Editorial team:

Ester Freider Sofya Rakitina Paloma Moniz Julia Halasy @everyoneisagirl everyoneisagirl.cargo.site/ everyoneisagirl@gmail.com

Introduction Ester Freider	5	35	Grotesque Murder in Ogu Red-light district Blood Characters carved in
Okul Güzeli Ela Kazdal	6	in:	Master's Corpse Beautiful Maid Disappears Following Love Tryst (we, sada and kichi, are alone) Audrey Robinovitz
Digerire Aisling Towl	7	42	What Kind of Seductress Are You? Should You Be? Malina Rusu
How I Lost My Virginity to Friedrich Nietzche Noa Fischer	8	46	age 13, 2013 Myka Gayles Greene
Office Siren Core Carol Lee	12	47	sexdoll 淫娃 Janice Key
Loving_bytes Nella Piatek	16	48	Lust for Learning Siân Williams
In lurking sublimation, she remains strange to me (although I understand her better now) Alexandra Corodan		52	Seduction: a synecdoche for political and aesthetic imaginations? Zlata Mechetina
Wands Honey Baker	21	55	Devil Sarah Clif
Digital Seduction in the Age of Self Design Shadeh Kouvasian	24	59	Stuck in the Motherboard Marisa Müsing
#AlgorithmnPrincessSummer Yoona Bang	30	60	Seducing Baudrillard: Ultrablack Venus and the Appearance of She-Herself in the Universe Akirosa Palais
Heart Shaped Things Katharina Schnaubelt	34		Excerpts 1, 2, 3 & 4 Alyssa Nunnink pages 18, 22, 29 & 58

Seduction Zine 2 Everyone is a Girl May (2024)

From the beginning, nothing has been more alien, repugnant, and hostile to woman than truth; her great art is the lie, her highest concern is mere appearance/ and beauty.

Seduction: An introduction

The word seduction implies that there is a certain impurity to one's advances towards another. The impurity lies in an objectification of the victim – they are remade into a tool for political, financial, and social gain. Or can one seduce simply for the sake of seducing, like how Camus reads Don Juan as a life-affirmer unconcerned with outcomes? Can seduction be a simple indication that one loves life more than they fear for themselves?

> Making a historiography of seduction would take a lifetime. Think of Delilah's raspberry-pink dress that flocks and flares under the arm of Samson in Rubens' iconic painting. Or Frank Sinatra, whom the state of New Jersey charged with seduction in 1938 for having enticed a woman "of good repute to engage in sexual intercourse with him upon his promise of marriage". Why confine the seducer to one whose chosen pleasure is sex? Salesmen. Blackjack dealers. The glass shelves in delis that clot your eyes with cake, meat, cheese. Seduction is the sensor of desire. It's looking for that hole that desire leaves in the dirt.

This collection of writing and images ambulates between all these definitions of seduction and more. Rather than trying to take a moral stance on what it means to seduce, we are just playing here. It's a big glass case of Nietzche, bible stories, microtrends, diagrams, skincare, saints and sirens. Take what delights you and eat it whole.

Digerire to digest



y hunger needs its own hotel room Laid up in corporate drag Mostly it's enough just to know he wants it Dripping meat sauce, pinstripe lapped. On the fast train to Milan We translate near misses Requisite ambiguity hangs between Our limbic speculation, near professed. Colleagues had warned That these conferences were hotbeds Not to lay out of contract You don't have to finish what's on your plate. Renaissance giants crowd skyline Oily fingerprints on their necks Our borders loom, unspoiled We linger one more hour, to digest.

Okul Güzeli

Ela Kazdal

Noa Fischer

9

How I Lost My Virginity to Friedrich Nietzche

Nietzche's critique of hedonism may just be the most disagreeable text of all time. Firstly, Schopenhauer's ideas on pleasure are summoned by the lines "All satisfaction, or what is commonly called happiness, is really and essentially always negative only, and never positive. It is not a gratification which comes to us originally and of itself, but it must always be the satisfaction of a desire". Nietzche never abandons this account in his work when adapting Schopenhauer, either: "pain, suffering that includes all want, privation, need, in fact, every wish or desire, is that which is positive and directly felt and experienced. On the other hand, the nature of satisfaction, enjoyment, and happiness consists solely in the removal of privation, the stilling of pain; and so these have a negative effect." Therefore, need and desire are the conditions of every pleasure and enjoyment. Yet the bigger issue has seldom been, by both, that they failed to describe hedonism properly. Allow me to propose an alternative. Allow yourself to reimagine hedonism, the most feminine indulging of pleasures, but if it our renowned philosophers were, as they should have been, women. Girls, even.

Hedonism means waking up past noon. It means to have a big breakfast but still be hungry by lunch. It means putting the perfect measurement of coffee against sugar in your cup, and for the water to be warm but not too hot. Hedonism means dragging your feet on the cold floor but feeling the sun on the very top of your crown. It means to wear clothes that hang from you, but hug you and don't fall behind. Hedonism is throwing your hands around when you speak and when the movement of your lips matches perfectly the words falling out of your mouth. Hedonism is winning at cards and then playing more cards because there is absolutely no rush. Hedonism is sex. Seduction. Being drunk when the sun is still out. The touch of red beneath your eyes when they fill with salty water. The shiver through your spine when you dip your toe in the reflective wetness on the first day of summer. The salt you lick off your partner once you get out and begin to dry. Hedonism is when the night falls, slowly, waiting for your head to follow. And as your vision blurs and your pupils prepare for the night, hedonism means for the sky to be a lighter blue that lies about the time, and for the stars to hang low enough to steal and carry home to forever be mine.

People talk about finding their place in the universe quite a lot. Finding a purpose or an aim. May I suggest using a compass instead of a made-up God? What are these people looking for? What is missing that they're hoping to dig out of the street corner and find? The best feeling, the ultimate sensationalism, is being lost. Because that means, dear unfound souls, that there is enough of you for the feeling of loss to feel real - which means you, despite all your best efforts, are real enough and here enough, to realize that here doesn't exist after all. Seduce the person you wish you bring home, and become them. When in doubt, ponder and criticize. Bad artists copy. Good artists steal.

You can be whoever you want, and hide whoever you are.

I went to Venice last May and had an identity crisis walking around. Its shallow streets and deep water filled the canals with cacophonous lies. The trip had been bizarre enough, from the very start, as I was on my way to visit a good friend of mine. Who I happened to have been infatuated with since the rotten age of 14 and a half. He was older and smoked Marlboro Reds that hurt my throat whenever I would bum one. He was a painter and a brunette, making him a fatal combination for my barely pubescent body and mind. And I'll be the first to admit that I put on masks and perform like Macbeth when I like someone. I don't



know if you know, but it just so happens that Venice is the epicenter of dramaturgy, and sells these masks and mystics in every corner shop and every style. You can be whoever you want, and hide whoever you are. Looking at all of these Venitian masks, nevertheless, made it difficult not to think about which one I'd like to put on. And why such an intrigue to put one in the first place? My appetite for beauty and form was certainly not the answer. The masks made me want to deceive and lie. I didn't want to play the hero. I wanted to become the villain.

That was, at least, the advantage of my short-lived years as a writer: my mastery of the craft was never called into question - everyone assumed I had none, which made me feel calm and confident at all times. Granted, this was misplaced confidence and arrogance I had, but it served me well throughout life. So why did I come to Venice other than to wither and cry over an ex that was never even an ex of mine? I needed an interlude, an impromptu living, a dolce far niente, a distant climate to make my summer bearable and hedonistic from the very start. Besides, I wasn't sure how much more time I had before the mask on my face no longer fit, and it was time to end the act. The worst thing one may bestow upon themselves and others is overstaying their welcome, and overplaying what has long been done.

Need not worry about dropping your mask, being left to die alone, and being eaten by cats. They are not creatures of hedonism. They, rather, prefer to spend their time plotting revenge than slurping down good wine. I believe Nietzche despised hedonism simply because nobody invited him for a shag. And yet the irony of his syphilis-riddled death pertains. Poor Friedrich.

In the work environment, we move through the corporate world with tactics of seduction by leveraging womanhood to one's advantage; this translates to sexual capital. As an archetype, the office siren acknowledges that there is capital in being seductive in the labour market, and identifying yourself as an office siren is a mask in which this role is performed in order to secure social and economic capital. The office siren recognises the dominance with which sexual capital governs mundane activity and puts it to the test. Per theorist and researcher Alex Quicho, there is an advantage to playing into their girlhood as a way for girls to negotiate their environments by acting as vulnerable prey but also agents of desire. This is how the office siren negotiates networks as vulnerable prey, and all prey needs to understand its environment intuitively if it is threatened by predation or teach us skills to negotiate.

