'classic' image of a woman speaking which she claims is of a woman setting off in all directions, leaving 'him' unable to discern any coherent thread to her meaning. She asserts that "in order for women to be able to make themselves heard, a 'radical evolution' in our way of conceptualising and managing the political realm is required" (Irigaray, 1985b, p. 127). An example of this involves a delight in undoing the effects of phallocentric discourse by simply 'overdoing' them.

It also involves a self-contradiction which is a form of rebellion against phallocentric consistency. Therefore, in contrast to the masculine construct of language, which is rational, linear and privileged by the patriarchal culture, a woman's language, my language and the structure of this thesis, attempts to have multiple beginnings, and multiple paths. Importantly my work is similar to Irigaray's (1985b, p. 29) contention that in a woman's statements:

One must listen to her differently, in order to hear an 'other meaning' which is constantly in the process of weaving itself, at the same time ceaselessly embracing words, and yet casting them off to avoid becoming fixed and immobilised.
Following Irigaray and Cixous I attend to women's language and its emphasis on desire, "inscribing the proximity, fluidity and multiplicity characteristic of the exchange between women rather than the masculine insistence on singularity and distance" (Sellers, 1991, p. 135). This is articulated in my use of autobiography, theoretical fragments, mixed analyses and 'voices' to represent a non-linear argument through the use of photographs and textual associations. In abandoning the strict essay form and writing in chunks and inserting photographic texts in the spaces and gaps of the writing, I disrupt the linear order and create a kind of writing that is aligned with the rhythms of the female body and female sexuality which is open and multiple.

Indeed, as Cixous (1976b) asserts, writing is itself a body function. Moreover, it is a feminin approach that involves an encounter, an engagement; it is a jouissance, a blissful merging of self and other, rather simply than glorifying oneself in a (masculine) position of mastery and authority.

**Visual Encounters**

As previously emphasised, journey photography has been defined as a masculine endeavour. Moreover, in the romanticism of the 'masters' of travel it also has a history of imperialism over the female, the land, and the culturally different: the Other. In opposition to the masculine approach I will be examining the possibility of a distinctive feminin engagement with the notion of landscape. My photographic work corresponds to two ethical paradigms identified by Gretchen Garner (cited in Davidov, 1998, p. 302), the curator of a major twentieth-century American photography exhibition, appropriately titled *Reclaiming Paradise: American Women Photograph the Land* (1987). One paradigm is concerned with strongly metaphoric notions of the land, not as a sublime 'other', but in terms of union, not ownership, with the focus on commonplace sites. In the other paradigm, the land is represented in terms of an inhabited space concerning growth and labour.
These photographers emphasise nurturance and independence rather than possession and production.

Hence, my photographs are a departure from the masculine landscape aesthetic traditions of the ‘sublime’ and the ‘beautiful’ according to Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant, which promote the division between self and other. Instead, my photographs explore notions of the ‘everyday’ and the ‘uncanny’ that may be construed as a feminist counter-aesthetic (Giblett, 1996 and forthcoming). This style, in particular, has its history in the early twentieth street photography of Paris by Eugene Atget. “As a documentary project” Atget’s almost 1000 photographs “was more comprehensive than anything previously attempted in European photography; in fact, Atget was the first photographer to undertake the description of a city in such detailed and extensive terms” (Lifson, 1980, p. 7). Furthermore, Atget’s work was distinctive in the sense that he “sees all his subjects in terms of metaphor” and it “wasn’t simply parks, statues, shops and so forth, but also images” (Lifson cited in Atget, 1980, p. 8). Benjamin (1979, p. 250) praises Atget’s work asserting that “he looked for what was unremarked, forgotten, cast adrift, and thus such pictures, too, work against the exotic, romantically sonorous names of the cities” it accomplishes what Benjamin (1979, p. 251) describes as “the achievements of surrealist photography” which “sets the scene for a salutary estrangement between man [sic] and his surroundings.”

I acknowledge that my photographs are similar on a stylistic level to Atget. I have admired his ouevre. I certainly consider him a ‘master’ of photography and in my work I face the difficulty that Grundberg (1990, p. 196) identifies:

For the documentary photographer today, there are at least two problems: to find a subject matter that has not already been exhausted by previous photographs; and to find a style that can maintain at least a medium of documentary authority without merely repeating the conventions of the documentary tradition.
Like Atget, I also try to work against the romantic and the exotic. My work, like Atget's, involves complexity, multiplicity, even contradictions. But, according to Lifson (1980, p. 7), "Atget doesn't blur distinctions. He doesn't confuse the divine love of two Gothic angels with the profane love of prostitutes" as I attempt to do similarly in my blurring of the sacred and the profane. Arguably, the streets of Paris in the early twentieth-century were quite different from the dominion of acculturated images in the streets of contemporary cities, which gives me the opportunity to explore a wider diversity of subjects. But I consider my work is not about "estrangement between 'man' and his surroundings"; it is about my engagement with the scene. I am a woman facing images of 'woman'. As previously discussed, the punctum, a subjective response to detail in the image, is an attempt to dissolve the subject/object division. The punctum is the trigger that raises questions for me such as 'could I be the woman in the image?' I don't consider that I used a masculine gaze of distance in confronting the feminine, but rather a feminine gaze of intimacy and acknowledgement. It is the differences between gazes that I consider is my departure from the many acclaimed (male) street photographers and the associated critical writing about their work. My focus is on the feminin, both in the producing of the images as well as in my reading of the images and application of a range of feminist critiques.

My work follows an écriture féminine or, more descriptively, it is a photographie féminine that I engage in. I try to express what would be otherwise repressed by (masculine) culture. I am communicating and foregrounding my position as a woman. This entails the possibility of different insights, understanding and ways of relating to the environment than those of a male photographer. I am reading and writing my story into 'his' story. Drawing on this theme, my documentary work includes self-portraiture as well as recording the ambivalent representations of the female body within the urban landscape, such as photographs of pornographic litter on the streets. I tend to magnify, or in other words, draw attention to, the
notion of 'woman' by reflecting back the effects of phallocentric discourse simply by overdoing them (Tong, 1992, p. 228). Moreover, feminist writing that is sourced in the female body offers a chance to (re)claim the lived experience. My work acknowledges that it is not merely the feminin that has been suppressed in western culture, but it is the association between artists that are female and the feminin that has been metaphorically veiled. By this I am referring to the under representation of woman feminist artists in exhibitions/publications. I am suggesting that the veil, in this instance, functions to cover, or hide, the work produced by women who are not following a patriarchal tradition.

There are many male journey photographers, such as Robert Frank, Lee Friedlander, Andre Kertesz, Harvey Benge and Martin Parr that use a subjective, or 'feminine', approach in their work. Self-portraiture, ambiguity and irony are part of their visual repertoire. I adopt their styles, particularly Lee Friedlander's. Friedlander “embraced an art of the body and not of the mind” (Pultz, 1995, p. 121). My work evokes his ironic vision of the street, his playful ambiguities of space and meaning in the juxtaposition of diverse elements, including the recording of his presence in the scene. His work, like mine, suggests “that our image of reality is made up of images” (Grundberg, 1990, p. 15).

Interestingly, Zellen (1998) asserts that Friedlander's photographs “are not meant to be political or social commentaries.” John Szarkowski, the organiser of a 1967 exhibition which included the photographs of Friedlander, noted that the work suggests “the belief that the commonplace is really worth looking at, and the courage to look at it with a minimum of theorising” (cited in Pultz, 1995, p. 121). The framing of his work within an apolitical art discourse was also supported in the thirtieth anniversary of Recontre Internationales de la Photographie d'Arles in 1999. Embracing the theme 'Vive les modernités', with its focus on aesthetic form, a tribute was made to Friedlander and his work. He was celebrated because he was
against the idea that photography can explain/change the world. I agree that photographic "meanings become less obvious according to the context in which they appear" (Jobling, 1997, p. 7). Thus it is difficult to assert that photographs alone can explain/change the world.

However, I am hopeful that the voices and photography of diverse minority groups 'writing the body' can change and help to explain some of the complexity of our lives rather than promoting the singularity of the western imperial masculine perception of the world. This is suggested in not necessarily mutually exclusive feminist, queer and post-colonial photography, in which subversive representations of the body are political acts. It is about "reclaiming and recontextualising sexist, classist, and racist images" (Bright, 1998, p. 4). One way of achieving this is in the foregrounding of the context and content of the photographs as well as the producers of the photographs rather than just solely focusing on the visual form.

However, historically it has been males who have been honoured within art discourse. In the field of journey or landscape photography, it seems that there are few women photographers that have worked in the genre and that have been 'successful' or acknowledged in the male-dominated art world. Bright (1996) vehemently argues that women seem to be systematically excluded or under-represented in publications and exhibitions15. This exclusion seems to follow a long-standing tradition in high culture. A case in point is the Wonderland (1999) exhibition, a major international landscape exhibition that aimed to blur the boundaries between documentary and the

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15 Bright (1996) highlights the strong gender imbalance in many landscape exhibitions/publications. For example, she argues that in Landscape Theory (1980) there were no women photographers included in the discussion of landscape practices. In New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-altered Landscape (1975) only one woman was represented out of nine photographers. Furthermore, the spring 1985 Aperture survey of Western Landscape photography featured the portfolio of eleven men and only one woman. In 1985, a major landscape exhibition, A Vision of Nature, excluded the work of women and the retrospective promoted the genius of six masters, Adams Porter, Steiglitz, Strand, Weston and White (Bright, 1996, p. 345).
imaginary. The exhibition provided an example of the promotion of feminine modes of subjectivity such as imagination and creativity, but it also had a strong gender imbalance. *Wonderland* featured only four females out of twenty-nine photographers. Moreover, it seems that the sort of the acclaimed photographer journeyman such as Robert Frank and Josef Koudelka "does not evoke any feminine counterpart" (Yenelouis, 1999).

Christine Battersby (1989) argues that for men to appropriate the feminine was historically considered to be a sign of genius, whereas to be female and feminine was of no value. Moreover, she asserts, "the high evaluation of male ‘femininity’ effects a radical split between the ‘female’ and the ‘feminine’ – and in ways that mean the sex/gender dichotomy cannot simply be renounced" (Battersby, 1998, p. 21).

Importantly, Cixous (1990, p. 25) further argues:

The problem is not with men: one finds a great deal of femininity in men, the problem is with the women who have produced, who have written, because culturally, they have been subjected to the obligation of masculinisation in order to hoist themselves on the scene of socio-political legitimacy. With the result that most of the texts by women up to our time have been terribly marked by the masculine economy.

Men and women do photography similarly. Generally there is nothing inherently feminist or political in photographs, but it is how they are positioned in surrounding discourses. The point, I am trying to make is that I have incorporated the visual and formal resonance of many male documentary photographers, whose work has a feminine or personal approach. But in the producing and the reading of my work it also entails renouncing the imperial (masculine) "position of militarism, capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy" (Davidov, 1995, p. 140). Valorising the feminin approach offers a new relationship not based on appropriation, but on a respect for, and of the other, though I add this may not be easily discernible when reading a photograph. Moreover, a feminin economy is open to
differences and possibilities. Relevant to my photographic practice Sellers (1990, p. 194) asserts that a feminine approach involves blurring the rigid and, absurd, distinction between 'critical' and 'creative' writing. She further claims that:

a 'feminine' writing entails relinquishing the pseudo-objectivity of conventional critical discourse and implicating ourselves as writers, accepting our role in the signifying process as well as the way language itself works on and shapes what we write (Sellers, 1990, p. 194).

In my work I try to adhere to a feminine economy. An example of this is in the blurring of boundaries in my streetscape photograph taken in Athens on 26th June 1999. An urban diasporic theme is prevalent. It is also a postmodern bricolage of visual elements. The photograph consists of a metal fence with graffiti next to a storefront. The storefront displays a range of commodities on offer, such as postcards, framed images as well as a mirror, which captures my reflection. Notions of the beautiful and picturesque are evoked in the postcards.
The depiction of scenic views corresponds to set framing conventions and aesthetic standards, such as the depiction of wide vistas and perspectives that are found in early eighteenth-century landscape painting. On the wall beneath the postcards there is an old framed black and white portrait of an officer in a uniform adorned with medals. The perceived values of discipline, order and respect are connoted. These images are related to a city's history of militarisation and organization in which political, economic and scientific rationalism has been constructed. Moreover, this suggests an organisational relationship to space which according to de Certeau (1985, p. 127) is a (masculine) strategic mode of discourse. De Certeau asserts that 'strategy' is the name for a mode of action that produces an 'Other'. It is a mode of action specific to regimes of place which serves as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it.

My approach, rather than being strategic, relates to de Certeau's notion of tactics (1985, p. 127). Tactics make a practice available to people displaced and excluded as other by the bordering actions of strategy (Morris, 1992, p. 32). Fundamentally, it is a mode of action determined by not having a place of one's own. Indeed tactics aptly relates to a feminist political subversion by cleverly playing upon 'opportunities', 'catch occurrences' and the 'opacities of history' (de Certeau, 1985, p. 127). Interestingly, this may be likened in photographic history to Henri Cartier Bresson's adherence to picturing the 'decisive moment' in which there is simultaneous recognition, in a fraction of a second, of the significance of an event as well as of a precise organisation of forms which give the photograph expression. However, I consider that the major difference between tactics and strategy is that tactics are politically motivated rather than the 'decisive movement' which is associated more with achieving aesthetic/stylistic form.

In my reading of the photograph taken in Athens, I consider that it conveys a political agenda relating to the territorial hierarchies of the city. In contrast to the pictures on the wall there is the juxtaposition of the graffiti on the dark
aluminium sheeting which signifies disorder, social unrest and vandalism. The graffiti involves tactics in the seizing of the strategic terrain of the city. Graffiti can be considered as an anti-aesthetic; it represents the breakdown of the middle-class social values which are read in the other depicted pictures. Graffiti crosses the border into criminality and animated emotion. It disturbingly demarcates a territory.

Similarly, my reflection in the mirror is a tactic. It acknowledges my engagement in the photographic act. It involved implicating my “role in the signifying process” (Sellers, 1990, p. 194). It acknowledges my presence within, rather than separate from, the depicted heterogenous landscape as well as my attempts to counter the (masculine) strategies of order within the city.

![Image of a soldier in Marseille](image.png)

Marseille 8th July 1999

The acknowledgement of the strategic hold of the city, and my attempts at de-militarisation is emphasised in my photograph of a soldier in Marseille. In the black and white photograph, there is a uniformed young male boldly
holding a rifle. In the background the series of elongated white lights resemble bullets being rapidly fired towards him. He is facing the ‘bullets’ but his gun is lowered. My camera is positioned from a low angle and I am looking upwards. The camera positioned from a low angle presents him in a higher position of power and this is also suggested in his upright stance. However, his authoritative masculine presence, which is associated with clarity and form, is blurred through my photographic techniques of using a long exposure. This deconstructs his lucid position of control as he is in dissolution. The blur gives an uncanny access to a place of transition and eerie uncertainty, rather than the sublime effects of masculine authority.

The photograph virtually reveals his skull. As such, rather than just surface there are signs of the depths of his anatomy. It is uncanny in its combination of fascination and horror (Freud, 1958). It is also uncanny in its momentary trace of the presence of the body, in which he is depicted in a vague, almost ghostly state\(^{16}\). Moreover, the image uncannily represents an indeterminate space which seeks to disrupt the binaries and boundaries of what is real and representational.

My photograph is a haunting image and is a reminder of the ever present patriarchal and military authority that I have witnessed on my journey. Presenting him in an uncanny manner is an attempt to articulate the indeterminacy and ambiguity that permeates my work and which I consider is a feature of a photographie féminine because it resists closure.

Overall, a major theme in my work is transgression. In my work I have attempted to subvert the masculinisation of the visual in which the female body becomes the object of the male (sexual) gaze. Indeed, much of my

\(^{16}\) This image is similar in style to Robert Capa’s famous photograph ‘Loyalist soldier at the time of death’ taken in 1936, during the Spanish Civil War. Capa’s photograph that consists of a blurred soldier being hurled backwards with his arm outstretched about to drop his gun became the icon for the war. The uncanniness of the image became valuable in commercial and political terms as consciences and emotions of the public were stirred (Lewinski, 1978, p. 89-92).
work records the prevalence of images of females in the street. The images serve as reminders of my physical presence as a woman. In relation to my tactical approach I have attempted to reframe ironically these images to disrupt the masculine gaze in which 'woman is image' and man is bearer of the look. This dominant gaze is traditionally a white bourgeois heterosexual masculine privilege and, as Rose (1993, p. 109) asserts, the gaze is not only the gaze at women and the land, "it is also a gaze at what are constituted objects of knowledge, whether environmental, social, political or cultural." Furthermore, the masculine voyeuristic gaze "sustains a gap between the subject looking and what they see... instituting a distance from, and mastery over, the image" (Rose, 1993, p. 106).

However, Battersby (1994, p. 93) vehemently argues that "women focus differently on the conventions which have been used to render them objects, since they stand in a different relationship with the history of those conventions than do men." Furthermore, Bright (1998, p. 11) asserts that "the same holds true for non-white men and women whose desires and bodily heritages are also marked and shaped by historical subordination." Certainly this is exemplified in my photography which attempts to be disruptive and is a rearticulation of women and space which posits a feminin interaction of play, performance and sexual dissent.

My work also follows Irigaray's (1985a) urging of women to examine the process of specula(risa)ation that subtend our social and cultural organisation. However, at times this is not a clear and easy task. For example, my figure in a mirror taken in a hotel in Cairo is both subject and object of the gaze, as I am in the streetscape photograph in Athens. Furthermore, in the self-portrait in Cairo the process of my 'specula(risa)ation' is illustrated with the inclusion of an imposing patriarchal figure who looks down upon me in a patronising manner.
I refer to this image as a self-portrait because I consider it a self-representation. In composition and its reliance on a chance encounter it has a similarity with Helmut Newton's (in)famous photograph titled 'Self-portrait with wife June and models, taken in Vogue Studio, Paris, 1981'. The similarity with Newton's 'self-portrait' is that it consists of a mirror reflection in which he is bent over the viewfinder of his Rolleiflex camera, as I am in my photograph. We are also both in possession of our cameras and are the subjects of our exposure.

However, my photograph is not technically perfect. The photographic negative is somewhat damaged which gives a sense of creative tension. The damaged print conveys an imperfection or blurring of substance. It suggests what Battersby (1998, p. 99), drawing on Irigaray's theory of sight and topography, refers to as 'female optics' which opposes straight lines, particles and clean-cut forms. Instead it is structured by shadows,
reflections, flows and intensive magnitudes that may also be aligned with the uncanny.

My reflection in the large mirror includes the presence of a large older male who was attempting to approach me. Unlike Newton's photograph in which the models are deliberately posing for the camera in front of the mirror in a clichéd pose in the genre of the 'pin-up', the male is directing his attention towards me. The presence of the male and his gaze directed towards my camera and my body disrupts my autonomy. It is a reminder of how the female body is subjected to the male gaze which connotes a patriarchal society.

Interestingly, the reflection relates to the Lacanian notion of the 'mirror stage' involved in the construction of subjectivity in which the child who experiences her/his body as fragmented and uncentred projects its potential unity in its own reflection in the other and in a mirror. The reflected image provides a promise of anticipation of mastery and control which the subject lacks.

My self-portrait presents a dialectic. As a photographer holding the camera I am presented as an active agent, thus in control. In the mirror I can see myself and have some idea of the way in which my appearance will register on film (Burgin, 1992, p. 225). The full frontal gaze, "a posture almost invariably adopted before the camera by those who are not professional models, is a gaze commonly received when we look at ourselves in a mirror" (Burgin, 1982, p. 149). Thus the position requires the spectator of the image to identify with me, but also the look towards my body can be a masculine gaze which is "curious, controlled and distant" (Rose, 1993, p. 103). This is exemplified in the photograph as I am the object of the male stranger's look. Rose (1993, p. 104) asserts that "the active look is constituted as masculine, and to be looked at is the feminine position." As such, in the photograph the male gaze towards me suggests passivity.
The photograph also draws on Irigaray's (1985a, p. 95) contention that the surface of the mirror is feminised. Women are the flat surface at which the subject gazes. The subject sees himself, as he speculates, as the master subject. However, in reflecting on my own corporeality in the mirror reflection, I also follow Irigaray's suggestion in challenging the status of the mirror and refusing to flatten reality into a single clear 'truth'. She asserts that "we look at ourselves in the mirror to please someone, rarely to interrogate that state of our body or our spirit, rarely for ourselves and in search of becoming" (1993b, p. 65). In the photograph of my reflection in the mirror I am attempting to define myself. It is a form of 'interrogation' but also a play or performance in which my look at the mirror seeks to subvert the clarity of the gaze. I am not just a passive object of the masculine gaze. As the photographer, I am also in a position of subjectifying and subversive power. The photograph, therefore, may counter Lacan's notion of the passive feminine and the 'fixing' of identity in the mirror of the other. As the seeing subject and the seen object, the mirror's specularity breaks down the power relations implicit in a unidirectional gaze.

A similar reading is also possible of another self-portrait in a mirror on a street in Arles in which the blurry image focuses on my female subject-position in which a trace of my body is present. Wearing sunglasses, and with my hair blowing in the wind, my face is masked and it is shielded from an investigative gaze. My body is frankly exposed which evokes notions of the head of Medusa who, according to Freud (1963, p. 212), in its frightfulness designates "a terror of castration that is linked to the sight of something." Freud interpreted the myth of Medusa's head as an allegory of the veiled woman whose unshielded gaze turns men to stone. Like many misogynist myths, the story of Medusa provides a powerful focus for counter-discursive feminist re-workings of patriarchal discourse. An example of this is my embracing of Cixous' famous subversive text, *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1976b), in which the tenets of an *écriture féminine* are described. Moreover, my reflection in the mirror, as a Medusa icon, is not just as a
castrating archetype but is also a sign of the regenerative and creative
energies associated with woman. Cixous further declares that for women:

> Our glances, our smiles are spent; laughs exude from all our
> mouths; our blood flows and we extend ourselves without
> ever reaching an end; we never hold back our thoughts; our
> signs, our writing; and we’re not afraid of lacking. (Cixous,
> 1976b, p. 878)

In the Greek legend Perseus actually kills Medusa by petrifying her with her
own reflected image in his shield. However, I am not solidified in the mirror,
but appear as a blur, a fissure in the representation of passive femininity.
The ‘blur’ is the photographic parallel to the polysemic text (Moore, 1991, p.
126). Moore (1991, p. 126) suggests it is a feminist strategy aimed to
“deny the visual ‘sexual fix’ in a pseudo-tactile indeterminacy.” The blur,
she asserts, is the “visual equivalent of a giggle.” As such, I suggest in the
photograph I represent the ‘laugh of the Medusa’. Cixous (1976b, p. 885)
declares, “you only have to look at the Medusa straight on to see her. And
she’s not deadly. She’s beautiful and she’s laughing.”

![Image of a person with a blurred effect]  
Arles  
6th July 1999
This photograph makes a point of exposing the mirror image as a play of surfaces, which obscures subject relations and looking mechanisms, by using the Medusa mask to neutralise fascination and ward off the evil eye — or in this case the male gaze. Furthermore, in the hazy mirror a strong *feminin* presence is evoked in my dress, posture and my camera positioned directly towards my reflection. The self-portrait appears narcissistic. However, Isaac (1996, p. 13) states that "while narcissism may seem a rather doubtful characteristic for women to claim as an asset, a number of feminist theoreticians have seen narcissism, along with hysteria, as a potential site of resistances, especially to specular appropriation." Drawing on Freud's (1927) essay 'On Humour', in which he links women and humorists (along with great criminals, children, cats, and large beasts of prey) as those who seem to have maintained an original, primary narcissism that the adult male has renounced, Isaac further asserts that narcissism, rather than being the vehicle to elicit admiration of men, becomes a "laudable quality of its own right" (1996, p. 13). According to Freud the narcissistic woman is outside the (masculine) law in the attempts to evade its effects, if only for a moment, by asserting pleasure. Thus in the dis-play I consider I am actively claiming my space within the real circumstance of the public masculine place of the street. I am playfully engaging in what Freud calls the 'triumph of narcissism', the victorious assertion of the ego's invulnerability, which occurs as result of the rebellious and liberating 'grandeur' of humour.

I venture into what Isaak (1996) refers to as the "revolutionary use of women's laughter" in which women artists turn the "culturally marginal position to which they had always been relegated into the new frontier" (1996, p. 4). Furthermore, through my use of appropriation and pastiche, through my tactical assault on modernist orthodoxies of immanence and the "self", through my interrogation of the problematics of mass media representations and through my critical engagement with mediated representations and self reflexivity, my work shares some of the major
features of post-modern documentary photography. Moreover, my work also follows photographic critic, Andy Grundberg's assertion that:

One direction contemporary documentary practice might take, then, is toward the recording of the 'I' instead of the 'Other', centreing itself on what the photographer's life is, rather on what it is not and acknowledging the crucial presence of the photographer on the scene. (1990, p. 198)

This, in turn, follows the politics of an *écriture féminine* in which Cixous (1976b, p. 875) advocates "woman must put herself into the text -- as into the world and into history -- by her own movement." Like Cixous, Irigaray argues that it is by writing women's bodies, by articulating our own dreams and desires that women will break down the bastions of male law. But the world as I know it and "our western concepts of reality, knowledge, truth, politics, ethics and aesthetics are all effects of sexually specific language, and thus far in our history are from male-dominated perspectives" (Grosz, 1994, p. ix). Particularly, this seems evident in journey photography in which the male 'romantic hero' sets forth in his quest for new and exotic experiences, yet continues a tradition of male-dominated outlooks.

**The Romantic Hero**

My journey outwards towards other worlds also reveals an uncertain journey inward. As romanticism is typically masculine, I do not follow this discourse. For a female to travel alone is hardly romantic. However, much travel may be imbued with romanticism. My work attempts to be critical and deconstruct the romantic tradition of the lone male traveller. Furthermore, romantic aesthetics involves the notion of artistic genius. It is what Battersby (1989, p. 43) refers to as the ' unholy trinity'. The unholy trinity consists of the three declarations: 'I am male'; 'I am the author'; and 'I am God'. In romanticism male individualism is highly valued and this is particularly evident in notions of the 'journey'. However, photographic critics such as Webster (1980, p. 19) assert the "fable of one man and his camera" must be resisted. Yet the romantic journey still persists in the lexicon of photographic
art. An example of this was found at the *Recontre Internationale de Photographie* in Arles, 1999, in which the romantic tropes of exile, solitude and nostalgia for a different time and space were evident in the work of a large range of male photographers represented.

There is a long tradition in which travel is considered an imperative for 'self discovery', but this has been a male discourse. Certainly, the Ulysses factor dominates male travel writing and photography. The traveller's quest is a literary reproduction of the subjective experience of becoming. The goal of the quest is a journey of aspiration. The travels of men mapping their territories of desire have been well-documented and have a central place within modernist art and literary canons. For example, the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss, Paul Gauguin and Henry Miller are examples of lone male travellers whose work is celebrated in terms of the journey in search of the Other relating both to the landscape and the female. The proposition is that aesthetic gain is granted through travel. There is a quest for new forms and fresh images which is a primary facet of modernity. Tourist theorist Dean Mac Cannell (1976) asserts that for moderns, which also include tourists, reality and authenticity are thought to be elsewhere, in other historical periods and in other cultures with 'purer', simpler lifestyles. This nostalgia is based on an alienation from today's fast-paced present. Generally, travel is associated with a romantic wanderlust in its search for an exotic Otherness.

I suggest that this is *not* an aspect of my work. I do not focus on impoverished conditions or the 'spectacle of the Other' (unless it is a self-representation), but rather on the repressed aspects of the contemporary city, exploring the nature of representation and the ironies that may be found, especially when approaching travel from a *feminin* photographic perspective.

The importance of journeys in twentieth-century photography, Davis (1987, p. 8) suggests, is emphasised by the impact of three books: *American*
Photographs (1938) by Walker Evans; The Decisive Moment (1952) by Henri Cartier Bresson; and the famous existential road journey, The Americans (1958) by Robert Frank. The selected books perpetuate subjective travel as a masculine discourse. Importantly, Davis' photographic catalogue on journey photographers claims that as the positivist certainty of the nineteenth-century diminished, travel took on an increasingly subjective meaning.

I acknowledge that the romanticist notion of travel as a way of experiencing new possibilities is extremely seductive. Furthermore, Borthwick (1991, p. 147) asserts that for Australians, due to our geographical isolation, “the imagined world is a magnetic Other.” The contemporary middle-class cultural imperative to ‘getaway’, associated with the idea that travel is an escape from the everyday has also influenced my ventures (as distinct from adventures). However, my desire for travel is closely associated with feminist writers such as Pratt's (1992) and Robinson's (1990) suggestion that the journeys of women have represented an attempt to break the boundaries of convention and traditional feminine restraints which implies a romanticist liberation. They argue that when the participation in travel is self-determined it can lead to empowerment. Indeed, my journey photography does convey a form of self-empowerment through the power and choices to critically represent visually my encounters from a particular feminist position.

Along with the desire to deconstruct the masculine appropriation of space and identity, there is certainly aspects of romanticism which I hoped not to reproduce in my own work and which I find deeply problematic. These concerns include the appropriation of the Other in which the Romantic self appears as a colonising ego and in which vision is associated with the power structures of imperialism and male supremacy.

Battersby's feminist concept of genius may be one of the possible avenues
by which to separate my work from the masculine discourse of romanticism. As previously discussed, to be male and feminine was historically considered to be a sign of genius. A creative woman who was female and feminine could not count as a genius, but ironically a male who appropriated ‘feminine’ attributes of imagination and passion proved his cultural superiority. Battersby (1989, p. 157) asserts that in contrast to the previous definitions of genius17, a female ‘genius’ is a woman who is judged to occupy tactical positions in the matrilineal and patrilineal patterns of tradition that make up culture. Even though I am uncomfortable with the term ‘genius’ because of its cultural sense of elitism, Battersby’s pragmatic definition of a genius as a person whose work is of value and of significance because it marks the boundaries between the old ways and the new within a tradition can be applied to my journey work. I am also aware that in my feminist journey "if I am to speak differently, he must learn to be silent - He the traveller who is in me and in woman" (Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1994, p. 24).

