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SURVEILLED WOMEN: SUBJECTIVITY, THE BODY AND MODERN PANOPTICISM

by

Sandra Gabriele

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in the Joint Women's Studies Programme

at

Mount Saint Vincent University
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JOINT M.A. IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

The undersigned hereby certify that they have read and recommend for acceptance a thesis entitled *"Surveilled Women: Subjectivity, the Body and Modern Panopticism"* by Sandra Gabriele in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Dated: September 8, 1998

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ABSTRACT

"Surveilled Women: Subjectivity, The Body and Modern Panopticism"

by Sandra Gabriele
August 1998

"Surveilled Women: Subjectivity, The Body and Modern Panopticism" explores the ways in which surveillance enacts the power to limit the self definition and thus the subjectivity of the female subject. Understanding the body as being intimately connected to the development of an autonomous female subject, surveillance is examined as a means of maintaining social structures of gender, race, and class. Technologies of surveillance are shifting the epistemological and ontological status of the body, undermining it as a verifiable means of knowing the world and ourselves. Arguing for a feminist revaluing of the body, surveillance is understood as creating powerful social norms, crucial to the maintenance of existing power structures, including patriarchy, race, consumerism and the media. Analyzing such various subjects as Marge Piercy's Woman on the Edge of Time (1976), Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale (1985), the death of Princess Diana, biometrics, and the Internet, this thesis explores the various applications of surveillance in these texts and the ways in which modern panopticism, through the development of target marketing, is changing the ways in which we view our world, ourselves and our social structures.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents and family for their love and continued support throughout this long journey: *Senza familigia, niente é possibile.*

I'd also like to thank the many special women in my life that helped me to stay focused, calm and in touch with reality. Those people include: Gillian Thomas, whose insights and patience pushed me to keep with it; Linda Christiansen-Ruffman, a true visionary whose commitment to the women's movement has taught me so much about what still needs to be done; and finally, Karen, Christine, and Trina, whose fascination with my television forced me to stay connected and who consistently reminded me to just lighten up.

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Introduction

"We've become a race of Peeping Toms. What people oughta do is get outside their own house and look in for a change. Yes sir," proclaims Stella (Thelma Ritter), the insurance company nurse caring for L.B. Jeffries (James Stewart), injured photojournalist, and the male protagonist in Alfred Hitchcock's 1954 film, Rear Window. What begins as an exercise designed to relieve the boredom of Jeff's forced confinement, Rear Window quickly develops into a tale about murder and surveillance of the most familiar variety: an inquisitive neighbour and his friends, keeping watch over others. Jeff, forced into invalidism by a broken leg, spends most of his time looking through his apartment's windows into his neighbours' rear windows. Exploring the insidious and alluring nature of surveillance, of invoking the gaze, Hitchcock explores knowledge creation and the power structures such an activity implies.

Jeff, a photojournalist by trade, watches the lives of the neighbours whose back windows open onto a central courtyard as he passes away the time until he can return to his exciting life surveilling the rest of the world as a journalist. Believing he is witnessing his neighbour, Lars Thorwald (Raymond Burr), dispose of the body of his invalid wife, Jeff, like any good story teller, pulls his audience into the story he is constructing. Jeff effortlessly lulls his lover (Lisa Freemont, played by Grace Kelly), nurse and detective friend (the only character to convincingly display resistance to Jeff's story) into the narrative trajectory of a gruesome murder story he has uncovered. Constructing a narrative with the data collected while he watches out his window, Jeff, not only solves Mrs. Thorwald's murder, but writes it, including motive and method of killing. Using a series of seemingly innocuous events that he has seen to fill in the gaps of his narrative, those moments when he was not watching the Thorwald apartment or those events not seen with his own eyes (the murder), Jeff creates knowledge about, and thus power over, his neighbour Lars Thorwald. As Jana Sawicki observes of Foucault's analysis of surveillance and power, "...ways of knowing are equated with ways of exercising power over individuals" (22).

Indeed as Lt. Tom Doyle (Wendell Corey) points out as he chastizes both Lisa and Jeff for their perverse pleasure (as evidenced in Lisa's later observation of their goullish disappointment in the news that Mrs. Thorwald is still alive) in watching the private lives of neighbours, there is an implied responsibility in the act of looking: "That's a secret, private world you're looking into out there. People do a lot of things in private, they couldn't possibly explain in public." Pointing to the increasingly disappearing division between the performative nature of a public persona, one obviously constructed for/because of the viewing audience of the outside world, and the inner, real world loaded with vulnerability, Doyle's comments implicitly critiques the intrusion of prying, knowing eyes. Doyle reminds Jeff and Lisa (and the audience watching the film) that knowledge created through the act of surveillance is not necessarily to be trusted, that the eyes (of the camera, doubly intended to recall Jeff's *and* Hitchcock's camera) can deceive. Although Jeff's eyes did uncover a truth, Doyle's comments and the equally probable narrative he constructs from his own investigation, reveals the active nature of looking. Pointing to the instability of what is seen, Doyle reminds us that even that which is seen, that which is empirically collected through observations of the eye (human or camera) always involves an act of interpretation, manipulation. Moreover, Rear Window reminds us of the dangers inherent in looking and being looked at, foreshadowed in Stella's earlier predictions of "trouble" falling on Jeff and her reminder that "…in the old days they used to put out your eyes out with a red hot poker" if caught looking. And as Jeff observes while considering the ethical implications of his actions, the gaze can be reversed: "Of course, they can do the same to me…watch me like a bug under a glass if they want to." Unaccustomed to having the gaze turned around to look back at him when Thorwald begins to suspect someone is watching him, Jeff technologizes his gaze using binoculars, a telephoto lens and the manipulation of light and shadow, not only to extend its reach and power, but to disguise the act itself. Unlike Stella who, as a gendered object constantly under the male gaze, has "been looked at before," Jeff uses a device of his looking (the flash), turns it into a weapon (the sound effects of the bulbs dropping to the floor are reminiscent of a gun being re-loaded) to blind Thorwald as he reverses the power of surveillance by encroaching on Jeff's world. Both Lisa and Jeff are punished for their acts of gazing as both of them suffer physical danger when caught looking.

Rear Window explores the same cultural currents that pervade our culture some 35 years after the making of the film: the collection of data to form knowledge about, and power over the subject. In this study, I will detail the ways in which knowledge creation about women's bodies genders them specifically female and enacts the constitutive power of defining and delimiting female subjectivity.

Considering the prevalence of Michel Foucault's theories of surveillance in works contemplating the topic, I believe it important to critically evaluate Foucault within the context of a feminist project. Foucault, in his 1975 study of the birth of the prison system, observed the principles of panopticism had infiltrated virtually all aspects of modern life facilitating the disciplining of bodies to be individualized, docile, and productive. Citing Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, a prison structure with a central tower located in its centre to facilitate the surveillance of each and every cell at any given moment, Foucault tracks the historical shift from the public spectacle of punishment of the body, captured in public tortures and hangings, to a "'higher' aim," seeking "to reach something other than the body itself" through reformative techniques (11). These reformative techniques require the disciplining of not only the body, but also the subject. Foucault's usage of the term panopticism, then, refers to the "general principle of a new 'political anatomy' whose object and end are not the relations of sovereignty but the relations of discipline (208). The body is disciplined through a process of illumination, where its actions are continuously viewed and knowledge about it is created. Foucault observed that, with a shift in disciplinary techniques in the eighteenth century that utilized the principles of panopticism, "[panoptic techniques], by being combined and generalized...attained a level at which the formation of knowledge and the increase of power regularly reinforce one another in a circular process" (224). Panopticism is precisely so effective because it constantly reminds the surveilled of the permanent state of visibility, ensuring the "automatic functioning of power" (201).

While Foucault's articulation of the knowledge-power dynamic and his development of a theory of surveillance are brilliant in their specificity, they pose some problems when considering gender and the feminist project. One problematic area is Foucault's articulation of power relations. Foucault critiques the "juridico-discursive" model of power upon which traditional revolutionary theories are based (Sawicki 20). Foucault's conception of power is threefold: it is exercised (not possessed), productive (not repressive), and must be understood at the micro level (rather than through metanarratives) (20). I would like to consider the implications of the latter two assertions for feminist theory. I shall suspend my discussion of power being productive until fully considering how an understanding of power at the micro level is problematic for feminists.

Foucault insists that power is horizontally, rather than vertically, constituted. That is to say that power relations (most perfectly captured within a panoptic schema of surveillance) are contained at the micro level of the subjugated or surveilled. For Foucault, disciplinary power begins and ends at the microlevel of society. It began there and was then utilized by the dominant class once it proved more efficient and economical than overt displays of force. Such an approach not only obscures the ways in which systemic power operates within our culture, it creates what Linda Alcoff refers to as "normative confusion." In "Feminism and Foucault: The Limits to a Collaboration," Alcoff asserts political judgements using such metanarrative claims as justice and freedom are impossible within Foucault's model, thus limiting the efficacy and political usefulness of feminist claims of oppression. Lois McNay argues that the rejection of all metanarratives undermines the very nature of feminism: "without some fundamental notion of what constitutes the legitimate and illegitimate uses of power in relation to the subordination of women, feminism would either run into normative confusion similar to that which pervades Foucault's work, or it could even cease to exist as an autonomous movement" (197).

Furthermore, Foucault's insistence on the "deinvidualized" operation of power and its analysis at the microlevel loses sight of the larger, systemic forces of domination. For Foucault, power is not in a discursive flow horizontally and vertically, leading him to a limited vision of how power operates. Rather than power being in a dialogic relationship between the macro and micro levels, Foucault simply reverses the top-down paradigm he insists limits Marxist criticisms (Sawicki 23) and replaces it with a bottom-up analysis instead. As McNay observes of Foucault's creation of the necessarily docile body within this power paradigm, "Such a conception of the body results in a problematic one-dimensional account of identity. In respect to the issue of gendered identity, this unidirectional and monolithic model of the power's operations on the body leads to an oversimplified notion of gender as an imposed effect rather than as a dynamic process" (12).

Jana Sawicki, in her study of Foucault, insists Foucault is useful to feminists, despite the fact he denies understanding phenomena of class or state (and presumably gender) power are most important in organizing for change. Rather, his insistence on micro level analyses is practical for feminists since it suggests a vision of local struggles "against the many forms of power exercised at the everyday level of social relations"

(23). This is precisely what is problematic about such a vision. While it is absolutely critical that such struggles exist since it is at this level that women are most empowered, the knowledge and analyses achieved at the micro level must then be applied to a similar analysis and struggle taking place at the macro level. Without *both battles occurring simultaneously*, true change, that is effecting change at the level of policies, practices and institutions, will never occur.

By disindividualizing power, and by denying the systemic structures supporting the act of surveillance, Foucault can easily claim "he who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection" (202-3). As Hartsock observes, Foucault's argument for an ascending analysis of power leads us up a slippery slope towards blaming the victim (169), not only for his/her own subjugation, but for the very effects of class power and patriarchy since micro relations make possible global relations. I concur with Hartsock's recognition that dominated groups do, at some level, participate in their domination, however, according to Foucault, the surveilled assumes all responsibility, absolving the faceless surveillor, and enacting yet another violence on the body of the surveilled.

Hartsock argues that "we would learn a great deal more by focusing on the means by which this participation is exacted" (169). I do not believe this to be the true problem in Foucault's assertion of responsibility, for I believe he does detail the ways in which this participation occurs. I believe the problem is more systemic since participation is located as being induced by an unnamed, faceless power relation. Through constant visibility, the surveilled is made to assume the powers of the normative gaze. However, Foucault resists defining who enacts the normative gaze, arguing instead that power is horizontally constituted. He writes,

> [the effects of being seen without seeing] automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up...it does not matter who exercises power. Any individual, taken almost at random, can operate the [Panopticon] machine: in the absence of the director, his family, his friends, his visitors, even his servants. Similarly, it does not matter what motivates him...
> (202)

A rather diffuse definition indeed, which is precisely the problem when considering gender. I am arguing that it does indeed matter who is doing the gazing and to whom the gaze is being directed. The colonizer's gaze enacts a different quality of power over the coloured body than the misogynist's gaze over the female body than the (presumed male) director's gaze over the (presumed male) prisoner's body. Through the process of disindividualizing, the specificities of the gaze are lost and thus the ways in which power is enacted becomes standardized and lacking any kind of a gender or race analysis. McNay claims the problems associated with Foucault's "undifferentiated theory of power" is never resolved even in his later works (5). She perfectly captures the dilemma faced by feminists attempting to understand Foucault's theories through the paradigm of gender and sexual difference: "...on a theoretical level many [feminists] may be forced to conclude that his silence on the issue of sexual difference is not enough to absolve his thought of the charge of androcentrism. When Foucault talks of the body or the self it is a male version that is frequently implied and thus...he perpetuates the patriarchal habit of eliding the masculine with the general" (195). It does matter what motivates the observer for it is precisely this motivation that guides the ways in which knowledge is formed and the kinds of stories that will be constructed and projected back at the surveilled.

Finally, Foucault's descriptions of power as operating at the microlevel of society, where power is so productive, the oppressed are responsible for their own oppression, fails to provide space within which a resistive subject can exist. McNay suggests this is particularly problematic for feminists since part of our project involves an emancipatory aim wherein an autonomous female subject is envisioned. Furthermore, she asserts Foucault's constructions of the docile body "leads to an understanding of power in purely negative terms as prohibitory and repressive – although, in principle, Foucault contests such conceptions with his idea that power is a productive and powerful force" (3). Foucault does insist on a productive model of power as evidenced by his discussion of power in relation to the Panopticon. Although Foucault's understanding of power relations in a panoptic model has some analytic value, I would contend it becomes problematic when considering gender. Foucault writes, "although [the Panopticon] arranges power, although it is intended to make it more economic and more effective, it does so not for power itself...: its aim is to strengthen the social forces – to increase production, to develop the economy, spread education, raise the level of public morality; to increase and multiply" (207-8). Foucault's observations are accurate; however, when considering gender, when making women count, particularly in the economic sector, the view of power as being productive becomes somewhat dubious. The economy, the education system, and reproduction have all been sustained and maintained on the backs of women. It has been the unpaid labour of women within the home and the dead end low paying jobs women have been forced into that sustains this economy and indeed helps it to increase and multiply. Without a model of justice, power, in this formulation, can be viewed as being positive since so many benefit from its unchallenged application. By utilizing a gender analysis, power applied within this model, is indeed repressive.

While I can recognize Foucault's attempt at a positive, productive power model, I believe it only succeeds within an androcentric point of view wherein women are not accounted for. However, this leads feminists into a peculiar problem. It is problematic because if all power is repressive, the very goal of feminism – achieving empowerment for women through the elimination of oppressive forces – becomes equally oppressive. Such a vision obscures fundamental definitions of justice by reducing oppression to relativism. Moreover, such logic is at the very heart of anti-feminist attacks that centre around the invasion of the white male's prerogative. Suddenly a project based on equal justice becomes abusive when it threatens the current power schema. While I am willing to accept both Sawicki and McNay's claims that Foucault offers a much needed corrective or elaboration of this problem in his later works which are outside the scope of this study, it further complicates the utility of Foucault's theories when thinking Foucault *through* feminism[1]. Furthermore, when such creative editing and thinking is required in order to fit this theory within a feminist model, as Sawicki contends when she admits to having to "de-emphasize or dismiss" the "rhetoric of decline found in Discipline and Punish" in order to develop a theory of resistance and struggle, one wonders at its utility (98). Having said that, I do believe that theory must be viewed as a malleable, organic entity that should be pushed and pulled to uncover its discursive limits in order that it might improved upon. While I have articulated the limits of Foucault's theories of power to the feminist project, I do not believe he can be summarily dismissed since what is useful within his theories do further develop our understanding of power and should be utilized.

---

[1] Jana Sawicki characterizes her study as "my effort to think feminism through Foucault" (15). While she is willing to "think beyond him," I find her approach problematic since feminism is subsumed within Foucauldian thought and uncritically assumed to be linked in a shared goal.

Today, we can see the application of the panoptic principles in the trend toward target marketing. Made to lose any sense of collective identity, existing communities are being "broken up" into segmented groups whose identity is defined by consumer spending habits, and demography (see Joseph Turow's Breaking Up America). As information is continuously collected through consumer research and extensive data collection capabilities brought about by the "information revolution," increasingly detailed pictures of what these groups do, how they think, what, when, where and even why they (don't) eat, and countless other habits are catalogued, stored, bought and sold and projected back at us. This is the modern setting for the Panopticon and it is destroying the space within which we, especially women, can express and define ourselves. The encroachment of the public into the private is destroying the space within which self definition and development traditionally took place.

Far from attempting to salvage modernist binary divisions between private/public, self/other, male/female, us/them, I am attempting to critically evaluate the postmodernist tendency to enthusiastically embrace the blurring of boundaries, which I am arguing ultimately works to diminish political efficacy. While indeed postmodernist thought has contributed to a highly complex understanding of female subjectivity that attempts to open up such binaristic thought to scrutiny, the trend toward highly localized theory-making and understanding – contextualism, or pluralism – without attention to a collective political identity, is not supportive of feminist agendas.

Within the last two decades, feminists of colour and lesbian feminists have led the way in feminist theorizing toward developing processes whereby theory-making sheds its essentializing tendencies and begins to examine the specificities of living in, not only, a female body, but a racialized body, to use one possible example. Indeed many of these theorists provided a much needed corrective to the assumption that gender is enacted on the female body the same way across varying axes of oppression and that all women viewed gender as the primary force exerting power over their lives. In this regard, postmodernism offered a useful paradigm through which to examine the various intersections of oppression. However, as Susan Bordo observes in her essay, "Feminism, Postmodernism, and Gender-Scepticism," defying its own logic, postmodernism has been applied as "*the* authoritative insight, and from there into a privileged critical framework, a 'neutral matrix'...legislating the appropriate terms of all intellectual efforts, capable of determining who is going astray and who is on the right track" (139). Moreover, feminists on both sides of the postmodernist fence (those who enthusiastically embrace its locality and those who question its androcentric roots and political efficacy) have fallen into an either/or debate, falling right back into modernist modes of thinking.

I am locating myself sitting squarely on the postmodernist fence, utilizing aspects from both a postmodernist approach and a materialist, socialist point of view in my methodological approach to this study and my understanding of the gendering of the female body. While I am wary of the enthusiastic embrace of postmodernism by advertising, market researchers, and consumerism in general, I am not willing to dismiss its multi-faceted, historically specific approach to female subjectivity. I am cognizant of the many criticisms of postmodernism, particularly the dissolution of a political, collective identity, I am even more wary of feminism's jaded history of essentialisms.