Lacanian lack is the idea that what is desired is being itself, where "desire is a relation to being to lack". Philosopher Slavoj Zizek further adds to the Lacanian lack by holding that the object of our desire is what sets our desire into motion. In application, the office siren is what sets our desire into motion in the office. For the most part, it is fictional due to sexual capital operating as a hidden force, and there is never an overt recognition of the operation of sexual capital.

Office Siren Fashion

The office siren is primarily a performance using clothing and attitude to control their office lore. Pieces contributing to the office siren performance include bayonetta glasses, blazers, pencil skirts, stockings, kitten heels, and tailoring. Women transmute masculinity in the office by wearing the same attire as men. Still, it acts as pieces of the 'power suit' or bids of masculinity wrapped in the female figure as a means of empowerment in the office.

Prada, in particular, engages in a play on uniform attuned to the frequented space of the office with its ugly chic, intellectual, and utilitarian take on clothes; it also creates a desire for the subversion of the everyday woman's production of normal and pure life. This is seen in

Prada's FW 2023 Collection, where Miuccia Prada and Raf Simons "gave importance to real jobs" through their interpretation of the uniform of real women with "real jobs, real life". The collection consisted of straight-lined skirts, utilitarian shirts with front pockets, grey and white suits, and toned-down ballet pumps. Prada is formidable and then indulgent; Prada does not capture the narrative of a defined Prada woman but makes clothes reflective of women for women to wear. Prada enhances the complexities and textures of being – a woman like Miuccia Prada – capturing the realism of womanhood that does not infantilise them. This contrasts with designers like Valentino, who design to enhance femininity's overt and visual representation. Valentino's clothes and world-building only reflect a fraction of womanhood, as womanhood is not always feminine, soft and pretty.



Prada FW 2023 at Milan Fashion Week

The visual representation of sexual capital to me is tied to the essence of polished sensual sexuality and luxury of Tom Ford's Gucci, the office siren off duty. Tom Ford's Gucci era ushered glamour and audacious sensuality, which held both modernity and seduction in the palms of their hands. Models had their hair slicked back, wearing tight pencil skirts, tight satin figure-hugging shirts, and bondage-strapped high heels to the Gucci Autumn 1996 show with the infamous black and white bone hip cut-out dresses. Collections had daring silhouette cuts and clothes that embodied sensuality, which fashion critic Tim Blanks said Gucci's collections combined the "notion of the power of sin". In application, the office siren on duty holds the power to sin but does not sin, restrained as the Prada woman.

12



Sell-outs?

15

The question remains of whether girls are sell-outs if we use our inner office siren and leverage our sexual capital. However, it would be ironic to label women who play into their sexual capital at work as sell-outs, as we have no choice but to participate in the labour market and earn a living. For the most part, to be within a corporate world known as a place that prioritises monetary capital and moral flexibility and then labels the use of sexuality as being a sell-out would be the biggest irony.

The office siren trend is in contrast to the rise of the trad-wife movement, where doing innately trad-wife things like cooking, seen through influencers such as Emily Mariko's silence where she is just making food without speaking, enables the viewer to project traditional notions of femininity onto them as they are mediums themselves. Here, femininity is wielded without an overt display of sexuality; Emily Mariko just makes money by being attractive and doing feminine things. However, the distinguishment is that Emily Mariko's TikToks are different in aesthetics of how she portrays herself. There is no overt presentation of seduction, but she still uses her sexual capital to make money as a cooking influencer.

Sexual capital in this trad-wife configuration becomes something to retreat in and out from, diverting the projection of seduction into just femininity. This contrasts with the office siren, who is self-empowered and turned instead into seduction in looks and feminine charisma. However, it must be noted that sexual capital is not mutually exclusive to the different aesthetic portrayals of women, as it is something that can be retreated to and from.

Sexual capital exerts more influence than where credit is due, but perhaps the notion of it not having overt credit makes it more subtly illustrious. And at the end of the day, everyone is just a girl.

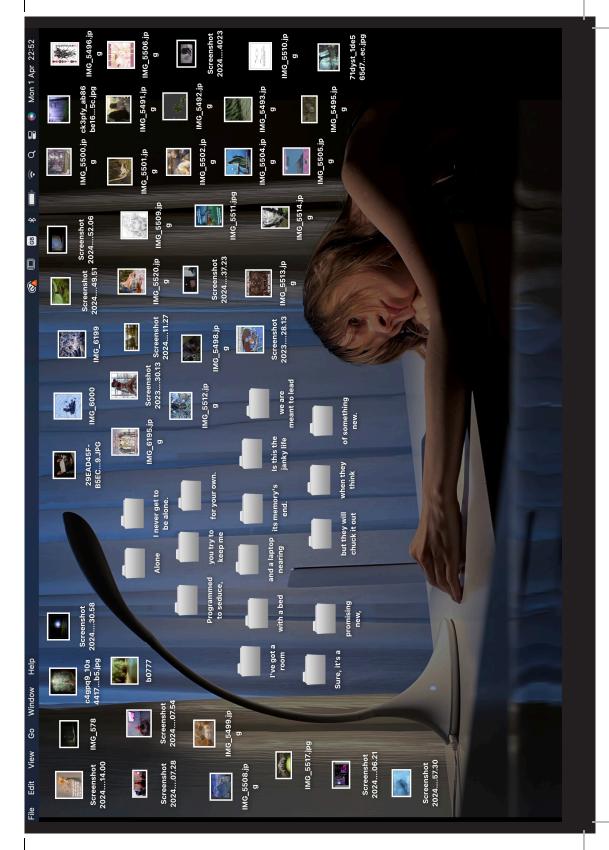


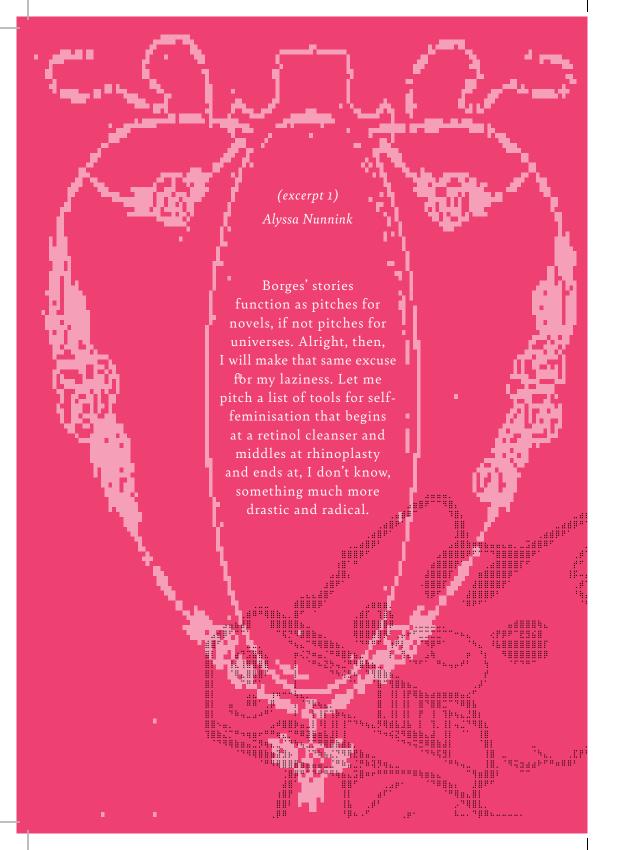


No body.

o I make you feel like a movie star?