Like Cixous, my writing attempts to deviate from the accepted masculine style and to write in an obviously circuitous and contradictory manner. By speaking in contradictions Cixous deliberately calls attention to the fact that she cannot express her true thoughts as she feels them, thereby exposing the inadequacy of the current language. In the context of a photographie féminine my work aims to be open to possibilities and resist closure. Travel or journey photographs generally feed an appetite for images of the exotic and the unfamiliar, often consisting of images of landscape, architecture and people of ‘distant lands’. By contrast, my photographs are concerned with self-reflexivity and with my tactical experiences in conveying a feminine

17 Battersby describe separate strands of the term ‘genius’ in our modern usage: 1) Romantics represents ‘genius’ in terms of a particular personality type (an outsider, a shaman). 2)”Genius as a specific mode of consciousness described as passion, imagination, instinct, the unconscious which came to use from the pre-romantics. 3) Genius described in terms of emergence (usually, sublimated sexual energy). 4) Genius is treated as a kind of ‘potential for eminence’ in terms of skill and talent. 5) Genius is defined in terms of cultural achievement (Battersby, 1989, p. 156).
space in a postmodern consumer-driven world in which we live our lives through, and surrounded by, images. Cixous (1976a, p. 542) claims that “insistence of the familiar gives rise to what is uncanny.” As such, the photographs of images seem uncannily familiar. Furthermore, there is a political use of humour and irony. They are re-productions or reframing of images in an attempt to present a deconstructive feminist political alternative to the genre of journey photography.
Chapter Two:

Wanderlust

The possession of a camera can inspire something akin to lust. And like all credible forms of lust, it cannot be satisfied: first, because the possibilities of photography are infinite; and second, because the project is finally self-devouring. (Sontag, 1977, p. 179)

In Wanderlust (1987) the work of three photographers, Walker Evans (1938), Henri-Cartier Bresson (1952) and Robert Frank (1958), was identified as having an impact on subsequent journey photography styles. They were valorised as ‘masters’ in their field. Walker Evans, who photographed in a carefully composed manner, and Robert Frank, who disregarded the rules of photographic composition, chose subject matter that was not considered worthy of notice. Their photographs consisted of advertising signs, buildings and scenes from a mélange of American society. By contrast, Henri-Cartier Bresson in his photographs taken in parts of Europe, Asia, North Africa and America seemed to notice, and is renowned for capturing, the ‘decisive moment’ of an event on the street. To some extent this documentary work has had an effect on the production of my journey photography. But more importantly the contemporary photographic journeys of Harvey Benge, Jean-Marc Bustamante, Josef Koudelka, Gisela Weimann, Nick Waplington, Marta Sentis, Max Pam, Martin Parr, Sylvia Plachy, and Raghubir Singh have also been influential in developing a photographie féminine as a counter modality to the dominant masculine modes of representation. I have either emulated or rejected certain photographic approaches. Their photographs have been influential on my work because they have all published or exhibited in the last decade of the twentieth century. Their work has also involved travelling
across national or cultural borders. As such, the currency of their work, their cultural western positioning and their photographic journeys to various cities are very similar to my practice.

I also acknowledge that our work follows in the footsteps of many personal documentary photographers that have come before us. For example, the formal resonance of 'master' street photographers, such as Eugene Atget, Andre Kertesz and Lee Friedlander is also evident in my work as well in that of a number of the previously mentioned photographers. Moreover, my views of these photographers and their work has affected how I conceive my own landscape representations, as well as what I wish to adopt and reject in my own practice.

As a form of meaning, photography is a primary medium through which people relate to visual images and make them their own. In other words, once a picture is seen and filtered through the human symbolic system, it is externalised once again in the production of other pictures and in the act of selecting what to see. This issue is particularly significant in stressing the notion that a landscape is a selected re-presentation as well as the point that it is often a masculine aesthetic that is conveyed.

Furthermore, there are very few women landscape or street photographers that have been acclaimed within a modernist (masculine) art discourse. This implies a gender bias and suggests that perhaps women approach the landscape from a different viewpoint. Lippard asserts that:

> While a large number of women photographers have gathered outdoor images, their failure to impress the art and journalism markets suggests that landscapes are still perceived as trophies from the battle of culture with nature. (1995, p.38)

Rather than presenting trophies from the battle of culture with nature, it is important for feminists to present different ways of seeing and experiencing
to subvert the imperialism and patriarchal dominance in journey and landscape photography. However, this is not an easy task. As a woman, Cixous asserts that "there is something of a foreignness, a feeling of not being accepted or of being unacceptable when as a woman you suddenly get into that strange country of writing where most inhabitants are men and where the fate of women is still not settled" (1990, p. 12). I tentatively explore the "strange country of writing" and try to find a space to articulate my own location within the photography discourse.

My analysis of various photographers' work is based on a type of reading practice, as suggested by Hélène Cixous, which involves approaching the text from a range of theoretical positions. Moreover, a feminine reading is not concerned with producing 'a' theory and making it 'fit' thus triumphantly confirming the status of the reader as master, but instead "involves 'opening' the self to what it is the text is saying, even if this is puzzling or painful or problematic" (Sellers, 1990, p. 192). This reading practice, Cixous suggests, comprises three interrelated strands. Firstly, our sexual, social and cultural experiences and expectations are brought into play as we read. Therefore we need to acknowledge actively our participation and situate our position in relation to the text. For example, Cixous asserts her own position when, as an adolescent, the only characters with whom she felt she could identify with were male. She asserts that this had a detrimental effect on her developing a sense of herself as woman. "Where am I to stand? What is my place if I am a woman? I look for myself through the centuries and don't see myself anywhere" (Cixous, 1986, p. 75).

My position is very similar. Journey photography has been largely structured as a male proclivity and activity. Therefore, developing my confidence and a sense of self-identity as a female producing a journey photographie féminine has been a tentative process. As such, what seems beneficial is the second strand of the reading practice that Cixous suggests involves listening to other 'voices' in the text. This helps raise an awareness of the marginalised
position of ‘woman’, as well as an ‘openness’ to other points of view. This in turn presents a different understanding of the text and a consideration of the differences that exist within the category of woman and the differences within cultural discourse. In reading a photograph this may involve considering the photographer’s position as well as that of the subjects being photographed and also listening to the ‘voices’ of the critics, if available.

The third practice of reading is linked to this deconstructive practice in which the reader develops an approach from the knowledge of the experiences, expectations and the needs brought to the text and the attention to its many different ‘voices’, thus refusing the masculine position of closure. This practice of reading which I also apply to the reading of my photographs involves “acknowledging that I as a reader participate in the ongoing process of the text’s creations; it mean recognising that my reading is itself a product of certain questions, blindspots, need and desires, and that these motivations are constantly changing” (Sellers, 1990, p. 192). It is a postmodern approach because it is concerned with the variability of meaning, and the acknowledgment that photographs are the ‘site’ of a continuous process of re-interpretation. After all, “photographs get meaning, like all cultural objects, from their context “ (Becker, 1998, p. 88). The self-reflexive approach and the exploration of the tenets of subjective photography are crucial to my development of a photographie féminine.

The way in which aspects of the land are photographed varies for each and every photographer. I am arguing that, although men and women can take photographs in a similar way, photographs are produced as a result of gendered visions and the specific modes of materiality have to been taken into account.

I suggest that the traces of the photographer’s body, of his/her subjectivities, are present in the work produced. Cixous claims that writing is itself a body function. The physical activity, together with the body drives, influence the
use of expression. Moreover, the photographic approach, whether it is masculine and/or feminine, is inextricably associated with desire and the interactions of the body and space. On a technical level, the differences in a photographer’s approach relate to choices of composition, camera angle, depth of field and other physical factors. But also the differences in approach between photographers involve spatial relations that reflect their personal history as well as their age, ethnicity, class, and particularly, gender and sex. The photographer’s relationship with the landscape and his/her travel encounters also leaves an imprint in the images produced. For example, whether the photographer feels isolation and distance or intimacy and acquiescence with the landscape is often conveyed through their photographic techniques of composition and the content she/he chooses to include in the image frame.

The notion of landscape, which consists of framing a particular spatial view, according to Bright (1996, p. 333), is generally conceived by western middle class audiences as “an upbeat and ‘wholesome’ sort of subject ... indisputably beyond politics and ideology” that appeals to ‘timeless’ values. Similarly, Warnke (1994, p.145) asserts a romantic perspective in which the landscape was a "refuge for the civilised, in which they could experience what was missing, suppressed or forgotten in the economic, social or private world they inhabited.” Moreover, journey landscape representation presents an ‘ideal’ scenario which valorises masculine values relating to adventure, conquest and romantic individualism. Henceforth, the landscape as a construction often occludes the history of oppression of the lower classes, women, other races and the land itself.

In this chapter, rather than viewing journey photographs as just an aesthetic object, I will be addressing the ‘political landscape’. As such, I will be discussing some concerns regarding the politics of representation. Thus I will be focusing “attention on the generation of meanings as they operate to affirm, contest, or subvert dominant ideological formations” (Solomon-
Godeau, 1995, p. 296). In particular, I will consider romanticism, orientalism, and the issues of gendered cultural production. My analysis of the selected journey photographic work is divided into three sections. First, I will examine aspects of romantic desire in journey photography. Then I will discuss this subject in relation to the work of two contemporary journey photographers, Josef Koudelka and Max Pam. In their work the desire to travel or escape to a distant environment has been an underlying theme and has brought two powerful discourses into proximity: the exoticisation of the past in another location or country, and the exoticisation of another gender, race or culture. In the second section, I will describe the work of a number of postmodern photographers, such as Marta Sentis, Harvey Benge, Jean-Marc Bustamante, Gisela Weimann and Martin Parr who attempt to deconstruct the tourist gaze and the masculine romantic journey. Following the analysis I will discuss the previously cited themes in relation to my development of a photographie féminine.

The Romantic Journey

Journey photography and romanticism are often inextricably linked. One of the romantic movement's characteristics, "more or less central... is a preoccupation with Otherness, with what is different, remote, mysterious, inaccessible, exotic, even bizarre" (Ong, 1971, p. 25). In journey photography this may reflect an 'imperialistic' mood in individuals in a tooconfident assertion of the 'will-to-power' arising from the feeling that one's activities are spiritual (Thorlby, 1966, p. 16). A number of photographers have addressed the issue of the spiritual connection with their (new) surroundings, in which they assert the emotional and intuitive aspects of photography. However, the photographers also tend to suppress or ignore the cultural determinants of their choices.
The documentary photographer Sebastiao Salgado states that:

What you know is simply automatic - you have a camera that's part of your hands, part of your eyes. And then you go inside without judging anything. You don't come with your American or your Brazilian or whatever culture in order to presume -'that's good, that's bad, that's black, that's white' - you come because you must come, it's your way of life. You're there to see, hear, listen, understand, integrate. (Salgado cited in Cott, 1991, p.138)

Similarly, Max Pam (1995, p. 33) comments on the nineteenth-century imperial photographer, Samuel Bourne, on whom he has modelled his journeys through India. He states that "Bourne's brilliance as a photographer existed with an equation that encompassed the borders of that notional continent where your own persona collides with mystery/majesty and your cultural baggage is thrown out the window." I agree that there can be a spiritual connection with the environment which is a common belief in non-western philosophy. However, it is questionable whether a photographer can 'throw out' their social or cultural 'baggage'. There is an interest in the other which is inextricably tied to particular cultural ways of seeing and experiencing that one may not be conscious of in the moment of photography. However, as a feminist photographer it is important to avoid the construction of the other as the romanticised Other. The point that I am stressing is that photography involves a selection rather than synthesis, or unified whole, of the outside world. The photographic selection is often the result of a replication or, in some cases a reaction against, modern patriarchal western aesthetic traditions of the beautiful, the sublime and the picturesque.

A reaction against photographic aesthetic conventions can be identified in Robert Frank's Americans (1958). Robert Frank's photographs were taken in the 1950s from his existential road journey through America. They were a challenge to the then existing standards of photographic style that propounded formal, balanced compositions that involved a precise and unambiguous description of surface, volume and space. According to Lacks (1987, p. 28), "it was in these qualities that the seductiveness, the physical
beauty of photography lay.” However, Frank’s blurred, off-centred photographs revealed a disregard for formal compositions and suggested, either consciously or unconsciously, that the “photographic eye” needs redefinition (Lacks, 1987, p. 40). Frank’s rejection of conventions in terms of style supports his choice of subject matter which involved a critical look at the complacent years of Eisenhower and the 50s. This involved documenting diversity in America, including aspects of black and Hispanic lives as well as mainstream white America. Frank’s photographs were a visual sociology, and it was an intensely personal vision. He stated that:

With these photographs, I have attempted to show a cross-section of the American population. My effort was to express it simply and without confusion. The view is personal and, therefore, various facets of American life and society have been ignored... I have been frequently accused of deliberately twisting subject matter to my point of view. Above all, I know that life for a photographer cannot be a matter of indifference. Opinion often consists of a criticism. But criticism can come out of love. It is important to see what is invisible to other people... Also it is always the instantaneous reaction to oneself that produces a photograph (Frank cited in Becker, 1998, p. 90).

The romantic notion of the ‘artist doing his own thing’ is certainly applicable to Frank’s work, which may suggest the alliance with the term ‘spirit, eye and camera’ that has been associated with his photographic predecessor, Walker Evans. Evans states that, “some of the best things you ever do sort of come through you. You don’t know where you get the impetus and the response to what is before your eyes” (cited in Lacks, 1987, p. 51). In my work, I accept that the photographs produced are often the result of very little contemplation and it does seem that I am ‘drawn to situations’ by a force. But moreover, like Frank, it is a political response relating to my subjectivity, which is filtered through my gendered, personal and cultural experiences and no doubt the influence of photographic styles and images that I have seen before.
Whelan (1981) asserts that photographers are drawn to strikingly similar subject matter. This is either the result of direct influence or pure coincidence or inter-textuality with other photographs. However, Lacks (1987) whose research has involved an analysis of how American documentary photographers respond to their work, suggests that the types of images produced can be related to the Jungian theory of the collective unconscious which all humans share. She asserts that the photographers’ “responses are emotional and their motives involve self awareness and self searching more often than conscious aesthetics” (Lacks, 1987, p. 47).

Photographic critics, such as Max Kozloff, also support this romantic idea. Kozloff refers to Josef Koudelka’s *Exiles* (1988), stating that “the outer environment exists for this photographer only to confirm the dejectedness and estrangement he himself feels, and the gauche, anomic or desolated scenes he discovers derive their power from being already, as it were, within him” (1994, p.148).

Koudelka’s photographs are in monochrome. The absence of colour draws attention to the formal considerations in the photograph, such as textures, light and shadow. His simple compositions document aspects of life that may go unnoticed. His photographs include empty spaces and rural settings which reinforce a sense of anomie. According to Kozloff (1994), Koudelka is a ‘silent’ witness, an outsider, an observer of the scenes before him. When positioned in the romantic rhetoric of an ‘outsider’ and as an ‘observer’, the photographer is considered passive. It does not acknowledge the active constructedness of photography.

Both Kozloff and Koudelka, a former Czechoslovakian national, confirm the modernist, critical tradition of conceptualising exile as aesthetic gain. In other words, physical displacement or exile is conducive to insights and experimentation. For example, in Bradbury’s classic study of literary modernism he asserts that “it is emigration or exile that makes for membership of the modern country of the arts, which has been heavily
travelled by many great writers – Joyce, Lawrence, Mann, Brecht, Auden, Nabokov” (cited in Kaplan, 1996, p. 26). Kaplan (1996, p. 28) draws attention to the point that “the modernist trope of exile works to remove itself from any political or historically specific instances in order to generate aesthetic categories and ahistorical values.” For example, in photography the ‘subject’ becomes divorced from the larger political conditions that ‘produced’ it. The abandonment of any contextual references may lead the reader to view the images purely as spectacle. This in turn draws attention to the ‘creative genius’ of the photographer and the romantic trope of the solitary male figure.

The romantic notion of the lone male out in the world, as an outsider and an observer, is a persistent theme in art discourse. For example, the melancholy and nostalgia about loss and separation characterises the framing of Koudelka’s persona. Kozloff (1994, p.155) states that Koudelka “insists on the freedom to be without direction, to be derelict, to be attracted to the unlovely... where there is no refuge from the feeling of loss.” Interestingly, in the foreword to Koudelka’s republished book Exiles (1997), Delpire claims “Josef has nothing, or practically nothing in common with the stereotype depicted by writers too hasty to glorify the man” (p. ii).

Nevertheless, Koudelka’s work seems to affirm the notion that when modern peoples seek reality in other periods and cultures, they reaffirm the alienation from their own (McCannell, 1976). Koudelka’s work, for example, represents a romantic valorisation and documentation of cultures that seem to be outside modernity. Aspects of the modern twentieth century rarely appear in his photographs. He has documented aspects of the minority cultures of Europe which appear at odds with the fast paced lifestyles and commodity culture of much of contemporary western experience. This suggests a romantic nostalgia for the loss of something past, or something which is a symbol or affective marker of the past.

Themes of alienation and exile are also evident in the discourse surrounding one of the “pioneers of photography”, Andre Kertesz (Adam, 1985, p. 7).
Kertesz was born in Hungary in 1894. He lived in Paris then moved to New York in 1936 to work for an American photographic agency which, according to Adam (1985, p. 9), was "the beginning of many years of unhappiness." Interestingly, Kertesz may be positioned as a modernist exile, in which to be "separated from the person or location that one loves best or knows most intimately is an unbearable condition" (Kaplan, 1996, p. 141). For Kertesz this unbearable separation was from Paris and his country of birth. Kertesz (1985, p. 38) states that "my youth in Hungary is full of sweet and warm memories. I have kept the memory alive in my photographs." Furthermore, he states that "Paris accepted me as an artist just as it accepted any artist, painter, or sculptor. I was understood there" (1983, p. 64). He asserts that in America "I was out of place" (1983, p. 90). Moreover, his sense of alienation, of being out of place, within America was also due to his photographic style. The modern American photography of the time, particularly the 'f/64' group founded in 1929, aimed at technical perfection. The name 'f/64' refers to the aperture which achieves the widest depth of field with the sharpest possible focus. Clarity was the imperative and "straight photography came of age" (Barrett, 1990, p. 104). However, Kertesz' s work is subjective and conveys degrees of opacity. Kertesz argues that "you need expression to create a picture, not simply technique" (1985, p. 90).

Unlike the contemporary photographer Koudelka who frames his work in a nostalgia for cultures outside of modernity, Kertesz's work consisted of conveying aspects of the urban milieu. His images of the city reflect an attention to form and to spatial relations between the physical environment and its inhabitants. He states that "the only one I knew to make pictures like mine was a kind of calendar photographer. He arranged his scenes" (1985, p. 38). Kertesz's style of photography at the time was not acclaimed within American art/journalism discourse. Life magazine told him, "you are talking too much with your pictures. We only need documents" (Kertesz, 1985, p. 90). Similarly, producing pictures that 'speak' and trying to find a voice in which to articulate my personal concerns is an imperative in my
photography. Furthermore, like many women photographers whose work did not conform to aesthetic standards, he was excluded from major art exhibitions and had difficulty getting published.

Kertesz' s book on New York took 36 years to get published. When Kertesz was 72 years old he was finally made an Honorable Member of the American Society of Magazine Photographers. The nomination read that his work "captured in sober and tender images the unfolding of everyday life" (Adam, 1985, p. 9). Significantly, the notion of the everyday has become a pertinent discourse in contemporary subjective documentary photography.

Similar to Kertesz and Koudelka, Sylvia Plachy, in her Unguided Tour (1990), documents aspects of her observations as an outsider. Plachy, who fled Hungary in the wake of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956, may also be considered to be an exile. She states, "I tried to connect with an alien world through my eyes" (Plachy, 1990, p. 4). However, Plachy's photographs bear little similarity to Koudelka's romantic outlook. Although her photographs are in monochrome which often suggests a nostalgic scene, her work does not idealise the past but conveys a sense of documentary realism. Her work follows the path of Kertesz who she has described as a friend and a mentor. This is exemplified with the closing shot of her book which is a photograph taken of her by Kertesz.

Plachy's photographs represent aspects of contemporary western society towards the end of the twentieth century. Her photographs are taken in various places and are also diverse in content, ranging from close-up portraits to street documentary scenes. Plachy's photographs convey interesting juxtapositions, such as the image of "Pope John Paul II, in the Bronx, 1979." The photograph frames a poster of the pontiff in a shop window. Above the poster is a neon light sign with the word 'BUD'. Other examples of her range of vision includes the landscape photograph taken at night "Under the Williamsburg Bridge, 1987." The photograph consists of a 'photogenic' street scene with a building with the word "AIDS" spray painted
on one of the walls. Another photograph is a panoramic view of Sicily with two males in the foreground. One male youth is facing the ‘scenic’ view and another youth is smoking and tentatively posing for the camera. These photographs do not present the landscape as a picturesque sight. Rather, the photographs convey aspects of the human presence that unsettles the conventional aesthetic viewing positions. For example, the latter image presents two viewing positions: the photographer is looking, as well as being looked at. It presents traces of her embodied presence as a woman in the gaze of the man. Also the framing of the landscape incorporates different subject positions and conveys a feminin version of landscape in which her relations to other humans are seen to be an integral part of the apprehension of the landscape (Lippard, 1995; Wearing and Wearing, 1996). In Plachy’s oeuvre there is also an attention to form and subject movement in her photographs which conveys the photographer’s focus on space and temporality.

Similar attention to formal composition and subject movement is paid in the work of Max Pam. However, there are differences in regard to Plachy’s and his respective relationship to the landscape which may be attributed to the differences in gendered, embodied experiences. Similar to Koudelka and the other romantic artists, Pam represents the solitary western male out in the world searching for differences from contemporary western urban experiences. Or more particularly, in Going East (1992) he may be described as journeying away to the world of the Other. Like Koudelka, who has been positioned within art discourse as achieving the rewards of aesthetic gain from exile in which the site of the authentic is continually displaced, located elsewhere, Barrett-Lennard (1998) also positions Pam within this ‘isolated artist’ paradigm. He asserts that Pam is “engaging in a great voyage into the spaces of others and outside the bounds of the late twentieth century.” Furthermore, he adds that Pam “is not just an occidental travelling in the Orient and confronting the ‘other’ but a person displaced
(although deliberately and consciously) and fully aware of his own difference" (1998).

*Going East* represents two decades of Pam's travels depicting whatever he considers 'Asia' to be. Pam's romantic outlook illustrates post colonial theorist Edward Said's assertion that "the Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance" (Said, 1978, p. 1). Like Koudelka, Pam's photographs are formally precise, carefully composed, black and white, and highly controlled, even allowing for the occasional blur of movement which signals life outside the photographic moment. But more importantly, his romantic outlook is conveyed in the subject matter of his photographs:

> The images seem distant from the transformations taking place in an era of globalisation and massive economic development (or from contemporary critiques of photography). They appear as almost outside time, for the twentieth century is largely invisible here, and in many cases they can be most readily interpreted as echoes of the nineteenth. (Barrett-Lennard, 1998)

Many of his photographs capture the sensual movements of people within the landscape, such as the photograph of ghostly images of children next to a tree bending with the force of the wind. However, his photographs also represent an imperialist nostalgia for the perceived simpler lifestyles of the non-western Other. His photographs present an exoticisation of another culture and gender. Post-colonial and feminist scholar Pultz (1995, p. 20) claims that "just as men are dependent upon women as Other against which their own maleness is defined", westerners have used the depiction of distant lands as a means of defining both their own culture and themselves. In particular, travel theorist Rojek (1993, p. 114) asserts that the self-discovery of the bourgeois traveller was often attempted through a confrontation with what was viewed as the antithesis of Western culture, the Orient. Orientalist discourse according to Said (1978) refers to mainly the western work on Islam and Judaic cultures of North Africa and the near East.
However, his theories are also applicable to the transactions between 'western' and all non-western Others.

For example, Broinowski (1992, p. 2) in her analysis of Australians' impressions of Asia, refers to Orientalism as the "European vision of all Eastern peoples as exotic, remote, inferior, and subject to the political, military, economic, cultural and sexual dominance of the West." Ramamurthy (1997, p. 172) further argues that these colonial visions pervade contemporary travel photography in postcards, travel brochures and tourist ephemera.

An orientalist discourse can be found in Pam's photographic *ouevre* in which he states:

I grew up in Asia... My initial attraction to the Orient can be traced back to a first experience with the work of Rudyard Kipling...definitions of Kipling's India presented the full repertoire of an Oriental culture misrepresented by an Occidental, imperialist, chauvinist writer – an India rich and supine, feminine, fertile, mysterious, metaphysically complex and politically despotic. (1995, p. 34)

Yet *Going East* (1992), replicates the same feminine, mysterious and metaphysically complex environment that Pam identifies in Kipling's work. Pam's landscapes evoke the sensations of the beautiful which are associated with the feminine. His emphasis on the people within the landscape which, he contends, conveys the "essence of theatre" represents an Orientalist discourse that, arguably, discloses racial and sexual stereotypes. In Pam's *Going East* he is both defining his masculinity and his western, cultural positioning. Furthermore, he resembles the nineteenth-century "middle-class flâneur" who was "attracted to the city's dark seamy corners" (Urry, 1990, p. 138). His work also seems to follow Said's contention that Orientalism takes a perverse form as a "male power fantasy" which sexualises a feminised Orient for Western power and possession (1978, p.6). Particularly in *Going East*, Pam's photographs, mainly taken in the masculine dominated spaces of brothels and bars, suggest imperialist, orientalist assumptions about the moral laxity and overt sexuality of young 'eastern' women.
The photographs challenge the boundaries between the personal and public, as well as the divide between pornography and art\textsuperscript{18}. The young women with their gaze or bodies directed to the camera are presented as sexual commodities for the western male traveller and armchair traveller. This point is particularly reinforced in the book by a double page 'spread' of various women. The decontextualised fragments of young female sexuality promotes a voyeuristic relation towards the subjects. Re-enacted in Pam's journey is Said's argument that the sexual subjection of Oriental women to Western men "fairly stands for the pattern of relative strength between East and West and the discourse about that Orient that it enabled" (1978, p. 207).

These ethical concerns may be raised about Going East. Although Pam's photographs are not stolen moments, and are taken with the consent of the participants, the photographs suggest his dominant power relationship. Pam's oeuvre may be associated with the previously discussed union of the spirit, eye and camera. Notably it is the spirit, eye and camera of a western white male. Hence the photographs bear the traces of his gendered and cultural presence. Barrett-Lennard (1998) claims that the photographic intercourse between Pam and his subject suggests a sense of equality, "both our looking at the other." However, he later adds that the photographs are also "records of artifice... the consequence of the photographer deploying all the devices available to him." Pam's photographs suggest an 'imperialistic' mood, a too confident assertion of the 'will-to-power' that is a characteristic of the masculinist outlook.

He asserts, "I enjoy that moment in photography of going 'click', that moment of recognition so much" (Pam, 1989, p. 93). However, he also claims, that he could never make it an aggressive situation. Pam's works are not stolen moments and I admire his candour, though there is still a trace of aggression.

\textsuperscript{18}In this thesis I define pornography as commercially produced erotic material.
in terms of photographic power and male dominance in which his subjects respond by directing their gaze at the camera. Barrett-Lennard (1998) points out that "Pam directs, he is the one that leaves with the evidence and represents it at a later date to another audience." His modality reflects colonial power which is represented through gendered relations – "the white wealthy, male photographer versus the nonwhite, poor female subject" (Ramamurthy, 1997, p. 172). The East is constructed as the submissive female and the West as the authoritative male.

Pam's work also confirms Berger's (1972, p. 52) account of the relationship between the male spectator and female artist's model in which he states her "nakedness is not, however, an expression of her own feelings; it is a sign of her submission to the owner's feelings or demands." Berger's assertions seem applicable in considering that the women Pam have photographed are part of the sex industry (Langsam, 1992, p. 13). He admits to paying women in exchange for sexual encounters ("Max Pam, traveller/photographer", 1989). Thus their performance and economic dependence is directly related to appeal to a masculine libidinal economy.

Barrett-Leonard (1998) asserts that in Pam's photographs, "the other players have been active and aware of the process in which they act." However, Barrett-Lennard does not acknowledge the imbalance of power and knowledge between Pam and his 'players' that extends beyond the photographic moment to the production and circulation of images within the art market.

In Pam's photographic journey in Going East he has not separated from a colonial legacy. Pam's photographs represent the phallic nature of the camera as a tool to exploit his orientalist erotic fantasies, as well as his imperial, economic privilege and complicity in Asian sex tourism. In representation Broinowski (1992, p. 107) contends that Eastern women were never treated or respected to the same degree as their western
counterparts. She suggests that Pam is merely following in the patriarchal western literary and artistic traditions in which eastern women are positioned as passive commodities for the service and pleasures of Occidental males. Pam's work seems to follow the imperial tradition of a tropical journey as a sexual quest. Pam confirms this notion stating "You can taste the sensuality in the air. It was sweet. It was cheap. It was accommodating love on offer" (Pam, 1992, p. 13).

As previously stated, I consider that Pam's choice and style of photographing women attest and affirm his heterosexual and masculine position. Pam's journeys can also be associated with the late nineteenth-century figure of the flâneur who participated in a gendered and eroticised set of practices. The figure of the flâneur characterises the production of modern spaces and modernist art, destabilising and contextualising the limits of such 'freedom' and 'eroticism' which are conveyed by a sense of intimacy (Pollock, 1988).

The photographs in both Going East and his more recent book Indian Ocean Journals (2000) represent Pam's social intercourse with the people he has met on his travels. He states, "working with a wide-angle lens I have to be within one or two metres of the person I'm photographing – so it's very important to make my picture that is open, relaxed and mutually agreeable" (Pam, 1989, p. 93). However, his photographs of men and boys also tend to question his heterosexist status in which the body of the male Other also becomes the object of his scopophilia. Despite his assertions that "often what I want is humorous or diverting for Asians on the street waiting for things to happen", Pam's work raises concerns involving the ethics of photographing the Other. Photographic critic Solomon-Godeau (1991) amongst others, such as Rosler (1989) and Sekula (1981), contend that the objectification and rendering of subjects into spectacle operates to secure Otherness. The documentary photograph testifies to the Western desire to preserve or salvage the Other.
Nevertheless, Pam's landscape images depict an inhabited space, rather than an aesthetic fixation on form and structure. Rather than merely photographing the architectural form of the constructivist-style observatories in India devoid of human presence, Pam's images include children playing, tourists, and other local people, who like himself, are also visiting these sites. In comparison to nineteenth-century imperial photographers, such as Francis Frith 'who was drawn' to the 'mysterious majesty' of architectural monuments and did not notice the people who frequented the area or "found the natives useful" only to provide scale, Pam uses the backdrop or landscape to establish a context for the person(s). Pam is mainly concerned with a visual anthropology which cannot be separated from an imperial legacy. Ironically, Pam asserts that:

Throughout the 70s and 80s I spent small lifetimes in Asia. My main function as a person was to be there, to travel, to comprehend and join in an osmosis with the many and unique cultures I passed through. I had no formal notion of myself as a photographer. There were no assignments. The printed media and I had no relationship. (Pam, 1995, p.42)

Working in a similar travelling style to the romantic journeyman photographers such as Pam is Marta Sentis. Her work "Habiaciones y Migraciones" (1981-1992) may be classified as being in the subjective documentary mode similar to Koudelka, Pam and Salgado. The romantic themes of abandonment and discovery are evident in her description of her photographic practice. Sentis asserts that:

Neither journalist nor a tourist my conscience led me to travel the world to see it for myself. Without a concrete intellectual project, my dream was to let myself go without looking for why. Human contact is the only way to illuminate mistrust; it draws the path and converts geographic locations into biographical and personal ones. (Photo Espana Exhibition, 1999)
As a woman, Sentis's work challenges the bastion of the romantic lone masculine traveller. Coincidentally, Pam and Sentis were both born in 1949. However, there are differences in approach which may be related to gender and cultural differences. She does not make a grand statement regarding joining in "an osmosis with the many and unique cultures", but rather she humbly contends that "human contact is the only way to illuminate mistrust." As such, the act of photography appears to be part of a process of communication with the other, rather than a medium which creates a spectacle of the Other. In her statement she seems aware that social and cultural differences may be perceived between photographer and subjects and that her presence may be regarded warily.