I am attempting to reinvent a cyborg feminism, in the tradition of Donna Haraway's 1991 "Cyborg Manifesto," which seeks to combine socialist principles with a postmodern irreverence for categories, as well as a recognition of shifting political alliances. Any assertion of a collective identity, a political "we," must engage in situational definitions that will serve the groups' political ends by facilitating political alliances. Chandra Mohanty refers to this as "cartographies of struggle" in her attempt to chart a viable means of organizing politically in a postmodern fashion. She writes of this approach, "it is the common context of struggles against specific exploitative structures and systems that determines our potential political alliances" (7); it is an approach that attempts to sit on the postmodern fence by not adhering to boundaries between various theoretical approaches.

The cyborg metaphor is precisely so salient for this study since, as Anne Balsamo argues, "cyborgs challenge feminism to search for ways to study the body as it is at once both a cultural construction and a material fact of human life," (33) discursively constructed within specific local contexts, while remaining part of a larger historical group. It is useful to developing an understanding of the importance of self constitution, of defining one's *own* boundaries and identity, rather than becoming objects of a normative gaze that ceaselessly surveilles all aspects of life. The cyborg metaphor directs our attention to the ways in which the body is technologically manipulated (in the Foucauldian sense) to reproduce gender and gender roles, and thus to the ways in which female bodies, through technologies of surveillance, are forced within these parameters. My understanding of female subjectivity is directly informed by the experiences of living in a specifically gendered body, coloured by the knowledge that is created from such experiences, given specificity by the body and the ways in which it is made to move about in the world. Throughout this work, I have approached the body as a source of knowledge creation about the world: through the experiences of living *in* a body, we can learn *about* the body, about the world and about the forces of power that construct the gendered body.

The female body, as the following three chapters will demonstrate, is the terrain on which power is continually exerted by forces of oppression. In this way, the "political economy" of the body is exposed (Foucault 25). Power relations "invest [the body], mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks...to emit signs" (25) through knowledge creation, for "power and knowledge directly imply one another" (27). Foucault refers to this process of developing knowledge (a knowledge that is more than "the science of its functioning") over the body in order to master it as the "political technology of the body" (26). Technology is used throughout this thesis to refer to both the common usage of the term in reference to mechanization and also in the Foucauldian sense, as an instrument of power. It is critical that we stake out a space for the epistemology of the body in order that we might understand the political technologies of the modern female body, and move to political action in response to these forces of oppression. But more than simply responding to acts of violence done to the body, I believe the body, in its capacity to provide knowledge, is the key to the development of the autonomous, fully defined and articulated female subject: more than being reactive, it is proactive. Amid the horrifying stories told within this study, this point, the imaginatory capacity of the body to re-envisage freedom in the most profoundly oppressive instances, represents the hopeful vision to be located and seized within this study. Much of this study centres around these concerns about the body by examining the persistent presence of surveillance, and the ways in which it is used as a technology of the body.

Marge Piercy's Woman on the Edge of Time, the focus of the first chapter, "Time (Travelling) to Save the World: Female Subjectivity and the Epistemology of Feeling," explores the ways in which the body is constructed as not being trustworthy since it provides the ground for a resistive framework that counters the forces of oppression attempting the discipline the body. By taking away the power to feel, and thus skewing the epistemological experience of living in a poor, Chicana, female body, Connie's subjectivity and her life are threatened. Using the manipulation of time and space, Piercy explores the development of an autonomous female subject as being intricately connected to the specificities of Connie's body. It is through resistance that Connie is able to assert her subjectivity, reclaim her Mayan roots, and understand the workings of racism, poverty, abuse and sexism in her life.

In Chapter Two, entitled "'Time as White Space': The Surveillance of Cultural Memory," I further explore notions of time, and the specificities of constructing a history in order to understand a present or future, as being connected to the development of an autonomous female subject. Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale plays with context, inverting and subverting it, in order to explore how historical, political, and social specificity is crucial in self construction. It is the control of cultural memory that is the aim of the surveillance used by the Gileadean regime in the novel, in order to control the female body. By attempting to remove cultural memory and imagination of freedom, the female subject is rendered blank, without specificity, and without the will to resist.

Chapter Three, "A Quest for Authenticity: Reflections on the Media and the Death of Princess Diana," examines one of today's most influential and pervasive surveillors, mainstream media. Using one of the most important media events in a changing media environment, Princess Diana's death, I examine the cultural currents and concerns that produced and sustained this massive media event. Arguing that, as surveillors of the world, the media, using one of their media darlings, project images of femininity, motherhood and the current state of feminism that are intended to normalize and disguise their constructedness. I also read the Diana story as providing the space within which a dialogue began through which cultural concerns about our highly mediated world and the resulting quest for authenticity, the concern with the dissolution of private space and the concomitant trend to turn the inside out, were articulated.

I utilize the Epilogue, "'Never a Subject in Communication': Modern Day Panopticons and the Will to Resist," as a space to further contemporize this study by reflecting on a growing concern with surveillance in public discourses and consider the ways in which such instances of surveillance as found in high-tech grocery shopping, biometric technology, and the Internet are systematically and coercively constructing stories about us, not only as consumers, but as individuals, that are becoming harder and harder to resist. In much the same way that Lisa, Stella and Tom are seductively pulled into Jeffries' constructed identity of his neighbour, our ability to resist being constructed and the constructions given us are becoming increasingly more difficult to fight, just as it is becoming increasingly more important to fight them.

Chapter One

"Time (Travelling) to Save the World: Female Subjectivity and the Epistemology of Feeling"

Marge Piercy's Woman on the Edge of Time (1976) articulates the consequences of the loss of personal freedom in an era of profound technological change. Set in Chicago at the end of the '70's, this novel captures progressive concerns of the latter half of the twentieth century. It chronicles the life of Connie Ramos, a woman who is institutionalized in a state mental hospital against her will and forced into medical experimentation aimed at controlling how her mind, emotions, and body work, and ultimately the "irrational" violence she has displayed throughout her life. Throughout her narrative, Piercy is persistent in displaying the "rational" side to Connie's violence, the social injustices leveled against her in a racist and sexist world. Luciente, a woman from Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, guides Connie in her journey into the future in the year 2137. Through her visits to this future world and its converse set in New York, Connie explores her own past, in order that she might come to terms with her present and the forces of power at work in her life.

Within the novel, the development of an autonomous female subject is intricately connected to the epistemological experience of living in a specifically female Chicana body. Implicit in the uses of technology in Connie's world and in the dystopic world of New York are the classic dualisms of the modernist period. In modernist discourse, the subject is divided into binarisms within itself and that which is outside itself, valuing the mind, reason, and the masculine over the body, passion and the feminine, to name only a few. And as Hélène Cixous notes, "[t]hought has always worked through opposition...through dual, hierarchical oppositions...Everywhere (where) ordering intervenes, where a law organizes what is thinkable by oppositions" (560). These dualisms underlie the rationale of the technology and how it is used in the present and future depiction of New York: the body and, more specifically, the epistemological experience of living in the body – the capacity to feel, to experience and to make sense of those experiences – is not to be trusted since it marks the point at which the potential for a radical re-thinking of the power dynamics at the heart of these dualisms most explicitly exists. Such a re-thinking inevitably leads to a questioning of the institutions built on and dependent upon the unquestioned division between mind and body and other dualisms. The institutions under examination in this novel to which I will pay particular attention are capitalism, gender, and racism. To varying degrees these institutions profit from the active engagement of these dualistic oppositions within the body. All of these institutions utilize power to prevent the full development of Connie's subjectivity, destroying her will to survive by attempting to control what she feels and how she is able to respond to acts of oppression. It is these circumstances that land Connie in the state hospital, rather than any individual act of violence perpetrated by Connie. What needs to be controlled is not Connie's violence, but Connie herself: her emotive and epistemological capacity must be contained in order that her subjugation to the dominant order dictated by various axes of oppression is secured.

I am arguing that the physical enactment of power over women in this novel is occasioned by an invasion into the private female body, making the body open to public scrutiny, invasion and dismemberment. Gildina, the cartoon like receiver from the future dystopic world is an obvious example; in her representation of a grotesque femininity, she is physically re-ordered to suit prescribed notions of sexual and aesthetic desirability. The enactment of power over the subject through patriarchy, race, and capitalism is leveled against the body in order that physical control may lead to psychic control and the containment or elimination of the will to resist. The body is turned into "enemy territory," the medium upon which power is most forcibly and visibly displayed. By forcing the body to betray the subject through the use of technology, the war in which Luciente and Connie are enlisted is a battle to reclaim the body as a valid source of knowledge of the world and a means through which subjectivity can be defined and developed; not a technology used against the self. The body is turned inside out and placed under public scrutiny making what should be a private autonomous entity public property and subject to constant surveillance. Such violence is also rendered on the bodies of handmaids in the second chapter.

The use of technology in the surveillance of the bodies in Piercy's novel is central to the issue of freedom and the loss of privacy. All accounts of explicit expressions of feeling leading to some kind of action are severely and quickly punished. The technology of surveillance is used in this novel to strip the subject of the capacity to feel, a central notion to the assertion and development of subjectivity and identity. This novel then raises important questions about technology as extensions of the body that are, in their service to institutions and ideologies, designed to ensure complicity, thereby undermining individual autonomy. Furthermore, the application of the technology implanted in Connie's brain, literally and vividly realizes McLuhan's theories of autoamputation. Referring to the introduction of electronic media, Marshall McLuhan describes how the introduction of a new communication technology affects the physical ontology of the body. He argues:

> With the arrival of electric technology, man extended, or set outside himself, a live model of the central nervous system itself. To the degree that this is so, it is a development that suggests a desperate and suicidal autoamputation, as if the central nervous system could no longer depend on the physical organs to be protective buffers against the slings and arrows of outrageous mechanism. It could well be that the successive mechanizations of the various physical organs since the invention of printing have made *too violent and superstimulated a social experience* for the central nervous system to endure. (43; emphasis mine)

It is indeed the implantation of the electronic technology in Connie's body that turns her body against her. The very structure and design of the technology perfectly encapsulates the logic of autoamputation, thus rendering the body hostile and subject to violence.

Within the state hospital, Connie's basic civil liberties are violated under the guise of protecting the public good. This novel explores how the lines between the public and private are obliterated and how this is achieved through the use of technologies of surveillance. It focuses our attention on the particularly gendered and racialized nature of being watched by the state. This process of "watching over" is subsumed within the discourse of the "public good" and social control. Connie is subjected to constant surveillance, both in and out of the hospital. The narrative trajectory of the novel insists that when the private body is made into public property, personal freedom is destroyed: the development of the autonomous self is impeded. The process of making the body into public property involves consumption, not only of the body, but, as the novel suggests, the self as well. Technology is used to dismember the body into individual parts that are confinable and easily maintained under the dominant social order. I am referring to this usage as technologies of consumption. State institutions function as technologies that dismember and, within the narrative impulse of this book, disease the body. As Connie observes of the state intervention she has felt throughout her life, "All those experts line up against her in a jury dressed in medical white and judicial black – social workers, caseworkers, child guidance counselors, psychiatrists, doctors, nurses, clinical psychologists, probation officers – all those knowing faces had caught and bound her in their nets of jargon hung all with tiny barbed hooks that stuck in her flesh and leaked a slow weakening poison" (60). Surveillance is crucial in the process of attempting to make Connie into an ideally subservient, lower class woman not able to challenge the institutions that peer into her private life. The body must be understood, explored, manipulated and turned inside out.

All technology with which Connie comes into contact in her world is owned and controlled solely by men. It is used in the service of what is defined in this novel as male values of domination. Thus, the technology is an extension of the male body. Viewing technology as an extension of the body blurs the boundaries between what is technological or unnatural, and the organic or biological. It does not, however, throw all modernist dualistic oppositions open to the same kind of questioning since inherent in the technology are the particular biases of those who develop and control it. Thus, the uses of technology in the surveillance of the body keep the mind/body, masculine/feminine, rational/emotional dualisms intact. The feminine and the emotional must be contained and controlled. The female body, untrustworthy in its idiosyncrasies and responsiveness to the emotional, must be de-sensitized, fragmented, taken apart and put back together into a technologically improved, that is, a predictable and closely regulated form. Technology in the present and future world of New York is consistently portrayed in this novel as intrusive, as probing *into* the body in order to control it. As an extension of the male body into the female body, the technology literally and metaphorically rapes the female body in its quest to consume and "know" the female body in all senses of the word.

Despite this presentation of technology, Piercy's narrative does not support a solely deterministic view of technology. The possibility of two futures – the future worlds of Mattapoisett and New York – resist a deterministic approach to technology as presented in Connie's world by positing a gap between what is and what could be. The two future worlds are intended to stand as an illustration of the ways in which the dominant values of the culture itself can shape the technology, the ways in which it is used and its effects on the citizens of those worlds. The world of Mattapoisett insists that the possibility remains of investing technology with the values of socialism and an ethic of caring. Luciente's enlistment of Connie into her war, a war which, by inducing change in Connie's world, will ensure the survival of the future and Luciente's world, captures the essence of many contemporary theorists' rejection of technological fatalism. As Ursula Franklin, one such theorist, claims, "Once technological practices are questioned on a principled basis and, if necessary, rejected on that level, new and practical ways of doing what needs to be done will evolve" (123). In the world of Mattapoisett, through an understanding of the effects of technology – the interconnectedness between technological innovation and life itself – technology is used to develop, rather than suppress, individual autonomy, and individual and community development, all within an ethic of caring. However, before exploring the possibilities for the future, I will begin with an examination of Connie's present world.

There are many forms of technological intervention that make up the surveillance of Connie's life. The hospital, where most of the novel takes place, is an intricate and multifarious technological apparatus involving various forms of surveillance. The medical machinery – EEG's, needles, pills, restraints, the brain implant and the nurses themselves, who are mechanisms within the medical system, the "automatize[d] and disindividualize[d]" functionaries of power (Foucault 202) – are all designed to perform various kinds of surveillance on the bodies of the patients. Intended to monitor the physical fluctuations of the patients' bodies, they also perform an important function of controlling behaviour. All aspects of the patients' lives are strictly regulated, from the overly starchy diet they receive, to when they will eat, sleep, interact with other patients, even how often one is allowed to go to the bathroom. They are closely watched, thus their lives appropriate those of prison inmates, not patients hospitalized to receive treatment. Only behaviour that is complicit and acquiescing to the strict definitions of acceptable behaviour made by the various authority figures in the hospital is tolerated; non-compliant patients are thrown into isolation for the smallest transgression, including stepping out of the lunch line. Not surprisingly, Connie is "punished" for her improper behaviour, feeling anger, by the brain implant that monitors her brain's response to her body after she visits the dystopic future world (300). As she observes, "that thing in her head was punishing her with sharp pain and spurts of dulling drug" (300).

Connie uses a relaxation technique taught to her by Luciente that utilizes the power of her mind to control her chemically surveilled body. By using this technique, Connie learns the intimate connection between the body and mind, the importance of maintaining holism between the two and displays her capacity to resist despite the implant. Not surprisingly then, it is this incident which prompts Connie to join Luciente's war. But before she can join the war, she must find a way to fight against the effects of the implant. The following passage describes how the implant has taken control of her body, but notably, not her will:

> Connie was an object. She went where placed and stayed there. She caught the phrase "passive aggressive" from Acker to his girlfriend Miss Moynihan. Exactly, she thought. You got it, Waggle-Beard – now run with it. She would not get up until gotten up. She ate only if fed. She sat in a chair when placed there and got up when hauled up...All the time the drug leaking into her head was clogging her, slowing her, and whenever she got angry, her head turned her off. Something hurt in her then; a dreadful anxiety out of nowhere beset her with a small seizure and she had to remain still. Covertly she watched the ward and learned what she could about the hospital. (302)

Using counter-surveillance techniques, Connie begins to formulate a plan to escape the degradation of the hospital. Despite being physically and psychically "turned off," Connie develops a strong urge to do more than just survive in the hospital; a will to resist, to fight back becomes central to Connie's survival. Connie begins by being a "difficult" or "passive aggressive" patient, but soon deploys a strategy of manipulation in order to gain a chance to escape. This strategy involves an accommodative, yet resistive, use of the very ideology she is fighting against. As discussed earlier, the technology of surveillance is used to teach Connie her "rightful" place as a woman. Following a prescription of expected gendered behaviour, Connie sets about the hospital "taking a shrewd and wary interest, volunteering for every task defined as women's work, cleaning, sweeping, helping with the other patients, picking up clothes, fetching and carrying for the nurses" (339). Intentional in her use of this particular strategy, Connie becomes the model of "woman" the technology was designed to make her into: an efficient worker in the maintenance of the dominant order that prescribes her to menial labour because of her gender and race; "Because she wanted that damned machine to stay out of her head" (337), Connie is willing to perform the tasks that she was unwilling to do as part of the welfare work programs. This strategy involves the performative nature of being watched. Under the constant gaze of those around her, Connie must perform. Her performance involves giving her audiences what they want to see in order that they may be assured of her complete submission. While seeming compliant, Connie is able to disguise her guerilla tactics and reflect back at her audiences the mirror with which she has been judged; she has become everything they have taught her to be, shrewd and unfeeling, purposeful in her pursuit of the goal of attaining freedom. By using the very ideologies that were used against her, Connie is able to get out of the hospital for Thanksgiving. It is significant then that this strategy is what eventually leads to the attainment of the poison that will kill all of those who violated her freedom within the hospital, a symbolic strike against patriarchy, capitalism and racism.

It is important to note that the extent to which Connie is truly successful at fighting back is suspect. Threatened with further violence to her body by being forced into undergoing further surgery (referred to as an Amygdalotomy 381) in order that her violent episodes remain under control permanently, Connie poisons the coffee reserved for the doctors and nurses. Although Connie does avenge herself against these doctors, she does not succeed in gaining freedom since she is hospitalized again after being found guilty of murder. Although it is important to recognize that faced with such profound invasions of and into her private body, Connie is forced to respond in desperation. No doubt Connie was well aware of the consequences when she poisoned the medical staff, and yet still believes "at least once I fought and won" (375). Arguably, in achieving her goal, Connie was less concerned with acquiring her freedom, than with simply resisting. It is significant to note that she is unable to maintain contact with the future once she has launched her war because she "had annealed her mind...She had hardened" (375). Within the limitations of the argument I have set out here, it would seem that the technology of surveillance had succeeded in delegitimizing Connie's epistemological experiences and stripping her of the capacity to feel, thereby making the assertion that, in the end, Connie had won rather dubious. However, Connie succeeded in preventing the re-insertion of the implant thereby reasserting her dignity to preserve the integrity of her body and participate in her own self definition.