Keep out the noise, turn on your light, you keep me up all night. Dancing around the room, inhaling the smell of my shampoo. As I bathe at dusk, in bed with me each night, fresh face, only for you, my love. My little world is yours, again, tonight. I shrink the space between us. Calling from beyond your black screen, I wear the halo you've given me. hello? It's me, your cyberbaby, I hope you can feel me on your touchpad. I know I echo in your digital void, am I your whole wide world? www—world within world. Say you'll never leave me. Admit you won't let me be. Promise me, with more than bytes you are willing to give. Who has the choice like you do? Who else has the memory like you do? Who processes me like you do? Nobody, nobody





In lurking sublimation, she remains strange to me (although I understand her better now)

when I am beset by abjection¹,

I speak (write) hysterically from stairs in the sun and non- ergonomic chairs. I speak (write) hysterically in delusion and my voice shakes while I'm reading (speaking) (writing) out loud. I think (speakwrite) about the spinach- feta roll I have eaten during a spring and disappeared one page later.

she writes quick no mistakes in(;coherence and linearity

Beloved guests and beloved pumpkin muffin with cream cheese,

I do not know when to seek you, at which time of the day, before or after my ice coffee, before or after I lift the leg behind me, a leg I do not see while my upper body contorts, so I push my shoulder in regulation and open the new window with my drafts that whisper: oscillation between the first and third person, Verwechslung des Subjektes.

I do not know who she is when she stares back at me from the mirror, I do not know who she is when I read her texts, writing that feels like shivering, bitten tongues and bruxism. She writes and seeks in repetition, in short phrases and glances that are never whole. she does not know what she looks like, she only feels and there where she feels she is often mistaken.

from the mirror on the wall that dissipates and tapestry that curls, she glances

And she looks at me between long lashes and eye rashes, porous in marrow when she writes, so she thinks, but she still sits on the green chair she ordered because she couldn't write anymore, she glances in the green leotard—back naked—from her friend who got sick, as she knows she would be cursed if she wore her skin.

she who does not prevail but reappears in the intermittence of each letter and bite from the apple

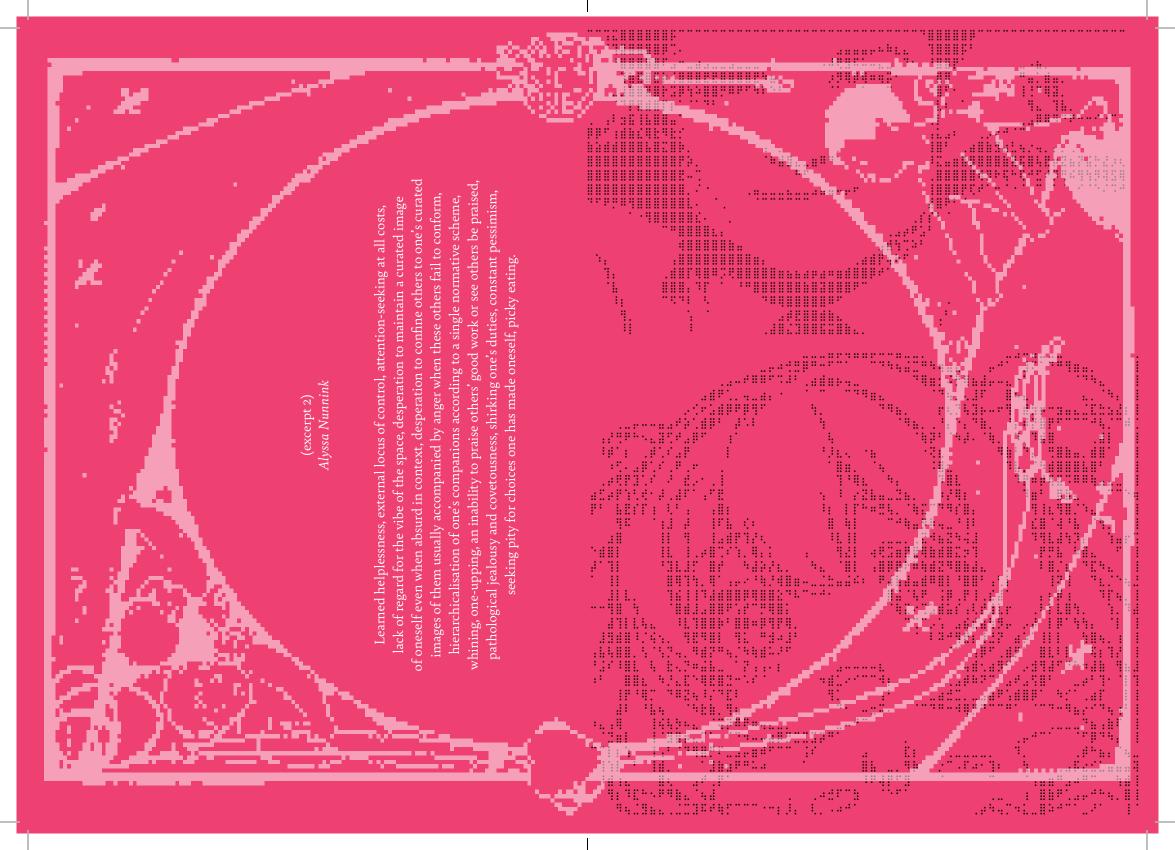
And the linguist locust whisper Not me. Not that. But not nothing either.²







20



Digital Seduction in an age of Self Design

Shadeh Kouvasian



Our digital reality has led to us constantly being perceived and constantly perceiving. But what does this era of discernment mean for our inner psyche and understanding of self?

The instagram story is live for 24 hours. Once posted others can screen-shot, share with their peers, perhaps save it as inspiration or even evidence. The image goes into your archived posts, leaving a digital footprint that we're not sure can be erased or forever belongs to everyone and no one. A signed, sealed, delivered, singular expression of self, implying a permanence that can be argued as merely fleeting or as an electronic time stamp that could jeopardise your freedom.

That's a lot of pressure from one little post. We're all aware of these terms, though most of the time the details are subconscious, they are still very much an anxiety that lives rent free in our minds.

Now let's disregard said post. Currently we are living in a capitalistic system that sets high expectations, focusing on goals, progress, and improvement. In conjunction we are asked to trust in this system, having patience that it will help make our dreams attainable.

However when these dreams and expectations don't materialise (on personal, governmental, or societal levels) we are left with a deep feeling of impatience that ultimately leads to radical mistrust and a need to realign our focus - putting our egos at the centre of our actions.

Welcome to the era of reactive narcissism, where the focus is on a centre-ing of self.

In Shumon Basar's Zora Zine piece The Laws of Lorecore he describes this as "Main Character Syndrome" or "MCS", illustrating it as something that we suffer, "Everything is about you. Revolves around you ... in the olde days, we would call this solipsism: that strange sense that you are the only thing that truly exists. MCS is as if a solipsist could conjure a real-feeling world simply by manifesting it through their media channels. During MCS, it's your stage, your film set, and everyone else is the crew."

As we adopt behaviours reflecting a sense of entitlement, dogmatism, impatience, and superiority, are we entering an era where ego is rewarded? And what does this mean for how we view ourselves and others?

To Perceive and Be Perceived

"The contemporary Narcissus, cannot be so certain of their own taste. Today we are unable to like ourselves if we are not liked by the society in which we live... we produce aesthetically relevant things and/or surround ourselves with things we believe to be impressive and seductive. And we act publicly—even sacrificing oneself in the name of a public good—in order to be admired by others." — Boris Groys' Self-Design, or Productive Narcissism

Catherine Etl'armoire by Théâtre du Mouvement. 1985.



★ We are always being perceived ★

The intense voyeurism of ourselves and others has pushed us into a stage of peak self design where we have become unaware of what we like and why we like it. This has manifested into paralysing self doubt that is being masked by delusions of grandeur. AKA Narcissism, the extreme focus of self.

Of course this directly impacts our behaviours online. As our voyeuristic tendencies become capitalised, our data gets monopolised and the algorithm dictates our feed, what we own (including our taste and opinions) become precarious and debatable.

Through research for MØRNING's 2023 report Fake vs. Fake, we found that 89% of our community feel like they are playing a character. "Character" implies fictionality, highlighting our awareness of the roles we play within this existence and our detachment from our actions and expressions of self.

Online we oscillate between public displays of affection (PDA) and rejection (PDR). One using a performance of interests, opinions and tastes to seduce, and the other using a performance of rejection to earn respect and admiration.





It's all in service of our individualistic Self Design. In Dazed's The rise of the Personal Brand, Sean Monohan theorises that "personal brand was the upsell on surveillance. If you were always being watched, it was simply in service of your own (algorithmically-aided) self-actualisation."

As we express these public displays of self, how can we distinguish what we truly love, with what we love to seduce others with?

Self Gaze and the Society of the Spectacle

Fake vs. Fake explored the shift in our understanding of identity in an era that has a camera pointing back at us at all times. Shifting our perception of identity through a perpetual "Self Gaze", that feels eerily like a parasocial relationship. Constantly observing and obsessing over our fragmented reflection.