Sentis's interactions are particularly significant in regards to the spaces she traversed. Her travel documentary images do not reflect the external landscape but include interior spaces which have historically been linked with the feminine such as the home as well as public bars which are associated with the masculine. Sentis's photographs of historically 'perceived' masculine spheres and the nocturnal street function as a resistance to the prescribed gendered spatiality that affect women, in particular the freedom of movement in the streets. Her colour images include children, families and images of males she encountered in her journeys in South America and the United Kingdom. The close proximity between Sentis and her subjects conveys a 'snapshot' aesthetic or the "aesthetics of intimacy" (Kotz, 1998). Kotz (1998, p. 204) asserts that the "aesthetics of intimacy" is a popular phenomena in the art-photography world. It is a certain kind of photographic work which is quasi-documentary and consists of "color images of individuals, families, or groupings, presented in an apparently intimate, unposed manner, shot in an off-kilter, snapshot style, often a bit grainy, unfocused, off-colour" (Kotz, 1998, p. 204). Sentis's photographs conform to this aesthetic. Her images appear as candid moments and, due to her close proximity, it does suggest the subjects are comfortable in her presence. Nevertheless, Kotz points out that these type of photographs also involve a
structure of power relations “that cannot be easily evaded by the spontaneous
performance before the lens” (1998, p. 210). However, I contend that
Sentis’s scopophilia does not seem to follow the same pattern as Pam’s
masculine gaze.

As a point of difference from Pam’s photographs, Sentis’s subjects do not
present an overt display for the camera which suggests a different form of
relationship between the photographer and subject. Sentis’s journey work
seems to expose the issue of women’s erotic freedom. This is suggested by
a few photographs of male nudes within the context of a darkened bedroom.
Her images appear as transient moments, glimpses, and along with the
dense rich colours of blues and green tones the photographic image alludes
to a sensual atmosphere. Borthwick (1991, p. 113) asserts that erotic
discourse is constantly alluded to in the reports of Western male travel
writers, and I might add photographers, but are rarely addressed by females.

Anthropologists Pruitt and La Font (1995, p. 422) assert that the relations of
western women tourists and local men have received less critical attention
than the commonly referred to sex tourism between western male tourists
and local women (and girls and boys). They assert the relations between
the women tourists and local men present a rich opportunity for
understanding the reproduction and transformation of gender and power.
Arguably, they consider that travel for women is about ‘love’ and ‘money’.
Pruitt and Lafont, (1995, p. 436) suggest heterosexual women are drawn to
the strength and potency of the masculine even as they experiment with the
power they acquire through travel independence and financial superiority.
They suggest that rather than the lack of emotional intimacy of sex tourism,
women on leisure travel are looking for romantic encounters. This may be
related to discourses of holiday ‘romance’ narratives, specifically the
encounter with the ‘tall dark stranger’ that seem to dominate travel fiction for
women readers.
Marta Sentis’s photographs suggests the previously discussed issues. Interestingly, her photographs could also be interpreted as conveying the stereotype of a black man’s body as an object of sexual desire. Partially hidden in the shadows, which conceals his identity, the male represents both danger and excitement.

The males in Sentis’s work do not perform for the camera and respond in the same way as the females do in Pam’s work. Unlike Pam’s photographs that have titles such as “High School student, Manilla 1991”, words that anchors the images in a context of male voyeurism, female exhibitionism and perhaps also female exploitation, Sentis’s photographs are without captions. With the lack of textual information it is unclear who the male is and the circumstances that initiated the photographic moment. In the absence of captions the images may be considered polysemic. A number of questions may be raised. Does the male pose a threat or is he an object of desire? Or perhaps both? It is also often considered that the person with the camera is dominant in the power relationship (according to patriarchal conventions it is for the male that the camera acts as a phallus). Sentis’s marginal cultural position as a woman photographing a male challenges the balance of power. There is not a direct confrontation between subject and photographer which may also suggest a discrete feminine erotic visual aesthetic. In terms of the gaze, Davidov (1998, p. 36) suggests that we need new structures, not repositioning, for thinking about the gaze. “In other words, the gaze could be considered within the structures of feminine erotics, structured as an exchange rather than as a masculine voyeuristic gaze.

I read Sentis’s and Pam’s photographs as records of personal experiences as private moments revealed in the bourgeois public sphere of a gallery or

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19 See bell hooks (1996) in which she argues that sexualising and stereotyping inscribe the ambivalence of colonial and racial fantasy oscillating between erotic idealisation and anxiety in deference of the imperial eye.
art book, thus transgressing public/private spaces. It also conveys some of the differences in approaches between a male and female photographer.

In the exhibition of Sentis's travel work, there were no titles with the images to identify or classify specifically where the photographs were taken. Unlike Pam's *Going East* with its imperial classification of people and places, the people in Sentis's photographs, who vary in physical characteristics, deconstruct the essentialist notion of 'race' associated with particular geographical locations. The mix of people reflects a postmodern world. There are complexities of 'identity' due to travel, migration, displacement, exile and the impact of colonialism. This point is particularly relevant in terms of my theoretical and cultural identity in which I position myself on the threshold of the boundaries which are "maintained to limit the type of behaviour within a defined cultural territory" (Sarup, 1994, p. 102). Further to my discussion post-colonial theorist, Trinh T.Minh-ha (1994, p. 20) aptly states:

> The boundaries of identity and difference are continually repositioned in relation to varying points of reference. The meanings of here and there, home and abroad, third and first, margin and centre keep on being displaced according to how one positions oneself.

The blurring of boundaries can be found in photographer's Jean-Marc Bustamante's project which encompasses the themes of finding similarities between 'here and there', rather than focusing on essential differences in the urban landscape. *Bitter Almonds* (1997) was originally a model for my own production. The book presents streetscapes of the cities of Miami, Tel Aviv and Buenos Aires. Rather than the conventionally beautiful or sublime aspects of landscape, his images convey the mundane, everyday aspects of the city. His bland colour images of the urban landscape consist of streets, car parking lots, and views of the city not normally considered of aesthetic value. His work is derivative of the *New Topographics* (1975) which has been influential on the course of landscape photography. The New Topographic photographers included: Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, the Bechers, Joe Deal, Frank Gohlke, Nicholas Nixon, John Schott, Stephen
Shore and Henry Wessel Jr. These photographers, amongst whom there was only one female (the other half of the Bechers), worked against the conventional norms of beauty and the sublime in relation to the overtly dramatic images and grand gestures of photographer such as Edward Weston and Ansel Adams. Green (1984, p. 167) identifies the paradox in this work stating that “these are photographs about taking, exploiting, and raping the land. At the same time they are also about the visual potentials of a damaged landscape.” Thus, the land is both politicised and aestheticised.

Bright (1996, p. 340) asserts that many critics and photographers regard the work of the New Topographers as moving beyond formalism to social critique. However, she considers that this has more to do with the “impoverished expectations of what passes for social criticism in art than with any theoretical positions assumed by the artists in question” (1996, p. 340). In an art context the emphasis is on pure visual form. It is an aesthetic arrangement. The exhibition lacked significant information regarding the textual or cultural references and historical context. I contend that historical context, including acknowledging the contingency of the photographer and/or subject is important in anchoring the image. However, there are cases in which the lack of verbal information can also communicate a political stance beyond the formal aesthetic values.

_Bitter Almonds_ (1997) does not have added verbal information placed alongside the photographs. As such, the photographs are not dependent on the captions to guide the reader. There is verbal text on the front cover. It consists of the title written in three different languages and the photographer’s name. Alongside the standard publishing details on the inside front cover in extremely small text, (almost concealed in a pattern of large typography) is the statement, “Photographs taken by Jean-Marc Bustamante in Buenos Aires, Miami and Tel Aviv.” The photographed scenes appear to be ubiquitous. The lack of clearly visible verbal information makes a strong statement regarding the commonality of urban
lands. Some of the photographs reminded me of aspects of Perth, my city, even though the photographs were taken in different cities, as well as in what may be considered culturally diverse cities of Buenos Aires, Miami and Tel Aviv. Bitter Almonds conveys aspects of the everyday, rather than the aesthetic modalities of the beautiful, sublime or picturesque. Furthermore, Bustamante’s journey does not represent Otherness as something remote or distant. In encouraging textual flânerie, it draws the viewer’s attention to the common and, what I considered, the un-aesthetic aspects of urban development that can be found in any modern city. However, the format of an art book positions the content for aesthetic contemplation. This suggests a political tension between the un-aesthetic images of the everyday and the aestheticised commodity of the art book.

In a similar style, Not here. Not There (1998) by Harvey Benge presents photographs of the urban landscape that may go unnoticed. "What happens when your eyes are shut and your mind is closed? Harvey shows us" (Turner, 1998, p.4). In Benge’s colour journey photographs there is an attention to signs and geometric patterns. Benge presents dissonant perspectives of the city. Benge’s photographs include the theme of reframing images, such as advertising signs, billboards, bright colours and other signs, that do not seem to fit in with conventional notions of the urban landscape. These include a photograph of three gloves on the side of a road and a cot alongside garbage on the footpath. Benge’s use of irony and juxtapositioning provides a critical questioning of what is considered ‘natural’ or normal. For example, Benge’s photographs suggest that “nature is a part of culture” or nature is represented as an image which is shaped by rhetorical constructs such as photography, industry, advertising and aesthetics (Wilson, 1992, p.13). Moreover, Benge’s visual attention is given to signs of the natural world in the ‘urban jungle’. On safari, the photographer-hunter ventures forth to take his shots. For example, there is a photograph of a parked vehicle with leopard car seat covers. In another photograph there is an image of an elephant painted on the side of a distant
building. An image of a tiger on a bus shelter in front of a park also becomes a target for the photographer.

Benge's work, framed within the theme of the safari, connotes a certain type of Anglo-northern European masculinity associated with privilege. Sontag asserts:

One situation where people are switching from bullets to film is the photographic safari that is replacing the gun safari in East Africa. The hunters have Hasselblads instead of Winchesters; instead of looking through a telescopic sight to aim a rifle, they look through a viewfinder to frame a picture. (1977, p. 15)

Benge's work may be considered to follow the tradition of Carl Akely, an early twentieth-century taxidermist who became a photographer as well, thus combining the natural sciences and art. Akely believed the “highest expression of sportsmanship was hunting with the camera” (Haraway, 1989, p. 42). It is also important to point out that this turn of the century notion of ideal masculinity or ‘manhood’ related to only the European, male heterosexual, Protestant, physically robust and economically comfortable individual. As such, for Akeley and his peers the highest expression of ‘manhood’ was through the ‘shooting’ life of a safari. However, this theme of the safari hunter is also evident in the contemporary work of photographer Peter Beard whose passion is for venturing forth into the ‘wilds’ of Africa, photographing the people (mainly women) and animals. Bright (1990, p.143) asserts that Beard is “a contemporary figure who literally combines the personae of great white hunter and great white photographer.”

The type of photographs produced by the previously cited photographers relate to imperial ways of seeing. Reminiscent of the imperial style, Beard’s black and white photographs of the landscape and its inhabitants appear as exotic spectacles. Animals that appear savage and bare-breasted women dominate his work. Danger and exoticism are further enhanced by the framing which involves streaks of a murky red substance on the photograph.
that resembles, or perhaps is, blood. Beard's images are positioned as autobiographical documents which combine photographs, personal notes and quotes. They may also be seen as postmodern in the sense of combining aspects of high and low culture, yet his adventure is a typical masculine journey.

Benge’s adventure, which may also be considered as a safari, is quite different from Beard’s. In Benge’s colour photographs there is a familiarity with the urban environment. The photographs do not seem remote in time or place, but record aspects of the everyday western metropolis, such as bus shelters and office interiors. However, what makes Benge’s vision distinct, which I liken to a safari hunter, is not the imperialism of the gaze, but rather his astute ability to notice and document the structures of the built environment which appear paradoxical. Turner claims that “no matter where we are, the natural world is always somewhere else. It is packaged and sold to us as a place of purity, danger and adventure, mystery, solitude. We dream of escaping to it. Yet we fail to see the mystery and intrigue in the everyday urban events that surround us” (Turner, 1998, p. 1). Ironically, although Turner asserts that “we fail to see the mystery” in everyday urban events that surround us, Benge’s photographs are the results of his travels or ‘escape’ to ‘other’ cities.

The modernist form of travel in which the artist seeks ‘authenticity’ elsewhere may be found in Benge’s work. Turner (1998, p.3) echoes the sentiments of the previously cited photographic critic Kozloff on the romantic theme of estrangement stating “why Harvey chose to travel is a clue to why his pictures might interest us. Possibly it is to do with a residual insecurity and some sense of isolation from the world that inevitably influenced the New Zealand psyche.” Yet in the use of colour and settings, the photographer’s work differs from Koudelka. Benge's work has traces of the exile, whilst also adopting the quizzical stance of a tourist. Instead of embarking on a nostalgic quest for a geographically or culturally remote Otherness, he is
searching for similarities within the contemporary metropolis. As such he seems to adopt the quizzical stance of a tourist seeking the commercial and superficial, rather than the role of the artist as ‘traveller’ or the estrangement of the modernist exile.

The Exile and the Tourist

Kaplan (1996, p.64) asserts that there are a number of similarities between the modernist exile and the tourist. For both the exile and the tourist, authenticity is elsewhere\(^2\). They also share the same belief that there is a more *meaningful* or pleasurable experience somewhere else. "Both figures, when mystified into primary subject positions, represent melancholic seekers after a lost substance or unity that can never be attained" (Kaplan, 1996, p.64). In travel discourse, along with the figure of the exile, the traveller has also been juxtaposed with the tourist. Fussell (1980) makes a distinction between the tourist and the traveller. He asserts that seeing and photographing are mainly the activities of the tourist, whereas seeing and experiencing are the sphere of the traveller. But this is a generalisation that stems from the romantic ideal of travel accounts that deploy narratives which are predominantly authored by the lone western male traveller. However, in his modernist account of the distinctions between types of travellers, Fussell concedes that all travel is now structured as tourism. He ruefully concludes, “we are all tourists now, and there is no escape” (1980, p. 49). Tourism accounts for the greatest amount of movement of people in the world and is one of the largest international industries. Importantly, the documenting of the gaze and the travel experience through the medium of photography is one of the most important phenomena of international travel. Urry asserts that:

Photography gives shape to travel. It is the reason for stopping to take (snap) a photograph, and then to move on… Indeed much tourism becomes in effect a search for the

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\(^2\) Authenticity is found away from home for the voluntary exiles such as Elliot, Joyce and Gauguin, but for the involuntary exiles such as Bakhtin and Benjamin authenticity is elsewhere in their original homelands or in the past.
photogenic; travel is a strategy for the accumulation of photographs. (1990, p. 139)

In this section, I will discuss some of the photographers that I consider subvert the notion of romantic artist in their work. These photographers - Gisela Weimann, Rajhubir Singh, Martin Parr, and Nick Waplington - adopt a parodic or quizzical stance in relation to the production of photographs from mainstream art or tourist imagery. Their work does not conform to the standard 'originality' of art photography. Rather it reflects a postmodern practice of self-reflexivity and satire.

The internationally acclaimed Magnum photographer, Raghubir Singh has photographed the people and the environment of the Indian country in which he resides. India has been framed as spectacular in terms of the diverse and 'authentic' sights for the tourist. As a Magnum photographer, his work is in the humanist documentary tradition which is often romantic and which evokes and validates western middle-class aspirations and feelings of the Other. However, it is interesting to analyse his work in terms of types of representation.

Singh (1996, p. 8) asserts that "geography is more than the sum of the earth's ever-shifting movements; it is one of the elemental forces that shape a culture's personality and history." His book, Tamil Nadu (1996), represents his journey experiences in this region of India. In his written text he critiques British imperialism in India, asserting that "Indians could never inherit the fantasy of the British" (1996, p. 13). He also states that although India is his "homeland, it was a place for discovery... it was remote and distant" for him (1996, p. 8). His position as an insider or as outsider is unclear. This highlights the question of where is the dividing line between insider and outsider? Trinh T. Minh-ha (1991, p. 73) aptly poses the questions "How should this (dividing line) be defined? By language? By nation? By geography? Or by political affinity?" In terms of producing representations, does Singh, due to his nationality, have more of a right to photograph, to
comment on ‘the east’ than an occidental, such as Pam? Perhaps it is not the subject matter but style that is important. Interestingly, Pam insists that Rajhubir Singh, as well as a number of other Indian photographers and film makers, have influenced his own photographic style (1995, p. 45).

Perhaps the main issue is not just the ethnic background, but the spirit and eye behind the camera and how they are manifested in the techniques of representation. For example, unlike Pam’s use of black and white photography that makes the subject appear nostalgic, Singh’s brightly coloured photographs present a contemporary perspective, whilst also adopting the richly coloured view of India supported by the tourist literature.

Hutnyk (1996, p. 18) asserts that these touristic documentations and exposures obey specific manifestations of Western cultural and political imperialism, produced and played out within the appropriative and consuming framework of global capitalism. As such, tourists are often in search of the exotic that replicates the (selected) framed ‘authenticity’ of what they have seen before. The point is that what is constituted as a viable experience of the ‘picturesque’ is established with reference to the conventions of western pictorial representation. For example, a statement from a western tourist expresses a common angst in regards to travel photography in India:

I caught myself taking photographs of fishermen but ignoring the middle-class as if being middle-class wasn’t part of India. No one wants a photo of a sadhu standing in front of an electricity pylon, or sitting inside a black and yellow Calcutta taxi. People back home expect the sadhu to be covered in ash and looking devout. (cited in Hutnyk, 1996, p. 151)

However, in Singh’s photographs he does not comply with conventionally selected western framing. Singh acknowledges modernity in India, and thus does not adhere to Orientalism. He does not replicate popular western representations of the ‘authentic’ India which characterise a system of thought and which could be considered extremist in its commitment to
notions of authenticity and experience. In opposition to the standard imagery of India, Singh’s photographs of the urban landscape include an astute observation of contemporary Indian society devoid of western sentimentality. For example, one of Singh’s photographs consists of a television set in front of an outdoor dance festival. This image does not conform to the ‘traditional’ or ‘authentic’ depictions of Indian festivals which are devoid of signs of modernity. Another interesting image, which presents a quizzical stance at standard landscape photography, consists of a picturesque scene of a lookout over a cliff, with a few men in the foreground positioned next to a signpost stating that “Mocking of Ladies is punishable.” The sign included in the photograph clearly marks the scene as a tourist site. The text of the sign comments upon gender relations. In terms of typography it is also significant in terms of its being written in English. Therefore this tourist site bears traces of the colonial legacy in terms of language as well as ways of viewing ‘sights’, which can be clearly traced to western construction of the ‘landscape’, as a place to ‘see’, thus establishing the tourist gaze. Urry (1990, p. 3) asserts that “the tourist gaze is directed to features of landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday experience.” Furthermore, Bohls (1995, p. 48) argues that

“aesthetic discourse disclosed a heightened potential for contributing to the colonial project... as travellers began to inscribe the concept of disinterested contemplation on the landscape through scenic tourism.” The gaze, therefore, maintains a relationship of controlled proximity and distance from the environment.

Cohen (1979) suggests that touristic motivations differ, that some tourists seek varieties of authentic experience but many are simply seeking entertainment. Yet probably it is ultimately impossible to separate these two out. Things appear to be authentic not because they are inherently authentic or real, but because they are constructed as such in terms of points of view,
beliefs, and perspectives of power. Moreover, the tourist has always been concerned with the visual and the spectacular. I would like to apply these ideas to the works of the journey photographers, Nick Waplington and Martin Parr.

*Other Edens* (1994) by Nick Waplington is a collection of his travel images recorded in different outdoor locations around the world. Although he is an art photographer, he does not deny the ‘amateurish’ element in his self-portraits. Waplington uses the traditional ‘all encompassing’ landscape view of the panorama. However, placing his nude, middle-age body within the landscape in what may be considered comical postures deconstructs the ‘serenity’ of the view which ranges from images of lakes to desert scenes.

Wiggins, in the foreword to this book, asserts “it seems to me that Waplington’s whimsical posturing disguises a deeper political statement about modern man. No sites were photographed...that might be construed as being pointedly edifying to mankind” (1994). However, it is interesting to identify that there is a shift in documentary photography towards acknowledging the personal and the playful behaviour of the tourist. Waplington declares: “Here I am on my vacation, each one of my poses states: here am I in my vocation. And, "I'm having fun" (cited in Wiggins, 1994).

Frivolity is also found in Martin Parr’s *Autoportraits* (2000) and *Small World* (1995) in which he also engages in the role of the tourist. For Kaplan (1996, p. 28), tourism signifies the mark of everything commercial and superficial, whereas travel is implicated in modernist high art formations. Martin Parr, like the previously mentioned photographers, is engaged in working within the high art world but he is also embracing the commercial and superficial aspects of tourism in his work. Phipps (1999, p. 75) claims that there are two strategies almost universal in technologies of travel dissemination, such as travel books, ethnographies, documentaries, postcards. One involves denying the presence of mass tourists, or any other travellers, in the visited
locale. This is most commonly practiced in photography where frequent attempts are made to erase other tourists and any signs of capitalist modernity from the frame. (This is particularly evident in the photographic work of the documentary photographer, Koudelka). In those moments when the presence of other tourists is an undeniable and inescapable fact, the primary strategy is that of removal by distinction. Other tourists become "them": the uncouth, despised, the simplistic tourist. Parr, however, does not seem to convey a contempt for other tourists in his work.

Parr actively engages as a tourist and his work appears self-reflexive. For example, *Autoportraits* is a portfolio of portraits taken by local studio photographers, street photographers or in a photo booth during his travels. In *Small World* the subjects in his images are not an exotic Other but middle class tourists like himself. The difference in the status between the photographer and the photographed is unclear. In a number of his images he is photographing others who are also in the act of photographing others. This draws attention to a central component of tourism which consists of taking photographs as souvenirs. Prior to travel, experience of the other is mediated through the commodification and aestheticisation of people and places. Tourists search out these images and sites, which in turn does not encourage an understanding of a culture, rather it replicates the commodication and narrow representations of a culture. Parr’s photographs draw attention to these modalities.

Parr’s investigation looks at tourism worldwide from the overcrowding of popular honeymoon sites to famous locations. Parr’s images include the juxtaposition of various tourist motifs, such as a photograph of a man wearing a Bali tee shirt outside the *Sagrada Familia* in Barcelona, Spain. Another juxtaposition is an image of a drink machine with a colour picture of a cathedral on it, also photographed in Barcelona. Parr’s lexicon includes the theme of photographing found images in the environment which draw attention to a world saturated with the image and the commodity. Tourists,
souvenirs and maps are also elements included in his images of different geographical spaces. Like the previously mentioned photographers such as Benge and Plachy, Parr draws attention to the notion that the world at the turn of the twenty-first century is one in which it is virtually impossible for the individual to engage in any act of social interaction without consciously or subconsciously relating it to social interactions and representations on a more global or commercial scale.

In considering that journey photography has been positioned as a primarily masculine endeavour, the autobiographical photographs of the feminist photographer Gisela Weimann subverts the dominant forms of representation. Her visual diary may be integrated into broader social and historical references in regards to the differences in the style of female production. Like Marta Sentis and Sylvia Plachy, Weimann’s work expresses the variety of women’s experiences and subjectivities. Moreover, the body of work produced by these photographers highlights feminin social interactions. There work represents ‘voices’ which have been silenced by patriarchal art discourse.

In Weimann’s *Frames of Memory* (PhotoEspana, 1999) there is an attempt to break down both the division between high and low culture, and the modernist distinction between exile/traveller and tourist. Her work asserts the position that “travel is overexposed to photography” and presents what may be considered personal tourist photographs in an art gallery context (Hutnyk, 1996, p. 146). Each series of images placed around a frame represents her journey to various geographic locations such as Mexico, Dublin and Istanbul, but also includes different themes relating to her personal life, such as family celebrations and to the photographing of public festivals and tourist sites. The exhibition dissolves the division between public and the private by presenting photographic details of a personal life journey.
Weimann's concern is with presenting multiple images, rather than with providing a single narrative of the Other. This involves presenting sequences which draw attention to the photographic construct of journey photography. The photographs have the appearance of the general tourist snapshot in which photography appears as an unreflexive action. In the photographs there is little regard for technical perfection. Her repetitive sequencing of the photographs suggests the behaviour of the tourist (and I might also add the behaviour of the professional photographer) of taking multiple shots of the same scene from slightly different angles. The work displays the excessive and sometimes obsessive activity of photography. It involves what Curtis and Pajaczkowska (1994, p. 210) assert is "a rigorous campaign of isolating and shooting segments of the ‘view’, of using the mechanisms of representation to secure identity and point of view, which is one way of restoring subjectivity through a process of objectification." The photographs also highlight the desire to secure an ephemeral experience through the taking of photographs. The series of images also suggest that as there can never be a unitary view or single meaning, experiences are multiple and fragmented.

Weimann's exhibition consisted of a series of nine images placed in the edges of picture frames. The centre of the frame, in which a photograph is normally placed, is left void. This absence unsettles the conventional viewing position of a photographic exhibition. It suggests the difficulty in presenting or selecting just one view of a landscape. It also deconstructs the notion of getting or identifying the 'perfect' image, and this is highlighted by the empty space in the centre of the frame. In other words, the space in the middle does not privilege the 'magnificent' photograph but instead the viewer's attention is drawn to the boundaries in which many 'ordinary' photographs are placed. Weimann's work presents elements of écriture féminine in the sense that it is not limited to the strict conventions of framing or display and it does not privilege one mastering view. The work seems to conform to Rose's (1993) argument that the domineering view of the single
point of the omniscient observer of landscape is one which is conventionally taken up by males and that women tend to experience the landscape in more relational ways. Like Plachy and Sentis, Weimann's photographs do not seek to subdue the landscape, but rather they represent the landscape in relation to their 'domestic' spaces and their networks of interaction. The point is that their representations bear the traces of their gendered experiences.

*Mon Voyage Vers Une Photographie Féminine*

As previously cited, “we are all tourists now, and there is no escaping” (Fussell, 1980, p.49). In developing my *photographie féminine* I have embraced some of the themes of the postmodern themes of tourism. After all, my 'one world ticket' situated myself in the social and economic position of an independent 'tourist'. However, I intended to subvert the masculine framing of the tourist as a flâneur, as an itinerant gazer. Male-oriented theories of tourism which assume a subject-object relationship to the destination, its people and places, do not describe my feminist approach to travel. My *photographie féminine* represents a conceptual shift from the tourist destination as a place to see to a more interactive space relating to a feminin experience engaging the senses beyond sight.

The documentary photographers Parr, Singh, Waplington, Weimann and Sentis, who acknowledge their role as tourists, but furthermore challenge the imperialism of standard tourist imagery, have influenced my work, though my adaptation of their work is marked by my feminin views. Indeed, all writing bears the traces of the experience of a male or female body. These practitioners accord with my subversive feminist work and may be considered as ‘oppositional photographers’. Taylor (1994, p. 240) claims that oppositional photographers do not reproduce the confirming nature of mainstream photography. He further states that:
Their disruption of normal tourist imagery is evidence of what they take to be the problematics of touring, which tourists are discouraged from noticing at all. For oppositional photographers, the pleasures of the imagination are precisely those which enable them to sharpen the historic complexities of race, class and gender where they have been softened and weakened by conservative attitudes often found in tourist entertainment. (Taylor, 1994, p. 240)

The juxtaposition of images, particularly the recording of commodified images within the photograph represented in the work of Benge and Plachy, has also influenced the formal compositions in my photography. Indeed, in their work, like mine, there are also traces of the style of a master of late twentieth-century photography, Lee Friedlander who juxtaposes diverse elements within the photographic frame, and “practiced an art of the body and not of the mind” (Pultz, 1995). Through a similar lens, my photographie féminine is concerned with writing the body, particularly the documentation on the feminin as part of culture and how it is shaped through rhetorical constructs.

Cixous, like Irigaray, asserts that “women have almost everything to write about femininity: about their sexuality” (cited in Sellers, 1991, p. 139). As such, in my gendered vision the photographs produced relate to the documentation of my own spatial relations and encounters with commodified versions of female sexuality. Furthermore, my photographs suggest the complex relationship between the representations of females within the urban environment. This includes photographs of images of women littered on the streets, and of statues and billboards that depict the figure of woman. It incorporates the notion of liminality in which women are positioned on the boundaries of ‘here and there’.
My photography involves a quiescent, intimate approach offered by many women artists, in contrast to the dramatic spectacle produced by males. Interestingly, Battersby (1989) and Lippard (1995) assert that many women's
work remains on the margins of high art culture. The feminist photographer is a marginalised authorial category. The exclusion suggests that the theme of ‘exile’ seems to be applicable to the position of women and the *feminin*.

Julia Kristeva (1986, p. 298) claims that “a woman is trapped within the frontiers of her body and even of her species, and consequently always feels exiled” in patriarchy. This statement relates to the lack of mobility in a male economy of movement, which may relate to safety in walking the streets as well as the repression of a feminist counter-aesthetics. Kristeva, who is an involuntary exile, also suggests that this may offer potentiality for generating new perceptions. She contends that “writing is impossible without some kind of exile” (1996, p. 298). The concept of exile, of being positioned on the margins, may also draw on the previously described modernist trope of exile as aesthetic gain, but in Kristeva’s sense exile is not positioned as solely a male modality.

Said (1978, 1984, 1988) also refers to exile in his writings. Although he does not specifically address concerns relating to female modalities or gender issues, his assertion that ‘exile’ mediates between the diverse and complex elements of identity and location are applicable to a feminist project. In particular, Said’s metaphor of exile as a multi-layered investigation of the modern condition in which the personal and the political is fused, and is a specific zone for the relationship between nation, identity and location are applicable to a *photographie féminine*. Kaplan (1996, p. 117) asserts that in Said’s writing on exile there is a contradictory pull between modernism and postmodernism. For example, his work seems to make reference to a ‘solitary exile’ as well as to a global phenomenon that can destabilise nationalistic identities. The tensions seems to resonate in the work of many oppositional photographers and also in my production.
Trinh T. Minh-ha (1994, p. 16) states that for the exile, such as woman, "if it is problematic to be a stranger, it is even more so to stop being one." She asserts that "colonised and marginalised people are socialised to always seem more than their own points of view" and this is particularly applicable to my own diverse ethnic background. Or as Said phrases it, "the essential privilege of exile is to have, not just one set of eyes but half a dozen, each of them corresponding to the place you have been" (Said, 1988, p. 48). The fragmented plural self is part of the postmodern condition, moreover it is exemplified for those like myself who are relegated in terms of culture and gender (in an anglo-patriarchal imperial world) to the margins. But, marginality, according to hooks (1990, p. 150), "offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternative, new worlds." She further asserts that "understanding marginality as position and place of resistance is crucial for oppressed, exploited, colonised people" (1990, p. 150). Wolff (1995, p. 15) also stresses that "cultural (linguistic,
geographical) marginality is one important factor which enables self-discovery." This offers productive potential. She further adds that:

For some women academics, this release of what Sexton called the 'buried self' has led to a rejection of those models of distance and objectivity in which they were trained, and to the beginnings of an attempt to render visible the threads which connect experience and biography with intellectual work. (1995, p.15)

The importance of travel, for me, is that it has been a method to acknowledge and raise my awareness of my social positioning as well of the value of discursiveness. I am attempting to connect experience and biography and discuss this process following an écriture féminine style of writing and photography which involves breaking from restrictive definitions. It is not so much about finding one's voice, but about not losing one's right to be heard. It follows Cixous who:

inverts and then re-values the criticisms often levelled - by men - at women's language, and she suggests that the circularity, questioning and apparent waste of women's speech is not only something 'we like', but that it derives from women's (positive) refusal to summarise in accordance with the 'objectivising' principle of the phallus, allowing instead 'the time a phrase or thought needs'. (Sellers, 1991, p. 118)

I also draw attention to hooks' (1990, p. 151) assertion that "it is not just important what we speak about, but how and why we speak." It is important to pay attention to the silences, the gaps, the questions left unanswered because this is also a form of communication. It is a way of circumventing the patriarchal patois which requires objectified explanations. It also involves, as previously discussed, opening oneself to what the text is saying, even if this is "puzzling or painful or problematic" (Sellers, 1990, p. 192).