The very threat of the implantation of the radiotransmitter suffices as a means of surveilling the behaviour of the patients. Connie and the other patients in the state mental institution are targeted for surgical implantation of a "microminiaturized radio" which slowly releases a drug when the brain responds to feelings of anger. This medical experimentation is particularly targeted toward patients who exhibit "poor impulse control," (194) "irrational violence" (202), or simply behaviour that does not fit within social norms. Stripped of the particular contexts in which the violent behaviour takes place – the historical, economic, political and social contexts – the insertion of this surveillance technology enacts even further violence on the bodies of these patients. The procedure de-politicizes the conditions in which these patients lived their lives prior to being institutionalized. It is intended to strip these patients of their free will to respond to the conditions around them. It represents a profound invasion of privacy, limiting the instinct to fight back against the institutions of power that surround them. Its sheer pervasiveness is evidenced by Connie's desperate final act of resistance and violence as she attempts to break free. The bias of this technology is to create compliant, dominated and powerless objects who possess neither the will, nor the physical capability, to resist its hegemonic impulse. Furthermore, this technology goes beyond simply controlling or preventing feeling. It has the capacity to *induce* virtually any particular feeling or sensation through its connection to the computer that continuously monitors its "progress" to ensure that these patients will "perform." Thus, the radiotransmitter not only surveilles, it literally controls. This notion of performance is most vividly captured in the scene where Alice, another patient who has been implanted, is made to perform the efficacy and efficiency of this new technology for the medical staff and the peering eye of a video camera intended to capture every moment of the show for promotional purposes. Induced to deny her instinctive reaction to preserve her dignity by resisting – "Motherfucker, you let me up! I ain't no guinea pig!" (203) – Alice's body, by the doctor's touch, is made to betray her. The sexual overtones running throughout the scene make explicit the sexual nature of the doctors' "bright interested gaze" (203) turning the film from one that could be used for "funding and education" (203) to a "blue movi[e]" (205). Thus in this scene, the doctors and camera, through their sexual gaze, become pimps directing a pornographic film where women are made to act out sexual pleasure:

> 'Now how are you feeling, Alice?'
>
> Alice turned her head from side to side. She began to smile. "I feel good. I feel so good."
>
> "Tell us what you're experiencing, Alice."
>
> "I like you, baby. Come here. Come close to Alice. That feel so good. You good to me now."
>
> Redding chuckled. "See? Like taking candy from a baby. Righto. Okay, attendants, hold her down"
>
> . . .
>
> A moment later Alice's face broke into a snarl and she jerked upright and lashed out at Fats...
>
> "Now once again let her go."
>
> "Doctor! We can't."
>
> But Alice collapsed and began to giggle. (204)

The combination of the sexualized gaze with Alice's resistance also provides a strong suggestion of rape throughout, adding horrific significance to the cameraman's question at the end of the "little preview demonstration" – "Can you turn her on and off like that every time?" – leaving the reader to wonder what comes after the preview (204).

One important system of power operating in Connie's life is race. As a Chicana woman, Connie is very much aware of the legacy of patriarchal rule within her traditionally Mexican family. Patriarchy and race intersect in important ways throughout Connie's life and are significant in the development of Connie's subjectivity. In a touching scene, Connie as a fifteen year old adolescent argues with her mother about where her life will lead her. It is worth quoting from the following passage at length to explore how Connie's early awareness of the intersection of race and patriarchy later change in the development of her subjectivity:

> ...She could remember herself at fifteen and it did not feel different, only louder, more definite. "I won't grow up like you Mamá! To suffer and serve. Never to live my own life! I won't!"
>
> "You'll do what women do. You'll pay your debt to your family for your blood..."
>
> ...
>
> "...I'm not going to lie down and be buried in the rut of family, family, family! I'm so sick of that word, Mamá! Nothing in life but having babies and cooking and keeping the house. Mamacita, believe me – oígame, Mamá – I love you! But I'm going to travel. I'm going to be someone!"
>
> "There's nothing for a woman to see but troubles. I wish I had never left Los Calcinados." Mariana closed her eyes and Connie had thought she might burst into tears. But she only sighed. "I've seen hundreds and hundreds of miles of a strange country full of strange and violent people. I wish I had never seen the road out of the village where I was born."
>
> From her mother she inherited that Mayan cast to her face, the small chin, the sensuous nose, the almond eyes. They had all traveled far, and all of it bottom class...Troubles had driven them north, and again north, generation after generation plodding northward into the cold, into bondage, the desmadaros...At fifteen, at seventeen, she had screamed at her mother as if the role of the Mexican woman who never sat down with her family, who ate afterward like a servant, were something her mother had invented...Yes, like the teachers she admired in her high school, she was not going to marry until she was old, twenty-five even. Like Mrs. Polcari, she was going to have only two children and keep them clean as advertisements. Those beautiful rooms, those clean-looking men who wore suits, those pretty sanitary babies, not at all like Teresa and Inez when she had to change them and clean up their spilled food.
>
> ...
>
> So who was the worst fool, then – herself at fifteen full of plans and fire, or the woman of thirty-seven who had given up making any plans? Despair had stained her with its somber wash and leached from her all plans and schoolbook ideals. (46-47)

This passage displays the extent to which Western ideals and the rhetoric of American idealism influenced young Connie. Striving to understand why she is unlike the images she sees around her – the white high school teachers, the images of white America captured in advertisements not meant for a Chicana woman – she learns to hate her heritage and most importantly, the colour of her skin. Indeed the images of the "sanitary babies," "clean as advertisements" seem all the more *white* against the coloured, "dirty" skins of her sisters. This reference recalls the earlier scene at the opening of the novel when, commenting on the stench of urine coming from Connie, the nurse comments, "You wonder how they can live with themselves, never washing" (21). Having urinated herself and forced to remain in her stained clothes while being kept in restraints, Connie is indignant at such racism: "She wanted to scream that she washed as often as they did, that they had made her smell, made her dirty herself" (21). Later in life, Connie is able to recognize the making of race as a colouring, a dirty-ing of her skin.

Initially seduced by white, capitalist, Western ideals, the young Connie strives to "be someone." The someone she wants to become, however, is not a faceless entity, but is specific in its gendered role. Despite sharply criticizing her mother for the role she takes within her family, Connie longs to emulate the perfect picture of domesticity she sees projected at her. Although the images of white women she longs to become are clearly privileged, they nonetheless exhibit a limited vision of the possibilities for women. Connie is unable to recognize the patriarchal rhetoric oozing from such things as advertisements that, within carefully contrived pictures of domestic bliss, offer women promises of freedom for the low, low price of $19.99. By believing in the possibilities espoused in the rhetoric of the American pursuit of happiness, Connie must deny the role racism has played in driving her family further northward to escape hardships, to encounter the "strange country full of strange and violent people." Furthermore, Connie fails to identify the link between her own life and that of her ancestors. Just as her family was uprooted from their homeland, driven northward, Connie is forced to surrender her body to a white, patriarchal medical system, thus connecting Connie's own struggle against patriarchy and racism to the historical legacy of racism enacted on her ancestors.

It is only at a later stage in her life that Connie can see beyond the impulse within the American rhetoric of individuality that only looks to the personal, to look to the political. Indeed Connie recognizes the internalization of patriarchal and racist ideologies has caused a war within her as she fights against hate with love for herself and the Mayan heritage inscribed in her face. We see, then, in the final paragraph of the passage quoted above that Connie is faced with the legacy of racism and patriarchy. It was the despair of facing such seemingly unassailable institutions that "leached from her all plans and schoolbook ideals," of seeing the foolishness in believing that she might just win against it, that causes her to give up. However, it is also the will to survive that forces her to speculate on which of the two perspectives may be the more foolish. It is the street-smart savvy, developed throughout her life of struggling, that becomes Connie's best ally in the hospital. Armed with a new awareness and understanding of the political, economic, and racial conditions that have shaped her life, Connie reaches an epiphany whereby she is able to see beyond her own culpability, beyond the personal to that which is outside herself. She declares: "the war raged outside her body now, outside her skull, but the enemy would press on and violate her frontiers as soon as they chose their next advance. She was at war" (337).

The development of Connie's political subjectivity is linked then, to an understanding of how forces outside of her body have worked to intrude into her body, how she has been screwed again and again by patriarchy, capitalism, and racism. It is significant that this process of developing a political consciousness has been nourished by her sustained contact with the future. Indeed it is only after making contact with Luciente that Connie is able to envision a notion of freedom, a notion which leads her to fight back. This process involves an acute awareness of what is happening within her body, of how and what it is feeling.

When first contacted by Luciente, Connie is understandably skeptical about the probability of a group called the "Manhattan Project" visiting her from the future. Luciente informs Connie that she is a "catcher...whose mind and nervous system are open, receptive, to an unusual extent" (42). Reading passivity into being "receptive," Connie understands the term as an insult with sexual, gendered and racial connotations, despite the term having some resonance in Connie's life. Connie, has in her past, recognized her intuitive sense, where "information entered her as a sound entered her ears" (44). However, she has never understood the capacity of this capability before understanding the purpose of Luciente's contacts. Connie is soon informed that her help is needed to influence her own world, to begin the revolutionary process of changing the dominant values in her world, in order that Luciente's world may survive. Faced with the possibility of the future developing into two possible trajectories, what happens in Connie's world directly affects what will or will not happen in Luciente's world. Responding to the profound problems created by environmental destruction and the inherent values of domination and power that exist in Connie's world, much energy is spent in Mattapoisett fixing what was wrong to shape a different kind of reality, one that is environmentally responsible and based on a respect for the private individual will. Hence naming Luciente's group the "Manhattan Project" is an ironic use of the historic reference to the secret U.S. development of atomic weaponry by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1940's. "Manhattan Project" (Luciente's group) is a way of appropriating the profound powers of the state to build weaponry that could destroy unprecedented numbers of people without public consent, consultation or knowledge. The ironic usage of the term points to how this group is attempting to build technology based on community participation and the furthering of life sustaining practices, unlike the ideologies espoused in the historical Manhattan Project.

Mattapoisett functions as a cooperative, where no form of commerce exists and all citizens equally participate in decision-making and the maintenance of the village. Maintenance is approached in a holistic manner, ensuring that all facets of the society are "well," in order that the whole may also be well. Everything is shared, from food to mothering to sexual partners. Individuals are allowed great personal freedom to pursue and develop interests to fulfill their individual potentials. Indeed, great care is taken to ensure that all citizens are treated in an equitable and respectful manner. Elaborate ceremonies are created to resolve tensions between individuals, to celebrate life and death, to "heal [them] to the world [they] live in with so many others" (278).

Scientific development and research and the attendant technologies that result are crucial to the development of Mattapoisett. Strikingly, however, the knowledge attained through science is not controlled by any one individual or corporation, as in Connie's world, but rather is shared with the community and the other communities surrounding Mattapoisett. Thus the power dynamic inherent in knowledge is alleviated and knowledge becomes a source of communal strength. How science should develop is decided in town meetings where all citizens have an equal voice in deciding the direction research should take and where its implications are discussed. As Luciente explains, "...in your [Connie's] day only huge corporations and the Pentagon had money enough to pay for big science. Don't you think that had an effect on what people worked on? Sweet petunias! And what we do comes down on everybody. We use up a confounded lot of resources. Scarce materials. Energy. We have to account" (278). Luciente's comments on the hierarchical and market-driven nature of science and technology are particularly salient at this point in the narrative. On the eve of Connie's implantation, this analysis places the impeding surgical procedure within its historical and political contexts. The world of Mattapoisett functions as a means for Connie to develop a political consciousness crucial to the development of her subjectivity and will to survive, to see beyond her world to what could be. Significantly, the notion that this world exists as a potential points to how technologies can be alternatively conceived. Indeed, Mattapoisett embodies what Heather Menzies (1996) insists is possible in present day communication technologies if developed with a mind toward community participation and input.

As an ethic of care and respect dominate all social relations in Mattapoisett, gender is virtually eliminated. All gendered personal pronouns are removed, replaced with the nondescript "per." Even what was once the exclusive domain of women, giving birth, is technologized and rendered genderless. The production of babies is conducted entirely outside of the body in an apparatus called the brooder. Mothering of the child created is then taken over by three persons, both male and female, who equally share all mothering responsibilities, including breast feeding. This mothering continues until the child develops a sense of self, usually around the time of puberty, at which time all claims of ownership as a mother are relinquished. Thus, all aspects of mothering, from the moment of conception to the actual raising of the child are categorized, broken down and made into a science itself. As Elaine Orr observes, "Thus, the replacing of female biological reproduction with technological birth, rather than minimizing mothering, maximizes it through narrative constructions of multiple, extra-uterine bonds. Put differently, Piercy's *showing* of technological mothering publicizes women's historical labor and amplifies the possibilities for maternal stories" (Orr 62). The outering of what was once women's biological function takes away the emphasis on the individual female body and the concomitant modes of surveillance that accompany a pregnant female body (Balsamo 1996). It also rescues mothering from the specifically gendered realm of the feminine, making mothering the responsibility of everyone. As Luciente explains to Connie:

> It was part of women's long revolution. When we were breaking all the old hierarchies. Finally there was that one thing we had to give up too, the only power we ever had, in return for no more power for anyone. The original production: the power to give birth. Cause as long as we were biologically enchained, we'd never be equal. And males never would be humanized to be loving and tender. So we all become mothers. (105)

This passage recalls what Anne Snitow refers to as "the divide" in feminist theory. Viewing women's biological capacity as a source of power, – "the original production" – or as a source of disempowerment – "biologically enchained" – has occupied feminists for decades. To the citizens of Mattapoisett, the elimination of all power supercedes both sides of the debate. Thus, at the heart of this particular technology is a consideration of feminist principles offering hope that, at least in the future, women's political analyses will be heard.

The other possible future into which Connie accidentally slips stands in stark contrast to the world envisaged in Mattapoisett. This world is full of cyborg bodies, chemically and technologically altered, highly stratified, embodying the dominant cultural values of the familiar institutions of patriarchy and capitalism. These institutions are made so explicit in their technological manifestations as to seem absurd and almost laughable. Set in New York, Connie lands in a segregated and guarded complex designated for "contract girls and middle flacks" (288). Connie is immediately introduced to a grotesque hyper-exaggerated embodiment of the ideal patriarchal vision of femininity. Gildina, a "contracty," or woman contracted for any length of time to provide sex for higher echelons, is Connie's receptor. She is a "cartoon of femininity, with a tiny waist, enormous sharp breasts that stuck out like the brassieres Connie herself had worn in the fifties – but the woman was not wearing a brassiere" (288). Connie soon learns that the "extravagance of her breasts and buttocks" are the result of constant and frequent technological manipulations of her once corporeal body. Having undergone "beauty-ops," "full shots," "re-ops" and "grafts," Gildina's body is subject to constant technological intervention in the pursuit of the "perfect" woman's body. Hence, it is femininity that is subjected to the constant surveillance of patriarchy in the pursuit of its own maintenance.

The individual performance of patriarchy then is embodied in the form of the technologically manipulated female body. The performative nature of surveillance is captured in Gildina's concern for having her legs painted. She reveals the leg painting is "for display. The painting is what counts" (297). The individual subjectivity of Gildina is not of importance to the maintenance of the patriarchal system since Gildina is relatively powerless. Being segregated and guarded, Gildina is not even able to leave her apartment. The Securcenter which monitors her every move and thought even within the seemingly private space of her apartment is carefully watched so that "if [she's] doing anything wrong, they'll stop [her]." (298). The constant surveillance, and Gildina's knowledge of the surveillance, ensures that she behaves within the strict confines of the order established "[b]ecause it is possible to intervene at any moment and because the constant pressure acts even before the offences, mistakes or crimes have been committed" (Foucault 206). Her awareness of her relative powerlessness, evidenced in her embarrassed admissions of the limits to the privileges she has a "contracty" of a fourth level "officer," ensures that she will never challenge the system that looms larger than anything she can control. The dispersal of power within the system of surveillance is so successful that her self-regulation – "'Sha! You don't talk about them,' Gildina looked around" (Piercy 298) – and awareness of her visibility ensures "[s]he becomes the principle of [her] own subjection" (Foucault 203), thereby completely consuming any notion of an autonomous identity. She is physically and psychically trapped within an image of femininity and notions of citizenry that are entirely not her own and do not serve her own interests.

Indeed this world is a hard line capitalist's wet dream. The "multis," large corporations owned by a few exceedingly rich families, not only rule the economy, but literally own both citizens and Cybos. Cash's body, Gildina's contractor, is also technologically manipulated in the interest of servicing his Multi. He boasts he has "no appendix either...That's why we don't need many of you useless cunts [Gildina and Connie] now-on. Nothing inessential. Pure, functional, reliable. We embody the ideal. We can be destroyed – not by you duds – but never verted, never deflected, never distracted. None of us has ever been disloyal to the multi that owns us" (299). Clearly, Cash represents the fulfillment of the acts of technological manipulation enacted on the body of Connie. He is everything that Connie is supposed to be, everything that the technology used in her world is intending to make her. The impossibility of Cash ever questioning his place in this world, or having his loyalty to the hierarchical structure waver in the least is linked to his inability to feel. It is significant that he is capable of being killed, whereas the multis are capable of living for centuries, showing the relative insignificance of his body to the maintenance of the larger system, since ultimately he is replaced with another; he is, after all, almost like a Cybo, but not quite. Since emotive or epistemological capability is not necessary to the maintenance of his multi, he does not possess them. In fact, it is absolutely essential to the structure of this highly stratified world that he not feel. Complete control of his body in service to his multi extends to complete control over his bodily functions. As Gildina describes, he has,

> Sharpened control, reallike. He's been through mind control. He turns off fear and pain and fatigue and sleep, like he's got a switch. He's like a Cybo, almost! He can control the fibers in his spinal cord, control his body temperature. He's a fighting machine, like they say. I mean not really like a Cybo, but as good as you can get without genetic engineering or organ replacement. He's still a woolie – that's what the richies and the Cybos call us, who are still animal tissue. But he's real improved. He has those superneurotransmitters ready to be released in his brain that turn him into just about an Assassin. I mean not really, he's fourth level, but he's in that direction, if you gape.
> (297- 98)

What is so striking about this passage is the structural links between this world, Connie's present and the other future world of Mattapoisett. Using a technique taught her by Luciente, Connie is able to control her bodily response to threatening situations: "Fear gripped her through the belly. She had to do the easercises Luciente had taught her, she had to become conscious of her breathing and relax" (293). Indeed she is able to control her bodily responses sufficiently to protect herself against the intrusive technology possessed by Cash. After some investigation of her qualifications, he remarks "'My sensing devices monitor your outputs. I reg adrenaline but no sympathetic nervous system involvement. You feel anger but not fear?...A dud could not react so, after coring and behavior mod. You have no monitor implant. Are you on a drug I cannot scan? Not acetycholine. Something is wrong...'" (300). Connie is able to calm herself sufficiently to disguise her bodily reactions to her feelings of fear and anxiety in order that she fool Cash. In this instance, the same technique is used by both Cash and Connie, marking a narrative connection between the two worlds represented by these two characters. However, the technique used by Connie was derived from Luciente's world, further creating a link between Connie's world, Luciente's world, and Gildina's world. Connie, through Luciente, has become a fighting machine, linking her to the war raging in the future and the war Connie will soon begin.