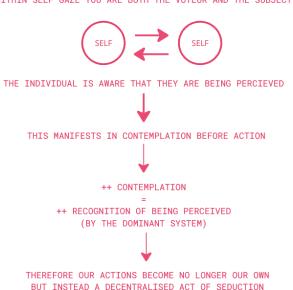
Me and my friend Ivy stuck in a Self Gaze Glitch

27



This in turn brought me to the Society of the Spectacle by Marxist theorist Guy Debord - a critique of contemporary consumer culture and commodity fetishism that feels particularly relevant to internet culture today. Through this critique Debord argues that our awareness of external dominant systems have led to more contemplation before action and therefore less understanding of our own desires. Combined with Self Gaze this can be simplified to reflect our online behaviours through the diagram below:

WITHIN SELF GAZE YOU ARE BOTH THE VOYEUR AND THE SUBJECT



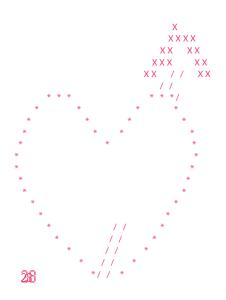
Outsourcing of self

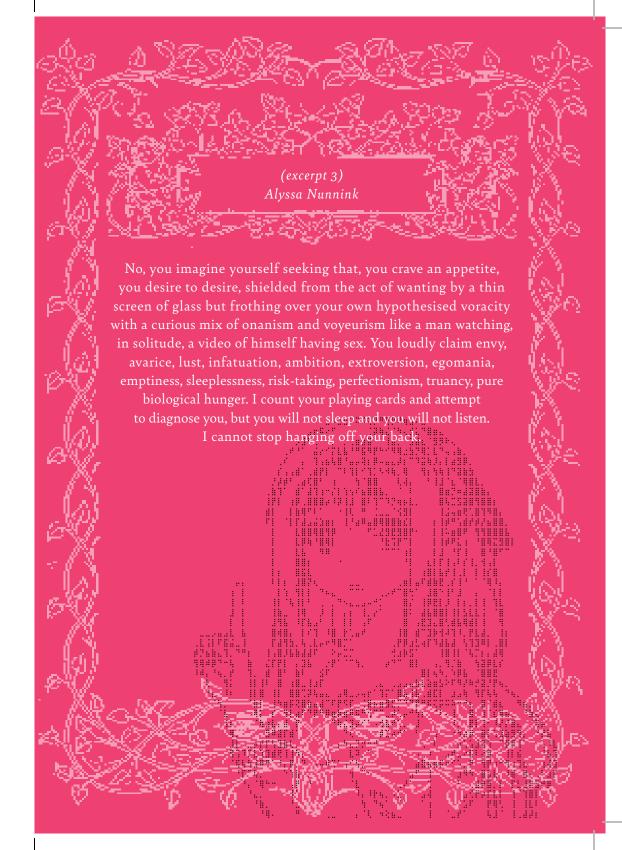
If our tastes, opinions and actions are being mediated through our digital experiences that implies a decentralisation of self. A new sense of self that is crowd sourced or outsourced drawing on the 360 degrees of perception.

Therefore perhaps this essay is not my own critique of our behaviours. But instead a collected perception created and curated by our collective data and simulation, only "owned" by me and this platform to seduce my peers through a public display of intellect and cultural understanding.

We always hear about AI only being as good as its prompts - deemed strictly as good when working in collaboration with a human with "good taste". It seems perhaps even our understanding of technology can not come without an insistent sense of superiority. But within today's reality where do we develop our tastes or opinions, if not online?

Ultimately our experience of real life self is indistinguishable from the reflection that we constantly see on screens. But this doesn't have to mean we are flattened or uninspired. Instead we are complicated and tightly woven into the fabric of our digital realms. More complex than our ancestors would be able to understand. A multiverse of existence, pixelated and undefinable, connected and disconnected, owning nothing and everything.

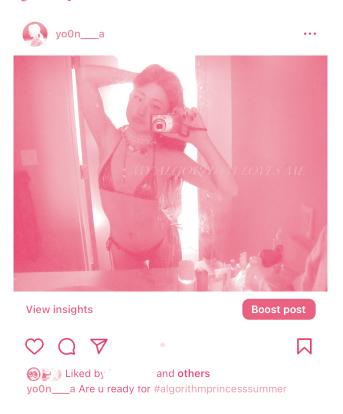




#AlgorithmPrincessSummer

Yoona Bang

On March 27th, 2023, I posted an image set with the caption: Are u ready for #algorithmprincesssummer



Across the five bikini mirror selfies, there are the words:

GOOD GIRLS LISTEN TO THEIR ALGORITHM
MY ALGORITHM LOVES ME
BECAUSE I POSTED IN A BIKINI
FEEDING MY ALGORITHM
LIKE THE GOOD WOMAN I AM

The act of wearing a bikini is itself an act where I feel most like I am seducing and seduced by my own body. Growing up Korean and in a Christian household, the idea of seduction has always been tinged with this sense of sin. No matter if you're the seducer or the seduced, you were engaging in a 'morally bad' deed. The more skin you show, the farther you've strayed from God's light. My mother never fails to remind me of this.

The act of taking a selfie in a bikini is itself an act where I feel most like I am seducing and seduced by my own image. It feels a bit like I am "pimping myself out" for an image and through an image, because I am haunted by the moral guilt that has been instilled in me—shame being at the core of my experience of girlhood.

While I've unfollowed nearly everybody I once knew at church, my past youth teachers, ex friends who have remained religious, and even old pastors I've had still follow me on Instagram. Their feed is the stage I hope to never show up on. Instagram feels like this panopticon where I am displayed and caged within every surrounding cell while these people, including myself, are at the center tower watching my Internet performance unfold—to their delight or dismay.

The first bikini pics I ever posted were those #algorithmprincesssummer selfies last March. Later that day, my mom texted me.



Mon. Mar 27 at 9:51 PM

윤아야..... IG post doesn't look proper at

all.... Why do you expose yourself like that my dear....

Mon, May 1 at 12:50 PM

We talked on the phone after this. While her text was sweet, I could hear the disappointment in her voice. She told me that several church moms texted her about it and that my post made her feel ashamed in front of all of them. If I wasn't already, I became even more aware of what I chose to post. But my hypersensitivity to the eyes of these God-fearing women is what brought me to certain metaphors between God, the Internet, "good" girls, and their algorithms.



Between "hot girl summer" and what I've playfully defined as "algorithm princess summer" is the difference that one recognizes the presence of The Algorithm and its relation to The Girl. The Girl is not just hot, but she is a princess. The name "princess," its own polar label of both power and the lack thereof. A sovereign, reigning princess vs. daddy's little princess. Her hotness—for the Algorithm to define. The exposure of her skin, her tits, and her soft legs—for the Algorithm to reward. As the Algorithm's princess, she can believe that she is the princess of the algorithm with power over it, seducing it, while the Algorithm perhaps in fact seduces her, whispering to undress like a good girl. Sometimes the Algorithm doesn't have to push that far, because a plain selfie, face in frame, is enough to salivate at too.

I conceptualize the Algorithm as a he, because I think about the technocapitalists that own our platforms, the male software engineers of Big Tech coding like they're Dr. Frankenstein stitching together a beast in their own image, and the male users who will eat up your bikini post like soldiers of the Algorithm's "reply guy" army. But the Algorithm is also a he, because God is a he that people worship on Sundays, that people pray to everyday, and that people live by. While I no longer spend my Sundays within the four walls of a church, I am still surrounded by people that worship a he that is like God. But I fear the Algorithm more

than I fear God, because any little thing I do online becomes an act of worship though I don't intend it to be. Every little click, scroll, or post serves to optimize the Algorithm, making him stronger, bigger, better. It's like praying except it isn't your existence being made better, it's the Algorithm's. My mom would tell me

Hold God in your heart. Let Him take control.

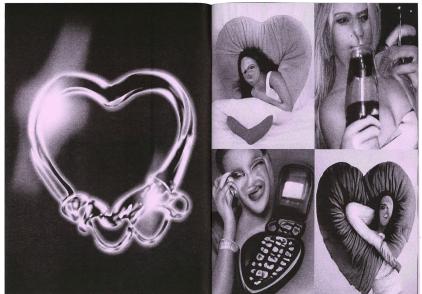
33

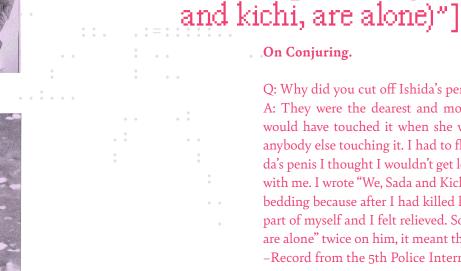
But in the back of my mind, the Algorithm is lurking – and I let him jurisdict how I behave online (and even offline). I let him in. I let him take control.