I want to stress that photographie féminine is a voyage of discovery as a woman commenting on the how I see the world and the social placement of women. In so doing I am following a feminist strategy of trying to subvert the
patriarchal images of women that are placed in the public sphere to highlight and re-situate the narrow and constraining position of women who are positioned as objects of the masculine gaze. The photographers and the photography reviewed have assisted in providing a stepping stone for my critical journey. Moreover, photographie féminine represents a process of possibilities; it is a certain wanderlust, though it is quite distinct from the masculine quests.
Chapter Three:

*In/Her Space*

The travels of men, mapping their territories of desires, have been well documented and have a central place within artistic and literary canons. For Janet Wolff (1990, p. 34) the "literature of modernity describes the experience of men." Similarly the dominance of male sexuality and masculine writing still seems to persist in contemporary journey photography. Examples of this can be interpreted in the wanderlust of photographers such as Peter Beard and Max Pam. My work, however, attempts to present a counter-discourse to the male proclivity of journey photography. My *photographie féminine* does not construct a romantic place of escape from the western urban landscape, but celebrates a space of feminist confrontation and encounter with modernity. Rather than a focus on romantic themes relating to masculine triumphal passages of sexual freedom, discovery and adventure, this chapter will address some of the issues relating to *feminin* modalities that may have resulted in differences in my photographic approach in comparison with male photographers.

I am following Cixous' (1976b, p. 879) proclamation that "woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement." Journeying through a mix of photographs, theoretical fragments, diary entries, and the ‘voices’ of others, which include travel ‘advice’ directed at women, I will address some of the concerns that have influenced my journey towards a *photographie féminine*. In my *écriture/photographie féminine*, I am writing my *feminin* body, drawing on the much-cited feminist phrase that ‘the personal is political’.
Evocative of many a feminist's position, Veijola and Jokinen (1994) outline the problem they have encountered in tourism studies which concerns the absence of the body. They assert:

(T)he tourist has lacked a body because the analyses have tended to concentrate on the gaze. Furthermore ... the analyst himself has, likewise, lacked a body. Only the pure mind, free from bodily and social subjectivity, is presented as having been at work when analysing field experiences. (1994, p. 149)

The tourist/photographer as a spectator is the product of the European cultural history of aesthetics in which the gaze is associated with predominantly the white middle class male, who remains an onlooker to see 'how things are'. The "tourist is a pair of eyes on legs; an ocular perambulator" (Giblett, forthcoming). Moreover, the western method of the production of art is based on observation, rather than contemplation which reflects eastern attitudes to the landscape. In terms of gender difference, Rose (1993) asserts that women have tended to be represented as the space of the bodily, whereas male observers of nature do not do so from a bodily space but from a seeing space. Rose further discuses that this is a space of power/knowledge, and this seeing position is more important in terms of the type of subject position that it maps out than it is for what is described.

My following of an écriture féminine, an acknowledgement of the feminin experience, will provide an alternative practice to the clearly delineated western masculine subject/object relation. In particular, the relationship to the lived body to its world is essential to my analysis.

I will emphasise the importance of sexuality and gendered spatiality. Sexuality and gender does make a difference to the varying visions of the world. It is integral to the status and social position of the subject. For example, Kristeva’s concept of exile, “of being trapped in the frontiers” of the body, seems to be applicable to the female-feminine position (1986, p. 298).
Although there is an aesthetic gain to be made from being in exile as the male modernists demonstrate, the affects of a metaphoric exile pose psychological restrictions in which the female 'body' is 'controlled' within patriarchal limits. Moreover, in a sense there may be a metaphorical veil covering or inhibiting women's experiences. The veil has represented feminine chastity in rituals of the nunnery, marriage, or mourning. In the religious sense the veil means seclusion from worldly life and sex (El Guindi, 1999, p. 6).

Although there are nuanced differences in the meaning of veiling, generally the term seems to suggest sexual modesty in response to the masculine gaze. Cixous (1976b, p. 885) asserts that as women “we've been turned away from our bodies, shamefully taught to ignore them with that stupid sexual modesty; we've been made victims”. In this view the masculine binary of the virgin-whore dichotomy is the paradigm. Furthermore, in the Freudian paradigm, female sexuality is viewed and defined in relation to male sexuality. Irigaray asserts that in a patriarchal culture female sexuality always refers back to male sexuality as suggested in the masculine bias inherent in Freud's theory of castration and 'penis envy' which is deemed to be the motivating forces of women's lives. Cixous concludes there really isn't any such thing as female sexuality in and of itself in this phallocentric system. Thus sexuality has not been considered intrinsic to the female body or to female sexual pleasure. She considers that there are so few feminin texts, because so few women have as yet won back their body. In advocating an écriture féminine Cixous and Irigaray assert the promotion of a female specificity. However, this is not simply an essentialist reclamation of the body. They are also concerned with social and cultural feminine economy and its place within language. They assert the general feminist argument that representation - visual, verbal, or any kind - profoundly affects women's lives (Neumaier, 1995, p. 1).
Language, the French feminists argue, is based on a typically masculine economy, privileging masculine values. They assert that the phallocentric nature of language in its simplistic binaries alienates women from their corporeality and their sexuality. Young (1990a, p. 156), in her research concerning white middle-class women, also supports this argument suggesting that the "general lack of confidence that we (females) frequently have about our cognitive or leadership abilities is traceable in part to an original doubt of our body's capacity." The knowledge of the body's capacity is not intrinsic but is sourced in the particular conditioning of females, which has been oppressive. Rose (1993, p. 146) also emphatically states that the male gaze "inscribes its power onto women's bodies by constituting feminine subjects through an intense self-awareness about being seen and about taking up space.

Furthermore, language, which can't be separated from the dominant western culture, promotes anglo (white) modalities. Unfortunately, Rose (1993, p. 144) asserts, for some "women of colour part of their sense of the difficulty of space is having to look white, and to act right, sometimes to sound right." For me this is a cultural quandary because I also have a white, as well as a non-white, background. Where is the border in the construction of my identity? In my interpersonal interactions I am not sure what my cultural performance 'is' or 'should' be or, with the hybridity of postmodern transnationalism, if it can ever be distinctively defined. Furthermore, perhaps I overcome the limitations imposed by hegemonic and dominant forces that construct and maintain socially congealed 'difference'. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that "skin colour, class and gender are all social attributes which are inscribed onto our bodies; and part of women's sense of oppression, of confinement, is their awareness of that process" (Rose, 1993, p. 145).

Shirin Housee (1999) highlighting the complexities of experiences as a black British woman tourist argues that travel writing, even the established
counter-discourse of women's travel experiences, remains largely within the hegemonic influences of white male travel. The notions of freedom and travel which are inextricably linked in masculine romantic travel discourses are not generally the experiences of women of colour. She asserts that due to racist assumptions towards women of colour the options and freedom of movement are even more limited than for white women. However, I might add that most of my travel destinations were to cosmopolitan places that reflected ethnic diversity, which is a feature of many cities and port locations. Interestingly, I was rarely positioned as nationally Other 21.

Moreover, in certain locations, such as France, Spain, Greece and Cairo, my ethnic ambiguity and olive skin seemed to work positively for me, as opposed to the disdain I had witnessed towards white (anglo) tourists from the local peoples. Moreover, in my cultural encounters within a heterogeneous mix of people I had similar positive experiences as I have had in Perth, my home. Furthermore, I also had similar experiences to House in which the (supposed) similarities between myself and others, "offered a previously unavailable opportunity for transnational connection and the formation of unlikely solidarities... Warm and friendly invitations based on connections between non-Western peoples was the recurrent theme of experiences shared with us by many tourism workers" (1999, p. 144).

I also consider that my positive interactions are, perhaps, accountable to my non-threatening demeanor, my optimistic approach to encounters and my choice of movement in spaces that I generally would be comfortable and familiar with, such as the middle-class aspects of the postmodern city. Moreover, as a woman and a tourist, I was also aware of the limitations to or 'placed on' where I could go. Furthermore, I avoided certain spaces that can give rise to hostility in which the disparity of wealth and opportunities between myself and the local people were exaggerated by my presence.

21 In transit it was often assumed by airline staff and passport officials that I was returning 'home', regardless of my destination (with the exception of China), this suggests the possibility of a 'transnational' identity.
with a camera (amongst other factors) which symbolises an economic superiority and social mobility. Moreover, in my travels I am aware that I am a visitor and have always tried to display a respect and avoidance of spaces in which I would not be welcome. I was not interested in photographing the spectacle of the Other, or being a spectacle of the Other. I was not consciously differentiating myself in terms of being from a ‘superior’ social class to the local people that I encountered. I generally carried myself in a similar way and in similar spaces to that I would in Perth, my home, and interestingly was rarely identified as a ‘tourist’. As such, there was little difference in my self-positioning in diverse locations. Interestingly, although I was in possession of a camera which is often the armour or badge of the tourist, the people that I encountered in the streets assumed that I was a student from the local college. This perhaps is attributable to my youthful appearance and my ambiguous ethnicity. In particular, my experiences evoke Anzuldua’s (1987) assertion that women who are racially and ethnically mixed are in a position to challenge and move beyond the binaries that structure racism and ethnocentrism.

Moreover, in my approach I consider that there is a difference in the picturing and reading of my photographs from the ‘heroic individualism’ of male travel photographers who evoke a bourgeois intellectual touristic superiority and the “cold attitude’ more objective and involving distance from reality” (Photo Espana 99). Furthermore, although I am reflecting existing definitions and categories of travel photography I am also trying to define my own feminin perspectives, which involves recording my interactions, rather than observations, and which is also marked by my embodied encounters.

Particularly, my work involves the politicisation of the social aspects of gendered spatiality. The photographs and analysis address the nexus of this tension in which the sometimes-contradictory elements demonstrate my

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22 This particularly was my experience in Spain and France.
complex cultural identifications. Battersby (1998, p. 11) clarifies my position by stating that “whatever the (very great) differences between women, all female (not ‘feminine’) subjects in western culture have to negotiate the paradoxicality of a mode of selfhood that is positioned somewhere between freedom and rationality, on the one hand, and passive and thing-like embodiment, on the other.” As such, my photography aims to represent the ways in which my social location is experienced in society.

Feminists assert feminine identity is constructed on a model that privileges phallocentrism which has a fidelity to a single linear discourse and generates simple binary oppositions in which the feminine is positioned negatively. The female is predicated in terms of relativity and ‘otherness’. As such, in a patriarchal culture our understanding of the feminine is a ‘masculine’ feminine. In terms of an analysis of female subjectivity and women’s relationship to language the French feminists argue that Lacanian psychonalytical theory, in which the subject is motivated in language by the desire to regain the pre-Oedipal state of plenitude with the mother, has become a central element. Lacan posits that the child moves from the Imaginary or Féminin (perceptual, pre-verbal) state to the Symbolic (the state in which the self is perceived as separate) when the individual enters language, a masculine order of abstraction and ordering. As such, an awareness of the self as a subject is constituted through a phallocentric discourse, associated with male social privilege and power. The female is destined to a take up a position in which she is linguistically marginalised, rendered inactive or veiled. A way to overcome this suppression is to evoke the ambiguity of the pre-symbolic or Féminin and to undermine phallocentrism by incorporating its discourse and subverting it through mimicry and exaggeration. Furthermore, in my photographic production I acknowledge my bourgeois femininity, but I wouldn’t want to subscribe to a feminine bodily existence, but rather a Féminin embodiment, which seeks to subvert the passive patriarchal construction.
In this chapter I will describe some stylistic elements in my photographs that highlight my spatial relations and my visual focus. Then I will discuss the significance of gender and space in association with travel. I aim to trace a spatial register - the connections, dislocations and boundaries of being both fluid and fixed in regards to a *feminin* modality.

The photographs produced on my journey present an ambiguity. There is an abstract spatial expression with attention to the geometric form, shapes, movement and, at times, ironic juxtapositions placed within the built environment. The photography, rather than strategically depicting a specific, classifiable tourist site and reproducing standard holiday tourist imagery, conveys a sense of space which at times reflects the isolation, solitude and indeterminacy of my journey. This seems to confirm Grosz's (1994, p. 90) assertion that we do not grasp space directly, but through our bodily situation. In the photographs there is a focus on design elements, such as shadows and lines, which convey a sense of tentative awareness of my spatial relations. Admittedly, there are also traces of the style of expression of the outsider, or the Romantic artist who uses the social deficits of being a stranger to stimulate his/her creative processes. Also the stylistic strategy that I utilise is very similar to the subjective work of a "pioneer of photography", Andre Kertesz (Adam, 1985, p. 7). Kertesz relished the play between pattern and deep space as well as the overlooked but expressive details. Interestingly, like myself, Kertesz has acknowledged the legacy of the street photography of Atget and also asserts that his work is inspired by his own life. He states "I express myself through my photographs. Everything that surrounds me provokes my feelings" (Kertesz, 1985, p. 29). I would also add that his work and the work of other documentary photographers are the filters over my camera lens. Their styles and strategies, are the legacy that I have usurped which I consider to be feminine because of the foregrounding of the subjective approach.
In Hong Kong, which is one of the most densely populated cities, my photographic emphasis is on personal solitude. The photograph on a walkway (July 22nd 1999) consists of the geometric designs of the tiled pavement in which softly defined triangular shadow formations fall across the path. The architectural space is linear and repetitive. However, at the top right hand corner of the photographic frame is the presence of a number of human legs. The people are in motion. The image demonstrates the temporal aspect of being in space. This is suggested by the shadow falling across the path and the slightly blurred human figures in the background.

Similarly in my black and white photograph of a walkway in the lobby of the Marriot hotel in Cairo (18th July 1999) shadows fall across the path, which represents space as an inhabited dimension rather than as a static place. But it also suggests a sense of apprehension in my portrayal of a lone male headless figure looming towards me. These photographs, particularly the image in Cairo, can be read as presenting the uncanny. The uncanny concerns what is dark and difficult to see (Freud, 1958). This is particularly
appropriate to the image and in generally Tallack's (1998) positioning of the hotel lobby as a "space of ambiguous identity"; in its blurring of the public and the private. Furthermore, he asserts that the hotel lobby is a place to meet others but also to avoid the look of others; a place of seeing and being seen - but also of reserve which qualifies as a paradigmatic urban experience as has been defined by Simmel, Benjamin and Kracauer. It is, according to Tallack (1998), an "uncanny modern space" which could produce "visual agoraphobia." Furthermore, it is a precarious space for unescorted women as my previously discussed 'self-portrait' illustrates.

According to Freud (1958, p 153), the uncanny arouses dread and horror, "a hidden, familiar thing that has undergone repression and then emerged". On an unconscious level this image conveys the repressed phobias and the (hidden) anxiety of my gendered spatiality, which is not particular to the geographic location, but is associated with my general positioning within space.
Many of my attitudes towards space have been shaped at home prior to my travel. Particularly, it is the knowledge that young women are often the targets of unwanted attention and victims of crime which has shaped my perceptions. For example, various magazine articles directed at young women and crime survival convey information such as:

In 1998, more than 65 000 Australian women were physically or sexually assaulted. Their attackers ranged from guys they know to total strangers. The assaults happened in city streets, at railway stations, in taxis, at pubs, in car parks... everywhere. Personal assault is the most common offence recorded by Australian police and, according to the statistics, if you’re aged between 20 and 24, you’re a prime target. (Marinos, 2000, p. 97)

Furthermore, my experiences of insecurity may be a form of vicarious trauma related to the constant media coverage on attacks on young women. This has resulted in a shift in my sense of safety about the world. Perhaps the personal ‘distance’ and apprehension evoked in these particular photographs also bear out Young’s (1990a, p. 155) assertion that “the threat of being seen is, however, not the only threat of objectification that the woman lives. She also lives the threat of invasion of her body space.”

Furthermore, in my journey I do not wish to follow what Marcus (1992, p. 394) refers to as the “script” associated with feminine fear “which inspires the familiar sensations of ‘freezing’ – involuntary immobility and silence.” As a photographer, I can try to break the silence and try to control this ‘threat’ by having the control of the camera. Moreover, “new cultural productions and re-inscriptions of our bodies and geographies can help us begin to revise the grammar of violence and to represent ourselves in militant new ways” (Marcus, 1992, p. 400).
Travel Threats

Shirin Housee (1999) aptly describes the experience of travel for women based on her own extensive leisure experiences in which she vehemently claims harassment of women cuts across class and race lines. Isaac (1996, p. 19) further comments that for any women who has travelled on her own what may be proffered as a sexual invitation is often “really a fascistic exertion of control over women who are perceived as having slipped outside of the control of the Law.” Housee adds that “the general message seems to be that any woman who is not with a man is an available one... In other words, women mindful of their own safety, limit their movements, particularly if they are on their own” (1999, p. 146). Housee’s assertions in regard to the gendered differences of spatial relations are also corroborated by Young (1990a) in which she claims that women learn to situate themselves and move in space in a way that is significantly more restricted than men. Even simple actions like sitting or walking are ones where the female subject is self-consciously not allowing herself to transcend the limits of the body as an object. I also follow Rose’s articulations that “I think that much of the buffeting and bruising, the confinement and stumbling, of women’s experience of space is part of a self-consciousness about being noticed: women watching themselves being watched and judged” (1993, p. 145).

Similarly Berger (1972, p. 46) argues that “a woman’s presence expresses her own attitude to herself, and defines what can and cannot be done to her.” Young extends this argument by stating that “if there are particular modalities of feminine bodily comportment and mobility, then it must follow that there are also particular modalities of feminine spatiality!” (1990a, p. 155). Although I accept that there is a negotiation that occurs in presenting a public persona, both genders are involved in modes of self production and self-observation in varying degrees. “These modes may entwine us in various networks of power, but never do they render us merely passive and compliant” (Grosz, 1994, p. 144).
Photographie féminine, entailing a woman's embodied subjectivity, is self-reflexive and empowering in its documentation of lived experiences. Furthermore, in documenting the dynamics of travel, journey photographie féminine offers the opportunity to explore facets of lived experiences, which are unaccustomed to being examined through the lens of the camera. My emphasis on personal movement and my documentation of various interactions with others are an example of this.

Interestingly, although there are an ever-increasing number of lone women travellers, due to a perceived 'vulnerability' women may sometimes be placed at a greater risk of danger. I should also like to add that the foreign women traveller is also perceived as middle class thus her gendered inferiority and economic wealth may also be a target ripe for exploitation. There may also be disdain towards tourists which may also cause fear and anxiety. Significantly, tourism is the second biggest business in the world and "to be sure the frantic ant-like movement of the world's more prosperous people today does produce unwanted side effects" (Winchester, 1995, p. xii). Furthermore, the onslaught of global tourism may be described as a "militarized consciousness" (Phipps, 1999, p. 74). Phipps asserts that "tourism becomes noteworthy for being 'non-war': while sharing some of the symptoms and anxieties of war: massive population movements; the crossing of cultural boundaries; a cheerful invasion" (1999, p. 74). The 'cheerful invasion' surely must generate some tension to host communities in terms of disrupting cultural values. For example, Phipps (1999, pp. 92-93) asserts that Islamic militants find foreign tourists a disturbance of their reality, or as useful targets in a campaign to destabilise the 'moderate' government of Egypt. Furthermore, the tourist destination is often viewed by westerners as a site for transgressions. Poignantly, Abdel-Rahman (cited in Phipps, 1999, p. 92) asserts "to those lamenting what has happened to tourism, I say it is sinful... the lands of Muslims will not become bordellos for sinners of every race and colour." Similarly, in the terrorist attack in the
tourist night clubs in Bali, on September 13th 2002, Bourchier (cited in Adolph, 2002, p. 44) considered "it was most likely to be an attack on a symbol of Western decadence", although "Australian sympathy for the US position would not have helped." Nevertheless, the tourist is not an innocent abroad as he/she is traveling and may be transgressing national, class, race and religious borders. The tourist is a representative of his/her national/cultural origins and thus is also representative of the economic and national politic viewpoints of his/her country. The physiognomy of the tourist as 'Other' marks the tourist as an object of observation, critique, exploitation and, as the recent Bali bomb attacks suggests, a prime target for terrorism. Furthermore, due to the general place of women within patriarchy, as objects of spectacle and the general belief that women are weaker and more vulnerable than men, our presence and behaviour on the street are more scrutinized. In particular, an unescorted western woman walking the streets may be considered to defy secular social norms in terms of the chaste behaviour assigned to local women.

Furthermore, Wolff (1995, p. 115) asserts "that practices and ideologies of actual travel operate to exclude or pathologise women." Importantly women's safety in public places is a critical issue. Various travel guides seem also to support this conclusion in their provision of information specifically directed at women travellers. For example, the Australian Consular Services has published a brochure titled "Tips for Women Travellers" (1998). Amongst various pieces of advice regarding travelling alone and dress sense for females, (which further highlights the critical attention given to women's appearances) it also include comments such as:

Don't get into train carriage compartments where you would be the only passenger, or stay in one only if everyone else gets off - attackers are known to target women alone in trains... But crowded trains and buses can also provide unwelcome opportunities for harassment. (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1998)

But more importantly, it seems that Jules Michelet's exclamation (cited in Pollock, 1988, p. 69), regarding the experiences of an unaccompanied
woman, written almost a century and a half ago in Las Femme (1858-60), seems to be still relevant in contemporary times:

How many irritations for the single woman! She can hardly ever go out in the evening; she would be taken for a prostitute. There are a thousand places where only men are to be seen, and if she needs to go there on business, the men are amazed, and laugh like fools... She would constitute an event, she would be a spectacle: All eyes would be constantly fixed on her, and she would overhear uncomplimentary and bold conjectures. (cited in Pollock, 1988, p. 69)

Feminin movement reflects a woman's sense of space in which there is an awareness of her social positioning within a masculine dominated culture. Rose (1993) describes the work of many feminist theorists who have charted the ways in which women's sense of space within public spaces is bounded by a fear of physical attack. There are also a number of contemporary artists, such as Barbara Kruger, Jenny Holzer and Ilona Granet who are making political comments in regards to harassment of women on the streets. For example, Isaak (1996, p. 33) states that Granet became infamous for her Emily Post Street Signs 'regulations' for etiquette in the street, such as the injunction "No cat calls and whistling kissing sounds" (1989). But one of the best example of photography documenting the gendered space of the street is Ruth Orkin's much reproduced picture, American Girl in Italy taken in 1951, which depicts the tension and terror of a young women pedestrian being leered at by a group of young men.
In comparison my photograph (24th June 1999) highlights similar issues. It also illustrates the *sur le vif* (spur of the moment) subjective expression of a documentary *photographie féminine*. Moreover, it illustrates the attention and flirtatious behaviour towards myself from the males photographed, which positions me as a sexualised body. The men are also aware that I am taking a photograph; they seem to perform for the camera and myself. In particular, they are also representing themselves as sexual beings. From their car one male is blowing a kiss and another male also has his head turned towards me and is showing me the peace sign with his fingers. Interestingly, I have found that when I am in possession of a camera, it seems to attract male attention. Humorously, I have referred to my camera as a ‘male magnet’.

Perhaps, the attention that I draw with my camera disrupts the conventional notion that men are the subjects of photography whereas women are considered its objects. Moreover, historically men have been “represented in the act of possessing, learning, controlling, and manipulating the camera and its accessory instruments. It is not for nothing after all, that the word
'tool' can be used as a synonym for the penis" (Solomon-Godeau, 1991, p. 266). As such, a female in control of the camera may seem to disturb or provoke the male fantasies of mastery. The males as active participants in my photographs could also suggest a way of negotiating their empowerment. The camera may be described as a weapon and this is particularly evident in the notion of the camera as a gun in which it is a predatory weapon in the act of aiming, focusing and shooting. For example, early twentieth-century safari photographer Carl Akeley said that he set out to design a camera "that you can aim ... with about the same ease that you can point a pistol" (cited in Haraway, 1989, p. 42). Furthermore "he enjoyed retelling the apocryphal story of seven Germans mistakenly surrendering to one American when they found themselves faced by an Akeley" (Haraway, 1989, p. 43).

However, in my work the camera may at times serve as a shield, as a form of defense. The photographer Sylvia Plachy also asserts that "the camera was the armor I needed, it shielded my timidity" (Plachy, 1990, p. 4). In a sense this seems to confirm Young's (1990a, p. 155) assertion that "women tend to project an existential barrier closed around them and discontinuous with the over there in order to keep the other at a distance." In a sense the camera provides a sense of security in its power to present the uncanny, an indeterminate space.

I wouldn't accept that the camera is only a weapon, because this entails aggression. Therefore, in my photographic practice I consider the camera as a defensive utensil against loss of subjectivity, rather than an offensive weapon. Indeed, it is through the transitory moments of travel and the play of perspectives with the use of the camera that I present a dialectic of vision, concerning self and other in highlighting my gendered spatiality. The

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23 It could also promote desirability, in terms of a young woman holding 'their tool', as demonstrated in the promotion of advertising and calendars for men of young sexualised women positioned with power tools.
dialectic allows "the superimposition of fleeting images, present and past" that makes "both suddenly come alive in terms of revolutionary meaning" (Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 220).

The Threat of Disorder

Culturally the body marked as female is a site for comment and exposition. This view is derived from a patriarchal or masculine economy and is an exercise of power. Wilson (1992, p.157) argues that:

women have fared especially badly in the western vision of the metropolis because they have seemed to represent disorder. There is fear of the city as a realm of uncontrolled and chaotic sexual license, and the rigid control of women, and this is particularly directed to younger women [through
projecting representational fears concerning their physical presence] has been felt necessary to avert this danger.

In contemporary times in western society women's presence in the city is predominant and there is an ever increasing number of lone women travellers (Wilson, 1992; Department of Foreign Affairs, 1999). However, the lack of advice given to men suggests that indeed there are different, gender-related travel experiences. This confirms Berger's insistence that a woman "has to survey everything she is and everything she does because how she appears to others, and ultimately how she appears to men, is of crucial importance for what is normally thought of as the success of her life" (1972, p.46). Young asserts that due to women's sense of restrictedness in modality women as a whole experience their position in space as enclosed and confining. Generally women see themselves as precisely positioned in space, that is, "in its immanence and inhibition, feminine spatial existence is positioned by a system of co-ordinates which does not have its origin in her own intentional capacities" (Young, 1990a, p. 164). The female subject position is one that indicates embodiment. It involves subjectivity and the body, in which the body is a complex intersection of given and acquired characteristics. It is not a biological given but is a prescriptive and a contingent historical and social norm. Moreover, in terms of expression, the individual experiences of the speaking subject are deeply implicated in the social positioning of the body.

What and how I chose to photograph expresses my embodied gaze. Conscious of my age and gender as a young woman and conscious of the travel advice directed at all women the photographs produced document aspects of my spatial relations which, I argue, are different from male counterparts, such as Max Pam. As well as photographing within the labyrinth of the city, I took a number of photographs as on trains and buses. Photographing in transit has also been the subject matter of the journey photographer Pam. Photographing on modes of transport represents a liminal stage of travel for the tourist. It involves a sense of displacement and
a subsequent establishment or negotiation of personal body space. Interestingly, there are a number of differences in style and content between Pam and myself. This may be related to differences in frames of experiences associated with gender and spatial relations.
In Pam’s photographs “Train to Tiruchirapulli, South India 1975” and “Train to Calcutta, India 1977” he has photographed with a waist level camera and many of the subjects are directing their gaze to the camera. Barrett-Lennard (1998) states that Pam “is the subject of their gaze... both are looking at the other.” However, in his photographs there are a few people which seem to be actively averting the gaze through their body positioning. Thus, they seem resistant to Pam and the camera’s presence. But generally, although there may be an exchange of gazes between Pam and most of the people on the train, they are not in an equal social position. The camera positioning, in which it is centred in middle of the aisle, and the blank stares of most of the people on the train gazing passively towards him, suggests that he is exhibiting an imperial position of power.

The novelty of Pam’s waist level camera and his physical presence as a white male tourist may interest his non-Anglo subjects, but their perplexed expressions and his physical distance from them separates the spectators from the photographer. This is particularly emphasised in the photograph ‘Train to Tirichapulli’ in which one male has his head and body turned away from the camera. Urry (1990, p.138) states “photography tames the object of the gaze, the most striking being of exotic cultures.” Pam’s general approach to his subjects, in which they seem to gaze passively upwards or across towards him and the camera, seems to suggest ‘taming’. In Pam’s photographs he reflects a masculine confidence in his approach. Pam’s vision is an encompassing view. Pam’s photographs in term of composition, in which he is the centre of attention, establishes his mastery over the space. This work establishes his authoritative relationship with the Other.

There seems to be a pattern in maintaining mastery of space in the work of male journey photographers. For example, in the train images of Robert Frank (1958) in the United States and Martin Parr (1998) in Japan the camera is directed to the faces of the travellers around them, although,
unlike Pam's subjects, the travellers seem unaware of the process of being photographed. Their photographs are straightforward head and shoulder portraits of anonymous people staring, or averting the predatory gaze of the camera. The imperialism of photography is evident in this type of documentary practice.

In contrast to the mastery of space depicted by Pam, my spatial encounters on a Paris train and a Hong Kong ferry present more of an ambiguity than the straightforward portraits of the male photographers cited. My work is more self-conscious and anomalous. Rose (1993, p.146) suggests that "women's sense of embodiment can make space feel like a thousand piercing eyes: 'location is about vulnerability'" and this is certainly suggested through the great amount of advice given to women travellers. Previously I considered that Pam's reasons for taking his train photographs displayed a masculine modality of confidence and power over a space. My photographs in a similar confined space, however, are quite different. This seems to confirm that as a woman I have learned to situate myself and move in space in a way that is more self-conscious and inhibited about taking up space which is different from men (Berger, 1972, Young 1990a, Rose, 1993). Sontag (1977, p. 15) asserts that "to take a photograph is to participate in another person's (or thing's) mortality, vulnerability, mutability." It is also, perhaps, as Alem (1998) suggests, the equivalent of capturing the 'twin self'. Or as Barthes (1984) elaborates that the photograph makes appear what we never see. I would also suggest that in the self-reflexivity of photographie féminine to make a photograph also reveals the trace and the mortality, the vulnerability and the mutability of the photographer.
In my photograph on a train in Paris (July 14th 1999), I wanted to capture tactically the tensions a young girl, who was sitting close to me, was experiencing from the presence of a male on the train. The photograph is a record of a momentary experience. The photograph involves a triangular exchange of gazes. The photograph consists of the young girl tentatively looking back towards the male. In the background there is a male with his torso facing the door but his head turned towards the camera and me. Unlike Pam's previously discussed photographs that are confidently assertive, my camera is positioned at a low angle, which increases the anxiety and ambiguity of being in a confined space.
My photograph taken on the Hong Kong Ferry (July 22nd 1999), was also taken at a low angle. There is also a sense of tension, but the photograph is less foreboding. In the photograph a man's legs fill almost half the frame. If the legs were of a female, it would be considered fetishistic. However, the legs of the man wearing black leather shoes signify control and power. In the background of the photograph there is a seated male figure who is looking towards me, with his chin resting on his hand. Under a masculine watchful gaze, the photograph conveys the notion of waiting or anticipation. It is not a documentation of a dramatic spectacle often produced by male photographers, but a quiet, personal moment depicting my spatial relations.
A different style of photography is presented in my photograph on a London bus (June 18th 1999), which is the result of a different time and cultural space, but also represents my feminin style in terms of documenting spatial experience. I am in close proximity and interacting with the subjects of my camera. My use of a flash and the playful movements of the males suggests that they are aware of my presence (in fact, they did ask me to photograph them). This photograph is another example of the confident assertion towards myself and the camera by male subjects.