Gildina, Cash and Connie possess similar technology within their brains that release chemicals that, through the technological surveillance of their bodily functions, control their actions. This technology, as Alice points out, is intended to "[c]ontrol. To turn us into machines so we obey them" (200). The economic benefits to be gained from the absolute control of the patients ensures that those who control the technology will receive a good return on their investment in terms of the benefits associated with the consistent and unchallenging behaviour of its receivers. Thus, capitalism is a powerful influence guiding the development, purpose, use and implementation of the technologies used. That is to say that the bias behind the technologies used is dependent on the values of those who control the technology. This is the crucial difference between the technologies used between the different worlds. The world of Mattapoisett is as technologically advanced as those of New York and of 1976; however, the ends and purposes to which the technology is used differs significantly. The future world of New York then is the realization of many values already present in Connie's world. Those values revolve around domination and control, determining who is to be surveilled. For Cash, his behaviour in service to the multi that owns him is crucial to the survival of the multi and the system that supports it. No chance of disloyalty can be tolerated. His body is thus designed to fulfill the maintenance of the power of the multis and the capitalist system from which they benefit. Similarly Connie is subjected to equally intrusive technology in order that the doctors controlling the technology may benefit financially and from prestige. It is also significant that Connie is re-incarcerated because she not only displayed violence a second time, but more importantly, it was directed against a man, her niece's pimp. Surely, such unruly women cannot be trusted to remain unfettered. However, Luciente's world also represents a possible future development of Connie's world. Such a possibility resists a technologically deterministic point of view and posits within the narrative an element of hope for the development of a world based on the self determination of individuals, and a vision of community based on a collective good rather than commerce and profit.

The economic gains that would result from the sale and use of this technology for the doctors that developed it are significant. And as Dr. Redding, the doctor responsible for the brain implant project, observes to Dr. Argent, a powerful and reputable doctor, the fame of being associated with the project is as equally great. In Connie's culture, fame and reputation have cultural and economic currency that result in professional fame which translate directly into dollars. The technology, however, is also used in service of the larger institution of the state. The state, which makes itself responsible for the monitoring of social behaviour, is also interested in social control. The form that the social control will take is dependent on the values of those that control the larger institutions that dictate and set social policies: the state, which is controlled by men. Social control must always include some means of surveillance, whether self-induced or conducted by the state itself. The form in which the surveillance will take then depends on the bias of those performing the surveillance. The state is directly linked to capitalism, implying that, despite its rhetoric of acting in "the public interest," the state concerns itself with the interests of only a few. Those few already possess political and economic power, power that is attained through the control of the dispossessed.

Woman on the Edge of Time is an explicitly political novel that, through its explorations of the role of the state in the intervention of people's lives, advocates the reassertion of personal liberties. Connie, in her complex relationship to Luciente, Gildina and Cash, is the metonymic arm of the body politic. It is significant that throughout this novel Connie is often described as being diseased, and that Connie is in threat of being consumed by this disease, a metaphor for the corruption of the state itself. As Connie observes while the doctors are placing the implant into her: "Suddenly she thought that these men believed feeling itself a disease, something to be cut out like a rotten appendix. Cold, calculating, ambitious, believing themselves rational and superior, they chased the crouching female animal through the brain with a scalpel" (282). Feeling is the disease that must be cut out of, separated from, Connie's body by a perverse medical system feeding her "dope to keep her stupid" (283). It is suggested in this novel that the path to curing this social ill is linked to the elimination of technologies of consumption that seek to consume the very identity and subjectivity (linked to the corporeal or the animal) of the female subject through the denial of the right to privacy. The powers of the state are further explored in the following chapter where, fuelled by fundamental religious values where "God" exists as the head of the body politic, the state described in The Handmaid's Tale takes on unprecedented powers.

Chapter Two

"'Time as White Sound': The Surveillance of Cultural Memory"

Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale (1985) is a futuristic novel describing profound social injustices committed by the state. The Republic of Gilead, based on principles of right wing fundamentalist readings of the Old Testament, has taken over areas of the United States and created a world where women are catalogued according to their reproductive functionality. Women with "viable ovaries" are made into Handmaids for the wealthy families of powerful men in the regime. Those without, but physically able, are used for their physical labour as domestic servants called Marthas. Absolutely every aspect of these women's lives is strictly controlled and monitored according to state specifications. They are not allowed to read, to speak when not spoken to, to see or be seen, but are placed under profound pressure to produce healthy children for the maintenance of the Gileadean regime in an attempt to alleviate the declining population levels. In what follows, I will suggest that at the heart of the anxiety surrounding re-production in this state is a concern with the construction of a culture of coercion in line with the doctrines of the state and more importantly, with the removal of any vestiges of a cultural memory of life as it once was. The obliteration of cultural memory is a violent process that destroys all imagination of life as an independent, free-thinking subject and represents the most profound and threatening act of surveillance the Republic of Gilead can enact on its citizens.

Surveillance of the female body comes in many forms in this novel. As a commodity and property of the state, the female body, and in particular the function that body serves for the state, is carefully watched and maintained. In Woman on the Edge of Time, the female body becomes property of the state-run hospital, not so much to fulfill a state-prescribed function (although ultimately as docile, gendered bodies who perfectly perform their gender roles, they do), but rather to be re-formed in the very image of the state. Women's bodies, in The Handmaid's Tale, are reduced to their physical capacity to perform their state-prescribed function. All behaviour and activity must serve that function, from restrictions on diet to create healthful, fertile wombs, to prescribed verbal greetings and responses that support Gileadean ideology. Handmaids are nothing more than floating uteri; those who fail to perform are swiftly and severely punished. As argued in the previous chapter, surveillance ultimately attempts to homogenize and indoctrinate the surveilled into collusion with the dominant values and ideologies of those who watch. This act of gazing is always gendered and becomes an act of sexual and political domination over the female body (Cooper 51). Unlike in Woman on the Edge of Time where the female body is subject to dismemberment and then re-ordering in order to "improve" it, the female body in this novel, is physically useful for only so long then utterly discarded and destroyed with little interruption to the everyday business of patriarchal rule. The body, emptied of all subjectivity and autonomy, is evacuated of all irrelevant parts (much like Gildina in Piercy's novel), including the speaking subject, and primed to be refilled with state sanctioned sperm.

The first order of the Republic of Gilead once in power was to formulate a society based on the patriarchal rule of the Father. All women were stripped of their most basic rights including, the right to own property and the ability to hold a job. All material possessions were turned over to the possession of husbands, or male next of kin. The women designated to become handmaids were eventually rounded up and the re-education process began. In the Rachel and Leah Center, an old high school turned into "adult education centre," the handmaids-to-be are given a severe regimen of propaganda and indoctrination into the values of the new (old) way of life. Indeed there is nothing in the ideology and operation of the Gileadean regime that is not familiar and already present prior to its enshrinement in the official discourse and way of life. Sexism, racism, heterosexism and classism all existed in Offred's previous life, which closely resembles our world today. The removal of all cultural products of the former way of life was a deliberate attempt to eliminate all that was associated with the previous world order that did not fit into the official vision for the structure of this society. This process included eliminating all notions of the future that the previous order promised. It represents an attempt to return to a "purer" way of life (read: unchallenged by eliminating all previously used forms of dissent) by severely limiting personal freedom and attempting to re-shape the ways in which people, particularly women, thought of their roles as citizens and their responsibilities to the efficient operation of the state. This process of re-education involves a return to "family values" and the "old" way of life based on scriptural precedent and patriarchal rule. At the heart of this process is the rejection of the autonomy of the female body, justified by a "careful" reading of scripture.

Although this tale is unbelievable in its horror and profound violation of human rights, by straddling three time periods – Offred's past life, (grounded in our own), the present of Gileadean rule, and the future world represented in the Historical Notes – there is enough resonance with our time to make this more than a futuristic tale. Much like in Woman on the Edge of Time, traces of our own reality are readily found in this text, providing us with a profound portent of one possible vision for our future. The conflation of present, past and future time in this novel does not allow the readers to establish a narrative distance from the text and discount it as science fiction. This narrative technique implicates the readers through an examination of how institutional and state surveillance seeks to create complicity with the hegemonic forces of the dominant ideology espoused by those in control. This issue is explored through the narrator's exploration of memory and time and is framed within a political context by the inclusion of the Historical Notes that force the readers to re-evaluate this tale as personal exposition and the role memory played in its construction.

A historical link can be made between the rule of the Republic of Gilead and the invasion of Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge regime in the mid '70's. Indeed the similarities are striking, and frightening. Brian Fawcett chronicles the atrocities committed against the Cambodian peoples in his collection of essays, Cambodia: A Book for People who Find Television Too Slow. In it he argues that the mass communication technologies of our current Global Village are destroying individual consciousness and memory in its unending articulation of the values of consumerism – as in the case of Princess Diana's mediated life and death (Chapter 3) – that assimilate all of its consumers into the corporate vision of those who control and own the communication technologies. In a similar vein, argues Fawcett, the Khmer Rouge, using far more brutality and violence, strove to achieve the same kind of homogenization of the Cambodian people. As he states, "They [Khmer Rouge] wanted a world in which people existed without memory and without the ability or will to think independently. They tried to replace those uniquely human abilities with direct experience framed by an absolute and monadic authority" (174). This authority, through the use of violence, or the threat of violence, maintained its control through the literal, cultural and psychological annihilation of the Cambodian peoples. Although Fawcett does not further explicate what he means by "consciousness" or name precisely which aspects of human consciousness he means, I wish to further explore the political aspect of human consciousness; this aspect, if dulled or completely annihilated, allows such barbarities as committed in Cambodia, or in the Republic of Gilead, to be committed by allowing the propagation of the political and economic conditions and ideologies that underlie such manifestations. The dulling of the political consciousness of a citizenry allows such atrocities to take place through political apathy and complacency. One correlation made between our current age of the Global Village and the world of the Cambodian peoples during the Khmer Rouge rule is the prevalence of white space and noise. Consider the following lines:

> The surface of public consciousness in the 1980's has been made astonishingly difficult to penetrate because of the massive array of covertly-interpreted data and propaganda thrown into the path of the contemporary investigator. The ugly truths of our time are neither dark nor silent. They have been rendered opaque by full-frequency light that admits neither definition nor shadows, and they are protected from the voices of the suffering and the disaffected by an accompanying wall of *white* noise.
>
> (14; emphasis mine)

Further on he writes:

> The Khmer Rouge then painted over, with *white* paint, every single sign in the city. There has never been even a remotely adequate explanation for why this was done, except to note it as a curiosity of Khmer Rouge barbarism, or to say that an apparently irrational order was given, and the order was carried out – one among many. I have a different theory. Perhaps, like the Calvinist zealots of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who painted over the muralled churches, they wanted to obliterate particularity, direction and local memory, creating in its stead a single focus on the monadic truth, the City of God.
>
> This city, emptied of all but cold ideology and the lethal bureaucracy that accompanied it, then began to obliterate the identities of Cambodians in the name of efficiency, simplicity and purity. I would like you, my readers, to consider that, in a less direct and violent way, the Global Village is doing the same to us.
>
> (62; emphasis mine)

The intention and effects of white space and white noise remain the same in both instances. Consciousness is whitened, wiped clean of all colour and detail. Consciousness that lacks detail is one that also lacks memory, memories of life before the invasion of white space. However, the operation of white space and white noise differ rather significantly. While white noise creates a dulled consciousness through its constant and unending stimulation of the senses, white space reduces the capacity to feel by rendering everything colourless. White noise over-extends the senses in its unrelenting onslaught of images, sound and words, rendering all of it undistinguishable and lacking in content. Usually used in reference to electronic media, white noise, as I am defining it, is the condition of information overload, the result of an age of excessive media saturation. White space, conversely, exists outside of white noise, along its borders. White space marks what is not there, whereas white noise marks the excess of what is there. White space lacks signification; white noise is over signified, voiding it of meaning. Both obscure information and seek to make its understanding within larger contexts impossible. The white noise of contemporary mainstream mass media obscures historical continuity and contextualization by reducing "news" or events into individual headlines, packaged to suit media constraints, commodified to serve the interests of media owners. Thus, white noise is cleverly constructed to prevent one from asking too many questions or steering too far away from the interests of those in power. And it often serves as useful propaganda by determining, selecting, shaping, controlling and limiting public discussion on matters of importance (Manufacturing Consent).

The process of nullifying meaning is crucial to the establishment of control and power because it removes the capacity or will to envisage a life outside of that which is presented by those who control the white noise and/or space. The control of consciousness and memory in the establishment of one preferred vision of reality perhaps represents the most profound examples of surveillance imaginable. I want to suggest that Atwood's novel explores this very issue not only in the values espoused by the Gileadean regime, but also in the future presented in The Historical Notes by Professor Pieixoto.

Surveillance of the kind explored in this study (that is overt, rather than covert surveillance operations) requires of the surveilled some level of reciprocity in order that it work effectively. At some level a tacit understanding is established, an exchange of some sort is made, that allows the surveillance to continue and achieve its goal of homogeneity and modified behaviour in line with the values of the surveillants. That is to say, that conditions must be such that the surveilled are induced into participating in the surveillance or allow its continuance. While Michel Foucault, utilizing the example of the Panopticon in the prison system, developed his theories about surveillance and power in reference to prison inmates (Discipline and Punish), wherein the surveilled are physically confined primarily against their will, I am suggesting that modern day surveillance, outside of the prison system, operates coercively through an implicit reciprocal relationship, rather than forcibly. The surveilled must be afforded some kind of benefit from the act of surveillance; institutional and structural conditions – economic, social or political – must be in place that seduce the surveilled into abdicating some element of their privacy. This reward may be nominal, or it may hold some kind of valued cultural significance, however it is promoted as being in the interest of the surveilled. The use of data banks that track consumer purchases at a supermarket, for instance, is justified as being beneficial to the consumer through the exchange of "points" that offer discounts, or the promise of being informed whenever sales are approaching. The information collected about the consumer can be sold to other supermarkets or manufacturers to facilitate their "target marketing." While the consumer may receive minimal discounts or information, they are implicitly agreeing to the sale of this data and the resulting marketing campaign that will be directed toward their demographic group, whether wanted or not. However, as Tom Wittenberg writes in his

Letter to the Editor of Time magazine, the promise of rewards is sufficient reason to tolerate such an invasion of privacy: "Sure, I could pay cash for everything and leave no paper trail for prying eyes. But for me the seduction of using plastic is the frequent-flyer miles that I can accrue. By funneling just about everything through one credit card, I'm flying free from Boston to Belfast and back. For me, it's a tolerable trade-off" (4).

White noise and white space participate in the creation of the necessary pre-condition that facilitates the effectiveness of surveillance. By ignoring the consequences of white noise and space, consciousness is dulled sufficiently to allow peering eyes into the lives of those who are surveilled. Christine St. Peter refers to the process of "internalizing the 'Eye'" as leading to "political paralysis" (98). Surveillance achieves its goal through the implied threat of violence, whether through the implementation of force or through coercion, leading the surveilled to "so interioriz[e] the gaze of the oppressor that she polices herself according to his commands, fearing that he will know and punish any infraction" (98). And the easiest way to live with such a constant threat is to ignore its presence, as Offred does in The Handmaid's Tale.

The following example offers a poignant correlation to the aforementioned passages from Cambodia. In it the narrator, Offred, describes her life prior to the forceful takeover by the army of the Gilead. Set in a time, not unlike our own, when gender injustices were occurring around her – the frequent raping, mutilation and killing of women – Offred remembers her life before the "revolution" occurred:

> Is that how we lived then? But we lived as usual. Everyone does, most of the time. Whatever is going on is as usual. Even this is as usual, now.

> We lived, as usual, by ignoring. Ignoring isn't the same as ignorance, you have to work at it.
>
> Nothing changes instantaneously: in a gradually heating bathtub you'd be boiled to death before you knew it. There were stories in the newspapers, of course, corpses in ditches or the woods, bludgeoned to death or mutilated, interfered with as they used to say, but they were about other women, and the men who did such things were other men. None of them were the men we knew. The newspaper stories were like dreams to us, bad dreams dreamt by others. How awful, we would say, and they were, but they were awful without being believable. They were too melodramatic, they had a dimension that was not the dimension of our lives.
>
> We were the people who were not in the papers. We lived in the *blank white spaces* at the edges of print. It gave us more freedom.
>
> We lived in the gaps between the stories.
>
> (53; emphasis mine)

Offred lived in the white noise of media saturation that, through its constant deluge of death and misery, homogenized the experiences of those who suffered, rendering them normal, or within acceptable experiences of the modern world. The white space framed by the stories to which Offred referred does not grant her freedom, despite her belief that it does. Rather the persistence of these stories intruding into her life narrowed the scope of her behaviour to carefully defined rules for "safe living": "I remember the rules, rules that were never spelled out but that every woman knew: don't open your door to a stranger, even if he says he is the police. Make him slide his ID under the door. Don't stop on the road to help a motorist pretending to be in trouble. Keep the locks on and keep going. If anyone whistles, don't turn to look. Don't go into a laundromat, by yourself, at night" (24). Believing she was safe within these prescribed rules, the forced manipulation of her behaviour was obscured within the maintenance of that myth.

Bereft of their political contexts, the stories in the media became nothing more than headlines, mere text. The analogy of being boiled in a bathtub offers a poignant comment on the implications of a dulled political consciousness creating fertile ground for the takeover by the rulers of the Gileadean regime. As Moira comments to Offred when the takeover began "[t]hey've been building up to this" (163) indicating that the white noise of media saturation had sufficiently lulled its consumers into believing that such injustices only happened to "other" people. Although it is important to remember that the takeover was accompanied by extreme force and the constant threat of violence, Offred is aware of some element of culpability when she loses her job and notices the reaction of her former co-workers: "We looked at one another's faces and saw dismay, and a certain shame, as if we'd been caught doing something we shouldn't...What was it about this that made us feel we deserved it?" (166). While I am not interested in attempting to lay blame or to suggest that the takeover was somehow justified, I am interested in tracing how "working" at ignorance is related to the control of ideological output (political consciousness), which is a powerful form of surveillance. It operates as surveillance by reinforcing collusion with the dominant ideologies of those in power. Noam Chomsky refers to this process as the "manufacture of consent". The Gilead state, founded on an ideology of patriarchy and its concomitant notion of power over the female body, had its corollary in the preceding time. Recall Fawcett's comments that "the ugly truths of [their] time [were] neither dark nor silent," (14) merely framed in the "melodrama" of news conventions that made the events "awful without being believable" (Atwood 53). By creating an "other," both the producers of the news and the consumers who believed in the existence of the other, could be convinced that they were in fact safe. By working at their ignorance those who believed in the existence of the other could live their lives without needing to concern themselves with the state of the world outside of their own private realm. The "other" existed as a means of controlling the masses from becoming politically involved in a world that allowed such atrocities to occur. The "other" allowed their whitewashed worlds to remain unsullied with the dirt of getting involved. Chomsky refers to this "naïve faith" as a "necessary illusion" that entices compliance with the dominant order by reducing the citizenry to varying forms of political apathy, allowing the state to operate under the guise of participatory democracy (Manufacturing Consent). At the heart of the creation of the "other" is the fear of a disorderly world – a world not easily explained in a 20 second sound bite – erupting with the chaotic complexity of the social conditions present within the world that allow the continuance of such crimes against women. This fear shrinks the world into individualized components that are narrow in their self interested scope. As the world shrinks into individual concerns and interests, larger social issues become subsumed within the rhetoric of the individual, stripping them of their complexity and connectedness with other social conditions, as Connie discovered in Woman on the Edge of Time. As Christine St. Peter comments on Offred's insistence on living in the white space: "Believing in the myth of the rights of the individual, aspiring to the ideal of personal liberation, she had ignored the knowledge that she was also part of a larger, communal life that was creating its own plot" (97). Thus, Offred is able to assure herself that she and those she cares about are safe because the women and men she knew are unlike those portrayed in the news. The distinction allows the social problems of misogyny and patriarchy to become a pathological anomaly of certain *kinds* of men;

misogyny and patriarchy become reduced to the individual male who had a bad childhood and know doesn't know how to deal with women. The cult of the individual forces one's understanding of the world to be stripped of its context in larger social issues leaving one to believe, "[e]verything that went on it your life was thought to be due to some positive or negative power emanating from inside your head" (Atwood 212).