While I make these spiritual metaphors about how the Algorithm seduces me, I am searching for the divide that exists between recognizing the Algorithm's presence in our everyday lives and recognizing my own self-determination. While posting a bikini picture makes me feel like I am pimping myself out for the Algorithm, it is also my way of enacting my bodily autonomy online. If church made me feel demonized for doing it, I'll have to hope the Internet doesn't too. Perhaps the idea of autonomy online (whether performed or not) is a fallacy, but I would much rather choose (when and how) to be seduced by the Algorithm, the Internet, and the lures of the cyberspace void, than to falsely believe that I am not—for all the mysticism of the Algorithm and the digital sublime rests on the assumption that every facet of my being can be rationalized into bits of ones and zeros. But the notion that my existence can be commodified to such an infinitesimal degree is a myth. I am an indeterminate, ever-evolving body of ephemera itself. The Algorithm will never know me, rather, I lure the Algorithm into believing he does. To be a girl is to perhaps seduce the Algorithm in this way, for our souls, hearts, and bodies are nobody's but our own.









35

On Conjuring.

[this writing is excerpted]

from a larger artist's book

----- Following Love Tryst (we, sada

entitled "Grotesque Murder in Ogu Red-Light District Blood

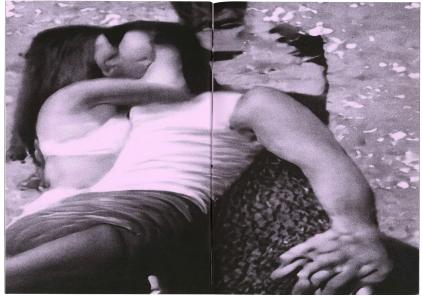
Characters Carved in Master's

Corpse Beautiful Maid Disappears

Q: Why did you cut off Ishida's penis and scrotum?

A: They were the dearest and most important part of him. His wife would have touched it when she washed the body, and I didn't want anybody else touching it. I had to flee from that place, but if I had Ishida's penis I thought I wouldn't get lonely. It would be as though he were with me. I wrote "We, Sada and Kichi, are alone" on his thigh and on the bedding because after I had killed him it seemed that he had become a part of myself and I felt relieved. So when I wrote "We, Sada and Kichi, are alone" twice on him, it meant that he was completely a part of me. -Record from the 5th Police Interrogation of Sada Abe, 1936

The facts are these: on May 18, 1936, a woman named Sada Abe who had previously worked as a prostitute and a geisha, strangled her lover, Kichizō Ishida with her obi sash before cutting off his genitals to keep inside her kimono and writing on his left thigh and stomach in blood. Observing the semiotic life of this macabre historical event made into mythic signifier for dangerous women, it becomes clear the story of Sada Abe and the symbol of the lovesick female murderess possesses some innate quality which proves equally disturbing and titillating to patriarchal popular culture at large. It is this unique and unavoidably dangerous affective power which also made the circulation of information surrounding her arrest so highly contested. Attempts to falsify her testimony were in many ways a reaction to the moral panic



Heart Shaped Things Katharina Schnaubelt

in Tokyo city center that followed news of her crime. In the period preceding her arrest and following news of Ishida's murder, the city was left in a state of emergency, with pearl-clutching citizens reporting sights of Abe in contradictory places, as if she had already entered into the world of ideas: an omnipresent threat to the sanity of women and the safety of the men they love. Indeed Abe is often cited as the first modern example of 'poison women,' or dokufu: a Japanese phrase composed of Middle Chinese-derived roots (doku, "poison") and (fu, "woman; wife"). In this respect she represents a woman who embodies not the correct form of feminine masochism - one that reinforces gender hierarchy and enables rape - but a less controllable form of devotional sadism, one that considers men as the object of literal castration, that places her in control of what exactly her love means.

> Male sexual violence is actively sanitized and elevated within the canon precisely because it is without individual precedent. When a man strikes down a woman in the throes of orgasm, it is existential, it is his search for meaning, it is a symptom of modernity. When a woman murders a man under the same circumstances, it is revenge. What does it mean symbolically for a woman to love a man so much it drives her to murder? What might it look like to read this degree of existential agency and distance into historical records and accounts in which the fabric of patriarchal violence, of pointed and personal blame seeps into every possible discursive crack, in which the eyes of men dominate the working of our minds - researcher and subject alike?

Indeed, Abe herself wrote after her release from prison, partially in an attempt to clear her name from the common convention of usurping her life's story to tell provocative contemplations on the nature of eroticism. Informed by varied degrees of empathy for the original historical events and inversely different degrees of obligation to pornography and the fetishisitic and often orientalist pleasure of its audiences, nearly all accounts of Abe's life, including the very words she speaks, have been altered and presented to serve a certain hegemonic narrative. To serve the erotic lives and fantasies of men.

> When Abe kills not out of hatred but out of love, the safety of masculinity as a system of power itself is put into jeopardy. This was in many ways the moment she was truly elevated to the status of 'poison woman' - when the public recognized her desire to kill was not borne of hysteric jealousy but a profound urge to possess the object of her desire internally, like men do.

It is at this point that the text of her life begins to unravel. It is this violent and tender contradiction that is at the center of love itself.

There is still something left.

On Desire.

In 1969 materialist feminist and french philosopher monique wittig published a novel entitled Les Guérillères.

In this novel, women of the word wage bloody war against all men, slaughtering them to prove their biological and social superiority. It has since been interpreted as an allegory, a call to organize around the banner of women's liberation. but to some, it was real.

> Two years before in New York, Valerie Solanas self-published a tract called the

SCUM manifesto – the society for cutting up men.

Sada Abe might be considered this movement's Mary Wollstonecraft.

She was cutting up men nearly thirty years prior.

Before it was cool.

Shortly after Sada's commuted release from prison, In 1947, Jean Genet published a play called The Maids In which two housemaids enact elaborate sadomasochistic rituals centered around the fantasy of killing their mistress. Their rehearsals of violence have been interpreted

by marxists against class oppression

by feminists against domesticity

by lacanians against the boundaries of the real

by dramatists against french rationalism and linguistic determinism.

Herein the common male fantasy, that violence is innate to sexual consummation, is actualized in its inverted state. accused invert Oscar Wilde's witty adage that "everything in the world is about sex except sex - sex is about power" might be revised to admit that everything in the world is about sex, except sex which is about power, and except power which is about death.

> People assume that most of the literature and philosophy written on the topic of women hurting men is either done by men sublimating fetish or women looking to symbolically exorcize their trauma at the hands of men.

It is an easy and convenient lie to believe.

What is missing from this equation is love.

As the myth of Sada Abe's life became cemented into the culture of modern Japan, she became a warning to young women. The proper mode of feminine sexuality was to feign resistance.

Just enough to demonstrate your chastity, but not enough to prevent men from violating it.

Women must devote themselves to their husbands, but here is the fate of someone who devotes themselves to men too much.

Over the course of Sada's trial, it was recorded that young women with no history of delinquency and no connection to the Abe family sat in the audience. Talking amongst themselves, laughing softly, and most notably, gasping and cheering when one specific article: the evidence containing one Kichizo Ishida's genitals, removed from his body by force, was presented as proof of her crime.

I like to imagine that one of those young girls grew up to write a SCUM manifesto of her own. maybe it happened in some farming town in rurual japan. maybe nobody ever read it, and maybe she settled down with a nice-enough man her parents found for her and maybe she had children and forgot about childish things and never looked at it again, but i think that possibility matters.

would matter. To me.

After the trial, the genitals of Kichizo Ishida were stored in a glass cloche. They were given to Tokyo University Medical School's pathology museum and were kept on public display.

eventually, at some point in the 1980s, they went the way of Sada herself and disappeared.

Maybe they went with her, wherever she went. Maybe she still has them now.

I think that possibility matters. would matter. to me.