The slight blurring of movement also suggests the transitory nature of encounters and is a reminder of the technological aspect of photography. In other words, the image itself represents the performative and illusory aspects of photography. In brief, the photographer has the power to render the image either in sharp focus or blurred. The sharp focus creates form and order and establishes space and duration in territories to be conquered and governed, whereas in the blur there is an abandonment of domination in the freezing of time and space. As such, my use of the blur enhances the ambiguity of power, whilst it also serves to intensify the whimsical behaviour of the males.
My camera is positioned at a low angle so that the males in my image are presented in a dominant position. In their playful performance for the camera and myself there is a sense of comfort in the taking/making of the photograph, unlike in Pam’s train photograph to Tiruchirapelli in which a girl is masking the lower half of her face with her hand, whilst another male is looking downwards. The subjects of my photograph are not ‘tamed’. They are not passively gazing at the camera but actively engaging in the performance process of photography.

Importantly, the occasions on which I chose to photograph in transit were not from an all-seeing mastering position, but were fragmentary and reflect a feminin position. Photography is indeed a way of making real an experience that threatens to overwhelm the traveller with feelings of the loss of familiarity. Generally, identity and point of view are secured by isolating and framing segments of a space. Thus subjectivity is restored through the varying degrees in the process of objectification. However, in
the examples provided there are clearly marked differences in approaches between Pam and myself, which convey different gendered subjectivities.

Transitory Moments

In journey photography the physical mobility, the movement across space, which induces new perceptions, shares many of the characteristics of flânerie. However, in terms of my wanderings I was not a flâneur. This is because a flâneur represents a specifically masculine modality of distance and anonymity. Whereas as a woman, and photographer I was also object of the gaze, thus I had difficulty in remaining anonymous.

In Benjamin’s (1968a) meditations on the flâneur there is ambivalence towards the city. The flâneur is a key figure of male solitude and anonymity. Wolff (1990 p. 47) asserts that “there is no question of inventing the flâneuse: the essential point is that such a character was rendered impossible by the sexual division of the nineteenth century.” Therefore, with the relative liberty of movement that women and girls have in contemporary times, the flâneuse should be a possibility. Women have a general ‘freedom’ of movement. Women may indulge equally in the pleasures of wandering the streets. However, “the streets of most major cities today may be more dangerous for women than they ever have been” and historically the role of the “flâneuse was open to females only as ‘streetwalkers’ (Isaak, 1996, p. 19). From a feminist position it is not simply a matter of changing the term ‘flâneur, to ‘flâneuse’ to acknowledge the presence of women on the street because flânerie involves privileging of the gaze which is masculine modality and does not provide a space for a feminine mode of interaction. Massey (1994, p. 234) suggests that there could not be a female flâneur because although a flâneur observed others
he was not observed. Furthermore, the flâneur’s gaze was frequently erotic and on the look out for sexual conquests.

Although women can share similar desires and positions when walking in the street, I consider that it is much more difficult for a younger woman, due to her bodily positioning as an object of the gaze, to maintain the distance and the anonymity of the flâneur. Feminist critics Wilson (1995), Wolff (1990), and Pollock (1988) argue that the liberty to look, appraise and wander the streets that is epitomised in the figure of the flâneur is historically a masculine freedom. Wilson (1995, p. 65) argues that it “is the flâneur, the flâneur as a man of pleasure, as a man who takes visual possession of the city... has emerged in postmodern feminist discourse as the embodiment of the ‘male gaze’.” She further states that in this context the flâneur “represents men’s visual and voyeuristic mastery over women” (1995, p. 65).

There are also strong associations between the tourist, photographer and the flâneur. Photography has been intimately connected to the tourist gaze. Sontag, for example, makes the link between the flâneur and photography stating that:

Gazing on other people’s reality with curiosity, with detachment, with professionalism, the ubiquitous photographer operates as if that activity transcends class interests, as if its perspective is universal. In fact, photography first comes into its own as an extension of the eye of the middle class flâneur...The photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitering, stalking, cruising the urban inferno. (Sontag, 1977, p. 55)

Similarly the concept of tourist as flâneur has a male bias in its consequent objectification of the landscape or the tourist destination as a place to see, rather than as a space for interaction. Places represented in the aesthetic discourse of the beautiful or picturesque entails the feminisation of the landscape that is produced by the masculine gaze. The masculine position is to look actively, possessively, sexually and pleasurably. Although
Cixous argues that a feminine look may be sexual and pleasurable, the masculine approach has a determined tendency to master. The possessiveness is related to a masculine anxiety with its obsession to dominate or manipulate the Other, including both women and the land.

There are also certain patterns that emerge in the journeys of males in which they speak of “unveiling and possessing the female landscape” (Dann, 1999, p. 170). This is conveyed in the language of male travellers, such as the late nineteenth-century English photographer, P.H. Emerson and the contemporary Australian journey and street photographer/flâneur Max Pam in which both the distant land and the female is presented as sexually tempting. Yet the desire for aesthetic knowledge can never be completely satisfied and remains elusive or, as Irigaray states, “the quest for the ‘object’ becomes a game of Chinese boxes. Infinitely receding” (1985a, p. 134).

**Veiled Women**

In terms of photographic approaches there are differences (however subtle) in desires and quests between genders. An example of this is in the work of Max Pam, Wendy Ewald and myself in reference to veiled women. Interestingly, we approach the subject of the ‘veiled woman’ in different ways. The figure of the veiled woman has historical and cultural significance in Orientalism as an object of masculine western desire. But, as previously mentioned, the metaphor of the veil in western feminism seems to be applicable generally to women’s experiences which are covered and repressed in a patriarchal culture. Wilson (1992) asserts that the city is a zone of individual freedom that offers women the chance to explore facets of public life away from the restraints of the private sphere. However, she concludes that all too often our experience of the city is “to live in it, but hidden, to emerge on sufferance, veiled” (Wilson, 1992, p. 16). In my
discussion the veil serves as a metaphor for the discourse of femininity, in which there are many forms of veils or masquerades that women adopt (Butler, 1990). It is the veil of artifice and sexuality that I actively engage with in my documentary approach. This is produced through my incorporation of signs of femininity whilst also trying to subvert the patriarchal construction of it.

In the following section I will show how the figure of the veiled woman functions differently. I will move between Pam's and Ewald's approaches, and Pam's and my own accounts of veiled women. Within Western cultural discourse the figure of the veiled woman is a symbol of 'desirability' or it represents the sign of women's servitude to 'eastern' patriarchy. Generally, in the western media the veiled woman does not speak, does not voice her opinions, but is silenced by the romanticised notion of the veil. She is rarely a subject of historical acknowledgement or recognition of her status as a subject or a self-motivating agent. It seems that the 'strangeness' of the veiled woman to the western masculine viewer gives her an erotic value. Thus she has become an object of fascination, an object of surveillance. In my analysis of the work of the different photographers and myself I will address these pertinent issues.

In Pam's *Indian Ocean Journals* (2000, p. 46) he writes of his stay in an area of Yemen stating “in the street I work in flash, often with a friend whom I use as a device to get closer to veiled women. If you ask these black phantom women directly to pose for a photograph they will refuse.” Pam's writing echoes the previous discussion of desire and the “possessing” of the female. As Urry (1990, p. 138) asserts, “to photograph is in someway to appropriate the object being photographed.” It seems that Pam wants to possess the women through the act of his photography.

24 For example in Islamic feminism, the voluntary wearing of the veil “is about liberation from imposed, imported identities, consumerist behaviours, and an increasingly materialist culture” (El Guindi, 1999, p. 184).
In Pam's work the veiled women are presented as objects of fascination and desire, a type of *femme fatale*. The women are exoticised. Pam refers to them as "black phantom women" which connotes a dark and mysterious presence. Interestingly, this also relates to Freud's notion of woman's sexuality and psyche as the 'dark continent'. Cixous (1976b, p. 878) expands on the power relations associated with this metaphor to demonstrate that the binary system which structures gender also structures imperialism: women are aligned with darkness, with otherness, with Africa, against men who are aligned with lightness, with selfhood and with western civilisation. Furthermore, she argues that what men have said so far, "for the most part, stems from the opposition activity/passivity, from the power relation between a fantasised, obligatory virility meant to invade, to colonise, and the consequential phantasm of woman as a 'dark continent' to penetrate and to 'pacify'" (Cixous, 1976b, p. 877).

Pam's writing represents the masculine libidinal economy which is further articulated in other comments regarding his visit to another part of Yemen in which he asserts:

> I chase girls in black unashamedly through the suq – black sexy kholed eyes – They want to pose and be photographed, but old Hadrami men keep castigating them for the brazenness so I can never quite get to them and do them the way they deserve to be portrayed. (Pam, 2000, p.169)

Pam's quests are similar to traditional anthropological ventures. The subject matter of anthropology broadly conceived is 'difference', the study and understanding of 'otherness' in its various forms – socio-psychological, socio-cultural and temporal (Graburn, 1995, p. 158). Moreover, Trinh T. Minh-Ha (1991, p. 75) explores the metaphor of anthropology's attempt to grasp the marrow of native life as itself a cannibalistic rite, quoting Stanislas S. Adotevi statement that "the only possible ethnology is the one which studies the anthropophagous (metaphorically cannibalistic) behaviour of the..."
white man.” I would add that the “behaviour of the white man” could be associated with the notion of the flâneur. Pollock (1988, p. 67) asserts that “the flâneur embodies the gaze of modernity which is both covetous and erotic” and consists in the transient and fugitive nature of encounters and impressions made in the city. Pam’s “chase” of elusive women in the streets and his desire and his expression to “do them the way they deserve” certainly epitomises the erotic undertones of the flâneur.

In contrast to Pam’s ‘documentary’ approach in which he claims that “they want to pose and be photographed” it is worth mentioning the feminist photographic work of Wendy Ewald. Ewald has travelled and worked extensively in areas such as Africa and the Middle East, as well as in the United States. Her documentary work involves collaboration between subject and photographer which attempts to avoid the dominant power relation of the photographer/anthropologist. It is not merely the question of ‘correcting’ the images but exploring new ways of representation that give the subjects discursive power.

In 1997 Ewald ran a photographic workshop for women and girls in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Photography is considered controversial and in Jeddah people rarely photograph in public, though many families take pictures at home. In addition to these considerations, there is a taboo against mingling of the sexes and public exposure of any part of a woman’s body except for her hands and eyes. Ewald (1998) states:

> every morning and evening for two weeks, the women and girls, wrapped in shroud-like ‘abaya’ robes, were dropped off by their chauffeurs at the girls’ school where we met (women are not allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia).

In discussions in the workshop it was considered that the most challenging subject that could be explored was the issue of self-representation integral to a photographie féminine. Ewald (1998) comments:
Finally I asked the women if they would work with me to make collaborative portraits that could be shown and published. After some discussion, it was agreed that they would need to cover themselves or represent themselves in indirect ways. I also gave them the large-format Polaroid negatives to alter in whatever way they wanted.

The response from one of the participants, Raja Alem (1998), was included with the images. Often the 'voices' of those photographed are rarely recorded and heard so that the photographer/author can maintain his/her position of complete mastery. Alem's articulations are important because they provide a different perspective on the act of photography. She follows Davidov's definition of an encounter as:

An exchange between self and other in which the voice of the other is heard, not a threat to be reduced or an object that I give myself to know in my capacity as knowing subject, but that which constitutes me as an ethical being. (Davidov, 1998, p. 139)

Her approach projects a feminin 'voice' that has relevance to my own self-portraits, reflections and problems with the power of photography. Of significance is her response to the camera, her apprehension of exposure to 'foreign' eyes and the use of the camera as a utensil of feminism. Alem asserts:

Taking someone's photograph is equivalent to capturing his twin self, his spirit; it is a way of taking complete control of the person whose picture is taken. Photography is a glimpse into the soul, stolen for the sake of illuminating a dark, impersonal sheet of paper. In the case of Wendy's Workshop, photography turned out to be something more. It began when we allowed an outsider to see behind the veil. At first we were all very cautious.

She further states:

Our experimenting went so far as to let some faces look back at the camera. Thanks to the technique of etching on our negatives, we were able to restore a protective veneer. We were not so much worried about social restrictions as we were about the idea of being exposed to foreign eyes. The
expectation that we might be interpreted by foreigners - and 
marginalised - was what stood between us and our 
cameras.

Assuming the role of hunters put us in another realm and 
gave us a place to stand that was powerful enough to alter 
the male-controlled orbits we move in... in the very act of 
announcing our power, we women gained power over the 
men... We enjoyed watching the transformations that took 
place in this small circle of feminism. (Alem, 1998)

In reflecting upon the comments that Alem makes in regard to feminist 
photography, such as assuming the role of the hunter, I would like to 
discuss my own journal entry which draws upon issues of power, 
representation and space, while providing a striking contrast to Pam’s 
account of walking in the streets. A common theme in both our journal 
accounts is the subject of Moslem women. Although the subject matter 
may be very similar, our approaches are very different. I consider that the 
contrasts in styles, such as our choice of descriptive language, are the 
result of the differences in our gender and differences in our desires which 
relate to life experiences. For example, Pam’s perception of the women in 
the street is predatory and sexual. The camera becomes a gun, a 
substitute phallus, and a libidinous weapon. He proclaimed “I chase girls in 
black unashamedly through the suq - sexy black kholed eyes.” His 
comments are in contrast to my simple observation/recollection of “fully 
veiled women.” Pam’s writing has an erotic presence of the other, whereas 
my words convey a sense of personal despair. He is looking outwards. I 
am looking inwards and outwards at the same other women. He is 
confident in his pursuits in the ‘role’ of a photographer, while I face 
uncertainty. I wrote:

My body is aching. Yesterday I walked for ages, but yet 
there was nothing of visual interest. I discovered the Islamic 
section of Barcelona with fully veiled women. However, I am 
reluctant to approach them with my camera. I question, 
“Why is it necessary?” “What is the purpose?” My visual 
work has come to a stop. (5th June, 1999)
Interestingly, in Pam’s journal account he laments about “not quite getting to them” whereas I do not want to ‘use’ my camera to get to “them.” The point is at the end of the day we both do not have any photographic record of the women that we witnessed, although we have come to this situation in very different circumstances. Indeed, rationales of intentionality are accountable here. As a photographer I am conscious of the power the camera wields, and as a woman I enjoy the masculine role that Alem calls, “assuming the role of a hunter.” The masculine quest is suggested in my phrases “I walked for ages” and “I discovered.” But I did not desire to take on the position of imperial mastery of a masculine photographer on the erotic quest or “chase” which Pam refers to. Cixous asserts that the masculine approach has a determined tendency to master, “to demonstrate, explain, grasp. And then lock away in a strongbox” (cited in Sellers, 1991, p. 91). The ‘strongbox’ that Cixous mentions could be interpreted as the camera, or more precisely, the photograph. It is the “impersonal sheet of paper” which Alem previously remarked on, but it may not be just locked away.

Although the camera may be a predatory weapon with a sexual and colonising appropriative interest in the difference of the Other, a feminist approach to photography can result in very different uses of the camera, such as a medium for self-exploration. An example of this was in the previously described photographic workshop and in the number of self-portraits taken on my journey.

Travelling does create an embodied awareness. There is an intensification of non-verbal communication in encounters in which the significance of expression, gesture and the body is intensified. As a woman I am confronted with the feminist dilemma that Mary Kelly (cited in Pollock, 1988,
p. 86) addresses wherein the woman who is an artist sees her experience in terms of the feminine position, that is, as object of the look. However, she must also account for the feeling she experiences as an artist adopting a masculine viewing position. To address this tension I used a number of veiled or masking devices, such as shadows or blurred movements in the self-portraits. In many ways it is a masquerade of femininity. Feminist film theorist Doane (1982, pp. 81-82) asserts that "the masquerade, in flaunting femininity, holds it at a distance. The masquerade’s resistance to patriarchal positioning would therefore lie in its denial of the production of femininity as closeness... By destabilising the image, the masquerade confounds the masculine structure of the look."

The masquerade is a way of protecting my identity. It is a way of deflecting the male gaze and it is a tactic I have used in all of my self-representations. It is, as Alem previously stated, "a protective veneer" against exposure to "foreign eyes." My awareness of my perceived ‘Spanish-Italian-French-Mexican-Asian’ image as an exotic Other to Anglo-western viewers further
foregrounds a self-consciousness. This is due to the fact that in photography race, gender and sexuality are intricately woven into a historical imperial discourse in which the non-Anglo or bi-racial female represents a desirable, yet sexually dangerous marginality. Furthermore, the popularity of biracial women as, Shrage argues, "is that they could conform to hegemonic white standards of physical beauty" whilst positioned in the white masculine discourse of the hyper sensualised or sexualised other" (1994, p. 155). This is problematic in terms of Anzuldua's assertions in which having a racially/ethnically mixed background is effective in disrupting sexism and racism, because according to Shrage, amongst others, such as Doane (1991), the mixed raced women becomes more desired 'exotic/erotic' objects, thus their positioning within a white masculinist paradigm reinforces a racist/sexist discourse.

Although I play with this discourse, I adamantly share the same sentiments of distress with the female participants in the photographic workshop in their overt awareness about being seen and about taking up space. Identity is relational and context-determined, but positioned within a white masculine paradigm, such as in photographs that are intended to be published, I approach the issue of self-representation tentatively.

I could not, for example, represent myself in the same manner as that of middle-age white British photographer Nick Waplington who made a political statement of self-reflexivity in Other Edens (1994) by photographing himself in the nude in various landscapes around the world. It may be a visual shock to see a middle-age male nude confidently performing for the camera within a landscape. But it certainly would not appear to be unusual to see a young slender female nude within the same landscape. This is because the female figure in the landscape is at the core of traditional western pictorial conventions and still persists today in popular culture. In my self-portraits I am as Berger (1972, p. 55) states "offering up" my
“femininity as the surveyed.” However, the femininity offered is veiled or hidden in shadows. My identity is concealed. But the culturally feminine gestures, such as body slanting and long hair flowing, are performed for the camera. The acting out of a stereotypical idea of femininity reinforces the constructiveness of the patriarchal feminine. However, the exaggeration of the cultural feminine gestures evokes Irigaray’s notion of female mimicry which is used to subvert the patriarchal feminine. The masquerade also plays out the fantasy of femininity, in which the erotic may be heightened but identity is inconclusive.

In photography I am concerned with the issue of representation of differences in which the other is not merely a ‘passive’ victim or a simple stereotype derived from western essentialism (Said, 1978). Therefore, I had to question repeatedly my role as a street photographer. Why do I need to photograph the Other? What is the political purpose? I do not want the women to become erotic spectacles for a western audience. In the previously quoted journal extract in Barcelona, as I was in non-Islamic dress, unveiled, aren’t I the Other? Or as Trinh T. Minh-ha (1994, p.23) states “depending upon who is looking, the exotic is the other, or is it me?.” Unlike Pam who desires to “do them the way they deserve to be” which in reflecting upon his previous images of women would probably not be in the feminist mode of Ewald, I am confronted with my own embodied experiences as a woman, in which I have at times been the target of the “chase” as Pam puts it, and I stress it is not a game that I enjoy playing.

The elusiveness of the women in the city also relates to what Wilson (1992) refers to as the sphinx in the city in the book of that title in which women are an irruption and an object of surveillance, an object of fascination and fear for male writers. “Women represented feeling, sexuality and even chaos, man was rationality and control” (1992, p. 87). The notion of the sphinx in the city also can be related to McClintock’s (1995, p.193) cultural analysis in
which she states that “colonialism represented the colonised landscape as feminine, unknowable and unrepresentable... Women became the Dark continent, the riddle of the Sphinx.” Women were thus exoticised. She further adds that “constructing women and colonised people as a riddle allows privileged European men to answer the riddle in terms of their own interests.” The other was constituted by a western narrator in a scopophilic process that established patriarchal authority in matters of commentary and judgement.

*My photographie féminine* is, as Cixous outlines, opposed to the masculine approach of a quest. It is the willingness to encounter the other without seeking to appropriate or annihilate the other’s difference in order to construct and glorify the self. “Like a mother”, the feminine writer “looks with a look that recognises, studies, respects, doesn’t take, doesn’t claw, but attentively,

with gentle relentlessness, contemplates and reads, caresses, bathes, makes the other shine” (cited in Sellers, 1991, p. 141). I consider that Ewald’s photographic workshop with the Islamic women and girls definitely achieved these goals of a *photographie féminine*. My works follows a *photographie féminine* approach but it is different in content from Ewald’s. I engaged in street photography as I did not have the time and resources to set up the kind of interactive and co-operative workshop that Ewald did.

Following my own desire for a *photographie féminine* as a journey and street photographer I was tentative. There were occasions on which I photographed people that I met on my journey, for example, my participation at the Anti-Capitalist Rally in London, which I will discuss in a later chapter. The “endeavour to write the other” in the style Cixous proclaims is not an easy task for a street photographer. It entails a notion of
sharing, a communion of souls that is not commonly achieved in masculine use of the camera as tool for observation, rather than interaction.

However, it seems that for women, due to their sexual difference, the relative freedom of movement in the street may be limiting due to the masculine gaze. Wilson (1992, p. 16) asserts that “with the coming of ‘modernity’ the cities of veiled women have ceded to cities of spectacle and voyeurism, in which women, while seeking and sometimes finding the freedom of anonymity, are often too visible.” This assertion is certainly emphasised in the specific range of travel advice directed at women and my awareness of feminine modalities and representations of the female body that have been a central aspect of my travel encounters.

Moreover, my hyper-awareness of the female body in my travels was a contributing factor in my feminist photography. The major differences between a photographie féminine and other types of photography is that it consists of an acknowledgement of the feminin experience. It involves reflecting a women’s sense of space through the autobiographical nature of the work. It attempts to merge the self-other dichotomy and the unequal power relations between photographer and subject. It also shares some of the characteristics of postmodern photography such as a:

concern with the nature of images and their circulation; an elision between high and popular culture; a scepticism about the nature of ‘the real’ or the authentic’ (for the ‘simulacrum’ is held to have taken over from the original); and a suggestion that the discourses that once bounded and structured knowledge (such as history or science) have broken down. (Price, 1997, p. 100)

Furthermore, photographie féminine is infused with the desire to play with, or move, beyond patriarchal stereotypes. It should involve the feminist visual shocks of irony, parody, anger, satire, humour and mimicry. It also importantly draws attention to gender and sexuality. Its focus is on the sensual body.
Chapter Four:

*Urban Exposures*

The city is a place of paradox. The city offers multiple contrasts and possibilities for the street wanderer. It offers a sensual experience. The city is, as Elizabeth Wilson (1992, p. 7) declares both, ""masculine' in its triumphal scale, its towers and vistas and arid industrial regions and 'feminine', in its enclosing embrace, in its labyrinthine uncentredness." The immensity of the city can be interpreted as the urban sublime. The sublime first introduced by Longinus and then developed by Immanuel Kant and Edmund Burke, amongst others, is associated with terror and magnitude. Giblett (1996, p. 30) asserts that the "sublime is a feeling of awe and fear in the face of gigantic objects as they are representatives for the ultimate symbolic object, the Phallus and the Law of the Father." However, the sublime towers may be eclipsed with the perplexity of the feminine and indeterminacy which can be considered uncanny.
Furthermore, the re-analysis of Freud’s uncanny by Cixous (1976a) and Giblett (1996) opens up possibilities for a feminist consideration of my photographs in exploring its resistance to submitting to the ‘laws’ of ‘patriarchal binary thought’, in its embracement of the feminist concepts which allow for contradiction to co-exist and its attempt to uncover what is hidden and repressed.

Freud (1958), who developed a detailed account of the uncanny, suggests that the uncanny can be associated with an overpowering female sexual ‘force’. The potency of female sexuality seems to resonate in extreme male anxiety. Cixous (1976a, p. 535) asserts that Freud’s analysis of the uncanny is characterised by his resistance to castration and its effectuality. The uncanny evokes the anxiety of castration with the fear of the loss of mastery and moreover with its particular correspondence to visual uncertainty in which there is a substitutive relation between the eye and the penis.

Furthermore, Freud suggest that the uncanny is the ‘unhomely’. It is a ‘return to the womb’ which in the patriarchal consciousness has been associated with dread and horror and is considered negatively. Indeed, as Giblett (1996, p. 33) points out, it could be described as the odour of female genitalia “which for Freud were the ultimate unhheimlich, the (un)homely or uncanny.”

In Freud’s essay on “The Uncanny” (1958) he associates sexual disquiet with the city. Although he was not a flâneur, he recalls his own ominous experience of his repeated fortuitous encounters in a built environment.
He claims that there were “nothing but painted women to be seen... a feeling overcame me which I can only describe as uncanny, and I was glad enough to abandon my exploratory walk” (Freud, 1958, p. 143-144).
The Field of Women is a project of the breast cancer research of Australia. The silhouettes have been named in honour of women who have or have had breast cancer.
In my explorative walks I share a view which is similar to Wilson's (1992) reading of women writers such as Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf. Wilson asserts that in their work the city is an enveloping presence and "they seem to find its vast amorphousness maternal or even womblike" (1992, p. 158). Unlike various male modernist writers, "instead of disintegrating, they are held by it" (Wilson, 1992, p. 158). Even though at times there has been a tentativeness in regards to issues of safety in my travels, there was also a certain comfort in the familiarity and the ambiguity of the city. This may be related to my urban background and interest in the sensations of the city.

Sontag (1977, p. 55) asserts that the "photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker... the voyeuristic stroller." She claims that the photographer as "the flâneur finds the world picturesque." However, although I am a photographer, I would not profess to being a flâneur, as it suggests a masculine modality of aloofness and anonymity. Furthermore, to "find the world picturesque" describes a masculine aesthetic and is prevalent in
mainstream popular photography. The picturesque, a middle term between the beautiful and the sublime, which creates a pleasurable effect on the mind, is a representation in which the potential for disorder could be contained by the controlling power of the (male) author or (male) spectator (Battersby, 1994, p. 90). I suggest that my photography, incorporating notions of the uncanny as a counter-aesthetic, is not about repressing disorder or about framing into stasis the potential power of the feminin. Rather, my photography is a way of negotiating and representing a landscape in terms of a space that is open to possibilities.

My work draws on the analysis of Cixous (1976b) and Giblett (1996) on the uncanny. As suggested by Cixous and Giblett, the indeterminacy and intensity of the uncanny as a counter-aesthetic has the potential to disrupt the Law of the Father. It is concerned with ambiguity and the blurring of boundaries. It is something familiar from which we have difficulty separating ourselves. As such it offers the potential to disrupt the subject and object divide and the masculine 'achievements' of repression and sublimation. My photographie féminine, the writing of the traces of the feminine body, provides a space to explore the uncanny; it involves my encounters with 'painted women', which was a source of anxiety for Freud. In the literal sense the work concerns the placement of images of female sexuality.

In my journey I am tracing the limits of place in which according to Irigaray woman is 'place'. The strangeness, yet familiarity of these images also seems to draw on Irigaray's (1993a, p. 35) comments that for woman "her issue is how to trace the limits of place herself so as to be able to situate herself therein and welcome the other." Furthermore, "at issue is the extension of place, of places, and of the relation of that extension to the development of the body and bodies (Irigaray, 1993a, p. 36). This self-searching quest and hope for accord with the other seems to correspond with my journey towards a photographie féminine. It also involves what Irigaray refers to as the interval. The interval is intermediary between the boundaries
(Irigaray, 1993a, p. 48). There is also desire to overcome the interval to describe place as never closed, in which "the boundaries touch against one another while still remaining open" (Irigaray, 1993a, p. 51). In trying to do this I address the contradictions and dichotomies of the *feminine* that exist within the periphery of the city.

As many male writers have suggested, the association with the feminine and sexuality is a source of ominous ambiguity and 'disorder' in the city. For many male writers of the city from diverse fields of investigation, such as Franz Kafka and Lewis Mumford, to photographers, such as William Klein and Garry Winnogrand, the multiple contrasts, chaos and 'disorder' of urban life are depicted as threatening, but may also be a source of fascination.

In the early twentieth century, the uncanny aspects of the city and its images, such as Atget's famous 1927 photograph of a series of headless mannequins in a shop window, seem to entice the Surrealists with its allusion to female sexuality as well as presenting a conceptual disorientation in. For example, for Aragon the city was a 'geography of pleasure', and he was irresistibly drawn to the simulacra on display (Fer, 1993, p. 191). Furthermore, Freud's notion of the repressed and the uncanny as something secretly familiar is a motif in Surrealist photography. Like myself the Surrealists placed 'woman' and sexuality at the centre of their concerns (Fer, 1993, p.177-179). However, the differences between myself and the motives of the Surrealists are that they privileged an erotic masculine viewpoint, whereas I attempt to filter this view through a *feminin* approach with the use of parody or exaggeration.
For example, my photograph of rows of the heads of coloured women mannequins (London, June 16th 1999) is an example of my pastiche and parody of Atget's mannequin photograph. The similarities between the two photographs is in the style and composition. However, juxtaposed, the images represent contrasts. For example, in Atget's photograph, 'women' are represented as sexualised bodies. Fry (2000) asserts that:

The corset mannequins, manufactured without heads, arms or legs, thrust out the undiluted characteristics of a feminine ideal, (wide hips, very narrow waist, prominent breast and erect posture), isolated from any context of personality or activity.

Notably, also female underwear is often modelled for the masculine erotic gaze. The black and white photograph with its strong contrasts draw attention to forms and shapes, as well as a sense of strangeness from everyday visual experiences, which alludes to exoticism, whereas the advantage of my use of colour is that it presents a common and everyday visual medium.
In my photograph of 'women' they are represented as heads on shoulders wistfully gazing outwards and perhaps represent 'mind' over body, rather than the masculine concept of 'woman as only the body', which represents a fetishised view of women in the city.

Furthermore, rather than retreating from this perceived aspect, my work confronts the 'dread' and 'horror' of the 'disorder' of women, by representing it ironically. Moreover, my pleasure in the journey through various cities illustrates Wilson's assertion (1992, p. 57) that women have often been less daunted by city life than men. Furthermore, although the city can be a place of danger for women, it can also offer a freedom from patriarchal restraints, and I might add, from adhering to masculine aesthetics. Wilson (1992, p. 8) suggests that perhaps:

the 'disorder in the city does not so much disturb women...The socialisation of women renders them less dependent on duality and opposition: instead of setting nature against the city, they find nature in the city. For them, that invisible city, the 'second city', the underworld or secret labyrinth, instead of being sinister or diseased... is an Aladdin's cave of riches.

Wilson's statement is particularly relevant to my work which presents a melange of images of the ambiguous and disorienting aspects of urban display that evoke the uncanny. Moreover, there is also a depiction of the blurring of society's borders. There is dynamism in the depiction of the co-existence of what is traditionally considered diametrically opposed, such as a pornography stand outside a church. The uncanny evoked in the photographs is characterised by a strangeness that elides resolution. It shifts between the traditionally fixed boundaries of what is considered to be 'real' and what is thought to be 'imaginary'. For example, the distinct boundaries between the private and the public, and sex and religion, are disrupted in my documentation of the divinity of the feminine. According to the French feminists, the feminine divine heals divisions through some escape beyond/before language. It is associated with liberating the feminine from patriarchal representation. As such, the uncanny,
drawing upon the divinity of the feminine, offers an alternative paradigm of thought compared to masculine neo-classicist aesthetics and its fidelity to distinct binaries.