When the structure of the world Offred had always known suddenly shifted with the takeover of the rulers of Gilead, Offred was suddenly confronted with the inevitability of facing the systemic causes that allowed *individual* men to kill and rape *individual* women and now allow the *state* to control and manipulate all facets of *all women's* lives, which leads Offred to question her own complicity. Pondering the loss of relevance the news now serves in our lives, Suanne Kelman, in a Globe and Mail book review, suggests that the news regains its importance in times of tragedy. She notes, "[m]aybe we've turned off the news because we don't really need it; our lives feel safe. Maybe news would return to favour if we ceased to be so lucky." Indeed this is the case when the Regime first gained control. Offred remembers: "That was when they suspended the Constitution. They said it would be temporary. There wasn't even any rioting in the streets. People stayed home at night, watching television looking for some direction. There wasn't even an enemy you could put your finger on" (162). And so the white noise of television and media saturation led to the immobility of an entire citizenry. Seduced as they were by the lure of television to explain their world to them, they sat at home instead, alone in their own private worlds shut out of imagination and political action, taking direction from a television that led them right into the hands of the enemy. Who remains the enemy in the end? The fascists in control? Television? Or themselves? It is only upon reflection that Offred can wonder at their political paralysis, allowing herself to place her complicity within a context of large institutional manipulation that induces complicity with the dominant ideology embedded in those institutions.

The crisis facing the Gileadean state is one of removing all forms of cultural memory. While there had been a profound drop in the population that threatened the existence of this state, without destroying cultural memory and historical awareness, the Gileadean state could not survive. Making it out of the transition stage, the time of making what was not normal, normal, is crucial to the maintenance of the Gileadean state. To accomplish this the Gileadean state removed all previous forms of cultural production and placed some of them within a new context of the absolute primacy of biological reproduction. The ultimate goal of this process was to remove all memory of previous life. Its manifestation was to dismember the bodies of women by organizing them according to their physical capacity to bear children. Memory plays a vital role for Offred in re-membering her body and to provide the will to survive. As the narrative progresses, Offred becomes acutely aware of the conflictual role time plays in her life. Time works against her – she must produce a child within a given time frame, she is concerned that as more time passes the likelihood of finding her family and that her child will remember her as her biological mother decreases – and time is her only weapon against the state by keeping her "past" part of her present, to remind her of the possibility of freedom. The narrative structure weaves in and out of time, conflating the present with the past, forcing the readers to be aware of the importance of Offred's past to her future, and of our present to our future. As part of the "transitional generation" (111), Offred and the other Handmaids, pose the most threat of disrupting the order of the state, by simply remembering their lives previous to their current circumstances and refusing to submit their memories to the process of dismemberment. Offred is acutely aware of this as she watches the young girls be wedded to their husbands in the public ceremony called a Prayvaganza. She notes, "Even though some of them are no more than fourteen – *Start them soon* is their policy, *there's not a moment to be lost* – still they'll remember. And the ones after them will, for three or four or five years; but after that they won't. They'll always have been in white, in groups of girls; they'll always have been silent" (205). The image of whiteness is equated with the silence of generations of women who will be trapped in servitude to male interests because they lack the memory of another kind of life. Significantly, the wings that surround the faces of the Handmaids are also white, forcing them to stare into white space. The image of whiteness and white space represent the institutional structures that prevent the free expression of female subjectivity through the act of speech and the capacity to return the gaze that continues to penetrate them. As a necessary precondition for their complicity with the system, the rhetoric used to justify the gender relations in Gilead centers around the protection of women:

> Now we walk along the same street, in red pairs, and no man shouts obscenities at us, speaks to us, touches us. No one whistles.
>
> There is more than one kind of freedom, said Aunt Lydia. Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from. Don't underrate it. (24)

Yet again patriarchy has succeeded in ordering the world into "either/or" (8) choices, leaving women to pay for a social order, past and present, they had no choice but in which to participate.

Indeed with the removal of cultural memory, history becomes shaped in the interests of those in power, thereby erasing all memory of freedom. Freedom then is defined as the capacity to tell, to speak of the injustices that render the female body dismembered. This connection is made by Offred herself in her apology for her painful story, "I'm sorry [this story is] in fragments, like a body caught in crossfire or pulled apart by force" (251). It is through the act of telling and remembering that Offred is able to fight the impulse to surrender her subjectivity. Remembering is a way for Offred to fill the blank time of "waiting," a tactic used by the Regime to keep these women in place. Waiting, however, is re-defined by Offred as a chance to reflect on her past life. As Offred and the others in her household wait for the Commander the night of the Ceremony, Offred slips into her past:

> We wait, the clock in the hall ticks, Serena lights another cigarette, I get into the car. It's a Saturday morning, it's a September...My name isn't Offred, I have another name, which nobody uses now because it's forbidden. I tell myself it doesn't matter, your name is like your telephone number, useful only to others; but what I tell myself is wrong, it does matter. I keep the knowledge of this name like something hidden, some treasure I'll come back to dig up, one day. (81)

In this way, Offred is able to "compose herself," to re-define and re-member her history and body and thus to retain the will to survive (62). The Handmaid's Tale, as a text, is a document intended to prevent losing generations of women's lives and to make those lives "matter". Its existence speaks to the importance of preserving memory in a public way, in filling the white space with detail and specificity, by placing the events of Offred's life within their historical and political contexts. The construction of this text, the influence of Professors Pieixoto and Wade notwithstanding, is a method of resisting the impulse of patriarchal discourse enshrined in "Scriptural precedent[s]" (16) that seek to naturalize the subservience and slavery of women, allowing Offred to declare: "[m]y self is a thing I must now compose, as one composes a speech. What I must present is a made thing, not something born" (62). Thus much of this novel becomes about Offred's quest and need to understand her current life and her past life within context.

As part of the "transitional generation," this task consumes her. Her narrative becomes riddled with tense changes that fail to signify a change in time period. Remembering the early days when Moira first arrived at the Rachel and Leah Centre with her, Offred recounts their attempts to establish contact. The scene begins with Offred in the present of Gilead, "I lie down on the braided rug," but soon switches to the past tense of being in the Centre (66). The remembrance is told in the past tense, until a sudden shift in verb tenses throws the reader into the present tense, while still remaining trapped in the past:

> I must have been there three weeks when Moira came...I couldn't talk to her for several days; we looked only, small glances, like sips.
>
> ...
>
> It makes me feel safer, that Moira is here. We can go to the washroom if we put our hands up, though there's a limit to how many times a day, they mark it down on a chart... (66-67)

The change in time, from remembering Moira's presence to being with Moira suggests to the reader that Offred is being rhetorical in feeling safe now "that Moira is here." The change in tense marks a strategy to resist the seduction of "unfilled time, the long parentheses of nothing. Time as white sound" (65). This strategy allows Offred to "pass the time" in its most literal sense by filling it with the details of her personal history and the history of all the women of her time. The slippage between past and present never allows the reader to forget how this world came to be. The past is infused in the present, contextualizing it, breaking through the opaque wall of "white sound." Offred is indeed a "refugee from the past" (213) who has learned about the importance of "existence through time" (20). We, as readers, are reminded that we are also part of Offred's past. Her present in Gilead remains our potential future. And Offred's own future, captured in the Historical Notes, indicates that, although the totalitarian state has been replaced by a seemingly less authoritarian one, the ideological roots that formed the economic, political, and social pre-conditions necessary for the inception and fruition of The Republic of Gilead are still firmly in place.

As one of the few histories available to succeeding generations, this document stands as a testament to the regimen of subjugation the Regime followed in their re-education process. One particular lesson learned in the Rachel and Leah Center that forms an important metaphor for the female body and time throughout the novel is the notion of emptiness. Emptied of all previously known forms of signification, the female body becomes the focus of the regime: "I am a blank, here, between parentheses. Between other people" (213). At once valuable yet threatening, the female body is stripped of its signification in the hope of creating an empty "chalice" (268) to then be filled with the official discourse, represented by the sperm of heads of state: "We are containers, it's only the insides of our bodies that are important" (90). This invasion by the state forces open all the private and internal functionings of the female body to public scrutiny. Somer Bodribb, in her critique of postmodernist discourse, argues that in masculinist thinking, central to postmodern theory, the body is evacuated of all meaning. Within masculinist thinking all theorizing springs from "the historically specific dualism of intellect vs. act, theory vs. practice" leaving epistemological theorizing about women's experiences devoid of any credibility as a valid way of understanding the world (xxiii). Such thinking is at the heart of the doctrines and structure of the Gileadean state. Implicit in its representation of all three worlds – past, present and future – is Atwood's critique of the potential danger of postmodern thinking to de-contextualize or dismember this story from its historical legacy.

In his essay on the ways in which gossip is linked to a "process of metafictional self-construction" in The Handmaid's Tale, Brian Johnson argues that Atwood's treatment of gossip suggests "a valuable model" for interrogating the assumptions of such postmodernist thinkers as Jacques Derrida and Mikhail Bahktin (42). Johnson suggests that The Historical Notes, which frame and attempt to subsume the larger text of Offred's story within Piexioto's "academic" interests, ultimately parodies Derridean notions of absence and free play (51). Johnson concludes that Atwood's presentation of gossip "remains deeply suspicious of any technique that would turn an ex-Handmaid of the system into a Handmaid of Orpheus [Atwood 293]" (53), since the very technique – a postmodernist insistence that "there are only contexts without any center or absolute anchoring" (Derrida, cited in Johnson 50) – that produces Offred's insistence on the value of context (Atwood 136), also produces Pieixoto's appropriation of her tale as an academic text, effectively erasing Offred's body and subjectivity. Clearly the critique launched here by Atwood indicates the dangers of a postmodernist play with contexts that leads the Professor to warn his colleagues that "we must be cautious about passing moral judgement upon the Gileadeans. Surely we have learned by now that such judgements are of necessity culture-specific" (284). Insisting these atrocities committed to the female body remain culture-specific, reduces their political, historical and personal significance within their larger context of the historical continuity of patriarchal abuse to some kind of a cultural and historical aberration. Furthermore, it allows the Professor to miss the irony in his later comment that "no new system can impose itself upon a previous one without incorporating many of the elements to be found in the latter" (287). It produces the same kind of political apathy and complacency that white space and white noise induce. A context-specific understanding of the world that reduces events to their individual circumstances fails to consider the larger implications of their significance, in much the same way that Offred's (mis)understanding of her life in the "gaps between the stories" failed to locate her collusion in a larger system of misogyny. As Johnson adeptly notes, Professor Pieixoto's comments

> ...[are] emblematic of the extent to which Offred's story has been ripped from its original context and relocated to furnish a new meaning. More importantly, in the act of naming her story...literally as a story, Pieixoto himself reduces her life to a manageable fiction, that is to say, to a 'text.' Clearly, in Pieixoto's recontextualization of her story in terms of his own academic project, the integrity of Offred's 'tail' (both of them) is on the line. (50)

As such, Piexioto fails to see how the sexism inherent in his pun on Tale/tail (283) participates in the very ideology that supported the Gileadean regime and renders his assurance that the Gileadean society "was subject to factors from which we ourselves are happily more free" laughable, if not for its frightening implications of the resiliency of patriarchy (284). His recontextualization of Offred's story also de-legitimizes any claim this story may have as a valid source of knowledge based in the epistemological experiences of the female body. However, as Christine St. Peter notes, the potential to read this text as source for feminist praxis remains in the final line of the novel: "Are there any questions?" (293). She writes of this conclusion: "This amounts to a troubling injunction to construct our own political behaviour...[W]e are left with the continuing struggle to listen to the conflictual conversations, both internal and social, and to construct the "I" among the 'one and one and one and one' as a model for a more communicative and democratic form of life" (102). The question remains whether or not we can, in our media saturated world, retrieve such a vision from the opaque distractions of white noise. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the extensive and utterly intrusive media attention paid to Princess Diana throughout her life might suggest otherwise.

Chapter Three

"A Quest for Authenticity: Reflections on the Media and the Death of Princess Diana"

> *In the long run only he will achieve basic results in*
> *influencing public opinion who is able to reproduce problems*
> *to the simplest terms.*
> - Joseph Goebbels, 1942 (qtd. in Hogshire: 49)

On September 7, 1997 much of the world witnessed and participated in perhaps one of the most profound media events known this decade. Fuelled by the momentum of seven straight days of non-stop tributes to the late Princess Diana (who, along with two others, died in the early hours of August 31, 1997 from injuries sustained in a car accident while being pursued by the media), a dialogue – sometimes clearly articulated, other times subtly suggested – was sparked. This dialogue centred around many of the cultural anxieties facing the Western world in the late twentieth century. These anxieties concerned the growing cults of celebrity and consumerism, a preoccupation with the authentic, the dissolution of private space, the state of journalistic integrity, and most of all, observations about our highly mediated culture. In what follows I will reflect on the cultural currents most clearly articulated in the Diana story.

Before continuing, however, a word should be said about how I am defining media since differences between media were explored throughout the length of this media event. With the death of Diana and the circumstances surrounding the involvement of the paparazzi in her death, many mainstream media producers were quick to carefully draw a line between respectable or legitimate journalists and the paparazzi. Consider, for instance, the following carefully worded "Letter from the Editor" by People's Managing Editor, Carol Wallace, published two weeks after Diana's death:

> From its first issue, PEOPLE has applied rigorous standards to its journalism. We employ a staff of researchers to check all facts before publication. Unlike much of the tabloid press, we do not pay story subjects or sources.
>
> We are also very careful about the photographs we use. While it is not always easy to know under what circumstances a picture was taken, we work hard to avoid buying pictures taken by so-called stalkerazzi photographers who menace their subjects, trespass or operate under false pretenses.
>
> Still there are no hard and fast rules that cover every situation. We use paparazzi pictures, as most news magazines do, and make decisions on a case-by-case basis, of a picture against a story subject's right to peace and privacy. In the wake of this tragedy we will redouble our efforts to maintain the standards that you have come to expect of us.
>
> Nothing matters more to this magazine, and to me, than your trust.
>
> (8)

Note the careful construction of People's rigorous journalism, replete with assurances of their legitimacy and respectability, all to support the final two paragraphs as justification for continuing to use photos that may have a questionable history. Wallace's argument is based on a carefully created difference between "stalkerazzi photographers" and their kinder, gentler cousins, the paparazzi. It is not surprising that Wallace would end her plea with a word about trust, perfectly capturing the thrust of her argument. Her argument utilizes the old and familiar rhetoric, also used in television news, that relies on style and personality as ways by which to recognize the authority of the news by building on an implied relationship of trust between the anchor (editor) and the audience (Zelizer 76). This chapter concerns itself with only the mainstream commercial press since, for my purposes here – to analyze ideological surveillance in the media – such a distinction between genres is not necessary. The end result of all media is to sell more papers, magazines, or increase viewership to add value to the advertising time or space to be sold. Thus, it is the enactment of market forces on the media that is relevant, not the style or genre of the particular medium. To uphold a differentiation between tabloid and mainstream media is, for my purposes, a mere marketing category that serves to obscure the fundamental market forces that invariably leave their mark on what constitutes "news" for each outlet and how that news will be delivered.

Cultural Trends in the Diana Story

John Fiske argues in Media Matters that media events gain prominence in people's lives because they pick up on cultural currents that are already present. The Diana story brought to the forefront a series of profound concerns not only about the media, but perhaps more importantly, about the consequences of living in a highly technologically mediated culture. While this story might suggest that the public were beginning to awaken from their numbed acceptance of media representations by demanding specificity in details, I would argue that the fetishization of celebrityhood is merely the further creation of white noise that distracts us from the important political events and changes taking place in our world. Stories that focus on such non-events seduce us into turning our heads to look the other way while the entire global and political economy shifts.

The first cultural trend I will explore is the trend within the media to turn what is inside out. Similar to the ways in which the inner workings of Connie's and the handmaids' bodies were put on public display, the media are becoming increasingly interested in what's going on inside of us. The outering of the inner, private world is a result of the growing surveillance in our culture. As more and more of our lives are scrutinized by a growing number of viewers, we have become accustomed to seeing more of ourselves. The media, always quick to pick up on cultural trends, have pursued this emotionalism in order to give it market value[1]. As the news becomes increasingly "human-story" oriented, we are viewing/reading and ultimately consuming, this emotionalism, turning it into yet another commodity to be sold to advertisers and ourselves. In this sense, the media have become surveillors of the most insidious kind, for from this collection of cultural data, knowledge that creates social norms, such as femininity, is produced. However, the knowledge that is produced is "read" through a paradigm of capitalism that values only that which drives profit, rendering female subjectivity and the gendered body a commodity, most clearly displayed in the Diana story. Thus, it is not surprising, though perhaps distasteful, to read reports of the development of a Diana doll, jigsaw puzzles, board games and other collectibles by the toy company Hasbro Inc (Auerbach & Frank R1). Even after her death, Diana's body and image continue to be a profit-making commodity. Fuelling the media's preoccupation with turning the inside out is our own desire to be in the know, not only about Diana, but about everything. Thus, after Diana's death, the private moments of the grief felt by millions of people became an overdetermined sign, a story within a story;

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[1] It is important to remember that this media event was part of a larger continuum of traditional media practices that have relied on sensationalism, human interest stories and tales of the rich and famous for centuries. While there has certainly been a shift recently towards softer, market tested news appeal, this shift is part of a larger historical tendency.

we became the news (Rosenblatt 50). As an overdetermined sign, the images of grief immediately signified Diana's personal affiliation with the "common people," and became part of the media frenzy, losing all meaning and sincerity. Suddenly the images of people crying and leaving flowers in memoriam became justification for demands to *see* more grief from the Royal Family. This story produced one more example of such a trend within the media that is changing our perceptions of what it means to live within a media saturated world. Furthermore, the prevalence of surveillance is conducted through a variety of sources that gathers seemingly innocuous pieces of information about our lives, spending habits, personal habits and feelings, work habits, etc., and our knowledge of this surveillance is shifting our very social order and the ways in which we live within it (Fiske 246).