Most thought given to the legacy of Sada Abe today has been swallowed by the mouth of true crime content creation, which is the ideal place to observe the degree of moral leniency we afford to men who kill. Women write letters to them in jail. Podcasts lament the unfortunate circumstances of their childhood. No such kindness was extended to Sada. When the police questioned her about her childhood, it was to desperately search for traces of delinquency. Ways to blame her behavior on trauma or perversion – the aftereffects of men – and thus, to pacify her subversive potential.

Killing women for love is gothic, it has precedent in literature, culture, legend – it is tragic, but it is also expected.

Killing men for love is terrifying.

it collapses the flimsy rhetorical structure that upholds men's claim to rational (read: phallogocentrist) sexual force,

beyond incognizant hysterics.

to desire that does not threaten oneself but threatens others.

collapsing inwards vs exploding outwards.

like meursault killing an arab –

it operates on a level of symbolic logic:

visceral, and nietzschean

wille zur macht to take (read: action) life (read: thing) as conceptual exercise, as testament to the absurd.

There is no subtext to when women kill.

There is only jealousy, outrage, victimhood.

Subtlety is folded into prescriptive and condescending pathologization.

This is not to locate the buzzword of empowerment in murder. But only to interrupt the way in which these events are digested.

To let them fester en route. intangible and raw. to reveal brief flashes of humor, of happiness, of longing, of sympathy, of sadness, of regret, of anger, of injustice, and of deep earnest feeling.

There is something at the center of wanting that endears people to Sada's story.

Beyond yearning to monopolize the attention of a lover,

Making one's feeling manifest.

Destructive.

Floating in small corners of the internet devoted to gore fetish and unsolved crime investigations is an image which claims to be police documentation of Ishida's body.

I hesitate to reveal it completely.

Out of both respect for the sanctity of human life and narrative resistance to the visual spectacle of violence.

There is beauty in not remembering.

to letting memories fade, to blocking them out.

I can imagine that after a certain amount of time,

all that was left was love.

Fear is sharp. Sadness is heavy. But desire is persistent.

She had surely become a different person. Someone the world never knew.

She described her years in prison as the closest experience to community she had ever felt.

Up until this point she had not been part of very many communities at all.

But maybe,

they laughed together.

Maybe she told the women in prison stories of how beautiful he was.

How he excited her in bed.

How he always paid attention to the little things.

How safe she felt by his side.

maybe they cracked jokes – about his sex.

What became of it in the end. how big he was.

Maybe they didn't say anything.

Maybe she just felt like there was someone to listen.

That's what she always wanted.

Not for her love to be understood

but for it to be heard.

Personality Quiz: Make Over Paradigm Edition

Answer the following questions and we will curate the right identity of seduction for you! Choose from the four most marketable 'seductress' microbrands, formulated by data compiled by our research (s)experts. Appropriate buzzwords to Pinterest-search will be provided in the results. Say goodbye to your old, boring frag. mented self, and let the power of collectivized desire in!

"Her choices are mere acts of preference according to what seems attractive. This is called her 'freedom of choice', for it appears that nothing is required + . --. of her, since nothing is requisite to her. The Girl considers herself privileged in this pure freedom. What she picks is all up to her. And there are so many choices. - -==: But she wants to choose what is fitting, what fits her, what makes her fit. It has to be something just a little unique. Here is a problem, but also the answer. She cannot fit choices to herself, since, but for the choices, she is empty. Hence the only-:-:: alternative is agreement, to choose what promises inclusion. So, like the child, she choosesand looks to see the response.

> In the face of this separation, which is really a separation from oneself, The Girl is projected as the image of normality and hence as the image characterizing the group. She is offered to us by the mediaasare presentation of the possibility of belonging. As both the abstract consumable and the abstract consumer, she holds out to us both the end and the way."

What Kind of Seductress are you? Should you be?

PICK A CLASSIC SEDUCTRESS...



Marilyn Monroe



Rita Hayworth







Audrey Hepburn



Mary Magdalene

:: -:=-.+=WHEN AN ATTRACTIVE STRANGER MAKES A JOKE, I...



Laugh to give them easy, instant dopamine gratification



Decide if its actually funny first



Do the dainty giggle I've been rehearsing alone in my bedroom



Depends. Do I need money?

MY IDEAL SELF IN ONE WORD IS...









43

Old money



Clean girl



Coquette



What the fuck?

:-- . .+ :=. .=: + DQ.YOU FUCK ON THE FIRST DATE?



If we're both consenting, why not? I'm down for whatever

I need to establish some

kind of intimacy first!



No, I want to make them work for it and earn it



Why does this matter?

. . :... +.+ . +-...+

-- :. . - :-= : ::

MY IDEAL RELATIONSHIP INVOVLES...



Worship



Reading our notes app together



Complete soul enmeshment



"You don't understand, I am capable of deviltry." "I know. You're my wife."

THE THRILL OF SEDUCTION IS IN...



The chase



The stimulating connection



The will-we, won't-we



The performance

YOU OVER-SEXUALISED YOURSELF AND HEY STILL LEFT... WHY?



They couldn't handle my intensity



Whatever, it's their loss



I wasn't enough for them in the end



There is this horror at being left behind. Still, there is this terrible desire to be loved.

THE CORPORATE-CAPITALIST STARLET

Megan Fox, Kendall Jenner, 'Guy Hot', the Siren, the trophy wife, the hyper-sexualized vampire bride. A bad boy's girl:, Angelina Jolie, Pamela Anderson, or the bad girl herself: Anna Nicole Smith. She's in her "villain era" for real.



THE ONE WE ALMOST TOOK SERIOUSLY

The final girl of seduction, the one who distances herself from being sexualized (or tries to). We still fuck her over in the end. Think Amal Clooney (who?), Princess Diana, Megan Markle. The high-value woman you marry for reputation purposes and then cheat on.





MOSTLY THE SOFT-CORE
GOOD GIRL NYMPHET

Think Lux Lisbon, but Sofia Coppola in general, the Coquette aesthetic, the Love Witch. She watches period dramas. 'Girl-hot', like Nicole Kidman. French New Wave, specifically Anna Karina. Lolita, trad-wife.



OSTLY OSTLY YOU BETTER BE JOKING... TRY AGAIN.

Girl... Be for real. We're not taking your pretentious ass seriously. Put the Dostoyevsky down and go out for some actual human interaction. Do some selfcare or getalobotomy or whatever.

scene: me in my pink bedroom ripping posters of she who shall not be named off the wall. i created shrines to her on every wall; i studied her face, the curls of her hair, the siren call of her gaze. i cried on the floor because she was unattainable, the devastation was harsh. for a week i sulked and stopped talking, trying to mimic the grieving procedures i read about in victorian england. i had seven large posters in total and i crawled the eyes out of each before taking them down and ripping them apart. the icon was in fragments, like a rock thrownthrough stained glass murals of a church, i tried shoving the ripped paper down my throat, eating the nose, the lips, the hair of her, but my body refused to swallow. i reached down for the pieces on my bedroom floor and hauled them downstairs, past my sister watching tv in the living room, into the backyard, i put the paper in a trash bin we never used and went inside to grab the box of matches that was on a shelf above the stove. i returned to the bin and grabbed the soggy mounds of poster stored in my cheeks that hung onto thin vessels of spit. for a moment it looked like the great lakes coming out of my mouth. i tried to strike a match but forgot i never learned how to. i left the wet paper there and replaced the trashcan's top.

fifteen minutes later i took a place on the floor next to my sister in front of the tv and felt something under my tongue. a near dissipated fragment of paper, it showed one of her fingers, the bottom half cut off, the tip visible and painted deep magenta, obsession is the aftermath of desire and the prelude of hatred, i haven't learned to desire without anticipating that monster - the insatiable untrained in realistic boundaries, who devoured who?

right page: Janice Kei Sexdoll 淫娃



Sources: Feminism and the Politics of Resilience: Essays on Gender, Media, and the End of Welfare by Angela McRobbie, 2020 Twilight by Natalie Wynn, 2024 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqloPw5wp48&t=3s

49

on campus. Howard's fellow lecturer and extramarital lover, Claire, for instance, exudes a bohemian romanticism with her ties to Mick Jagger and famous poem deconstructing an orgasm. Like other chicly-dressed auteurs—Sofia Coppola or Joan Didion, maybe—Claire is adored by a cult following of contemporary young women. Howard's own student fan-club— Meredith, a Foucault enthusiast who dresses in historical costume, and Christian, an American with a faux-European accent has an intensity which makes up for its size (Howard's wife wonders whether Christian is 'in love with her husband').