Feminist philosopher Grosz (1995a, p. 108) suggests that the city is the site for the body’s cultural saturation, and for its takeover and transformation by images, by representational systems, the mass media and the arts. In my work I follow her argument that “it is the place where the gendered body is representationally re-explored, transformed, contested, re-inscribed.” A number of my photographs have involved the re-framing of displayed images of female bodies in the streets. I have photographed commodified images of femininity and its location in the surrounding landscapes. I do this to try and destabilise the mastering gaze that tends to focus only on the body of women. My work is concerned with relationships. The exploration of depictions of femininity represents “a consciousness that historically women have been ‘framed’ through the process of representation and can be reframed through the same process” (Neumaier, 1995, p.1). In other words, by re-framing the images within a wider context my work attempts to resist patriarchal positioning in which female sexuality is limited and presented as a source for masculine desire, fear and seduction.

The range of photographs corresponds to the theme of photographie féminine in two ways. Firstly, it relates to my overt attention to, or more precisely an awareness of, the feminised body in which I try to disrupt the masculine structure of representation by attempting to introduce new formulations or discourses. Secondly, it relates to the representation of a vernacular landscape from a feminist perspective. The photographs produced form part of an autobiography. It is the documentation of personal observations at particular times and locations. Battersby (1989) and Lippard (1995) contend that woman photographers and writers generally tend to approach the environment from an intimate viewpoint. As such, we are concerned with what we are familiar with, rather than an Otherness or separateness.
Despite the differences in the geographical and assumed cultural differences of the various cities to which I travelled, I found similar themes of socially constructed femininity which are familiar to me and reflect my own media-orientated cultural background. Furthermore, in my self-representations and in the placing of a picture within a photograph, or a scene within a scene, the work not only draws attention to discourses of femininity, as our visual society is dominated with images of young women, but also to the fact that our postmodern sense of reality is mediated visually.

My work acknowledges Cixous' assertion that in *écriture féminine*:

> Woman will return to the body which has been confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display – the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions.

(Cixous, 1976b, p. 880)

Indeed, the representational body functions for the female spectator as a cultural reminder of her fetishisation. The uncanny reworks the traces of the past and “returns the subject momentarily to the unconscious and to the surfaces of the body which have been inscribed, and some of whose depths have been invested, by capitalism” (Giblett, 1996, p. 34). Therefore, in a subjective postmodern documentary sense the work provides ‘evidence’ of my encounters with the female body on display. It is also an attempt to subvert a dominant patriarchal reading of images of females through the use of mimicry and ironic juxtapositions. Rather than the voyeurism evoked in the *flâneur*, my encounters with commercial images of females seems to confirm Doane's (1987) argument that when women are spoken to ‘as women' in advertising, the physical separation between subject and object, conducive to both *flânerie* and voyeurism, is annihilated. I also argue that “woman is constructed differently in relation to the processes of looking” (Doane, 1991, p. 24). In particular, as Fuss (1992, p.729) points out, for the female viewer the commodified image of woman “is the place of both a constitution and a fading of subjectivity: both are ‘screens' that operate for the subject as sites where
identity emerges and recedes.“ The site where identity emerges and recedes is also the uncanny.

My female gaze suggests an ambivalence in the indeterminacy of identification. There are dissonant perspectives in my work. For example, as well as photographing the highly visible projections of commodified femininity, my gaze was also lowered to litter, the discarded, often unnoticed, refuse of advertising material that was on the streets. The latter approach to street photography, may be likened to Benjamin’s (1983, p. 36) well-known description of Baudelaire’s flâneur who most notably “goes botanising on the asphalt.” However, I am not a flâneur as this is a masculine position of distance that establishes a subject-object divide, whereas my work is about intimacy and destabilising divisions.

The photographs produced concern ‘noise’ and ‘dirt’ in the city streets. My emphasis on movement, sounds, scent and emotional states characterises an écriture/photographie féminine in that it attempts to work against the closure of a phallocentric language and narrative. As such, Davidov’s (1998, p. 24) association of noise, dirt and difference with aspects of early twentieth-century women photographers’ work is also a feature my photographie féminine. By the term noise I am referring to a disturbance that can be subversive. It may be a weapon against attributes of power. In association with photography, Davidov (1998, p. 24) cites Jacques Attali’s suggestion that in his work on the political economy of music the noise of marginals “indicates the limits of a territory and the way to make oneself heard within it… And since noise is the source of power, power has always listened to it with fascination.” Similarly, by the term dirt I am referring to Mary Douglas’ assertion that dirt is disorder. It is destructive to existing patterns, but it also has the potential to be politically subversive. In my usage it has the potential to disrupt the phallocentric order. “It symbolises both danger and power” (Douglas, 1966, p. 94).
Painted Women

In the analysis of my street photographs I will be drawing on the themes of danger and power in relation to 'painted women'. My particular emphasis is on the figure of the *femme fatale*, which is a dominant feminine representation in the public sphere. Importantly, the discourses concerning the *femmes fatale*, are "defined by their sexuality, which is presented as desirable but dangerous to men" and moreover "function as the obstacle to the male quest", seem to be in accord with my subversive journey themes in regards to gender and space (Kaplan, 1981, p. 3). Moreover, the figure of the *femme fatale* seems to share some of the characteristics of the uncanny in that she represents "a certain discursive unease, a potential epistemological trauma" (Doane, 1991, p. 1).

Similar to the uncanny the *femme fatale* is dependent upon perceptual ambiguity and harboring a threat which is not entirely legible.

The prolific development of the *femme fatale* in the nineteenth century was associated with the growth of feminism. The *femme fatale*, "the ambiguous woman capable of many disguises", is commonly defined as a "woman who lures men into danger, destruction, even death by means of her overwhelmingly seductive charms" (Isaak, 1996, p. 221; Allen, 1983, p ii). According to Allen (1983, p. 191), "she was produced by men who felt threatened by the escape of some actual women from male dominance." She is a 'place' that man has created. For example, in cinema the figure of the *femme fatale* is characterised as evil and is frequently punished or killed. Her textual eradication involves a desperate re-assertion of control on the part of the threatened male subject (Doane, 1991, p.2). Moreover, the *femme fatale* is perceived as harbouring a threat which is not "legible, predicable or manageable" (Doane, 1991, p. 1). However, by picturing this 'threat' which is related to an excess of sexuality she was framed into stasis by the male artist and the male gaze.
By re-framing the figure of the *femme fatale*, my work attempts to be subversive. In particular, this follows Irigaray’s suggestion that one strategy to confront the stabilising effects of the limiting patriarchal conventions is in the form of mimicry. She contends that this has the potential to undo the phallocentric discourse through exaggeration. “If women exist only in men’s eyes as images, women should take those images and reflect them back to men in magnified proportion” (Tong, 1992, p. 228). Admittedly the act of subversion or mimicry may not be clear to all readers.

The characteristics of the *femme fatale* include being erotic, seductive, destructive and exotic as well as self-dependent and independent (Allen, 1983, p. 4). She is also associated with darkness and veiling. Her potential effects are the products of cultural practices including framing and ‘reading’. As an object of fascination, her popularity is associated with the styles of Decadence, Symbolism, Art Nouveau. The current popularity of the figure can be seen in advertising, fashion, music video and, of course, some forms of ‘soft’ pornography. The latter category is not a discrete realm of representation that is distinct from other forms of cultural production.

In my photographs, which involve juxtaposing the billboards that contain *femmes fatales* with elements of the surrounding environment, I emphasise the social placement of femininity. I also try to destabilise the masculine erotics associated with the *female fatale* in pornography by framing the images in a wider context. I will discuss images that relate to historical images of women that portray signifiers of a mysterious sexuality, part of a predominantly masculine history of art. The images were originally created by male artists intended ideally for male spectators. Berger (1972, p. 55) contends that the images are “made to appeal to his sexuality. It has nothing to do with her sexuality.” In the private sphere of a phallocentric high culture and the public sphere of the art gallery, these types of images of a ‘feminine’ sexuality and nudity are aestheticised, contained and accredited. In the late twentieth century these images which are dispersed and magnified into the
public space of the streets suggested a break down in division between high culture and popular aesthetics. Arguably, the placement of these images is also diffusing notions of female modesty and female inhibition in the public space which may suggest that we live in a more liberal environment. It is also an example of my self-awareness and evocation of images that represent my western youth media-oriented background, which is closely aligned with the performance of female sexuality. An example of this is my photograph (July 18th 1999) of a billboard consisting of a young female sitting in a sexually suggestive pose; she is wearing high heels and an extremely short dress and exposing her bare legs and arms. She gazes directly towards the camera which also suggests that she is addressing the viewer, in the manner of the *femme fatale*.

![Cairo July 18th 1999](image)

Interestingly, this billboard was positioned in downtown Cairo, in one of the busiest commercial areas. The city background is like any other modern city and the image of a young woman on the billboard is also very similar to popular western media representations of contemporary, young, sexually, provocative women. There is some paint splattered on the edge of this image (which may be a form of protest against overt displays of female sexuality). The white 'matter' splattered over the image of the female also resembles
male ejaculate. This could further suggest the sexual nature of the image. Hence the private 'use' of this type of female imagery is taken into and magnified in the public sphere and is a "matter out of place" (Douglas, 1966, p. 35). Thus it becomes a form of defiance and derogation\textsuperscript{26}. However, the public exposure of the female seems also to suggest that there is an infiltration of 'western' liberal ideals of sexuality which may be considered either progressive or regressive in terms of traditional cultural values of the region in which women generally cover their bodies.

I consider there is a difficulty in assessing the pattern of power relations involved in the portrayal of sexuality. For example, Paglia (1990, p.13) asserts that the \textit{femme fatale} is not a fiction created by male desires, but an extrapolation of biological realities in women, which expresses women's ancient and eternal control of the sexual realm. Furthermore, the performance of sexuality is seen by many young women as a form of empowerment with which Paglia vehemently agrees. By pushing the boundaries of 'acceptable' appearances and categorisations of females, such as the virgin-whore dichotomy (which allows little space for the complexities of woman), there may be a distinction between a femininity that is imposed on women and one that is controlled by women who possess the confidence to subvert the constrictions.

Socialist feminists, however, assert that the sexual portrayal of women relates to masculine fantasies of power and possession, and women may contribute to the perpetuation of female subordination by embracing and feeling empowered by the objectification and sexualisation of the female body. Importantly, in a patriarchal culture, Irigaray asserts, the general understanding of what is 'feminine' is the result of masculine libidinal economy. Femininity as we understand it is a 'masculine' feminine. Therefore, the challenge is to try to subvert the masculine order.

\textsuperscript{26} Special thanks to Gil Bradley for this suggestion.
Campbell (2000, p. 109) asserts that for women the 'masquerade', or mimicry, in which women 'play' the "feminine and seductive games that men want in order to win power through surreptitious routes" offers the possibility of seeing something joyful and excessive about women's sexuality. Doane (1991, p. 26), amongst others, argues that in "this type of masquerade, an excess of femininity, is aligned with the femme fatale and... is necessarily regarded by men as evil incarnate." However, rather than retreating from an excess of sexuality it may be a possible to flaunt and flirt with its masculine containement, as I try to do in my photographs. Campbell asserts that the masquerade corresponds to Irigaray's notion of "sexual bliss or jouissance which is multiple and fluid overtaking the 'phallic norm' to potentially represent other forms of identity" (2000, pp 9-10). I try to achieve this in my work through my use of disparate signs of femininity which also are self-referential in that they highlight an awareness of the act of photographing, and that our western contemporary sense of reality is made up of images. The focus of the reading of the photographs also involves more than the formalism of the images. It is about how, as a young western woman, I conceive the world. It is about my relationship to the camera and my attention to 'woman' who is often the object of scopophilia. Doane (1991, p. 22) elaborates that for the female spectator there is a certain over presence when confronted with the image of 'woman' because "she is the image." "Given the closeness of this relationship, the female spectator's desire can be described only in terms of a kind of narcissism – the female look demands a becoming". In other words this involve congruity. It negates the gaps or distance associated with the voyeuristic gaze. Moreover, "this body so close, so excessive, prevents the woman from assuming a position similar to the man's in relation to signifying systems" (Doane, 1991, p. 23). As such, although my journey photographs may have some similarity to those of males, I suggest that there are differences in approach to the subject matter.

I am speaking from a position of intimacy with the other, rather than distance from the Other. Furthermore, the photographs are positioned are mimetic
souvenirs of my journey towards a *photographie féminine*. There is a 'performance' of meaning which expands into a wider discursive field based on the intimacy from the memory of my encounters and more general feminist theoretical reflections that draw on cultural myths and western art practices. Particularly, I follow Lumby's (1997, p. 8) comments in that we should not read images in a way that makes women feel bad about themselves. She asserts “why not encourage them to make creative readings of images and to appropriate and reinvent female (or male) stereotypes to their own advantage?” (1997, p. 8). In my urban exposures, I try to achieve this by working with the existing myths and metaphors of the feminine on the street to bring out the excluded abject status of the feminine into a wider context of representation. This is achieved, through my picturing of juxtapositions.

For example, the signs of the ‘feminine’ are foregrounded in my photograph taken on Las Vegas Boulevard (14th June 1999) which consists of a ‘Mona Lisa’ reproduction poster positioned on a high brick wall. Positioned near the top right hand corner an extremely large painted male artist's hand is lifting up the edge of a sheet to reveal the icon. The photograph is an example of the
discourses of patriarchal art practices and femininity. Although the 'Mona Lisa' is not generally positioned as 'abjected', she has been the source of male fascination for centuries which positions her as Other.

Paglia argues that the Mona Lisa, painted in 1503, is the:

premier sexual persona of western art... She is an ambassador from primeval times, when earth was a desert inhospitable to man. She presides over a landscape of raw rock and water... Her figure is a stable female delta, a perceptual pyramid topped with the mystic eye (1990, p.154)

I consider that the Mona Lisa painting does present elusive qualities which are represented in her firm outward looking gaze addressing the viewer. Her sensual dark physical qualities, as well as her most 'celebrated' wry smile, also evoke a mysterious power. Freud, haunted by the smile himself, was also fascinated with the wide range of commentary in regards to Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa and how the smile is connected with laughter. This seems to be associated with primary narcissism which Freud "declares is the greatest source of fascination for men" (cited in Isaak, 1996, p.13). Isaak asserts that "Freud's discovery suggests that the impetus for Leonardo's artistic production derives from an attempt to recover a maternal identification, more specifically, an identification with a women who maintained a primary narcissism" (1996, p.13). Isaak further claims that "the laughter of women has been disquieting the discourse of art history" (1996, p.12).

I draw upon the notion of the wry laughter of women in the way in which I framed this image within the context of the painted images and posters emphasising the gender relations in the history of western art. The large male hand can be attributed to the 'genius' of the (male) artist. This gesture is symbolic of the patriarchal lineage of art and woman as a muse for, and object of, art.

The various composites framed together provide a commentary on art practices and the blurring of boundaries. In other words, the photographs I
have produced try to present its own uncanny existence. It is an in-between space between the real and the imaginary. The vivid colours of the image, such as the deep blue sky above the top of the building, complement the painted posters on the wall. The sky appears as part of the painted poster. The entire scene lacks depth and space is compressed. Therefore there is a seamless union of sky and building which does not allow the viewer to identify the division of where the poster or building ends. The position of the camera, pointing upwards also suggests the importance and recognition of this image as well. The eclectic mix of art styles and periods reflects the playfulness and pastiche of a postmodern society, but is imbued with a masculinist gender politics and poetics.

According to Benjamin (1968b), through the use of mechanical reproduction artworks such as the Mona Lisa are divested of aura. The experience of viewing the subject is no longer special or unique. Its common usage is an example of the transgression from high art to popular culture. However, in my framing with the isolation of details, such as the hand and the Mona Lisa painting it creates a new reality and is a cultural commentary of the position of women in art history.
Similarly my photograph produced in Athens (27th June 1999) consists of part of an advertising billboard juxtaposed alongside a distant view of the Temple of Olympian Zeus and the Acropolis, surrounded by lush green vegetation. Like the Mona Lisa photograph, it is a space in the present that carries traces of the past. The photograph combines the images of woman, nature and ruins. It also represents elements of the ancient (the temple) and the modern (the advertising sign).

Due to the juxtaposition of signs and my emphasis on the presumptuous pose of figure on the billboard I consider that the female is re-represented as a symbol of authority. Woman as a signifier of autonomous authority has not been part of modernist practices, except as a *femme fatale*, a debased form of power. From her body language and attire, and the Temple of Olympus in the background, the female connotes an image of the ancient pre-hellenic Greek Goddess, Aphrodite, who in her independence also embodies a *feminin* practice (Spretnak, 1992, p. 69). Her "consciousness was both focused and receptive" and she motivated "women to seek intensity in relationships... to value creative process, and be open to change" (Bolen, 1984, p. 17).
The female’s dress also suggests a hyper-femininity associated with creativity and female sexuality. She is draped in a white sleeveless dress or robe with a plunging neckline. Her left breast is almost completely exposed, which may be read as sexually overt. However, exposure of the breasts, could also be connoted as maternal, as a sign of nurturance, in the same way the iconic and sensual figure of Marianne was during the French Revolution. A suggestive power is represented in her loosely crossed arms and her head turned towards the left. The latter gesture is symbolic as the ‘left’ connotes the feminine, social justice and is often concerned with the marginal. Of importance is that the female positioned as emblematic of civic power is negated in patriarchal culture. This is also argued by Battersby, (1994, p.92) who has researched the patriarchal bias in celebrating the male ‘genius’ in romanticism and asserts that “tales of matriarchy and female goddesses have been recouped by male narratives that consign them to an early stage of evolutionary history.” Feminist archaeologist Gimbutas (1989, p. 321) also contends that in the ancient world the “Goddess in all her manifestations was a symbol of the unity of all life in Nature.” But she asserts “a prejudice against this worldliness developed and with it rejection of the Goddess and all she stood for.” Incorporating Gimbutas’s emphasis on the importance of the Goddess, Bolen (1984), argues there are ‘goddesses in every woman’. She asserts:

The Greek goddesses are images of women that have lived in the human imagination for over three thousand years. The goddesses are patterns or representations of what women are like – with more power and diversity of behaviour than women have historically been allowed to exercise. (Bolen, 1984, p. 23)

My reading of the billboard as a Goddess presents an image of independent female power. She may be positioned in the conventional patriarchal framing of femininity, with her tilted head and her frontal

27 Marianne was a major political icon of the French Revolution. Her exposed breasts connoted an image of revolutionary nourishment. It suggested equal care for all—excluding the aristocracy (Sennett, 1994, p. 288).
display of her body. She is 'to be looked at', and this is established in her body language and the large scale of the billboard print. However, a more creative reading, which is established in considering the juxtaposition of the ancient temple and the green vegetation in the background, relates to myths of the Goddess. As previously discussed, this power is suggested in her physical presence, the scale of her image and by her head turned towards the distant archaeological site barred by the frame of the advertisement.

Another image of a billboard, taken in Paris (14th June, 1999), emphasises the representation of the female 'form' of femininity and sexuality. The poster painting is an advertisement for the Musée D'Érotique. The photograph was taken at night. The colours of the image are warm mellow tones which enhance the sensuality of the notion of woman and the night. The billboard consists of a young slender woman with her bare back revealed. She represents characteristics of a *femme fatale*. The significance of my photograph is that it follows Irigaray's strategy of reflecting patriarchal images of women in magnified proportions as a subversive strategy of play and
mimicry. Also, due to its erotic nature, it is an image of a woman that would be normally viewed in a private space but is on display in public. Therefore, the placement of this image on a building wall breaks down the divisions of private and public erotic viewing spaces.

In relation to the issues of public and private viewing spaces and the *femme fatale* I would also like to discuss the photograph of my shadow or trace-imprint taken in Aries (8th July 1999). Authorial projection through the cast shadow was part of the very fabric of the self-reflective discourse in photography and has been demonstrated by photographers such as Alfred Steiglitz, Andre Kertesz and Lee Friedlander (Stochita, 1997, p.117). According to Stochita (1997), for the artist the distortion and magnification of her/his shadow is an expression of autonomous power. Admittedly, in depicting my shadow I am also adhering to the legacy of bourgeois individualism that exalts the individual producer by deliberately marking his/her photographs through authorial self-reflection. My following a common trope of photographers also illustrates the difficulty of trying to 'invent' a feminine language outside masculine discourse. However, what distinguishes my work
from those who may not share my political position is the context and content of my photographs in which I focus on ‘writing the feminin body’ which has rarely been the focus within masculine cultural contexts. My work aims to exaggerate my feminin presence. The use of the shadow in this context is used as the symbol of the uncertainty and a foreboding enigma which is related to Freud’s reading of the uncanny.

Moreover, the photograph presents a dominant dark and mysterious feminine presence with the chiaroscuro of film noir and the male ‘fantasy’ woman in the window. It also poses the difficult question of whether it is possible to define female sexuality outside the terms of the objectifying male gaze.

The photograph was taken at night. It consists of my shadow on the exterior wall of my hotel building. The colours in the photograph are warm and muted, as in soft pornography. However, instead of a clearly visible portrait of a woman, or an erotically veiled figure in a private interior, the large projected silhouette on a building wall is uncanny. It is ghostly as it designates what escapes and eludes total representation. Freud (1958) discussed that the duplication of the self was an essential ingredient in the production of the effect of ‘the uncanny’. Furthermore, the image seems to uncannily rework the traces of the body. I become the subject of my feminist counter-aesthetic. Connotations of female sexuality are evoked, yet it is inconclusive. The image, which bears the signs of femininity such as the long hair, body cant and curved figure and also offers a hint of the femme fatale, is just a shadow over the (masculine) sublime vastness of a wall. Baudelaire states that “it is woman who casts the biggest shadow or projects the greatest light” (cited in Fer, 1993, p. 177). As such, in the uncanniness of the photograph, I consider I am involved in both ‘writing with light’ as well as casting a shadow on cultural signs of femininity and female sexuality. The image suggests how

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26 According to Place (1980, p. 54) film noir is the “only period in American film in which women are deadly but sexy, exciting and strong.”
photography can make use of light to study shadows. The image is also an example of the way I have used the surrounding landscape to re-frame images of women.

Dirty Pictures

My photographs convey my awareness of images of femininity and women in the urban setting and my attempts to subvert a dominant patriarchal reading through mimicry and juxtapositions as well as by adopting a standard documentary investigative approach. My work acknowledges Kristeva’s (1982) location of the position of women in society in the patriarchal system as perpetually at the boundary, the borderline, the place where order shades into chaos, light into darkness. Interested in the borderline positions of women I photographed the highly visible projections of femininity as well as being lowered to litter that was on the streets.

The imagery of women discarded in the street is litter. Interestingly, Irigaray identifies the patriarchal notion of femininity as the “shards”, the “scraps: the uncollected debris.” (Irigaray, 1985b, p. 30). My work is concerned with femininity as ‘dirt’ which I recycle or reposition in my photographs to challenge the limitations of patriarchal framings. The discarded images of women also may be categorised as the abject. “The abject – be it the feminine, homosexuality or race – is excluded by an Oedipal symbolic” (Campbell, 2000, p. 107). By contrast my work attempts to be inclusive. It evokes the imaginary and the blurring of definitive boundaries. I foreground the abject in order to disturb the status quo. In the masculine order the abject is “related to perversion” (Kristeva, 1982, p. 15). It is the notion of ‘perversion’ that I textually play with and draw attention to.

Dirt and filth are also labels for pornographic material, and much of the matter that I photographed was pornographic in the sense that it was originally intended to incite a (male) sexual response or was an advertisement for sexual
services. It may also be considered an abject part of society that has the potential to threaten life, disturb identity, system, and order (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4).

A selection of my photographs relate to dirt in two ways: one as a matter of aesthetics or hygiene of the street, and the other as an aspect of a male defined femininity. Pornography removed from the intimacy of the private room and left in the public space of the street is literally "dirt as a matter out of place" (Douglas, 1966, p. 35). It is private matter made public.
An example of 'woman' placed on the boundaries and as litter is to be found in my photograph taken in Barcelona (25th June, 1999). The photograph consists of the lower half of elderly woman with a walking stick in the act of stepping near a discarded brochure, advertising the Museu de l'Erotica abandoned on the street pavement in Las Ramblas. The brochure consists of an image of an Art Nouveau style painting of a bare backed young woman, similar to the image of the billboard take in Paris (14th July, 1999). Her body cant with her left arm outstretched also conveys a casual abandon. Smaller images on the brochure include phallic shaped objects and a small map informs the passers-by of the location of the erotic museum. The photograph was taken at night and, with the use of the flash to expose the feminine elements, reflects the trope of 'the night as woman'.

In my photograph there is a contrast between two forms of femininity, as well as between age and youth. The older woman due to her clothing (she is
wearing a blue floral dress and white court shoes) represents a matriarchal figure whereas the younger petite woman who reveals her bare back conveys aspects of the *femme fatale*.

It seems that the elderly woman who is walking alone in the street at night presents a view of matriarchy detached from the ideology of an older woman’s place in the domestic, private space of the home. Wilson (1995, p. 72) in her analysis of the nineteenth-century metropolis, asserts that the androgynous woman, the lesbian and the prostitute are associated with the eroticisation of life in the city. Notably, the older matriarchal figure is absent from this discourse which suggests that a young fertile woman is seen as a ‘figure of public pleasure’ in the masculine landscape of modernity.

Laver (1969) and Flugel (1930) described the "Shifting Erogenous Zone" which in art and advertising emphasised different features of the female body, such as the back or legs, and which was used in order to prevent men from being sexually bored. However, it is not only certain features of the female body but youth that is eroticised. My camera is positioned at a high angle frames the older woman's legs and feet. An image of these features taken from a position looking upwards conventionally presents the legs as a fetish, thus sexualised. However, the potential sexual gaze does not occur because the view is looking downwards towards the 'pure' white dress shoes she is wearing. Also the woman's aged appearance does not contribute to the 'normal' (masculine) view of a sexually desirable woman. Youth represents sexuality, and this is further conveyed in the way young slender female bodies are depicted in the popular media. Aged women, however, are rarely depicted in similar ways to that of young women thus they are not deemed to have a desirable sexual 'persona'.

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29 Paglia (1990, p. xiii) refers to personae as 'masks'. This offers the potential for the 'performance' of sexuality, rather than viewing sexuality as innate and fixed.
The depiction of fallen leaves on the pavement under the woman's feet is also significant. Moreover, the elderly woman and the fallen leaves both connote the moving towards the end of life, or existence. Interestingly, her presence evokes the myth of the old woman of Autumn, Baba Yaga, the ancient goddess of birth and death. An environmental consciousness is elicited in the depiction of the (almost lost) presence of nature in the built environment of the city. Indeed, the expansion of the urban realm in the invasive growth of cities threatens to overtake the natural living world and our relationship with flora and fauna. Importantly in the construction of the photograph I do not confirm the patriarchal capitalist ideology of culture against nature. My photograph confirms Wilson's (1992, p. 8) previously stated assertion that women due to their socialisation "instead of setting nature against the city, they find nature in the city." For example, the leaves are juxtaposed with the constructed fabrication of the pavement. Likewise the older matriarchal woman is juxtaposed with the patriarchal mass-produced brochure of a young female.

The presence of the elderly woman also challenges the stereotypical label of the 'lady of the night' associated with street prostitution which once marked, and perhaps still marks, the nocturnal topography of the city. Although the photograph may suggest that that she is an aged prostitute now able to walk with the other litter of capital, the unaccompanied older woman walking the street can be related to the myths in which the archetypal aged woman, or the crone, was seen as a source of power and authority. Dexter (1990, p. 182) asserts that whereas virgins and matrons have been tied to patriarchal culture, and have given energy to the man the old depleted women has not been possessed by patriarchy. Thus the older woman may be considered to be 'reclaiming the night' from patriarchal control. Furthermore, her walking stick may provide physical support but it can also be used for self-defense.

Historically in the city men tended to "experience the 'dark corners' of the metropolis as regions of adventure, of challenging danger, or self-affirmation" whereas for the majority of women access was denied or restricted (Schlör,
1998, p. 171). Indeed, "women's sense of security is profoundly shaped by our inability to secure an undisputed right to occupy that [public] space" (Hamner and Saunders, 1984, p. 39). The presence of the older woman seems to subvert the masculine supremacy and the masculine seduction by the nocturnal city. Baudrillard (1990) charts the operation of seduction in which the ambiguities and mysteries of surfaces offer a disruptive potential. However, Baudrillard, following a masculine economy, condemns what he sees as the feminist attempt to make everything speak, to destroy seduction and open up the secret of the hidden operation of the world, or in other words, what I refer to as my uncanny exposures (Plant, 1993, p. 95). For Baudrillard seduction is a whimsical game, but as Plant (1993, p. 97) points out "if the game becomes serious, seduction does indeed begin to dissolve the certainties of the masculine." I suggest that my photography is a serious game that is played with pieces of the masculine world.

In the role of the photographic bricoleuse, I am piecing together different signs to produce new meanings in an attempt to emphasise the contradictions and ambiguities that exist in the urban environment. In my work I attempt to reveal the holes and push the boundaries of the seductive.

In literature and art the common theme involving seduction is that:

After the fall of darkness other powers rule than during the day. In the symbolism and myth of most peoples the night is chaos, the scene of dreams, it teems with ghosts and demons, like the sea with fish and sea-monsters. It is female, as the day is male, and like everything it brings quiet and terror at the same time. (Schivelbusch cited in Schlör, 1998, p. 169).

The night as feminine and the "the scene of dreams, ghosts and demons" present aspects of the uncanny which darkness evokes. On Las Vegas boulevard, which is also known as 'the strip', the themes of the uncanny, abject and waste are brought together in both the desolate female representation and the presence of the 'ghostly' male in one photograph (13th June 1999) I took there.
The photograph consists of a bin with a pornography magazine in it. It symbolises Juliet Mac Cannell's metaphor of the 'trash can' to describe female subjectivity. "Woman", she writes, "is only seen in pieces (in part-objects, in the 'trash can' of overvalued zones of her body" (1986, p. 108). The metaphor of the trash canning of women is made literal in this image, as well as in Irigaray's previous assertions about patriarchal femininity as 'shards, the uncollected debris'.

The woman on the cover of the 'entertainment' guide displays the characteristics of the *femme fatale*, such as long luxurious hair and a heavy lidded gaze. Her mouth is also slightly apart and her reddened lips reflect sexual arousal. Body canting, the tilted head, the pouting mouth are commodified images of a fetishised female sexuality. These are 'over-valued zones' of femininity. Pollock, in her analysis of one of Rosetti's paintings, describes the depicted woman as "she is body; she is sexuality; she is danger" (1988, p. 142). The same comments are aptly suited to the woman on the
magazine cover. "The femme fatale is a woman who lures men into danger, destruction, even death by means of her overwhelming charms" (Allen, 1983, p.v). However, the danger in the photograph in Las Vegas not only relates to the fetishised female who represents danger for 'men' because she is in 'control' of her sexuality and a threat to public 'morality'. For me, as a woman, the depicted male also represents a masculine danger. This feeling is evoked in the common notion of the city at night as a dangerous place for an unaccompanied female.