At the same instant, the Diana story captured, in a most graphic and horrific way, a collective cultural quest for authenticity. This attempt to return to the authentic - the real person versus the public image, real experience versus the mediated experience - comes in reaction to the logic of consumerism and media saturation that has insidiously infiltrated our lives. The quest for authenticity represents a misguided reaction to the above noted trend within the media, for it merely increases levels of media saturation by prompting the media to continue looking inward, mediating even more of our "personal" experiences.

Lastly, the Diana story elucidates the persistence of stereotypical constructions of women in the media. Despite the myriad of representations found about Diana, there are still strictly defined prescriptions of behaviour that remain within the limits of accepted gendered behaviour. As surveillors, the media participate in defining and reflecting the limitations of current definitions of women's roles.

I hope that through an analysis utilizing the above noted lenses, I can elucidate a theory of the media's capacity as surveillors of the world. As an instrument of "watching" that is supported by and dependent on millions of dollars, there is much at stake in watching the world. With the introduction of new information technologies, traditional media, particularly print, are facing huge pressures to keep up in a constantly changing market. According to reports in The New York Times, the Internet is providing increasing competition with traditional media as a source for immediate, up to date news, particularly when a major story or crisis breaks (27 Jul 1998). Furthermore, as Robert Samuelson observes in his Editorial in the Washington Post, with the decline of newspaper readership (down from 78% in 1970 to 59% in 1997), and increased pressures on network television from specialty cable channels[2], the notion of a media elite with social importance and political influence is quickly eroding as the market diversifies (A17). These factors are forcing traditional media, particularly magazines, but also television news, to cater to smaller, specialized audiences requiring vast amounts of information about these audiences so that they, and their viewing/reading/spending habits may be understood, thereby decreasing the risks for missed profits. The implications for this kind of target marketing follow what Howard Kurtz observes in his Washington Post column that "local television [news] has moved into a softer, user-friendly, market-tested phase" resulting in newscasts that are "occasionally frivolous," and "light on politics, government and investigative reporting" (C01). The pursuit of profit motivates this trend toward target marketing, resulting in consumer surveillance. Thus, the media, arguably one of the most influential and important ways a culture speaks to itself and others, must respond to market demands and pressures to tailor their representations of the world according to tastes of their target audiences, thereby increasing profitability.

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[2] July 1998 marked the first time cable networks surpassed the 42 basic cable networks in ratings and audience share with 21.6 million viewers compared to 21.3 million viewers shared by the top four broadcast networks (Washington Post 08 Jul. 1998).

Levels of Surveillance

This organizing system within the media represents the largest threat of surveillance within modern day, capitalist cultures. However, considering surveillance in the particular instance of the media coverage of Princess Diana's death requires a complex, multifaceted approach. On one level, the media by definition keep watch over major political events worldwide, providing and uncovering information that many could not receive otherwise. However, as Lili Berko observes "the gradual development and expansion of television news coverage has not only taught us the power of seeing, without being seen, but has made sure that we all know that each of us is a potential subject of surveillance" (69-70). There is a necessary trade off implicit in relying on the media to explain our world to us. Another part of this trade off involves accepting, at the most practical level, the kinds of framing that necessarily takes place within a news story by selectively removing details, simplifying complex situations, or removing historical context. Virtually every media critic acknowledges this assertion, while the extent to which and how such framing occurs may represent a more contested area. I concur with

Michael Shapiro when he argues that the "commodification of news exerts pressure not towards particular ideologies, rather the pressure is toward holding interested readers and toward avoiding offending those with any recognizable ideological orientation;" the media's major ideological task involves a constant "reinscription of the status quo" (140). I am adding to this argument that the logic of free market enterprise and consumerism, part of the status quo, encourages its own promotion and represents the most important factor in influencing the ways in which the media operate within our world. Existing class structures, and classic constructions of femininity (updated to suit shifting cultural notions of women that has been influenced by a simplified and depoliticized notion of feminism) were consistently maintained throughout the Diana story. Furthermore, the collection of consumer data, very highly developed within broadcasters' market research systems (just to name a few of the market researchers responsible for measurements of audiences in various media: Neilsen ratings, Bureau of Broadcast Measurement [BBM], Radio Advertising Bureau [RAB], Print Measurement Bureau [PMB], Radio Marketing Bureau [RMB]) that claim to provide consumers the benefits of better programming, and services in exchange for this information suggests that we are engaged in a system of collusion where, when not forced to participate, many of us willingly participate in order that we may reap the promised benefits. This level of surveillance operates in a similar manner to that described by Foucault in the maintenance and production of social norms and to which I have referred in earlier chapters.

On another level, however, the status quo and existing power structures are maintained and reproduced into new configurations in a particular way when the surveillance is performed by the media. Because of the media's particular role in our culture as mediator and instigator of public discussions and because it represents one of the few public forums where such discussions can take place, as limited as it may be, the ways in which the media operate are very important. As a technology of surveillance and a technology of public discussion, the media's fascination with "soft news," with stories about our emotionalism and the private lives of celebrities and public figures (for instance, the Monica Lewinsky/Bill Clinton scandal) is a way of producing distractions, preventing us from recognizing and criticizing existing power structures. By lulling us to continue living in the white noise of media saturation, public apathy results, along with considerable consequences for civic life: a study conducted by the U.S. bipartisan Commission on Civic Renewal found a decline in the last 25 years in political participation, organizational memberships, and a decrease in trust in government and one another (Broder A06).

Within the Diana story another level of surveillance is operating, albeit in a peripheral kind of way. While the media may be quick to pick up on cultural trends, it is part of their job to do so. Diana also was a master at "feeling out" the public mood and sentiment and, utilizing her media power and leverage, was able to tap into these factors so critical in the public relations game in which Diana participated. Seemingly just a measure of public stature, this public relations game paid off greatly for Diana who reportedly received $26.5 million in her divorce settlement from Prince Charles. As an ex-member of the monarchy, Diana had to re-fashion herself in order to gain negotiating power in the never ending battle with her former in-laws. While most of this chapter centres around the media's role as surveillors of our world and their manipulation of Diana and her image as commodities, it is worthwhile to point out Diana's complicity with the system. Notorious for colluding with the media, Diana was far from being powerless (which is one way in which this chapter is markedly different from the others wherein the objects of surveillance are virtually powerless to change their circumstances). Indeed as a member of an elite, wealthy socialite group, Diana had incredible resources at her disposal. From access to virtually any part of the world in which to hide or "just get away," to allies within all major British media institutions, to extensive personal security, Diana held an incredible amount of control over the details of her life that were made public. However, that being said, it also cannot be stressed enough that Diana, like so many other female public figures, did indeed make the necessary trade off for the kinds of power she wielded. In order that she might have even the smallest amount of control over what might be printed or said about her, or what images of her would be printed or broadcast, Diana had to participate in her own commodification as a "news item" to be bought and sold, traded and ultimately consumed. Her death remains an extreme and powerful emblem for the kinds of tradeoffs we are all enticed to make in order to assert our subjectivity in our heavily surveilled world.

Lastly there is one more level of surveillance at work within this story: the necessary surveillance of a media/cultural critic. Implicit in the work that I am performing is a level of intense watching that perhaps surpasses the general public's fascination with this story; I have consumed Diana as so many others have. I was forcibly reminded of this as I was required repeatedly to call ahead to my main source for the printed media materials to request all papers and magazines detailing this story be held for me before they sold out; and I had to suppress my discomfort at walking out of the store with bags full of pieces of Diana's life. I have experienced first hand the impact of white noise on the viewing subject. Distracted from writing other chapters of this thesis, I was drawn to the replayed images of the crushed car that killed three people and severely injured a fourth, to the images of profound sadness and grief as the world mourned Diana's passing and felt television's pull to become an intimate part of it.

Getting to Know Diana: Turning the Inside Out and the Malleability of Diana

Diana's death prompted the most extraordinary displays of public grief this century has seen yet. With an estimated 2.5 billion viewers watching the various telecasts of Diana's funeral and another 1 million mourners lining the funeral route (Sunday Star A1+), and virtually every paper covering the event with special editions[3], we were witness to masses of people describing how much like a friend, family member, even lover, Diana felt. As one Sunday Star reader wrote in a letter to the editor, "I would like to thank the media for allowing me to witness the privileged life of a princess, for making it seem as though she was a dear friend" (F5); even more shockingly, and frighteningly, a young woman, described by New York Times reporter R.W. Apple Jr. as having "never met or even seen the Princess said she felt 'a *need* to be close to *my* Diana one more time, to see her home, to let her know how much I will always love her;'" and consider the comments of a 33 year old woman attending the funeral that, although was typical of many of the sentiments expressed, is striking for its absurdity: "This is one of the most tragic things that has ever happened to me in my life. I remember so clearly watching her wedding, and she meant a lot to me because *she was so human*. She made errors and she had weaknesses every woman understands. It wasn't good enough to watch this on television. It's strange that we all feel this way – not that we knew her ourselves – but that we feel *she's touched us all personally*" (10; emphasis mine).

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[3] R.W. Apple Jr., of the New York Times, reported the Daily Mail, a British tabloid, devoted 112 pages to a special edition on Diana the morning of her funeral, while The Times ran 60 pages (10).

The need to know Diana and to know about her life has connections to the cult of the celebrity permeating media coverage, but also to the rise of information technologies that feeds the need to know. At a time when the Internet, for instance, provides vast quantities of information instantly and allows us to reach out and "touch" in many new and exciting ways, traditional media are being forced to follow suit. However, the general trend toward gathering more and more information about everything is intimately linked with the discourses and ideologies of consumer culture; as much as pieces of Diana are being sold, consumer culture is being promoted and sold. As Stacy Margolis observes, "the celebrity of the late twentieth century seems to embody the logic of both the market *and* of the spectacle, so that the public figure becomes a kind of commodity" (84). With this comes the necessary illusion of capitalism, to appropriate a phrase from Chomsky. Once Diana has become attainable, reachable, knowable, then the consumer culture she represented, and implicitly sold along with her image, is, by implication, also attainable. At the moment that Diana is made "one of us," a "commoner," her lifestyle, class status and the logic of the class system itself are sold in one neat package, leaving the ground fertile for the enactment of social norms and the ideological manipulation it entails. Beverle Houston perfectly captures the link between the viewing/reading consuming subject and consumer culture when she describes television in the following way:

> Television's regime is to maintain a level of dissatisfaction with itself that first teaches endless consumption of itself in the hope of a satisfaction it will never deliver since its work is to send its viewers out to close the gap of desire by consuming something in the real world. Mainstream American television is structured to teach its spectators to watch in a way specific to this function in culture, a form of watching that returns the spectator and her dollar to culture, to the world of language and money.
>
> (qtd. in Berko: 74)

Thus, continual media saturation blurs boundaries between the real and the mediated, reality and fiction, private and public and shrinks the boundaries of history into an instantaneous present that allows Diana to stand for an entire age and the modern day woman.

Furthermore, Stacey Margolis observes in her discussion of celebrity and privacy in nineteenth century America "rather than giving people control over their images and allowing them to establish firm boundaries between self and world, the logic of privacy in consumer culture actually seems to eliminate control and dissolve boundaries" (91). This dissolution of boundaries may explain the malleability of Diana's image which is confused with knowing the "real" Diana. Within the logic of consumerism, part of Diana's appeal was her ability to be something (everything) to everyone. "Knowing" Diana meant loving her and possessing a profound amount of knowledge about her. Despite Diana's complicitous relationship with the media's desire to gaze into her life, how her stories could be told were always pre-defined and out of her control specifically, since, in order to play the game, Diana herself had to participate according to the strict gender rules. The lines that mark all possible ideological constructions of Woman are clearly delineated and limited within mainstream social values about women and their role within our culture, and Diana, in her excessive media coverage, was fortunate, or unfortunate, enough (depending on how you look at it) to have run the entire gamut of possible constructions. As Salman Rushdie insightfully comments (perhaps based on his own experiences of stalking and living in forced exile) on the circumstances surrounding Diana's death, "In escaping from the pursuing lenses, she was asserting her determination, perhaps her right, to be something altogether more dignified: that is, to be a Subject. Fleeing from Object to Subject, from commodity toward humanity, she met her death" (69). Inevitably, any reader, familiar with Rushdie's own story of exile, understands his comments through that story, for both Diana and Rushdie were/are not safe from pursuit anywhere in the world. While Rushdie's forced seclusion is the only way he can remain safe from his fundamentalist enemies, thereby lending a particular way of seeing Diana's death as being inevitable, I would contend that Diana's death is not the inevitable result of the assertion of female subjectivity. Furthermore, it is difficult to claim that her escape from pursuing lenses was her choice since she was in the protective care of the Hotel Ritz security team, or that it was an act of self determination at all. Diana's relationship with the media has been very complicated in the years since her separation from Prince Charles, her own game of pursuit and retreat. While the assertion to a right to privacy is indeed an act of self determination, it is almost impossible to insist on a definitive reading of this particular incident.

Within the last ten years, news has shifted its focus from political and international affairs to a human affairs focus – a perfect time for the proliferation of such figures as Diana, who managed to crystallize a synthesis between old, familiar institutions such as the monarchy, and a highly conventional media star of the nineties who told all to the world via the television camera. The 1995 BBC interview with Martin Bashir, in which she confessed intimate details of her life as the Princess of Wales, combined with the thousands of words written and spoken about her in the media created a sense of knowing and ownership over her image by the average consumer of media. As Nancy Gibbs and Priscilla Painton observe in their September 8, 1997 Time article, – "she made it so easy to claim her as secretly, subversively, one of our own…We could make her anything we chose, and her evolving image often said more about what we wanted than about who she was" – it is precisely this ownership that makes Diana so malleable. The use of the inclusive pronoun "we" is deceiving, since "we," the public, had considerably less power in constructing Diana's image. Rather the "we" refers to the media and Diana herself. Diana's malleability partially comes from the media's desire to maintain the status quo, and partially from Diana's evolving image of herself as was required.

Within the images of Diana, the process of commodification and the inherent ideological constructions in this process are obscured. As Gibbs and Painton continue to say, "She was all raw material [back in 1980], charm and skin and a curtsy, the kindergarten teacher who could cross the street without stopping traffic. She would never be a perfect beauty, so the fun was watching her become a great one, *the bones and the* *bearing taking shape before the cameras, as though by an effort of will*" (37; emphasis mine). Thus, the act of *watching* leading to Diana's commodification, the dissolution of boundaries (including the boundaries of Diana's very body in this instance) and the boundaries between reality and fiction perform extreme violence on the female body. It is not surprising that this violence should be coupled with images of devouring (claiming her as "one of our own"); we consume Diana as we consume any other commodity. As we devour Diana we exclude the potential of understanding her as a complex subject, removing any possibility of creating a space within which she can claim the position of a fully formed and articulated subject. Diana was always in process, always in the process of being re-defined, for "she belonged to the world" (Harris 1) and not to herself.

In Search of the Authentic

Attempting to understand Diana's popularity is not a simple task. How is it that one woman was able to capture the attention of literally millions of people? As much as I can deconstruct the media images of Diana, and the kinds of manipulation in public image that constituted much of Diana's life, I can't ignore the public delight in knowing senseless details of her life. I am proposing that in this age of mass consumerism where the rhetoric claims the "real" experience can only be mediated through the consumption of goods, where the simulacra has become so insidious as to belie any notion of the real entirely, the obsession with knowing Diana comes in response to the seeming ubiquity of consumerism. Fed on an endless array of images framed as the real, "the consuming subject is...in search of the illusive real promised him/her by the diegetic world of television [or print, or radio, or even the Internet]" (Berko 74; addition mine). Note that what is crucial to the paparazzi photos and the proliferation of gossip about Diana is the notion of candour, reaching the "illusive real," that indicates an authenticity that cannot be found elsewhere in the media. Value is added when the stars are caught when they least expect it.

In his essay "Radical Exoticism," Jean Baudrillard touches on the violence implicit in capturing the genuine moment. He writes,

> The only genuinely photographic subjects are those which are *violated*, taken by surprise, *discovered or exposed despite themselves*, those which should never have been represented because they have neither self-image nor self-consciousness. (152; emphasis mine)

As Foucault has shown us, to know is to construct knowledge and power over the viewed object. At the heart of the media (and journalism's) preoccupation with discovering the "truth" is the threat of surveillance and the power to construct. Thus, at a time when "accessibility [is confused] with star status, openness with self-promotion" (Stephens 6), the obvious response to this kind of manufactured representation is to seek the that which is not known, that which lacks self consciousness and thus, the power to self construct. Salman Rushdie describes the pursuit of Diana by photographers as being "a sublimated sexual assault" (68). He continues by writing, "The public figure is happy to be photographed only when she or he is prepared for it, 'on guard,' one might say. The paparazzo looks only for the unguarded moment. The battle is for control; for a form of power" (69). The power is one of self construction and constitution, for at the moment that the unguarded is captured, the power of the subject to return the gaze and project an image of one's self is wrested away from the subject. Some might argue that Diana, through her negotiation of the media attention she could attract, manipulated the media, thereby frustrating their control over her and her image and developing a sense of her own image to suit her own vision. I would contend however, that, although this point of view may have some validity within the rubric of the complex rules of PR, Diana ultimately failed to ever challenge ideological constructions and assumptions about women, therefore maintaining existing power structures. Furthermore, whatever projection of her image she may have induced, even if it challenged conventions of a monarchical figure, Diana never challenged dominant discourses about the very culture of which she was a part[4]. Although Diana's charitable work certainly benefited a great number of people, the contradictions between her lifestyle and the lives of those she helped were never addressed, least of all by Diana herself.

Rushdie is indeed astute in his suggestion of profound gender implications. The circumstances of Diana's death (being pursued for pictures of Diana and her lover, Dodi Al Fayed) constructs Diana's sexuality and plays it off images of her as mother, capturing the "commonality" of a divorced young mother trying to assert her sexuality. And so, in the fluff of paparazzi photographs, a serious and deadly power differential exists, one that is obscured in the glossy pages and grainy images of a woman who feels like our own to define, possess and devour, rather than involve ourselves in our own lives and the communities in which we live. When all aspects of human life become a talk show, ownership of our lives and our ability to construct our images of ourselves are obscured within the distraction of mediated representations of the lives we should aspire to. I believe this is at the centre of the seemingly illogical rage expressed against the paparazzi at the time of Diana's death. I do not believe it was a protective response based on Diana's popularity, as many media accounts suggested. The rage was about having exceeded the boundaries within which we are willing to accept this kind of intrusion and power over *our* lives, not the lives of celebrities, for it is increasingly our lives which are being constructed within a vision that is not our own.