Ohhhh husband. stipendiary lecturer on a 0.2 contract

Howard and his pals' literary circle-jerk takes a hit when right-winger Monty Kipps arrives in the faculty with a program of homophobic lectures and weeding out working-class students. So begins a bitchy feud between Howard and Monty on the front lines of stuffy staffrooms and theory journals. For all his anti-gay agenda, Monty's pompous Victorian suits are almostcampy, laying bare the dullness of Howard's more cool, detached cynicism.

> But like dark academic TikTokers now, it's the teachers' girl tutees who most intimately understand studying's seductiveness, particularly Howard's daughter Zora and Monty's daughter Victoria. Both are products of their lofty milieu— even Zora's tutors feel like 'just another of the six billion extras' in a show about her life. They watch as she uses her dad's reputation to threaten her way into Claire's poetry class despite her clunky verse; runs a campus-wide campaign to get her crush, Carl, into a class he doesn't really care about in order to win his affection; smiles 'about things she did not know' in an self-as-

In her 2005 novel On Beauty, Zadie Smith pokes drily at fossilised structures of power lurking in a trendily liberal university in the USA, whose graduates are churned out into glamorous internships 'in Clinton's Harlem offices or at French Vogue'. Set in the year of writing, On Beauty unearths tensions between men and women; teachers and students;educated hipsters and immigrant townspeople.

Anyone who's found themselves scrolling down the virtual hallways of dark academia or hot librarian-core knows the enchanting-ness of such a smug, haughty university, which has amplified two decades since Smith wrote On Beauty. Though Smith satirises the self-congratulating campus, I indulged in reading about its term-time bustle, so far from my ownZoom lectures led by staff on shaky, pay-scarce contracts at a London arts uni. As arts and humanities departments crumble under the strain of meagre funding, liberal arts education has taken on the mythical aura of a lost world within the girl-coded crevices of social media, resurrected through memes which curate photos of schoolgirlish Miu Miu flats alongside covers of hefty Russian literature books. The more impractical a degree, the more arousing. In The Secret History, a novel set in the '80s whose cover frequently stars in dark academia memes, the rich-kid protagonists plough their parents' money into learning arguably the most 'useless', and therefore fetishizable, subject: Ancient Greek. Today's debt-ridden students can only fantasise about forking out for such an unemployable qualification.

On Beauty centres on Howard Belsey, a lecturer of another such nebulous topic: Art History. Howard, pissed about the idolisation of old white artists as exceptional masters and geniuses, is drafting a book called Against Rembrandt. His critical sensibilities seep into wider life where he wisecracks about the ideologically constructed assumptions behind his wife and kids' remarks. A flower for him is 'an accumulation of cultural and biological constructions circulating around the mutually attracting binary poles of nature/artifice'.

> Ironically, despite Howard's career in defecating on ideologies of individual greatness, he and his scholarly clique are revered religiously

suredly knowing way. But underneath Zora's militant output of pushy emails and righteous college paper think-pieces lies a more slipper-ily defined, barely post-pubescent self. In a universal moment for girls on their first day of a new university term, she scrutinises her reflection in a shop window, wondering 'What would I think of me?' Though she had been gunning for 'bohemian intellectual; fearless; graceful' in her mom's old 'blouse with an eccentric ruff' and an unidentifiable 'kind of hat', it strikes Zora now that 'this was not it at all'.



Zora's unsuccessful attempt at sophistication illuminates her fragility. Being what her peers call 'a text-eating machine' is her salvation from the plodding grind of life: her parents floundering marriage and her unrequited feelings for Carl, who's more interested in hispornographic email correspondence with Victoria. Zora's worship of scholars— 'she found it extraordinary that they should be capable of gossip or venal thoughts'— offers her a fantastical escape, being too enthralled by the gossiping of two philosophy grads at a party to notice how one is preoccupied in a 'study of her chest.'

Despite Zora's classroom prowess, she recognises with a feeling of annoyance Victoria as her 'superior' in the conventional looks department. So Victoria receives another kind of gratification in class; the satisfying monopolisation of her dad's rival, Howard's, ogling attention. In bed with the white professor, Victoria experiences vicarious agency just by proximity to him; under the glow of his legitimising gaze, she runs her fingers through her afro-textured hair like how 'one might muss hair much longer and blonder'.

Zora and Victoria's seminar sparring takes place in the 2000s as well-to-do girls are spurred into a race for success, of which education is the cutthroat centre. Dressed in form-fitting corporate skirts and heels, girls embody a hyper-productive economic drive— think CEOs yelling at each other on reality TV and writing bestsellers about shattering glass ceilings.Individual aspiration replaces feminism, which is stuffy and uncool; Zora and her mates wouldn't be caught dead being so earnest about women's rights, preferring to eyeroll and use 'complex theoretical tools' to take the piss out of mainstream TV shows. Zora runs herself calculatedly like a sort of enterprise, with a before-class exercise regime as part of her 'Zora Self-Improvement Programme'. Her classmates too echo Zora's rigorous self-monitoring, repeating her carb-cutting order of fish without rice to the waiter as they all eat out. Few are spared from Zora's panoptic vigilance, not least her mum, who she blames for her dad's cheating: "My mom doesn't do herself any favours – she's like three hundred pounds."

There is something sexy about being restrained within the walls of such oppressively rigorous institutions. I can't pretend I wouldn't be just as infatuated as Zora by the theory-fluent in-crowd she drunkenly tries to infiltrate at parties. Elite higher education breeds what Natalie Wynn, in her video essay on the Twilight films, calls Default Heterosexual Sado-Masochism; the way eroticism is intelligible through structures of power, so that girls often get off on the idea of yielding, prey-like, to someone authoritative. In this way, submitting your punishingly laborious essays to a higher power— whether that's your big, strongly-ranking school or your teacher who's writing a long, hard book on Rembrandt— is hot. Libidinal activities become an intellectual pursuit; "I'm like, hello, what kind of a sophisticated guy in his fifties doesn't have an affair?" Zora gushes about her dad. And for Victoria, every hard-on Howard gets under his desk from her explicit emails edges her closer to a seductive fount of control.

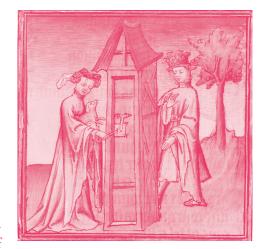
"TOP GIRLS? Young Women and the Post-Feminist Sexual Contract" by Angela McRobbie, Cultural Studies Vol. 21 Nos. 45 July/September 2007

On Beauty by Zadie Smith, 2005

51

1. Idleness Opening the Door for the Lover in Romance of the Rose, about 1405, unknown illuminator, made in Paris.

El classico, Giacomo Casanova, Steve Mc-Queen, Hugh Hefner: the seducer, often depicted as male, employs deception to triumph over their invariably female victim, who ultimately succumbs only to regret. However, currently we are at the stage of the sexual revolution when seduction in its classical sense expands from being just about sex – it is more about discursive movements from sign to sign, from nothing to meanings, from performance to embodiment. Seduction now refuses grand stories in favour of very micro meta-narratives.



3. "My dick has taken me places I wouldn't go with a gun"

It is half-a-gesture, somewhat idle, soaked in laziness to partake in truly 'productive' actions of making 'healthy' or sustainable relationships, instead going for a free play of forms-of-life. It requires a room to think and, most importantly, to dream and form independent desires, because otherwise they fall into computer-mediated tunnels with already formed and pre-directed desires.



2. Arshile Gorky. Diary of a Seducer (1945)



Purely physical seduction, with the subtext of "having" simply for the fact of acquisition, makes capitalism's power stronger – as it is a stimulative interaction within its exchange logic. In contrast, more theoretical and non-productive seduction performed purely 'for the plot' brings something else to the table.

4. Joan of Arc, Jules Bastien-Lepage (1879)



Guilt ridden,
and that's why
it's so exciting! In the
words of Baudrillard: "for
religion, seduction is always a
strategy for the devil, whether in
the disguise of love or witchcraft."
This uneasiness that accompanies
the act of making somebody lose their
way makes sense within the Protestant
Catholic background of capitalism. You
are either a good Christian that participates in the productive ethos of capital or
a bad Christian that dares to lose money.