As a woman, and from my experience of walking in the street, the nocturnal city is a place of potential danger in terms of personal security. Advice to women in countless number of travel books, such as the Lonely Planet Guides, is for women to avoid walking alone in the city streets at night. Schlor summarises the common view that "the nocturnal city is a place of risk, of potential danger, and it is charged with sexuality" (1998, p.178). Thus for many females there is a self-imposed restriction on the freedom of movement brought about by an awareness of the potentially sexually aggressive behaviour of males.

As a photographer, I considered myself at times in a dominant position because of the power associated with the operation of the camera in selecting and constructing a photograph. The camera also acts like a defensive shield. The male in my photograph is blurred through my use of a low camera shutter speed. The blurring also gives the male a somewhat ghostly appearance; it also renders him uncanny in his indeterminacy. Thus from my feminist reading of the uncanny 'he' becomes less threatening. The tactic creates a sense of movement and illusion which I consider are elements of the nocturnal city.

There is also horror and a feeling of dread that the femme fatale, which presents the dialectic of sexuality as a form of power and sexuality and as object of the male gaze, is disposed of in a bin. My camera positioned at a high angle presents her female gaze as passively looking upwards from the
abyss. Notably Cixous (1976b, p. 885) uses the abyss to represent the area of femininity that men have established for women as being "too dark to be explorable." Furthermore, the female, like the prostitute, which Felski (1995) identifies as the figure of 'public pleasure', also represents "the abyss of a dangerous female sexuality linked to contamination, disease, and a breakdown of social hierarchies in the modern city" (Felski, 1995, p. 19). This is suggested in the placement of pornography in the bin. However, it is not woman as such who is abdicated, but rather woman as privileged signifier of that which man both fears and desires (Burgin, 1996a, p. 55).

The female considered as dirt and dirt 'defined as a matter out of place' relates to Julia Kristeva's (1982) notion of abjection in which the subject resides outside the 'normalising' terms of desire and is repressed. My photograph of the image of the female in the gaping void of the bin affirms Kristeva's notions in which the abject beckons the subject closer to the edge of the abyss, and its attestation to the impossibility between borders of the 'clean' and the 'unclean'. Furthermore, the excluded woman represents an abject residue. Campbell (2000, p. 109) asserts that "men fear their loss of identity and unconsciously project this lack onto the body of the woman... woman is seen, therefore, as a black-hole or death-like abyss outside language and culture." My photograph of the woman placed in the 'black hole' ironically illustrates this phallic psychoanalytic perspective in which the woman lingers, in the trash can, outside the propriety of culture. Representing the abject disturbs the repressions of the patriarchal order. Furthermore, it highlights that the abject is also about the idea of the impossibility of separation between opposing elements or forces which is a theme in my photography.

In a number of photographs there is also an intimate collision of the sacred and the profane. MacCannell (1976) suggests that for the tourist there is a longing and nostalgia for authenticity which lie in the 'imagined' qualities of the past. This may be interpreted in my photograph (July 18th 1999) taken outside one of the oldest mosques in the African continent, Amr Ibn El-Aas also
known as Taj al Jawamie (Crown of Mosques). MacCannell also claims that this type of nostalgic desire by the tourist is based on an alienation from the urban, fast-paced present. However, although I did photograph the interior of the mosque, I was also interested in the view from the street, in which I noticed a crumpled front cover of a magazine discarded on the pavement. Unlike the tourist seeking 'authenticity' I was attentive to the signs of the urban, fast-paced, commodity-driven world. The magazine image of a young woman's face in the vicinity of a mosque in Egypt shatters the romantic idea of the space as 'untouched by time' or by modernity.

In my photograph (18th July 1999) a man is kneeling down and holding the image of the female to the pavement. Interestingly, it was very windy outside the mosque and the man had noticed that I was trying to photograph the discarded image. He volunteered to pin down the image and was eager to pose for my camera. I was hesitant in making photographs of the Other as I intended to distance myself from the imperialist tradition of photographers who present the Other as a passive agent and as a spectacle for a western audience. I also desired not to intervene in what I originally witnessed, which consisted of the image in isolation from human contact, abandoned on the pavement. Nevertheless I took the photograph, but from a low angle to somewhat empower him. The man is not a passive Other. He is active, not only by holding down the image, but by his gaze addressing the camera.
The image the man is holding down represents signs of patriarchal capitalism. It is a magazine cover consisting of a face of a young woman. The magazine image of the woman relates to the Marxist idea of commodity-fetishism. The female image is presented as a commodity to be bought, touched and discarded. According to Pollock (1988, p. 123), the representation of female faces "function as a screen across which masculine fantasies of knowledge, power and possession can be enjoyed by a ceaseless play on the visible obviousness of woman and the puzzling enigmas reassuringly disguised behind that mask of beauty." The close-up of a young female face, representing a femme fatale of sorts, has pouting, reddened lips and soulful eyes. She is adorned in a headdress of bright pink feathers. Beneath her image on the page were smaller close-ups of other fetishised aspects of femininity, such as eyes with heavy make-up that suggests a dark sensuality.

I did not expect to see this type of litter outside a mosque whose "holiness and impurity are at opposite poles" (Douglas, 1966, p. 7). An impurity is evoked in the image due to the strict moral codes of conduct in regards to the obligatory
concealing of aspects of female sexuality and the female body in the public spaces of an Islamic culture in Cairo, though, I might add, the covering up of the female body also relates to the virgin/whore dichotomy in which sacredness or purity is aligned with female modesty in dress standards.

Las Vegas 14th June 1999

A similar collision between the sacred and the profane can be found in my photograph of a small wedding chapel in Las Vegas in front of which there is a pornography stand. In the foreground, the stand contains a number of
magazines with images advertising female sexual services. It represents females as a commodity. In terms of the placement of pornographic material available in the vicinity of a religious site the photograph combines the sacred and secular.

The church is reminiscent of a Protestant country church; it is white, with a steeple and crucifix. It signifies simple Puritan family values such as community, tradition and conservatism. In the photograph the doors of the chapel are closed; the outside lights of the building are on which suggests that a religious service is taking place within the confines of the building. It is therefore sacred and private. This type of church is often a model for wedding cakes and therefore invested with the ‘positive’ values of heterosexual romance leading to marriage and monogamy. The wedding chapel is situated amongst grand scale resort hotels, elements of which can be seen near the edges of the photographic frame. Venturi (1998) in his analysis of architecture of Las Vegas considers that allusion and comment on the past or present, or on our great commonplaces or old clichés, are evident in the city of Las Vegas. This represents a postmodern pastiche; it is kitsch and is a kind of aesthetic populism.

My framing of the pornographic stand juxtaposed with the white chapel suggests an ‘anxious’ ambiguity of traditional boundaries between the sacred and the profane. The framing disturbs the aesthetics of the chapel and is shadowed by the uncanny presence of the pornographic stand.

In the pornographic stand, which is a blue box, there were magazine images of commodified female sexuality on display behind glass. It is situated for full public access and visibility. The ‘pure’ Protestant values invested in the chapel, which are juxtaposed with the pornographic images, represent the divergence between ideas of expressions of female sexuality. Even the colours of the two constructions are in contrast: the white of the chapel represents innocence and purity, whereas the dark blue is connotative of ‘blue’
movies, the underworld and the forbidden. Paglia (1990, p. 34) claims that our pagan past is based on cultic exhibitionism. She asserts that "pornography is pure pagan imagism" which is now commodified and reproduced mechanically. According to Paglia's interpretation of pornography, the photograph in Las Vegas represents the conflict between the Judeo-Christian religion that has sought to ban pornography as well as paganism which Christianity has tried to suppress.

According to many feminist critics, women's true sexual selves exist somewhere outside the commodified images produced by male desire. Berger (1972, p. 55) states that "the female body is arranged the way it is, to display it to the Man looking at the picture. The picture is made to appeal to his sexuality... it has nothing to do with her own sexuality." Berger compares this tradition in post-Renaissance European oil painting to late twentieth-century advertising images which he argues portray the same conventions of feminine body performance. Both depict the expressions of a woman responding with "calculated charm to the man whom she imagines looking at her – she is offering up her femininity as the surveyed" (1985, p. 55). Based on this perspective a women's pleasure is masochistic, it comes from being a sexual object, from being looked at and desired by men. Interestingly, current feminist approaches challenge the notion that in contemporary society the ideal spectator is male and that pornography is a misogynist product. Critics such as Grosz (1991) and Gamman and Makinen (1994) reject the notion that females enjoying the images represented in pornography are evidence of their internalisation of patriarchal ideology. They argue that exhibitionism and voyeurism are expressions of sexuality. In the images the models' sexuality reaches out to entice the viewer. Arguably, the females are not victims of a patriarchal system and are taking pleasure in the exhibition of their own bodies. They actively participate in a narcissistic spectacle. However, they are also responding to commodified stereotypical patriarchal versions of femininity in their overt sexual display. But, in embracing the characteristics of
the *femme fatale*, the masquerade of excess female sexuality can be empowering to women.

The images in the pornographic stand consist of advertisements for sexual services. The top image is a head and shoulder shot of a reclining brown-skinned woman with long dark hair. Her face is directed toward the camera, her hands are over her head, she is wearing a black satin shirt unbuttoned to reveal part of her left breast. The text, which is covering the rest of her breast states: “First Class” in large letters underlined with “XXX Nude Dancers.” Additional text at the bottom of the photograph states “Full Service, Xotic Beauties.” This image therefore represents not only a transgression of the Protestant sexual codes, but also represents a non-white women, an ‘exotic beauty’ which represents a romanticised imperialist view of the ‘Other’ as a desirable commodity for the service of the (male) western consumer. The images affirm imperialist orientalist assumptions about the sexual provocativeness of non-white women. Furthermore, it seems to follow Shrage’s view (1994, p. 151) in which she asserts that:

> in our contemporary world, perceptions of racial purity, moral purity, and sexual purity are somehow linked. For this reason we may conjecture that the tastes of white North American and European males for racialised sexual others may stem from socially formed perceptions regarding the sexual and moral purity of white women – perceptions that may serve to construct racialised sexual others as morally impure, and thus as sexually available and sensual.

Interestingly, in line with Shrage’s comments on the desirability of the racially Other female in sexual commerce, the ‘exotic’ woman is given visual prominence, in terms of the large space allocated to her image in the advertising brochure. Thus it suggests that she may have a stronger appeal to the prospective client, though the smaller images on this advertising page, which consist of young white women wearing lingerie or a piece of fabric, are in much more explicit sexual positions. For example, one woman has her head directed towards the camera and her legs are raised above her head in a sexually suggestive manner. There are also two other images of females
draping a piece of fabric across their unclothed bodies in which their gazes are directed towards the viewer in the manner of the *femme fatale*. The accompanying text states “Adults Only” and gives a phone number and an Internet address. Pornographic, clichéd images of female sexuality and the advertising of female sexual services less than ten metres from a chapel challenge the notion of what is considered a proper viewing act in public. It disturbs Shrage’s view of the “contemporary world in which perceptions of racial purity, moral purity, and sexual purity are somehow linked” *(1994, p. 151)*. It reflects a breakdown of traditional aesthetic, sexual and spatial boundaries.

The significance of boundaries or thresholds concerning sexuality is also represented in my photograph taken in Barcelona (25th June, 1999). For this photograph, like many others I have taken, outside information is necessary to highlight to the viewer the documentary significance of the image to its context. The photograph consists of the double side entry doors of a large Catholic Cathedral. The purpose of taking the photograph was to document the graffiti spray painted on the doors. The graffiti defiling the sanctity of the church suggests a highly political act.
In the photograph parts of the limestone church are visible along with the sign of the cross above the doorway, which signifies a Christian space. The graffiti on the doors mainly consists of the female symbol, repeated five times and the text “Lesbiana plaer” which translates from Catalan as ‘lesbian pleasure’. Even without the knowledge of the Catalan language, the word ‘lesbiana’ and the female symbols in graffiti represent a political statement of protest to the western tourist. It also can be related to Cixous’ assertion in which she draws on the American feminists’ statement that “we are all Lesbians’, that is, don’t denigrate woman, don’t make of her what men have made of you” (1976, p. 882). Graffiti in public spaces has come to symbolise “violation, social anarchy and moral breakdown” (Gablik, 1984, p. 103). It is abject. It also can be interpreted as the political expression of an oppressed and disenfranchised part of the community. This is particularly significant in terms of the oppressive history of Catholicism towards non-heterosexual marital relations.
Irigaray (1991, p. 45), amongst other feminists, is outspoken on the patriarchal views of the Catholic Church. She states that "let us not wait for the Phallus god to grant us his grace". And this Phallus god is everywhere: "do not many bearers of the said phallus now increasingly take themselves for gods in the full sense?" Especially Irigaray argues "in the holy catholic church, whose sovereign pontiff now thinks fit, once more, to forbid us contraception, abortion, extramarital relations, homosexuality, etc." (1991, p. 45). I consider that this graffiti is a form of protest in the context of its display on the Catholic Church doors and my documentation of this an overtly, politically aware act, though the Pope, as well as certain sections of the public, would most likely consider the graffiti an act of vandalism propounding what Douglas (1966, p.7) asserts is the norm that "sacred things and place are to be protected from defilement."

In my feminist reading of the photographs the images of females gain meaning in relation to their location in the urban landscape. In my work I have represented patterns that reflect masculine culture. I have tried to mimic and subvert the masculine (repressive) gaze through re-framing found images on the street. Furthermore, this evokes the indeterminacy and intensity of the uncanny which attempts to disrupt the traditional (masculine) perimeters and binaries. Furthermore, my work follows Pollock (1988) assertion that women artists who abandon the conventional wide landscapes of male painters for more confined spatial representations, re-articulate traditional space so that it ceases to functions primarily as the space of sight for a mastering gaze, but becomes the locus of relationships. My encounter with the environment is associated with relationships, rather than presenting panoramic views. Moreover, there is critical attention to the politics of space, women's place and interactions in it through which I try to avoid romantic imperialism.
Chapter Five:

Reclamation

1. the conversion of unusable land...into land suitable for other uses
2. the extraction of useful substances from waste or refuse
3. the claiming back of something taken or given away

(Microsoft Word, 2001)

In my journey towards a photographie féminine I have attempted to use a feminin language in constantly touching upon issues together with presenting a range of theoretical perspectives. In particular, I have addressed issues concerning the masculine appropriation of space in terms of travel and aesthetics. My travel experiences have been mediated through the practice of écriture féminine which relates to a feminine economy that has the potential to reformulate existing structures through the inclusion of women's sexuality and history. I acknowledge my position within the margins of a dominant patriarchal ideology and follow Irigaray's suggestion that women "should assume the feminine role deliberately" thereby providing the possibility of changing women's underlying position through making "visible what was supposed to remain invisible" (1985a, p. 65–85). As such, my focus has been concerned with the gender politics of body and space, in particular drawing on the themes of the uncanny and the abject, which are aspects of society that have been repressed or excluded. Moreover, my photographie féminine represents a re-conceptualisation of the landscape from just a place to see to a more interactive space relating to a feminin experience.

I am attempting to develop a critical practice that acknowledges the cultural legacy of colonialism, photography and the representation of the female, from
a feminin position rather than following a modernist journey concerned with purely formal—the 'visual' aesthetics that seek to promote masculine modalities of power, authority and distance. The work also acknowledges that there are traces of many personal, cultural and photographic influences within my work. This follows Grundberg's (1990, p. 5) assertion that "the inability to have 'pure, unblemished meaning or experience' at all, is what "we call postmodernist", and, is a "theme that is characterised by most contemporary photography explicitly or implicitly."

In this final chapter I will briefly discuss the notion of chora which is a spatial concept and involves interactivity. I will also weave together my subversive and dissident themes relating to gender and space in a textual tapestry concerning my journey towards a photographie féminine. I am suggesting that it is impossible to have "unblemished meaning or experience" due to the differences of gender, sexuality, ethnicity and related experiences which result in variant approaches to space and the body. Moreover, my work seems to follow Youngs' (1990b) ideal of the city as a metaphor for a politics of difference. She claims that city life embodies an ideal form of social relations between strangers. Similar to the theories of écriture féminine which involve celebrating difference and diversity Young's considers that in the city there is the possibility of a form of co-existence which involves an "openness to unassimilated otherness" (Young, 1990b, p. 227). This involves a recognition of, and a respect, for others.

These political themes are brought together in my participation in, and analysis of my photographs produced at, a major 'reclaim the streets' anti-capitalist rally held in London on June 18th 1999. Evocatively, the chora, a feminised concept of space, is associated with liminality and involves a heterogeneous rhythm which is an emphasis in my work and was an undercurrent in the rally (Wearing and Wearing, 1996, p. 237). In particular, my emphasis on the body, movement, sounds, scent and emotional states that characterise écriture féminine are integral to my photographs which work against the closure of a
phallogocentric language and the popular press narrative of the protests. Moreover, the significance of the notion of chora to the subversive themes of my work, and my framing of the rally, is that chora contains many characteristics which masculinist lore has forsaken.

The notion of chora has been used by a number of male philosophers from Plato to Derrida. Feminist critics such as Grosz, Kristeva and Irigaray insist that chora, a highly ambiguous spatial category, may be aligned with a feminist concept of space, particularly because, as Grosz (1995b, p. 51) asserts, chora “is the space in which place is made possible” and as Irigaray suggests that woman is place (1993a, p. 35). Therefore, the chora may be the space of indeterminate borders in which women and particular feminin modalities flourish.

Furthermore, Grosz (1995b, p. 48) cites Plato who in the Timaeus, invokes a mythological bridge between the intelligible and the sensible, mind and body, which he calls ‘chora reflection’. Derrida (1993) contends that the chora must be understood without any definite article and thus, as Grosz articulates, it has an acknowledged role at the very foundation of ‘place’, ‘location’, ‘site’, ‘region’, ‘locale’ and ‘country’. Moreover, in Kristeva’s (1977, p.57) work the chora, associated with the deconstruction of dualisms, opens the possibility of alternative forms of thinking. Irigaray (1991) further expands on the qualities of chora, suggesting that in this form of feminine spatiality there is the capacity for genuine dialogue and communication. Furthermore, as Grosz (1995 b, p. 48) asserts, it also contains an irreducible yet often overlooked, connection with the function of femininity, being associated with a series of gender-aligned terms - “mother’, ‘nurse’, ‘receptacle,’ and ‘imprint-bearer’.” The latter term ‘imprint-bearer’ may be applied to a photographie féminine and a post-modern documentary practice as it implicates the photographer’s presence on the scene, rather that the photograph viewed as an unmediated ‘window to the world’.
Travel theorists such as Wearing and Wearing (1996, p. 233) assert that instead of a destination which becomes an "object of the stroller's gaze, the concept of chora suggests a space occupied and given meaning by the people who made use of the space." Thus the "space gives birth to the living experiences of human beings, it is open to possibilities." Furthermore, this space may also be associated with photography and the camera, which according to Giblett (2000, p. 188) "is a Bachelor Machine for a Bachelor Birth in which the photographer gives birth to a new world" thus circumventing the female body. But rather than circumventing the female body I am integrating my embodiment into my practice. Although I acknowledge that the technology I use in my work is masculine, I would follow Donna Haraway's (1991, p.150) suggestion of the 'embodied vision' in that we are all cyborgs (part organism, part machine). This could be a model of positive interdependence in which the boundary between human and non-human, subject and object is neither absolute nor fixed, but rather fluid, negotiable and culturally variable. Similarly, Cixous argues that writing and language are themselves bodily functions.

In terms of my photography journey which challenges the masculine identity of the flâneur, as a passive observer, as a sightseer, and the masculine territories of production, the concept of chora with its implied maternal dimensions and its emphasis on interactions seems to be highly applicable to my approach. Indeed, the notion of chora takes up the point that Wilson highlights in the writing of Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolff in which their female protagonists experience the city as "maternal or womblike" (Wilson, 1992, p. 158). Moreover, as a way around the loss, exile and perpetual alienation in the masculine schema (that is also associated with figure of the flâneur), Cixous argues for the inclusion of the maternal (nurturing) body in writing which presents a link with the pre-symbolic plenitude between self and m/other. Furthermore, she argues that due to women's sex specific capacities to give birth "woman is always in a certain way 'mother' for herself and for the other" (1990, p. 68). Although Cixous' theory is speculative, it seems particularly significant and relevant to my approach. Furthermore, by re-appropriating the implied maternal dimensions of space associated with the
chora, Grosz (1995b) suggests that it might be possible to orient ways in which spatiality is conceived, lived and used thus making way for women to reoccupy places from which they have been re/displaced or expelled.

As I have argued in previous chapters, my photographs bear my imprint. There are traces of my female body. It is an écriture féminine, 'a writing with light' incorporating feminist concepts that I describe as a photographie féminine. My street photography, in its documentation of the social landscape, is a result of an interaction between photographer and subject. It involves a subjective process of producing photographs rather than taking photographs from an objective distance. It is not a detached form of spectatorship associated with the tourist persona, the flâneur, and the masculine aesthetics of the beautiful, the sublime and the picturesque. My work evokes the feminist counter-aesthetic of the uncanny, which is an unsettling indeterminate space that has the potential to disrupt phallocentric discourse.

Similarly, my interest in the chora is its association with an intermediate feminine space which is both metaphysical and bodily, and in which representation is heterogeneous and disruptive. In my work produced in Trafalgar Square at the anti-capitalist rally, labelled the 'Carnival against Capitalism', the concept of chora and the uncanny are brought together for the promotion of social politics and subjective documentary. The photographs taken at this event are significant because they draw together a number of themes of my journey. These include the city, travel, the body, gender and space. Similar to my own journey, which involved travel to geographical distant locations, the June 18th (J18) protest organisers hoped that "the resistance will be as transnational as capital" (J18 press release, 1999). Also akin to my journey-goals is that the protesters aimed to 'reclaim the streets'. The street or public place is considered to be a masculine space.

Following de Certeau (1985, p. 127) in his discussion of practices of space, my work involves tactics that "play upon 'opportunities', catch occurrences, and
the opacities of history" rather than a strategic practice which may be considered masculine and connotes a history of militarisation and organisational and institutional control. Tactics are "a way of operating available to people displaced and excluded as 'other' by the bordering actions of strategy" (Morris, 1992, p. 33). As such, the journey involves tactics that seek to disrupt the masculine strategic hold of public space. Moreover, these (feminist and subversive) tactics are characterised by a degree of uncertainty and indeterminacy. They operate on the 'fringes' of social order and seem to offer a capacity to recombine heterogeneous elements of culture. Furthermore, the use of tactics in the setting of the rally in Trafalgar Square is highly significant because the square as a major 'tourist attraction' of London has an historical importance as a 'strategic' place.

The presence of Victorian statues and monuments in Trafalgar Square bears the legacy of British and European imperialism. The square commemorates the heroics of Admiral Horatio Viscount Nelson's victory in the battle of Trafalgar of 1805 in which he defeated the French and Spanish fleets and Napoleon's intended invasion of England. The victory helped secure the supremacy of the British naval forces which was the basis of British defence, aggression, trade, and empire. Given the historical significance of the square, the presence of the protesters at the 'Carnival Against Capitalism' and my photographie féminine is a tactical response of subversion to the pre-eminence of 'aggression', 'trade' and corporate 'empires' that dominate the city.

In the uncanny shadow of the sublime, towering monuments the crowd, the allegedly 'threatening' masses, could be described in images of feminine incertitude and sexuality as a flood or swamp (Wilson, 1992, p. 7). The swamp of people can be analogous with Giblett's (1996) notion of the swamp which in the patriarchal consciousness is neither aesthetically beautiful nor sublime. This is especially applicable in terms of the relationship between the counter-aesthetic of the uncanny and the swamp. The relationship between
the swamp and the crowd has also been highlighted by writers such as Edgar Allen Poe (1967) in which his 'man in the crowd' could only exist so long as he swam in the crowd. The crowd with its indeterminacy was permeated with an uncanny horror. Moreover, for many male travellers, the fear of the crowd haunts their texts. "The crowd is travel's limit-text; it undermines its foundational individualism, decentring it, whilst forcing it to face the foreboding visibility of power" (Arshi, Kirstein, Naqvi and Pankow, 1994, p. 237).

For myself, as a feminist traveller, I found the decentring nature of the crowds at the anti-capitalist rally as productive as a boundless text, rather than "travel's limit-text." Notions of the uncanny were evoked in the blurring of boundaries in the crowd as well as the intensity in the display of a 'return of the repressed' which was indicated in the protesters in their attention to the surfaces of the body. There is the possibility for social and political agency in the 'performance' which is a bodily act that eludes and exceeds the symbolic, thus evoking the uncanny space.

Trafalgar Square attracted to the centre of London thousands of environmental protesters, opponents of capitalism and a number of anarchists. London was targeted to be the major area for social and environmental protest as it is one of the world's leading financial centres. London still maintains the legacy of nineteenth-century British imperial power with its major involvement in world trade and its large overseas assets. The importance of London in global politics is that the financial dealing that takes place in the city far exceeds Britain's economic and geographical boundaries. The protests were timed to coincide with the start of the G8 summit in Cologne, Germany. It was organised on the Internet as an international day of action, protest and carnival. It aimed to highlight the links between economic globalisation, poverty and the destruction
of the Earth's environment. It sought activists, such as myself, who wished to ‘reclaim the city’ and who hoped to strengthen their diverse spiritual and ecological roots.

In a twenty-four hour period, in over forty countries, activists participated in the protest and their actions were telecast via the Internet. Activists hoped that it would be the first of many such ‘festivals of resistance’. Since then, a number of similar anti-capitalist protests have ensued. Massive protests against the devastating effects of activities of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) took place in Seattle in early December 1999, and to a similar extent activists in London once again reclaimed the streets in the May Day protest, 2000 and 2001. In London at the J18 anti-capitalist rally, amongst the diverse number of activist groups that were present in the carnival of ‘resistance’ were Jubilee 2000, who campaign for all Third World debt to be written off for the new millennium; the Association of Autonomous Astronauts who were protesting against the militarisation of space; and anti-car pressure groups as well as animal liberationists.

Street protests are a vital way for attracting public support and media attention to a cause. However, the sensationalist popular media tends to focus tendentiously on images of violence and conflict that often are there to “shock, titillate, but never to challenge or to raise questions” (Webster, 1980, p. 221). Images of violence at demonstrations “invite the public as a whole to regard all such ‘protest’ as strategically pointless and personally dangerous” (Barnett, 2000, p. 52). In contrast to the documentation of the ‘strategic’ practice of photojournalism, my photographie féminine concerned the tactical carnivalesque aspects of the rally. Bakhtin’s (1984) notion of the carnivalesque, elaborated by literary theorists, is a form of cultural resistance. It is something that is developed when the performances twist, mutate, and

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30 For example in Australia, the leader of the opposition, Kim Beazley was attacked by pie throwing protesters for speaking at a meeting about global trade sponsored by Shell.
invert standard themes of societal makeup. Isaak (1996, p. 20) insists that the carnivalesque "is an instrument not only for a feminist analysis of texts, but also for feminist artistic production and cultural politics in general."

The traditions of carnivalesque, which were developed in Europe in the Middle-ages, involved mocking those in authority and parodying official ideas of normal society. During the carnival the people took themes and conventions from mainstream life, and through inversion, criticised them. Although the celebration and joyous ambivalence of the carnival performed an escapist function, the carnival also provided a forum through which to question societal norms. The latter point is highly significant in terms of my interpretation and documentation of the carnival. Rather than an 'orgy of violence' as reported in the press accounts, I recall the event as largely a peaceful, joyful gathering of diverse people.

My photographs, which focus on body performance, inscriptions and spatiality, involve a number of the features embracing the characteristics of carnival as outlined in a promotional leaflet by the organisers. Interestingly, the carnival leaflet draws on Bakhtin's (1984) concept of the inversion of hierarchy. They suggest that carnival is:

1. An explosion of freedom involving laughter, mockery, dancing, masquerade and revelry;
2. Occupation of the streets in which the symbols and ideals of authority are subverted;
3. When the marginalised take over the centre and create a world turned upside down;
4. You cannot watch carnival, you take part;
5. An unexpected carnival is revolutionary.

In my observations, which focused on body performance, the previously cited features of 'carnival' seem to be reflected in the anti-capitalist protest in Trafalgar Square. Furthermore, the features are also part of my
photographie féminine. The use of the term 'carnival' by the organisers is of particular significance because it connotes a form of festivity and social participation in which bodies amiably come together and are fashioned for overt display. In particular, the body is seen as a political text. This follows Grosz's (1995a, p. 117) assertion that "the human body figures as a writing surface on which messages, or texts are inscribed". As such, the body can be reinscribed in the performance for the carnival.

My focus on the body as an inscriptive surface draws attention to the various ways in which people inscribed and performed their bodies in response to their participation in the anti-capitalist rally, the carnival atmosphere and my photographie féminine, which was indicative of the statement, "You cannot watch carnival, you take part."

At the anti-capitalist rally I worked only with a wide-angle lens and flash as opposed to the telephoto lenses the press photographers were using. When taking portraits, the wide-angle lens requires the photographer to be physically close to the subjects. Unlike the Magnum photojournalist, Steve Mc Curry (2000), who adopts an imperialist stance and insists that "If you ask permission the mood is destroyed", my photography involves an interaction with my subjects. I consider that an ethical photographic practice would allow the subjects to engage actively with the camera. This could perhaps shift the balance of the power relations between photographer and subject. The individuals could decide if they wanted to be photographed and how they wanted to perform their bodies, though ultimately it is myself, as the photographer, who decides how to frame the image and the moment to press the camera shutter, which can invariably alter the intended readings of the photograph.

My photography presents a somewhat different version from the press accounts of the rally. Rather than solely emphasise moments of physical aggression and conflict, my body of photographs presents a varied
perspective of the people's responses to the "Carnival against Capitalism." I wanted to emphasise the pleasure of body performance and what I experienced was a peaceful congregation of diversity in Trafalgar Square. Moreover, the photography was emblematic of my travel experiences, in which "pleasure, as the purpose of travel" as in the examples of female travellers that Pratt (1992) describes, does not evoke 'imperial eyes' but is considered a conduit of anti-conquest ideology.

My images were not taken for the purpose of the daily press. Therefore, at the time I did not have intended editors or specific audiences in mind. But it is the style of documentary photography that reflects my personal journey and interaction. I embraced the notion of chora in my work in acknowledging the place as a more interactive space and in which the meaning of the space can be redefined. This style may be considered as the 'new public photography', which presents a complexity of events with the reluctance to accept the masculine assumption that simple objectivity is possible (Grundberg, 1990; Edwards, 1991).

My photographs present my subjective involvement in the "carnival against capitalism." Sontag (1977, p.10) argues that photography is a principal device for experiencing something, "for giving an appearance of participation." However, Sontag elaborates that this is merely a "chronic voyeuristic relation to the world" (1977, p.11). This view is echoed by the infamous fashion photographer, Helmut Newton who also acknowledges the scopophilic relationship in photography, vehemently asserting "I am a voyeur! If a photographer says he is not a voyeur, he is an idiot!" (cited in Burgin, 1996a, p. 80). I agree that there is a voyeuristic aspect in photography. However, there is a distinction, though it may be indeterminate and it does depend on the context and discourse surrounding a photograph, between photography that is aggressive and seeks to violate the privacy of the other and photography which displays a willingness to encounter the other, without seeking to appropriate the other's difference in order to glorify the self.
One of my first observations concerning gender, space and protest at the carnival of ‘resistance’ was as follows:

Standing defiantly on the crown of a statue of a lion in Trafalgar Square, London, a young man with his fists clenched and arms raised together high above his head addresses the crowds beneath him. He turns towards me and we exchange looks. He gently smiles, waves, bows down and seductively blows me a kiss... he notices my camera, he repeats the gesture... I take another photograph. (June 18th, 1999)

The sequence of photographs that I have taken of this man conveys the physical dialogue or interaction between him, the crowd and myself. The man’s relation with the ‘world’, his momentary dominance and control is expressed in his body language and positioning on the crown of the lion’s head, which is also a symbol of strength. The man standing on the lion represents his supremacy over the ‘king of the jungle’. The lion also bears traces of Wilson’s (1992) notion of the ‘sphinx in the city’ which is the feminine - what is feared, desired and to be mastered.