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[4] It is important to note that, within feminist circles, Diana sparked some controversy regarding the extent to which her actions could be read through a feminist paradigm. Many feminists, eager to support the representation of strong women in the media, argue that to summarily dismiss Diana as a conventional figure does not sufficiently capture the extent to which her refusal to participate in a monarchical and patriarchal system that accepts the male prerogative to commit infidelity challenges a system deeply entrenched in history. It is a valid argument to understand the media constructions of Diana as an unstable, flighty woman as a media tactic designed to disguise the extent to which she challenged patriarchal assumptions.

The underlying tensions behind the ever expanding, all encompassing knowing eye of the media is a recognition by the public that these images are in fact, mediated. Consider, for instance, John Fiske's definition of a media event:

> The term *media event* is an indication that in a postmodern world we can no longer rely on a stable relationship or clear distinction between a "real" event and its mediated representation. Consequently, we can no longer work with the idea that the "real" is more important, significant, or even "true" than the representation. A media event, then, is not a mere representation of what happened, but it has its own reality, which gathers up into itself the reality of the event that may or may not have preceded it.
>
> (2)

Accepting such a definition results in a profound uneasiness about our epistemological knowledge of the world and the possibility of ever "knowing" the world around us in the sense that most of us have come to expect. To accept such a definition is to accept a loss of control, the relinquishment of even the power to "know" the world without the influence of market forces. The questions that remain when one begins to examine the extent to which all of our world is mediated as the media expands its scope and breadth of coverage are indeed frightening to consider: what can be claimed as genuine, verifiable knowledge of the world? Is absolutely everything technologically mediated? Can there be anything like "reality" ever again? If there isn't, then what is this life I'm leading? Berko places similar questions within the larger move toward postmodernist representations of the world that present a crisis for the subject. She writes, "the metaphysics of transcendentality have also become threatened by the death of the "meta-narratives" (Class struggle, love) that have given meaning to and have held our culture together through history (i.e., the end of history where the past gives way to a continuous present)" (67). It is precisely these profound philosophical questions that came to the forefront with the death of Princess Diana and an underlying current that fed this media event. The extent of the coverage – impromptu, non stop coverage by network television, special editions of newspapers, commemorative editions of magazines and its relentlessness forcibly brought these issues to the surface and forced some kind of public discussion about them. Furthermore, the circumstances of her death – being chased by paparazzi on motorcycles wielding telephoto lenses in a high speed pursuit – is an obvious and undeniable image of the devouring nature of the uncontrollable "need to know." What is striking is that most of the intelligent conversations I witnessed about these kinds of issues were taking place in coffee shops, kitchens, and bars, but not, within the media, suggesting the limitations of each medium for complex dialogue and the ways in which these limitations guided the discussions. As Jonathon Alter notes in Newsweek, "Ultimately, nothing much can change because media coverage is the oxygen of modern public life. Watch now as celebrityhood is transmogrified into secular sainthood, courtesy of a publicity machine that will turn even its own remorse into just another story" (39). The cynicism[5] that oozes from this excerpt marks an understandable response to the kinds of issues I am raising. For at the heart of this philosophical quandary is the notion that with the acceptance of an entirely mediated world is the loss of all sense of genuineness and authenticity of experience based on bodily lived experience. As more of our lived experiences are defined for us and appropriated from us, our ability to resist and exist outside of such mediation is greatly diminished, representing the true threat of media surveillance.

And if we accept that the media coverage of this event operates on the principle of trying to gain authenticity, then we can consider that the media are appropriating the trope of ordinariness, for certainly there is nothing more genuine than the ordinary. This slippage into ordinariness confuses reality with a vision constructed to serve specific interests, namely the maintenance of existing power structures. No one other than monarchy and the very wealthy lead a life like the one Diana led, but underneath it all we are all human, right? We all go out for a jog every now and then, we all take our children out to McDonald's and to amusement parks, we all vacation in the Mediterranean on yachts. Masked beneath the veneer of ordinariness and approachability is the maintenance of a class system and the differences in wealth it engenders. Stuart Hall observes of newspapers, though a similar extrapolation can be made for any other media:

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[5] This cynicism also marks the opposite end of the spectrum that plagued the media coverage around the time of Diana's death. On the other end of this spectrum came the outpouring of grief and emotion that characterized the public response to Diana's death. In these scenes of such raw and honest grief we found those who either participated in the spectacle or those who wondered at how readily "mourners" were willing to turn what was genuine into a display for the cameras.

"It is via this double articulation [formal news values/ideological treatment] that the institutional world of newspapers, whose manifest function is the profitable exchange of news values, is harnessed to the latent function of reproducing 'in dominance' the major ideological themes of society" (234). These ideological themes (gender, class, sexuality, and femininity, in this instance) buttress and focus the constructions of Diana defining her within a limited view that never challenges traditional roles. Whether Diana appeared on television or in a major metropolitan paper, the sheer volume of photographs taken of her, particularly the thousands of close up photos, humanized her by pulling her closer to the readers, and obscured the ideological nature of that humanization.

As Michael Shapiro observes of the earliest photographs of the monarchy, close up photographs had a "demystifying effect" and ultimately had an "authority-challenging impetus" by revealing privilege to be a "human contrivance or practice rather than the result of a divine, superhuman script" (129). While images of Diana created a kind of mass marketed monarchy figure previously unknown within the Windsor family, I believe that something far more complex was at work in the case of Diana, for although Diana's authority status as a princess (a loaded sign with great gender and class implications) was compromised in the process of pulling her into the lives of her fans, the media coverage of Diana failed to challenge the ideologies of femininity and consumerism. And while Diana's wealth may have been displayed as a human contrivance, it was never criticized for its excesses, but rather promoted and taken as a "natural" consequence of monarchal status, so perfectly part of an ideological construction that it is as natural as the landscape around us, and something for all of us, especially women, to dream of. It obscures the power differentials implicit within a class system that allows some to live in extreme wealth on the backs of those who must sustain the system through their labour. As Connie learned in Woman on the Edge of Time, such a paradigm fulfills the illusion of the American dream of individuality and the necessary illusion of capitalism that, with hard work and a bit of economic savvy, anyone can achieve such status.

In much the same way that brand recognition is meant to work in advertising, the persistence of images of Diana pulled her into the lives of viewers/readers, while teasing out of the picture the difference that really existed there: the distance in social classes. In the political economy of the late twentieth century ideal of individualism, a free market mentality and the force of consumerism, Diana's privilege was not constructed as being out of reach. In fact, constructions of Diana belie her monarchical status by focusing on "Di," not *Princess* Diana. Interestingly, Diana was elevated to the status of "Queen of Hearts," an allusion to the loss of her monarchal status once divorced, but also the term works as a signifier of Diana's popularity and affiliation with the common people, not the high society of monarchy. It is not surprising then that the popular rhetoric surrounding Diana's "courage" emphasized how she "challenged" the monarchy by being so uncharacteristically human. Furthermore, Diana's own history of privilege was carefully constructed to resist overt associations with privilege. Thus, despite being born into aristocracy, she "became" a Princess; despite living in wealth and privilege all her life, she was "unprepared" for the life of a Princess; and although her childhood was far from being typical, just like so many other children, shy Di came from a broken family.

Indeed the very tragedy constructed around Diana depended on this slight of hand, thereby setting the scene for the introduction of the cold, typically aristocratic family who never understood Diana and despised her supposed "working class" mentality. In this way, Diana was a billboard for the various commodities being sold within her image: from ideological constructions of femininity, class, aristocracy, the celebrity, to brand names, designer names and charitable causes. Add to this, a manipulation of the space between public and private, the construction of Diana as the champion of the underdog, and the typical lines that separate the common person from the celebrity – class and social lines – become blurred, if not removed entirely.

In the media surveillance of Diana, a meta-text is evident detailing appropriate behaviour," either through its constructions of Diana, or through its criticisms of her behaviour and the implied norm from which she had deviated. It is interesting to note that behaviour that was heavily criticized while Diana was alive (such as her outspoken admission of an extramarital relationship, her tacit relationship with the British media and her approach to her role as "Princess of Wales") was often reconstituted as evidence of a "fighter," a feminist icon who stood up to staid institutions. She could be labeled feminist precisely because she never challenged them "too much" to veer too far outside of acceptable media limists. Appropriate behaviour is suggested through archetypal constructions of Diana, part of a larger myth building impetus, that rely on familiar ideologies about women. The myths built up around Diana work by suspending history to focus on the "now," allowing Diana to stand for an entire age. Familiar narratives, updated '90's-style, are told when explaining Diana to the world – the tragic conclusion of love finally found, the presumed "rags to riches" story of wealth, power and grace, and finally, the power of love, and not prestige and wealth, to bring fulfillment and happiness – that operate as a means of social control through the maintenance of class and gender roles within capitalist cultures.

The stereotypical characterizations circulated about Diana include: Demure Aristocrat, Charismatic Princess, Shy Princess, Humanitarian, Shimmering Bride, Loving Mother, Besotted Mother, Spurned Wife, Neglected Wife, Victim, Manipulator, Saint, Schemer, Public Enchantress, International Pop Icon, Hero, and Rule Breaker, (Hurst A1). Indeed Diana represented all those familiar constructions of Woman in one mythical figure that was "complex," yet simplified to be captured according to media specifications. In his comprehensive historical analysis of fame, Leo Braudy comments on the necessary specifications for a celebrity in a media age: "like icons...the famous and the heroic are designed to be two-dimensional...No matter how widespread the image or omnipresent the visual echo, they lack the private mystery that makes the rest of us real – and complex – to each other" (610). It is precisely this complexity that cannot be transmitted over long distances and cultures. But, perhaps, more importantly, such complexity is not necessary for a profit driven media, interested in producing coverage at minimal costs and a public who does not demand contextual journalism (Zerisias D7), content to accept the condensation of history into an instantaneous present.

With the condensation of history into the moment, Diana's mythological status is secure. As Stuart Hall observes, the creation of myths is intricately connected to the compression of time within media constructions, since the instantaneous present converts all history into "today, cashable and explicable in terms of the immediate" (241). As the emblematic "woman of our time," Diana represents a particularly pathetic representation of the current state of women and feminism. Consider the following, written by Liz Smith and printed in a commemorative magazine:

> She was a real woman of our time – her self absorption, hyperemotionalism, and her fantastic need to be loved – coming to grips with a life that was, despite its extravagant trappings, ordinary in so many ways; married at 20, a divorcée at 35, an unfaithful husband, infidelity on her own part, two children, an unsympathetic mother-in-law, etc."
>
> (Smith 4).

Indeed the list could go on, for Smith is tapping into the "ordinary" and very familiar constructions of women as emotional, self involved, lacking, without the stability of a husband and home, not capable of self constitution and definition outside of the traditional ways women gain authenticity. Similar anti-woman rhetoric can found in the following article reprinted in The Ottawa Citizen from the British paper Daily Telegraph wherein the author "reads" (although the active nature of this construction is obscured) Diana's return to public life in late 1994 as evidence of her "still searching for an identity that would confirm her as a woman of both independence and substance" ("A Life Unfinished" B1). It is doubtful that Diana could have ever truly achieved such status within the confines of media limitations for representations of women. The article participates in the mythification of Diana by claiming she "became a modern icon, combining film star glamour, a genuine concern for society's less privileged with a powerful, liberated feminism that matched the mood of our times" (B1). Thus, the history of feminism, a detailed, multifaceted history that can never be fully articulated within the media's insistence on simplicity, is suppressed within an image most of us would not consider feminist. Rather feminism, history and Diana's subjectivity are reduced to the ideological weight of the thousands of images of her projected at us. By linking feminism with the aforementioned limited constructions of women, feminism becomes a depoliticized, individualized orientation, severed from the historical movements. The goal of feminism is to create space within which women can define themselves as autonomous subjects within a vision of justice and gender equity outside of these constructions. Placing feminism and its history within media constructions of women that fail to challenge existing power structures, eliminates the possibility of achieving these definitions and keeps women in their historical, social, economic and political place.

The creation of an instantaneous present (Smith 193) has created a condensation of time into the moment, succinctly captured in a sound bite, photograph or headline. It is important to note that such compression of time is facilitated through technology and serves market forces of all media that market themselves as providing the most up to date news as it happens. Anthony Smith suggests news is a perishable product by definition, thus news organizations are sensitive to technological change that alters the domain of the instantaneous present. And as technology advances, the amount of and speed with which information is transmitted equally increases. With the passing of Princess Diana, we were witness to the capabilities of this technology which supplied countless hours of stock footage of Diana's wedding and the years thereafter re-packaged to suit the occasion, while also providing reportage of the available details of her death.

In a 1966 interview for WNDT Education Broadcasting Network, Marshall McLuhan, in extrapolating on his term "global village," provides an interesting paradigm through which to consider the compression of time. He said,

> Today, the instantaneous world of electronic information media involves all of us, all at once. Ours is a brand-new world of all-at-onceness. Time, in a sense, has ceased and space has vanished...The global village is at once as wide as the planet and small as the little town where everybody is maliciously engaged in poking his nose into everybody else's business. The global village is a world in which you don't necessarily have harmony; you have extreme concern with everybody else's business and much involvement in everybody else's life. It's a sort of Ann Landers column written larger....We now share too much about each other to be strangers to each other. For example, in the age of the information explosion, all the walls go out between age-groups, between family groups, national groups, between economies. The walls all go out. People suddenly have to adjust themselves to this new proximity, this new interrelationship, and merely to tell them that this has happened isn't very helpful. What they need to know is, if it is happening, what does it mean to me? (qtd. in On McLuhan, 40).

McLuhan cites the compression of time as being a product of the introduction of electronic technology. As McLuhan predicted, electronic technology has facilitated the instantaneous sharing of information across geographical, economic, racial and cultural bounds. This technology has allowed us to become intimately familiar with, not only the various figures that dominate our newscasts, but also, as McLuhan alludes in his reference to Ann Landers, it has profoundly shifted the commonly accepted barriers between public and private. The talk show format (on both radio and television) feeds off and contributes to the dissolution of boundaries and has attempted to build a sense of community in an age where the familiar definition of community has expanded exponentially and has been re-defined to centre around cultural associations, common experiences, and to some degree, sensational headlines. This format has had far reaching consequences for present day media, including the hallowed institutions of news production.

McLuhan's global village term has become part of popular culture by now, losing much of the subtleties to the term as being connected to a return to tribalism. Instead, the term is a way of using a spatial and social term to describe the expansion of communication possibilities and the resulting changes to social relationships. In fact, as Lili Berko argues, new communication technologies, by changing conceptions of spatiality, alter our sense of ourselves. She writes, "by changing the nature of face to face interaction and 'blurring' the distinctions between public and private, the electronic media have severed the traditional link between physical space and social place culminating in the creation of new patterns of behavior altering our sense of social subjectivity" (64). One aspect of our social subjectivity that has been severely altered is the way in which we think of community. Encouraged to "think globally," many of us have lost a sense of the local. Made to choose between global perspectives or enclosure within our own small worlds with television as our contact to the outside world, we have lost a sense of community, and thus ways in which to create alternate visions of life outside those dictated to us by various sources of surveillance. As Paul Virilio notes, "with the interception of sight by the sighting device, a mechanism emerges that no longer has to do with simulation...but with substitution" (47). And it is precisely this problem of substitution that captures the potentially deadly consequences of being consumed by the mediated images of ourselves projected at us. Rather than living our lives, participating in the real communities that exist around us, we are watching others do it on television, read about it in the paper and hear about who we are on the radio. The proliferation of surveillance in our culture, at many more levels than through the media, as the Epilogue explores, marks the defining conditions in which the subject must attempt to impress its own image. Rosi Braidotti makes an astute observation on the compression of time that is useful in considering why it is time to resist: "time is being taken away from us: *the time of our own becoming*. Taken away before it can ever be actualized; it is being short-circuited, aborted" (158; emphasis mine). The compression of time the media produces in their surveillance of our world is indeed removing the time, space and our ability to become subjects in the communication of a world built on principles of respect and justice, produced through an awareness of ourselves and our communities. Reclaiming time, historical specificity and cultural memory facilitates an understanding of the world in which we live, the world(s) from which we came, leading to the space in which we can possibly define ourselves based on the specificity of our lived experiences, in order that we might see a better vision of a world into which we could enter.

Epilogue

"'Never a Subject in Communication': Modern Day Panopticons and the Will to Resist"

Late into the winter months of 1997, I decided to get on-line one night to better understand virtual life. I was conducting research for a paper on the possibility of virtual rape and the capacity of a corporeal or phenomenological feminism to address such issues. I was not discriminatory in selecting which chat room to enter – I wasn't about to be excluded from a room because of a vulgar name. In fact, I thought that precisely some room bearing the promising name of "Hot, Hot, Hot" may, give me a clearer picture of the ways in which gender roles would be enacted on-line. Chat rooms are cybernetic spaces, much like telephone party lines, in which a group of people using their own identity or a constructed identity "chat" with one another by typing in text which then appears on each person's screen. After observing conversation for some time, a fellow character, using the whisper command[1], informed me that he too was from Halifax, Nova Scotia. I was shocked and horrified that someone was able to trace me to my home. I physically reacted to the comment: I looked around my living room and could feel the suspicion and adrenaline rising. By checking my identity profile, this character, a fellow graduate student in the city, recognized the university server and initiated a private conversation. The whisper command, being a very personal mode of communication on-line (since other characters cannot "hear" what is taking place), felt like an invasion of my personal space. The corporeal or physical experience of this approach was much the same as if a complete stranger on a bus had leaned over and whispered in my ear that he too lived on King Street. Later when I was invited into a private room, I reacted as I would physically: I would not endanger my physical safety by entering a private room alone with someone I did not know.

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[1] A whisper command is a way of "speaking" to only one character at a time, excluding all other on line characters from participating in or witnessing the conversation; it is a highly personal mode of communication.

Reflecting on the experience now, I'm filled with a mix of embarrassment at my technological naivete and justification for my caution. Certainly, knowing the university server pointed this individual to which institution I belonged, and with minimal work, it would not have been difficult to obtain a phone number, an address and other details. As I continue to work with privacy issues presented by new technologies, the more I learn, the more cautious I become. Data collection and data mining are part of a profitable industry of marketers who are interested in all aspects of our lives, including (especially) our personal lives. The result of data mining is the development of quantifiable, well-researched (known), commodified, and fully articulated target markets that are dependable and predictable in their habits and behaviour. We become already and always known and thus more easily coerced into the logic and vision of consumerism. The creation of these composite identities results in a loss of a collective sense of ourselves as part of any kind of group outside of our particular demographic. This is particularly problematic for the development of a feminist movement that relies on political unity developed through common visions, definitions of oppression, political agendas and strategies. Increasingly, this methodology of group identification and construction is leaving its insidious mark in all spaces of our world. It seeks to make more and more private space public, simply so that all behaviour, in particular, all spending habits, can be recorded and then used to target yet another product or service to particular demographics. What is troubling about such group construction is that identification and knowledge about ourselves is no longer the privilege of lived experience in a material body, but rather constructed according to market and consumer preferences that are diametrically opposed to our well being and continued existence. Inherent in these reflections of ourselves is the logic of consumerism and capitalism, not social justice or a sense of community.

Increasingly what was once considered the personal space of the body is being invaded, catalogued and carefully watched. Many feminists have chronicled the ways in which Western medical practices on female bodies, particularly pregnant female bodies, script the body as untrustworthy, foreign, and specifically female[2]. While Marge Piercy, joining other radical feminists, critiques the accepted surveillance practices of mentally ill patients, and other "outside" institutions (race, class, gender) that support such practices in her novel Woman on the Edge of Time, the contemporary setting of such invasive practices has extended itself into virtually aspect of modern day life. Although a wide range of examples could be used, consider the following two: 1. Biometrics; and 2. Grocery shopping.

Biometrics technologies, or the digital measurement, photography, or similar capture of the human body for the purpose of identification, are increasing in popularity and use as more and more of our daily transactions are being conducted online or electronically and the need for a verifiable and reliable way of identification becomes increasingly important. These technologies include the measuring of such areas of the body as fingerprints, the iris, retina, voice recognition, signature verification, and even the ear and one's odour. Facial recognition is still under further development since it is currently only reliable within three feet of a camera and when the subject is not moving a great deal[3].

Working on the assumption that each of these body parts is unique to each individual, law enforcement, government and others concerned with security issues seek ways of authenticating identity. Since biometrics "provide irrefutable evidence of one's identity since they offer biological proof that can only be linked to one individual" it is seen as a way of concretizing the ever-shifting postmodern identity.

At first glance, biometric technologies seem to support the body's status as a verifiable means of obtaining knowledge. The applications of biometric technologies, as they are currently being used and developed, however, seek to betray the body as a means of producing knowledge *about* it, not *for* it. The current use of biometric measures, especially stored in their identifiable form along with other personal information, represents an assault on the body, using it to identify the specific body in order to manipulate or control it. Biometric technologies dismember the body, breaking up its stability, utterly destroying any sense of privacy, reducing it to its parts that are supposed

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[2] See specifically Chapter 4. "Public Pregnancies and Cultural Narratives of Surveillance," of Anne Balsamo's Technologies of the Gendered Body: Reading Cyborg Women, 1996.

[3] O'Connor, Sean. Interview with Wendy Mesley. Undercurrents. CBC. 11 Jan. 1998. Online. Internet. 20 Jul. 1998. FTP: www.tv.cbc.ca/undercurrents/stories/bodyprinting/occonor.html.

to stand for the whole, thereby re-inscribing the whole body with the constructed image found in the database connected to the biometric technology.

In an identifiable state – that is, connected to other pieces of data that would reveal the identity of the individual – biometrics represent a profoundly frightening instance of surveillance, particularly if one considers the possibilities of this data being shared between other government departments, agencies, businesses, etc. The ability for informational self determination[4]” would virtually disappear and the categorization, segregation and normalization of individuals into manageable categories would be greatly extended. Sean O'Connor, a Stanford Law Fellow and critic of biometrics, puts the issue clearly: “I think the…fear is that I want to know that I can be…by myself sometimes and I can…have the right to create my own…identity and that I don't have to have everyone scrutinizing what I do”.[5]

It is not surprising that such technology is being used to decrease supposed welfare fraud and by immigration officials at Canadian and American border crossings[6], for the very purpose of biometric technologies is to identify the supposed transgressors. At a time when governments are tightening their immigration policies, and the rhetoric surrounding welfare fraud and its costs to the system abound, it becomes increasingly crucial to quickly and efficiently identify who does not belong. Furthermore, since submission to a biometric measure (currently, fingerprinting) predicates the administering of welfare funds, it also becomes an efficient means of discontinuing benefits for thousands of people[7]. As a process of normalization, biometrics is a technology of othering since its purpose is to identify the transgressor, s/he who does not belong within a particular classification, and facilitates the punishment of the deviant. It represents, perhaps, the greatest threat to individuality we will come to face in the coming millennium.

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[4] Ann Cavoukian, Ontario's Assistant Privacy Commissioner, uses this term in a paper delivered at the Cardtech/Securtech 96 Conference held in Atlanta, Georgia. The term was first used in the German Constitution Court in 1983. It refers to the "right to control one's personal information, and the ability to determine if and how that information should be obtained and used."

[5] O'Connor, Sean. Interview with Wendy Mesley. Undercurrents. CBC. 11 Jan. 1998. Online. Internet. 20 Jul. 1998. FTP: www.tv.cbc.ca/undercurrents/stories/bodyprinting/occonor.html.

Even an activity as seemingly benign as grocery shopping is now subject to the gaze of marketers. What we literally consume, the foods, but more specifically the brand names of the foods, are all closely monitored. Utilizing technologies such as, "smart shopping carts" that scan items as they are placed within it, suggesting other products based on items already chosen, the very interiority of the body is being surveilled. That is to say, even what goes into the body is a source of knowledge, and thus power, over the body. In a world where the effects of target marketing are such that computer executives dream of "customers scanning loyalty cards as they enter [a grocery] store and getting shopping lists generated by past buying habits" thereby enabling them to "collect that data and mine it for further sales opportunities," the reach of the new technologies to

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[6] See the Undercurrents (CBC) web page for further details and partial transcripts of the interviews, including the one with Sean O'Connor, conducted for the story on "Bodyprinting" (originally aired: 11 Jan 1998). FTP: www.tv.cbc.ca/undercurrents/stories/bodyprinting/.

[7] Nawrot, Richard. Interview with Wendy Mesley. Undercurrents. CBC. 11 Jan. 1998. Online. Internet. 20 Jul. 1998. FTP: www.tv.cbc.ca/undercurrents/stories/bodyprinting/nawrot.html.

Richard Nawrot is a representative of the New York state welfare department who advocates the use of finger imaging on welfare recipients. Consider his words: "We've been able to close approximately [43,000] cases who decided not to come in and get fingerprinted and if they don't come in we cut off their welfare benefits." He continues by saying, "People don't bother to come in because they know they'll be caught." Note the presumption of guilt of defrauding and immediate association of fingerprinting with criminal behaviour. After all, if you object too much, you must have something to hide.

store information about individuals and compile a consumer profile has expanded (NYT 16 Jul 1998). This collection of data about the body is part of a larger trajectory of surveillance, deployed by, partially motivated by and partly facilitated by developments in technology whose very design is consistent with market demands for more consumer information. It is the escalation of Western consumer culture, part of the larger institution of capitalism, that belies the material realities of a body and seeks to replace them with transient, consumable, and dispensable images conceived by the very forces that oppress the body.

I believe it is no coincidence that as the rhetoric of the revolutionary communicative capabilities of the new technologies proliferates, the rise of surveillance using those very same technologies, and the discourse about this surveillance, is also on the rise. Amid accolades from the banks and producers of digital "smart cards" (credit-card sized cards used in financial transactions that contain a small computer chip that can be used for a variety of purposes, including storing sums of digital cash) about the kinds of freedom such technology will allow, come severe questions about it's security. Stories in mainstream media detail the ways in which smart cards will make all spending traceable, and thus, open to scrutiny, whether legally obtained or not. Furthermore, what is supposed to be "a highly secure digital safe" is susceptible to hacking. By monitoring the consumption of electrical power, vital information about the secret key that protects the money or other data stored on the chip could be discovered. As Paul Kocher, head of Cryptography Research, a firm that has succeeded in cracking all lines of defense installed in the smart cards, has said, "We have not yet encountered a card that couldn't be broken" (NYT 22 Jun 1998).

Similar to the ways in which Bentham's Panopticon optimizes power over the bodies of the inmates through the presumed presence of constant surveillance, social norms act as an invisible boundary on the expressive capacities of our bodies. For example, gender norms exert all kinds of pressures on the female body to conform to a specified shape, condition and aesthetic. It is precisely the knowledge created from the combination of disparate sources and kinds of data that supports and maintains the power of underlying institutions utilizing this knowledge. While utilizing a vertical, or top-down, flow of power, power is dispersed and works efficiently when the subject, aware of surveillance, also self regulates. While the power enacted on welfare recipients by a government who can withhold life sustaining monies does indeed flow in a hierarchical line, the power of surveillance to enact norms also effectively and efficiently succeeds by producing the perfectly docile subject (Foucault 208). This docile subject eventually loses the capacity for self definition and exists solely within the white spaces of subjugation to power (as discussed in Chapter 2).

The real threat of the surveillance capacities of these technologies of the body is that they seek to verify identity that has been constructed by someone else (or something else, such as, a database, or "smart" computer)[8], according to market specification and demands, and most importantly, tie your body to that particular constructed identity. Security concerns, of course, come to mind: as we increasingly rely on these electronic identities, the threat of a security breech, or from function creep, moves from a mere annoyance to life threatening (for instance, if stalking resulted from access to personal information). Moreover, however, by tying identity to the body in this way inscribes sexual, racial and class differences making self identification and construction almost impossible. Thus, the real threat lies in a diminishment of our power to resist the homogenizing impulse necessary for the maintenance of various power structures.

It is not surprising that, despite the supposed democratic possibilities of various Internet applications [9], where gender and the material body itself are supposedly shed and dismissed as archaic vestiges of real life with which the virtual "body" need not contend, many feminists have observed strict adherence to traditional gender boundaries. Attempting to reduce the body to its mere physical elements, divested of all cultural significance – a body that cannot be trusted, or rather is not as trustworthy as technologically manipulated bodies – obscures the very real persistence of institutions such as race, gender, class, and other "norms" that persist in re-constituting the modern day body. Such discourse seeks to obscure the continued dialogic process of sexual difference producing and being produced in the cultural production of the body. As Anne Balsamo observes, "sexual differences are both the input and the output of the technological production of gendered bodies" (158). It is thus, not surprising that biometric technologies are being "tested" on social assistance recipients, suspected criminals and criminals alike – those groups that fail to fit within prescribed norms of the consumer. The use of these technologies and the knowledge created through the data collected about these individuals is crucial to the maintenance of norms and the continued exercise of power.

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[8] Recently, First Union Corp. announced the debut of a new computer system, "Einstein," that is supposed to "re-create the personal relationships customers once had with the neighbourhood banker." Using a system of green, yellow and red brightly lit squares indicating the customer's profitability for the bank, a customer service representative receives direction on how to handle the customer's needs whenever a customer calls. As the executive vice president, Jack Antonini, explains, "two customers with the same types of accounts and the same balance may have different ratings because one uses ATM's and the telephone" to bank, while the other may use bank tellers more often. The first would receive a green rating, the other a yellow or red. (WP 27 Jul 1998). As more and more customers are encouraged to bank over the phone or online, or even penalized for not doing so, it is easy to see how such a classification system could have profound implications for the kinds of services we rely on banks to provide. Entire identities are reduced to a coloured square on a computer screen. What is most striking about this system is the way in which identity is constructed: not by any personal attribute, rather by one's level of profitability.

As information is gathered through the use of surveys, market research, and even through more "conventional" means of gathering information about individuals, academic or medical research, and as this information is more easily disseminated through devices such as the Internet or conventional media, normative discourses about who we should be, and how we should be behaving and reacting to the changes in our world are everywhere. Programs like Jerry Springer or Oprah, where the limits of personal behaviour are pushed, explored and marketed as representations of "America," project images which are codified into a targeted demographic graphically depicting who we "should" be. It was this same system of projecting images of ourselves, images that have all been manipulated and re-packaged according to market testing and the desire to attract particular consumers that was very much at work in the Diana affair.

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[9] Here, I am referring to virtual reality created in such cybernetic spaces as MUDs (Multi-User Dungeons, other related simulated communities are MOO's, and MUSH's) and IRC (Internet Relay Chat).

The dialogue that has begun concerning privacy and how we define the private comes as a response to the persistent encroachment of the public and its inquiring eye into all areas of modern life. More complexly, however, the dialogue surrounding the surveilling capacities of the various technologies discussed in this study – institutions such as patriarchy, race, capitalism, the medical profession and the media – are ways of reinstating the stability and power of these traditional institutions. So, while on the one hand, new communication technology may indeed flatten hierarchies and foster participatory democratic communications; on the other hand, the current deployment and applications of these same technologies is being consumed by market enterprise and the rationale of capitalism. Thus, surveilling capabilities that ultimately undermine freedom and the capacity for self constitution based on the lived experience of an embodied point of view, become paramount in the very construction and deployment of new information technologies.

By examining how the technologies of the body are re-producing knowledges of the material body, I have attempted to deconstruct the ways in which these technologies are rendering the body culturally meaningful. Our understanding of our bodies is discursively constructed. We come to understand and be aware of the world around us through our bodies, and it is the world around us that produces our understanding and awareness of our bodies. While we continue to exist in our material bodies, the discourses surrounding technology are seeking to belie a stable sense of the body and the space it occupies. Thus, these technologies, the cultural production and understanding of these technologies, are changing the ontological and epistemological status of the body, displacing it as a verifiable means of knowing and constructing knowledge. As Foucault first observed, ways of knowing are ways of exercising power. Herein lies the true danger in allowing such discourses about the body to proliferate. If to know and understand the body is to exercise individual power over it, it is essential to democratic freedom and a world based on social justice that we make our bodies count. By examining the ways in which gender and class, for instance, are technologically re-produced for material bodies, I am seeking to reinvest a trust in the body. And, moreover, by attempting to stake out a space for the body I am seeking the space within which we can re-claim the primary importance of our bodies in the ways in which we come to understand the world around us, the power to situationally define a collective identity of ourselves and our communities, and the right to participate in self construction and definition on our own terms, rather than the terms determined by banks, governments, the media, and other various institutions of oppression.

As we increasingly become the "object of information, never [subjects] in communication," (Foucault 200) our ability to resist these definitions, to collectively organize to action, to assert an independent will against that which oppresses us is systematically removed. The shrinking of private space, the loss of community, the rise of white space and the normative impulse of the constant gaze are trends that must be resisted and fought by feminists and others interested in social justice. I believe this is absolutely crucial in achieving the feminist ideal of equality for women, wherein rather than attaining some level of equality *despite* our bodies, we achieve equality precisely *because* of our bodies: because of the knowledge created through the experiences of living in a gendered body.

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IMAGE EVALUATION
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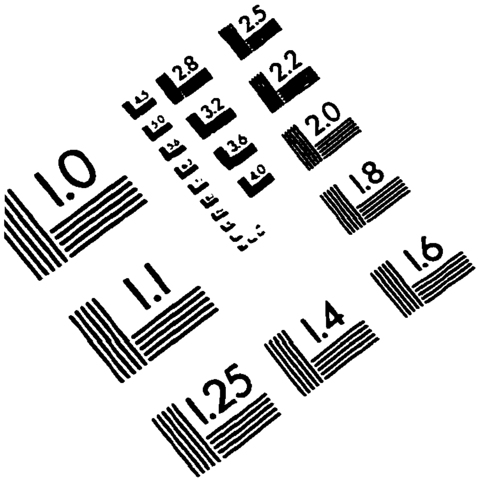
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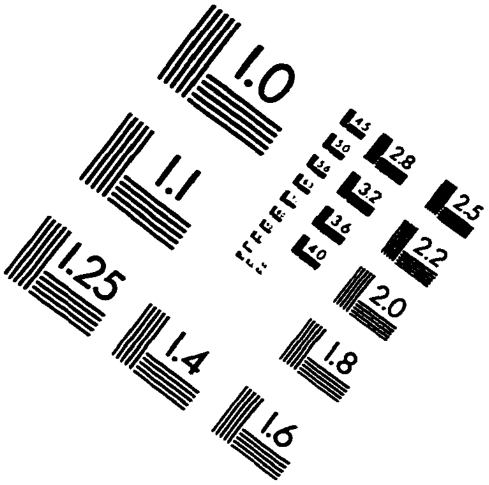
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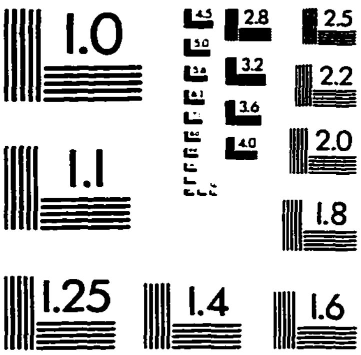
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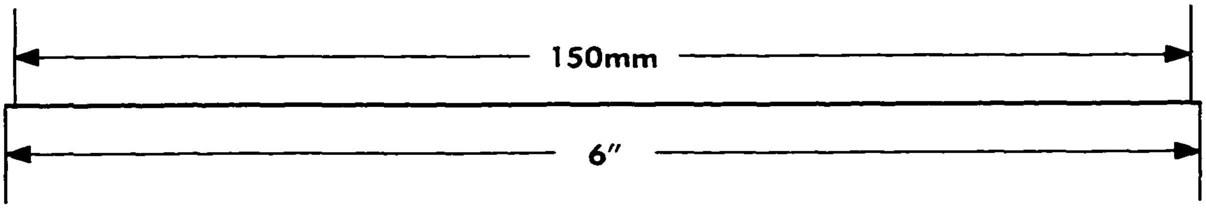

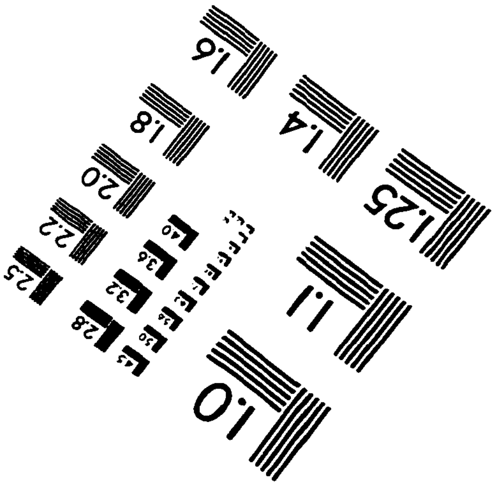
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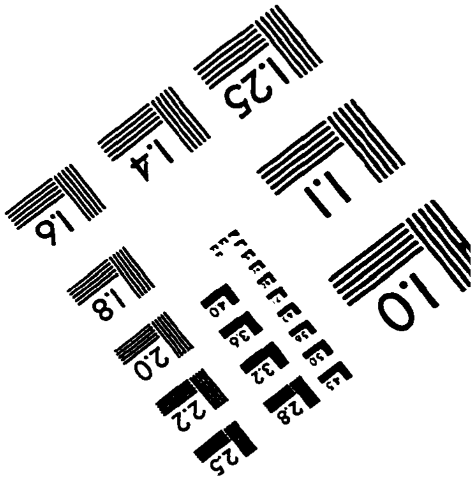
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