In terms of mastery, the man displays machismo in his stance, and his dominant position over the lion is emblematic of patriarchy. The display of his body and his bare chest, resists the conformity of the clothed bodies beneath him. He subverts the western bourgeois standards of middle-class public decorum and in his dominant posture is expressing the western notions of ‘primal’ power of the ‘primitive’ or tribal male. His final gesture towards me...
represents a display of sexuality. It highlights my feminin presence and the significance of gender relations in social discourse.

A solitary white male facing the landscape is also a masculine romantic notion which conveys the divide between self and other. The landscape is to be dominated. In the context of the anti-capitalist rally his actions, both symbolically and physically, represent an act of defiance against passive bourgeois norms. This photograph is also in striking contrast to the photographs I took on the previous day at the same location in which there is a degree of tranquillity experienced in the use of the space.
It is also worth noting that at the rally the police had asked the people who were climbing on the monuments to get down, but this request was ignored. The popular press reported that the police were not prepared for the scale of protest and acts of violence. From my observations it seemed that indeed there was a temporary reversal of order in terms of seemingly behaviour in a public space. The (masculine) symbolic categories of hierarchy and social value were temporarily inverted which bears out Mikhail Bakhtin's (1984) notions of the 'carnival'.

In my style of photographic documentation there is also an inversion of these symbolic categories which are also embedded in popular photojournalism. Many feminist critics assert that the symbolic categories of order or hierarchy organise the libidinal drives according to a phallic sexual economy. Irigaray argues that the phallic libidinal economy is not restricted to sexuality, but extends to all forms of human expression, including social structures. Importantly, feminist expression is a resistance to this economy and my work
attempts to achieve this. Patriarchy, which is the manifestation of a phallic sexual economy, reinforces a masculine perspective in which distance, singularity and objectivity is privileged. In press photography it represents a phallic sexual economy, which denies or represses heterogeneity and produces photographs in a given context that often maintain the masculine status quo in terms of norms and stereotypes, whereas the photographs that I took at this event are quite different from the typical mass media representations.

Leading London newspapers such as *The Daily Telegraph, The Daily Mail* and *The Independent* commented upon the rally in less than 'utopic' terms. The general written text provided a somewhat balanced report of the event. However, bold headlines such as "Anarchy in the city as mobs go on the rampage" and "The day the mob brought violence and destruction to the square mile" which are illustrated with images of large crowds, police with shields and batons positioned against groups of people expressing anger and despair, do not provide a balanced presentation of the protest which for the most part was peaceful. This style of documentary photography as a result of editorial decisions is considered 'newsworthy' because it presents images that are 'sensational' and overtly 'emotive' which arguably appeal to the mass public. Certainly the newspaper photographs present dramatic aspects of the events of the day. But they also conform to standards of photojournalistic practice in which their paradigmatic subject is battles of various sorts that provide "visceral immediacy, visual movement and a ready-made narrative trajectory" (Jolly, 1991, p.16).

The press photographs from the anti-capitalist rally share the same characteristics as outlined by Webster (1980) in his analysis of responsibility in visual communication. Around two decades ago he vehemently criticised photographs in the popular press for the mass production and circulation of
narrow stereotypes. They all, he remarks:

pursue the same course by dramatising issues (the shot that picks out the 'injured bystander' at a demonstration is a common appeal to readers' foreknowledge of 'violence' at such occasions); by placing issues in a conventional frame (the picture of pickets forcing against lorry deliveries is familiar to us all and easily slotted into assumptions about strikes). (1985, p. 222)

It seems evident from the reporting of the "Carnival against Capitalism" in 1999 that very little has changed in terms of the style of newspaper photography. The newspaper photographs reinforce preconceived modes of thought about popular violence or police violence in protest activities. They still adhere to the conventional frames and thus do not provide diverse visual experiences. The press photographs are accorded an objective truth-value on the basis of their being 'real' or evidence, as products of a process, which are considered to lack intervention from the photographer. Although the recording of the photographic image and its reproduction is a mechanical process, it involves a reflexive choice in terms of camera angles, framing and depth of field, thus there is human intervention; it has a subjective bias.

Undeniably protests do often attract an element of violence. But the issue that I am stressing is that the sensational documentations of events, which focus solely on the violence of minority elements, do little to promote the active engagement of those that peacefully united in body and spirit. Criticism of the June 18th protests involved pejorative comments from the press contending that the organisers were more interested in numbers than analysis, in how many groups they could get involved than in the commonality between them. This in turn leads to lowest common denominator theory and a spectacular practice. However, I would argue that the 'spectacular practice' of body inscription, performance and diversity was indeed a positive aspect of individuals united in protest which was ignored in the popular press photographs. In contrast, the massive protests in Seattle, later that year, and the sheer numbers of people from a broad range of backgrounds expressing
their concerns against the global commercial interests of the WTO, was deemed a success in raising public awareness, but this may also be attributed to the way the press favourably reported the event.

Hayes (1993, p. 228) argues that photojournalism "is a practice which involves varying degrees of command, or imperialism, over the events encountered." The press photographs of the J18 carnival were taken from the perspective of the 'silent' observer; they appear non-intrusive, therefore providing a glimpse of the 'real', providing the central 'facts' of the situation. Notably, however, the positive aspects of the protests were largely blacked out by the Western media and newspaper coverage "focused on minority violent elements (June 18th, 1999, p. 304). The photographs communicate by identifying and confirming the predominantly white middle-class readers' expectations, and this is further reinforced by headlines and the text.

An example of this manner of communication was in the press reports of the Anti-capitalist rally with headlines such as "Mobs put City under siege." The accompanying photographs provide the 'evidence' of the assumed peril. The images were mainly taken with telephoto lenses that have a long focal length which compresses space that deceives the viewer into believing the photographer/hero was in close proximity to the 'action'. However, the telephoto lens requires a physical, and I would add an impersonal, distance between photographer and photographed. Giblett (forthcoming) aptly draws attention to the point that the camera like the gun is a device for shortening distance, but he adds "in the process it keeps the shooter and the shot distant from each other. Similarly the camera keeps the armed photographer and the photographed distant from each other". This is further emphasised in the common feature of photojournalism which is the apparent candidness of the image in which the subjects rarely address the camera. Photographer, Steve McCurry from the prestigious Magnum Photo Agency states, "It is better to
take candid photographs, before they freeze up... If you ask permission the mood is destroyed.” He further asserts, “Shoot away, ask questions later!” (public lecture, February 12, 2000).

In the press photographs of the anti-capitalist rally the ‘mob’ is seemingly ambivalent or unaware of their participation in the photographic process. The apparent candidness of the photographs maintains the subject-object relationship between viewer and photographed. In the press photographs of the anti-capitalist rally the bodies or gazes are not addressing the camera or the viewer, therefore the photographic reader is positioned as a passive voyeur. The reader is passive in the sense that s/he is not encouraged to identify with the subjects of the photographed.

A common reader response is articulated by Sartre (cited in Barthes, 1984, p. 19) reflecting that “newspaper photographs can very well ‘say nothing to me’. In other words, I look at them without assuming a posture of existence... Moreover, cases occur where the photograph leaves me so indifferent that I do not even bother to see it ‘as an image’”. The reader of the newspaper is positioned as a bystander, a spectator, and a sort of textual flâneur, with a leisurely shifting gaze. By adopting the position of the flâneur, there is a profound and complex association between the realist inquiry and the stranger. In the realist inquiry photography is seen as a window to the visible world. However, positioned as a stranger her/his aesthetic sensibility varies between involvement and detachment.
Historically, the practice of photojournalism has been defined by men, and as such tends to be regulated by masculine ways of seeing. Feminist critics, such as Grosz (1984) argue for a resistance on the part of feminist thought to male dominated knowledge, such as objectivity, the phallocentric adherence to universal concepts of truth, methods of verifying truth and the concept of a rational, sexually indifferent subject. Feminist theories should begin with women's views and experiences of the world. This implies that there is a difference in seeing between male and females.

Moreover, there seems to be a sense of aggressiveness in the masculine style of press photography. The early twentieth century feminist photographer Tina Madotti (cited in Rule, 1996, p, 259) expresses my concerns as a photographer stating:

I have been offered to do 'reportage' or newspaper work, but I feel not fitted for such work. I still think it is a man's work in spite that here many women do it, perhaps they can. I am not aggressive enough.

I certainly consider in my photography that I occupy a different subject position to a masculine photographer. My argument is supported by experts in the field of photojournalism, such as The Washington Post's Joe Elbert, who has
worked with some of the United States' most awarded photojournalists, including Pulitzer Prize winners Guz and du Cille. He responds:

'absolutely' to the question of whether gender makes a difference in what photographers shoot and how they go about it. Women peel away the layers of a story like an artichoke; men like to slam in there, go for the money picture and move on. Of course, that is a generalisation, and there are exceptions to the rule (cited in Ricchiardi, 1998, p. 28).

His comments seem to support Irigaray's argument that due to the way identity is assumed in language within the patriarchal symbolic system, generally "women are more likely to engage in dialogue; while men privilege the relation with the world and the object, women privilege interpersonal relations" (cited in Whitford, 1991, p. 5). My portrait photography attempts to practise these theories.

The photographs that I produced at the anti-capitalist rally may be deemed to be 'concerned photography' because they attempt to convey features of the humanist paradigm of subjective documentary, such as a sense of empathy or complicity with the subject of representation. It follows the ongoing "ethics" of sub-cultural documentary which "demands that the transaction between artist and subject be represented as an exchange" (Kotz, 1998, p. 208).

*Photographie féminine*, which shares the features of self-reflexivity and deconstruction of postmodern documentary photography, is an approach which entails implicating my role in the photographic process and relinquishing the pseudo-objectivity of conventional photojournalism. The photographs are an acknowledgement of my presence which is indicated by the subject's gaze to the camera and diversity of representations which convey a sympathetic response to their cause.

*Photographie féminine* involves a traversing of spaces left forsaken by the masculine economy, thus it corresponds to the theme of the carnival of 'resistance', and more specifically is an attempt at subverting the capitalist patriarchal market-driven media. Unlike mainstream photography,
photographie féminine is derived from a feminine libidinal economy as described by Cixous which is open to difference. It is a "willingness to be traversed by the other" and "it is a deconstructive space of pleasure and orgasmic interchange with the other" (Moi, 1985, p. 113). The feminist treatment of the camera is as a utensil, a magnet to unite the photographer and subject in producing an image that represents their encounter. It involves a communion of souls rather than a division of spirits between photographer and subject (which is the masculine approach). The masculine use of the camera is unilateral. It represents a detached perspective. The camera is seen and used as a tool, a substitute phallus, a gun to aim and fire, it triggers the 'death' of the subject. This undertaking renders the subject into an 'object'. Barthes (1984, p. 14) asserts the photographer must exert to the utmost to prevent this 'death'. I suggest that a feminist approach might be a way of breathing life into the subject, thus evoking a "deconstructive space of pleasure" (Moi, 1985, p. 113). In my feminist documentation I attempt to reveal the 'carnivalesque', which according to Bakhtin (1984) represents a connection with new sources of energy, life, vitality and excess. It offers the potential to reverse the symbolic order with what is deemed appropriate or proper in terms of mass photo-journalism practices.

I produced photographs of people that I was meeting as I 'wandered' through the 'mob' and the alleged 'anarchy'. I was interested in acknowledging that "during carnival, established authority and dogmas of morality or religion that pretend to be absolute become subject to mockery (Isaak, 1996, p. 16). Rather than images of 'mobs' which gives a detached perspective, I focused on producing portraits of small groups of people or individuals who were interested in engaging with myself and the camera. For example, my photograph of a policeman posing for the camera, casually leaning back with his arms stretched out, does not bear any resemblance to the dramatic press photographs of the police engaging in acts of combat. His smile to the camera

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31 For the relationship between photography and death see Barthes (1984).
and his relaxed demeanour does not reflect any of the tension that was reported in the press.

Similarly another man who represents the carnivalesque aspects of the protests is dressed in a parody of police helmet and brief attire, which exposes his bare skin. He is also smiling towards me and does not convey any of the trepidation that the newspaper photographs project of the protestors.
There were very few signs of acts of violence or conflict depicted towards my camera which I suggest may be attributed to my feminin presence as a photographer as opposed to the other photographers present who adopted the masculine 'uniform' of photo-journalists, armed with combat vests crammed with camera bodies and various large photographic lenses. The attire, which is 'necessary' to get the best 'shots', is similar to the attire of the 'great white hunter', but instead of the guns and bullets, they arm themselves with cameras (with its range of telephoto lenses) and rolls of films and aim to take many shots. In the rapid firing of a camera there is a distant 'reality' created by the masculine ballistic use. Interestingly, although the subjects in the press photographs seem ambivalent to the camera's presence, "Detective Inspector Kevin Moore, of the City of London police, suggested that "the presence of the press at the anti-capitalist rally could have been a contributory factor leading to
the violence on the day" (The Guardian, July 1st, 1999). As such, this suggests that the ‘mobs’ were performing to Webster’s (1980, p. 222) conventional media ‘scripts’ of protests in a stereotypical, aggressive manner because this is often the only way that they can get ‘recognition’ for their cause in the sensationalist popular press which focuses on conflict.

In contrast to a masculine style my work is quiescent. The writing of film-director and critic Trinh T. Minh-ha aptly conveys my feminin photographic approach:

I have often been asked about what viewers call the lack of conflicts in my films... Conflicts in western contexts often serve to define identities. My suggestion to the 'lack' is; let difference replace conflict. Difference as understood in many feminist and non-western contexts, is not opposition to sameness, nor synonymous with separateness. (1994, p.23)

An acceptance of difference is a key concept in my work. I attempted to represent a wide range of people from diverse social and ethnic positions in Trafalgar Square. My portraits also represent the political use of fashion and may be closely aligned with that of fashion/art photographer Wolfgang Tillman in terms of style and subject matter:

The work of this German photographer relates closely to the experience of a generation that lives amidst a wealth of possibilities where music, daily life, fashion and everything immediate is of enormous importance. His images mostly in colour express improvisation and freedom. One of the constant features of his work is his support for the social demands of young Europeans - their fight against discrimination for reasons of race, sexual inclination, etc. (PhotoEspana, 1998)

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32 After the anti-capitalist rally, The City of London police applied for a court order under the Police and 1984 Criminal Evidence Act forcing the media to give up video footage negatives prints recordings of interviews and notes taken during the demonstration. In defence, the press argued that journalists could become victims of violence if the demonstrators regarded them as 'agents' of the police. The coercion to hand over material also breaches article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights and the guarantees that it gives to free speech. The attempt by the police to seize the documentary material was finally dismissed by the court.
Like Tilman’s focus on youth culture, my photographs present a diverse version of ‘Englishness’, rather than as a stereotype of solely conservative, white, middle-age and middle-class origin or as the racist and xenophobic soccer hooligan. I attempted to represent a cosmopolitan space involving my feelings and observations regarding a positive interaction of race, class and gender that I experienced in Trafalgar Square.

The heterogeneity that I attempted to depict is a constituent of many postmodern cities which is the result of decades of immigration and the blending of populations. It also reflects my diverse ethnic background in growing up in multi-cultural Australia as well as my travel encounters. In my work I have acknowledged that ‘cultural identity’ is both the scene and the object of political struggles. As such, my ‘celebrating’ of Anzuldua’s border position is an optimistic attempt to resist the construction of identity in terms of exclusion. I therefore follow writers such as Trinh T. Minh-ha (1994) who acknowledge the significance of culture and gender, but also question the notion of master territories with fixed notions of identity and place.

I suggest that my photographs of the carnival present a utopian perspective. I also acknowledge that “it is difficult to read against the grain of Euro-American modernist romanticisations of the metropolitan experience because the myth of the mixing of peoples and mingling of influences is so powerfully linked to western ideologies of democracy” (Kaplan, 1996, p. 31). Indeed, this position resonates in how I conceive the world in my depictions of difference and diversity.

My range of photographs include people climbing and positioned on public monuments; youths playing and dancing in the water fountains; musicians beating drums; a juggler; a father and his baby; a man in a wheelchair; the police and various close-up portraits of different people of various appearances who were participating in the carnival atmosphere of the day. Images of diversity and harmony dominate my photographic documentation of
the anti-capitalist rally in which a freedom of sexual and political expression was displayed. Through their body language, the subjects chose how they wanted to present themselves to the camera. They were not passive objects of the camera but were empowered by expressing themselves in the way they chose to pose.
Grosz (1995a, p. 35) asserts that "bodies speak, without necessarily talking, because they become coded with, and as, signs." Photography does play a central role in communicating the language of body performance, in particular, forms of sexuality which are also foreground in my photographs. Grosz (1984, p. 22) suggests sex "is not trivial to ones social and political status: it is integral to the status and social position of the subject. It has a pervasive influence on effects for the subject." Moreover, power seems to be gained through the deployment of sexuality. In particular, it seems integral in our visual culture that to gain recognition is to be visible. Irigaray, for example, asserts that our culture is organised according to a hierarchy that assures the omnipresence of the masculine and the occlusion of the feminine, which is plural and heterogenous. Cooper (2000, p. 118), drawing on Irigaray's work, suggests that the ways of rendering the feminine visible, from the optical to the political (without separating these fields definitively), may be a way of exploring the diversity of sexuality associated with queer theory, in which the term 'visibility' has acquired a set of political meanings. As such, my photographs tend to foreground notions of subversive power and expressions of sexuality that may
not conform to restrictive covenants associated with masculine, heterosexual conventions of representation.

For example, in the portrait of a young female being embrace and kissed on the neck by her partner it is unclear if her partner is a female or male. Thus the indeterminacy of gender, as well as the promotion of public displays of affection, represents the carnivalesque qualities of the protesters and their performance to my camera.

In another photograph one male is wearing a floral dress with a crest of upturned female dolls’ legs upon his head. Another male is wearing a tight fitting tee shirt with the words “Fuck your mother” alongside an illustration of two people involved in a sex act. Both men are engaged in tongue kissing. Standing together with the men is another male addressing the camera. He is wearing a simple yellow tee shirt. Although the men appear quite different, the three people are together displaying their bodies in an empowering
manner in line with the themes of the carnival which provides a forum through which to question societal norms.

Interestingly, the term 'anarchy' was used to describe the mood at the rally, which may in some way be applicable in terms of the 'carnival' theme. On a warm summer evening people performed and inscribed their bodies to make a political stance by coming together in a public space. The theme of anti-capitalism was interpreted in different ways. Various people played with, and incorporated, the signs of capitalism into their surface inscriptions, which on the one hand may parody the acceptance of the global capitalist system, but on the other hand it may reflect their compliance and seduction into the articulation of commodity consumption in wearing the 'badges' that reflect multi-national fashion aesthetics. For example, three men who actively pose for a photograph are wearing designer wear symbols. One man is wearing a
tee shirt with Saint Laurent Jeans and another male is wearing a cap with the Nike symbol:

Like many of the other people that were in Trafalgar Square, they represent an articulation of commodity consumption, personal identity and desire which characterises, or in the context of the anti-capitalist rally, parodies life under hyper-capitalism.

The photograph of the three men standing together who pose for my camera is also significant in drawing attention to the dissent that was reported in the press. The wearing of masks by two of the men suggests that they were involved in some form of insurrection and this is further suggested in their demeanour.
In another photograph two men who are sitting together pose for my camera. In terms of body inscription, they contrast in the clothing they are wearing, their personal style and their body language. They signify the capitalist and the bohemian. They present an uncanny double, of contrasting identities that are inhabiting the same space. Interestingly Freud (1958) refers to the double as a subject of terror. However, rather than a masculine fear of the contrasting juxtapositions of the ‘body’, I consider that the ‘double’ signifies differences and harmony together in a public space. Although they appear to be of similar ages, one man appears very conservative. He is clean shaven with a short hair cut. He is wearing a white business shirt and tie and has his arms folded across his chest. Close to him, the other man has longer hair and a beard. He is wearing a bright pink and orange printed shirt with a black printed tee shirt underneath it. His attire is very casual and this is also reflected in his body language with his arms resting downwards. They both happily engaged with the camera and my feminin presence.

London 18th June 1999

The blurring of boundaries and hierarchies is an integral aspect of my work.
The dynamics of space and gender have been brought together in various subversive ways throughout my journey. Indeed, I have attempted to follow Grosz’s (1995a, p. 54) assertion that for “feminists, to claim women’s difference from men is to reflect existing definitions and categories, redefining oneself and the world according to women’s own perspectives.” Moreover, I have attempted to apply the tenets of écriture féminine which involves actively incorporating the female/feminine body into the writing process, drawing attention as such to the process of representation of landscapes as well as to feminine modalities and feminine spatiality.
In my journey towards a *photographie féminine* my photograph of a young woman addressing the camera in a provocative stance, with her finger raised in defiance, presents my subversive themes relating to women and the city. It also illustrates my emphasis on encounters which Davidov (1998, p. 139) clearly defines as:

an exchange between self and other in which the voice of the other is heard, not a threat to be reduced or an object that I give myself to know in my capacity as knowing subject, that which constitutes me as an ethical being...

I consider that an exchange has taken place in the photograph. There is a blurring of the boundaries of who is the protagonist in the landscape. I suggest it is the *feminin* interaction that dominates the production of the image. The female protester and myself as a photographer combine forces to project an image of empowerment and of defiance to the masculine economy. Moreover, the female and her body performance project the carnival of ‘resistance’ theme. This photograph was described as “raw” in a radio interview in terms of feminine identity because it was considered unstylised, threatening and non-conforming to attributes aligned with passive femininity (Chris Butler, Interview, 16th September 1999). Through her body performance she represents the disruptive aspects concerning the construction of the masculine feminine, “the phallic feminine, woman as man sees her” (Tong, 1992, p. 226).

The female displays a sexual subversion of imperialist and capitalist signifiers. As in my journey photography she acknowledges what Irigaray (1985b, p. 148) asserts is “the articulation of the reality of my sex. I am a woman. I am a being sexualised as feminine. I am sexualised female.” The female gaze and body language addresses the camera and confronts the viewer. The female has an assertive pose which is compliant with her choice of attire; which is a mid drift singlet, with a “Smith and Wesson Handguns” logo. She is also wearing a necklace made from a round of bullets. She has incorporated these signifiers of masculinity and power into western feminine sexualised codes of dress,
such as jewellery and a very small tight fitting singlet which reveals and exposes her slender torso and navel. Her performance of sexuality, which complies with the stereotypical feminine stance, is also conveyed in her body cant, with her weight slightly shifted to one hip and her shoulders slightly tilted. In displaying a bar code imprint on her left wrist, she ironically presents herself as a 'commodity'.

Her pose is that of resistance. My low camera angle accentuates her dominance. In the encounter her dissident 'voice' is heard. She has her arm outstretched and her middle finger raised in defiance. It subverts the notion of the gentle 'feminine touch'. Without this 'get fucked' gesture her body tilt parodies the glamour fashion model. Also a point to consider is that models who have their mouths open and tongues exposed usually signify an overt sexual display. But in this example, her lips are apart and her mouth is open but her studded pierced tongue poked out does not convey passive sensuality, but stylised contempt. In her performance for the camera and her bodily display the message to the patriarchal gaze is 'look but don't touch'. However, the hand and pointed finger by the female on the edge of the photographic frame seems to suggest a (patriarchal) disapproval. Grosz (1995b, p. 120), drawing on Irigaray's spatial writing, contends that "the ways in which space has been historically conceived have always functioned to contain women or to obliterate them." But I suggest that my photograph allows a space for this particular female to project her own identity and resistance to patriarchal norms of passive femininity.

In the photograph there is a form of guerrilla subversion of patriarchal codes. In the female's directness, in writing with her body, she personifies the Laugh of the Medusa in which Cixous (1976b) outlines the obstacles women struggle to overcome as well as an exploration of an écriture féminine. Cixous explains that the 'popular' monstrous image of the Medusa exists only because it has been directly determined by the male gaze. However, in my photographie féminine, it does not encourage identification with masculine viewpoints and
the construction of a male viewing position. As in Cixous' analysis of the myth of the Medusa, there is not the threat of castration for males, but the projection of female power and creativity which is associated with the original Medusa story. For even in the face of tragedy and disgrace, the Medusa was portrayed as meaningful and a symbol of feminin appeal. Like the Medusa, the young woman in the photograph affirms Cixous' (1976b, p. 885) statement in which she declares, “she's not deadly. She's beautiful and she's laughing.” In evoking the political theory of laughter and parody in my reading of the photograph it acknowledges the wider field of a feminist deployment of humour to subvert the patriarchal order. Moreover, “the history of Western art” which begins with “images of laughter – the laughter of women” is being re-addressed by a number of contemporary women artists (Issak, 1996, p. 11). Furthermore, Issak (1996, p. 20) asserts that the “crisis of authority and value that is symptomatic of postmodernism has itself in large part been instigated by a feminist deployment of laughter.”

In drawing upon the characteristics of the carnivalesque, which represent a crisis of authority, weaved into my journey towards a photographie féminine I have tried to emphasise the positive and negative aspects of the feminin. Persisting in this theme is that the camera was a utensil used for feminist consciousness raising, rather than as an instrument for detached observation and aestheticisation.

In my work there has been a resistance to the masculine aesthetic structures of landscape photography and its imperial tradition. The beautiful, the sublime and the picturesque are masculine aesthetics that are focused on the mastering gaze. The masculine photographer, the transcendental observer, creates a division between self and other. Reading my work utilising a feminist counter-aesthetics of the uncanny attempts to disrupt clear-cut distinctions, as well as engaging in meaningful play with a subversive political purpose.
Selections of the photographs, such as the London anti-capitalist Rally images, have been exhibited in a collection of feminist works. The anti-capitalist images were juxtaposed with the images and texts from the London newspapers that were published the day after the protests. The contrast in content aimed to illustrate the differences in approaches to documentation between that of the capitalist popular media (which focused on mobs, violence and anarchy as well as the distant ‘decisive’ moment), as opposed to my photographs (which consisted of posed portraits that conveyed an intimacy and diversity of people that projected the anti-capitalist ‘reclaim the street’ movement).

It is not an easy task to overcome the long-standing tradition of masculine optics that has been the focus of visual culture. I also realise that the viewing context can influence the preferred meaning of the photographs. This is especially the case in which photographs represent ambiguity and complexity. Moreover, I recognise that my photographs as a whole may have similarities with photographers that may not share my conceptual outlook. Therefore, in the presentation of my work within a feminist discourse I have needed to consider the importance of the fact that:

when a photograph – considered as a single unit of meaning – enters into a montage relationship with either a caption text, another picture, or a particularly potent display context, then a ‘third effect’ meaning can be generated from the juxtaposition which was not inherent in either of the terms seen in isolation. (J. Walker, 1997, p. 56)

The ‘third-effect’ meaning may be realised in the tactic of providing juxtaposition between the masculine and feminine approach (which I attempted to do with my anti-capitalist photographs). The ‘third –effect’ meaning may also be developed into uncanny space for viewing in order to disturb the masculine clarity of vision and the aesthetic responses of the beautiful and/or the sublime.
The uncanny, which is concerned with illusions and indeterminacy, can be evoked in displaying a selection of my photographs that are projected onto a gallery wall, in between the spaces of photographic prints. The repetitive flickering of the large colour projections with pauses of white light which could be positioned between particular black and white photographs from my journey will aim to evoke the indeterminacy of vision, the ghostly trace of female subjectivity and the disruption of “the boundaries of the photographic frame that has been used in aestheticism and to render harmless – images of female power” (Battersby, 1994, p. 94). The projections also refer to Tong’s (1992, p. 228) evocations of Irigaray’s theory of mimicry in which she asserts that “if women exist only in men’s eyes, as image, women should take those images and reflect them back to men in magnified proportions.” The viewing space could also be disturbed to disrupt the standard patriarchal gaze at women. For example, certain photographs that contain women on billboards and that would normally be seen in an elevated position could be scattered flatly on the floor beneath the spectator, whereas some of the images of women as ‘dirt’ or porn which have been discarded could be elevated to an ‘upright’ position. This inversion of hierarchy also presents the political humour of the carnivalesque. Importantly, the disrupted viewing space involves paying attention to the space and gaps, the interchanges of the text and the overflowing of boundaries that signify an écrite féminine.

The large projections which are not bound by a standard frame also challenge Young’s (1990a) argument that the ‘space’ available to women is a constricted one. However, the framed black and white images, such as my photograph of a small female child walking across the steps which seem to be enclosed between two large pillars, is metonymic in that it reiterates Young’s assertion of women’s confinement within a masculine space that consists in this image of hard geometric surfaces. As a whole, the framing and the non-framing of photographs represents contradictions and discrepancies. Moreover, it seems to allude to an uncanny space and in particular to my féminin approach which aims to be questioning and open. It also represents the tension “between the
masculine closure of representation and feminine possibility of excess” (Moore, 1991, p. 127).

To emphasise the difference between a masculine and feminine approach a thematic selection and sequencing of my photographs may also be necessary. An example of this may be in the presentation of the series of photographs from Urban Exposures (Chapter Four) that focus deliberately on reframing commodified images of women found on the streets.

The public presentation of feminist work also poses Moore’s (1991, p.155) pertinent question, “is feminist access to the art market conditional on its displaying aesthetic and sexually pleasing qualities, providing the sensual and intellectual stimulation demanded by the discourse of high culture?” Major international art exhibitions, such as the annual Internationale Recontre d’Arles still promote the masculine discourse of high culture, though there have been exceptions in the photographic scene such as the international photographic festival in Madrid, Photo Espana 99, which focused on feminist and postmodern ethics. Furthermore, the aesthetics, or more precisely the anti-aesthetic ‘style’ of photography, has emerged in popular magazines, such as The Face and has entered high culture. This brings into the debate the questions of what is the political nature of the image when placed within the art scene and whose experience is validated? This is especially a concern when women feminist journey photographers seem to be under-represented in the context of the gallery and publications. These questions still persist whether the specific political strategies of photographie féminine and the journey experience will be successful and whether the “ambiguous, minoritarian status of the feminine voice” will resonate (Moore, 1991, p. 127). And perhaps, this could only be achieved through persistence and the knowledge that for political subversion photographs are best presented in association with a given text or as what John Walker (1997, p. 56) defines as a “montage relationship” of encounters which “evolve feminine ‘special effects’ (seduction, threat, desire)” that both utilise and undermine “principal tenets of Freudian and
Lacanian psychoanalysis in the name of a feminine ‘laughter’ or pleasure” (Moore, 1991; p. 125).

In my attempts at feminist interventions into the masculine proclivity and activity of journey photography, I realise that the line between compliance and subversion is always a fine one. However, in my use of tension and tactical processes, which is both descriptive and prescriptive, I have tried to leave a trace of a potent feminist experience of travel. Moreover, I consider that the feminin photographer, like the writer should:

Come out of herself to go to the other, a traveller in unexplored places; she does not refuse, she approaches, not to do away, with space between, but to see it, to experience what she is not, what she is, what she can be. (Cixous, 1986, p. 86)
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