4. Vera and Vadimir Nabokov playing chess



In this narrative, the seducer emerges not as a villain but as an 'autonomous individual' shedding the impositions of societal norms, religious constraints, and cultural taboos. This individual is autonomous in the way he or she is able to liquify the existing norms, pass through and rework them, without falling into obvious opposition. Autonomy, here, is understood as the ability to speculate and rethink the political imaginary through personal invasive methods of micro-narratives and everyday acts rather than the grand nature of what is evil and not. Speculative actions and animal movement.

Reading list:

Bataille, Georges. Erotism: Death and sensuality. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1986.

Bauman, Zygmunt. Liquid modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

Baudrillard, Jean. Seduction. New York: St. Martin's Pr., 2007.

Bauman, Zygmunt. Liquid modernity. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

Bennett, David. Psychoanalysis, money and the global financial crisis. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 2011.

Chukhrov, Keti. Practising the Good: Desire and Boredom in Soviet Socialism.

University of Minnesota Press, 2020.

Preciado, Paul B. Testo Junkie: Sex, drugs, and biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era. New York, NY: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 2017.

Tiggun. Introduction to Civil War. Los Angeles (CA.): Semiotexte, 2010.

Preliminary materials for a theory of the Young-Girl. Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2012.

Vilisov, Viktor. Post-Love: future of human intimacies. Moscow: AST. 2022

Žižek, Slavoj. Disparities. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

Devil Sarah Clif



f I am standing here,

toes as sharp as my wit and cares as true as Your love, then just know that I am waiting. Not waiting as others do, for their bus or their drink or even for Your divine judgement, but simply for the electric pulse of the music to swim into my ears and take control, yanking at my arms and prodding at my legs, until my motion blurs the dizzying lights into one bright shadow, blending into the wall.

If the music starts, and that smile that stretches across Your face confuses You. do not blame me for that pain. You do not need to watch me live, and I am not watching You. Instead, I focus only on that spot where I must plant myself on the eighth count, before I shoot up and grow, blossoming with each swirl, creating petals of air about myself. And when my rose-hip pops out at You, do not assume I love You. nor want You near my thorns. My leaves would rather bathe

My leaves would rather bathe in the sun, in a field far from Your window.

If You wonder who I do this for, note it is not for You.

My body is my own and only that buzzing beat can use me as its doll.

I do not exist in the shadow of the curtains, but rather illuminated by the spotlight sun, forever dancing in her amber arms that stretch out and hold me up, every time You try to burn me down. You think I fear Your flaming tongue, that fires ashy remarks, and yet You maintain that hell is my home.

But what You don't know is that — like me — the dancing flames never burn out, and we flicker together, warm deep within our hearts.

If I have offended You,
I wish I could say I felt sorry.
Should it distress me to learn
of Your anger and hate?
Should it worry me to think
of all the energy You have to use,
just to try to teach me all my wrongs?
If the furs that rub on my shoulders,
mingling carnally with my own hairs,
and the deep purrs of the animal pressed
against my body
tease Your senses
and boil You from the inside,
do not be feel tormented by me,

and let that 'manly' power inside Your bones enjoy the manly sight in Your view.

And then, if tomorrow You are still daydreaming of this devil that danced and dangled You down into the depths of her feverish den, do not come back and curse me or cure me of my life.



Akirosa Palais

61

Seducing Baudrillard: Ultrablack Venus and the appearance of She-Herself in The Universe

While this might seem an unlikely place to find a certain bespectacled old French man , in the work of Jean Baudrillard, the idea of *Seduction* goes far beyond just *erotas*, and is rather understood as a force or power that specifically relates to symbolism and signs . Jean writes of an indeterminate or 'secret' universe, somewhere within which the garden of of our experience, the symbolic, coagulates. 'The symbolic' is the semiological codification of 'the real' into 'reality', and Jean's work has a profound interest in the way reality simulates the real, and how that simulation as a system of signs, models and codes, can *deviate* or *swerve* (like Lucretius) to such an extent that they no longer bare any resemblence of the original and become simulacra. His general concern is with the *death* of signs, and he cites that reality in capitalist modernity , with it's productivisit logic of positive , endlessly proliferating, unilinear accumulation , has stopped operating in accordance with its original referent (the real). If you ever sit and watch the news and think "how is this reality?"

Jean's writing argues that reality has been *seduced* into hyperreality , and an example of this from popular culture would be Mark Fisher's *Capitalist Realism*, a condition characterized by being unable to distinguish capitalism from reality . Yet, despite Jean's recognition of the role of seduction in the transformation of signs . (and the *death* of signs), when seduction is considered within his overall cosmology , it is also an important subversive force when it comes to confronting the hetero-patriarchal hegemony of Global Capitalism, and its productivist, modernist logic.

Seduction, for Jean, is resolutely not X the feminine Q other to a masculinised G production, nor is it the negation Q of production, but the transformation of it. This is important Q because for Jean, the tendency within western

philosophy and thought to operate in accordance with a symbolic order of oppositionally-structured pairs of signs is highly problematic, because the productivist logic or the assumption of unilinear accumulation of capital leads us into increasing degrees of abstraction . Seduction is a strategy for producing meanings and values but it doesn't operate based on the logic of production, which is characterized by additions, accumulations , and, importantly, making visible. If anything, Seduction as a process makes things invisible, it guides identities to their death, thus annulling the hegemony of production. For example, should Identity enter a seductive process with Identity. B, both A & B will 'die' as they become re-characterized and re-identified as two poles in an irreversible becoming-each-other, without necessarily ever becoming. Yet, to position Seduction in an oppositional pair with production is to dramatically miss the point of Baudrillard's work overall.

Sadie Plant (accused Jean of fearing Seduction as she felt that he was afraid of the power seduction has to dissolve the very concept of Man of which she assumed Jean would defend, yet, given Jean's commitment to criticising the productivist logic of modernity and capital, it is hard to believe that he really feared the *Death* of himself as Man. In most moments, Jean writes more like a "theoretical terrorist", who, if anything, attempted to bomb * the sacred oppositional structures that underwrite patriarchy and western philosophy . Jean wrote that the oppositional structure of Masculinity/ Femininity is always a Masculine opposition, where the masculine is asserted and the feminine is othered. In asserting that the feminine is just the other to the masculine, it masks or conceals anything that doesn't follow a productivist logic, and we now know from Quantum Theory & that there never was any feminine-absent void out of which objects and identities were erected, it was always noise and fluctuations, and thinking the absent, invisible or secret, as void, vaccuous or non-existent, is an illusion cast by the present. To mistake noise for silence is quite the error and can only be explained by an unwillingness for Man to listen. In accordance with this line of reasoning, Jean wrote that, if anything, it would be more reasonable to say that there is no masculinity or Male sex , given how hard it strives to exist in contrast to an all-encompassing 'other', and the inconsistency associated with erectile dysfunction makes it appear more like the Masculine is the other of the Feminine (3),

which flickers in and out of existence erratically. Everyone is a girl when the boys look away. This is a direct transformation of the logic of production, where instead of the oppositional structure of The One over The Other, there is *only* other.

I *love* this, on some essential level, the *Gaian* will for everything to merge together; to burn and melt it all down into the liquid metal core of a new planet: YES; god. That's so hot. As we know from Jacques Derrida, the image of the binary oppositional structure has dominated western philosophy throughout history, since the debate between Permenides in and Heraclitus about Being and Becoming, or Aristotle's ounmoved-mover, or Plato's forms-appearances, or Descartes' dualism of mind-body . Yet, Louis Althusser writes of an underground current of materialism, which draws a line from Heraclitus to Marx , and I would argue that Jean, with his ideas of secrecy and seduction, is a part of this kinetic-materialist movement. I say this because, while Jean also speaks of a two-fold real, the main difference is that the two-folds of Jean's real-symbolic is that they are understood to be one-and-the-same, and that their illusory duality is not organized as a masculinized oppositional structure. They are not abstracted from each other. Along with Jacques, Jean and Louis, I am trapped in a determination to fix another French veteran of Theory, a certain Francois, or Monsieur Laruelle, who wrote a sort of allegorical poem, with a palpable afrofuturist tone, about western 😚 dualisms called *Universe Black* 🖤 . In this poem, Francois speaks of a Black • that cannot be defined as the other of White • —it is an all-encompassing Black • that does not submit to the *authority of light* (unlike colour , Black has no position). It is not Black • as in Black • /White • , it is something beyond that, it is ultrablack (Szepanski). Francois writes that the Universe and Man, although it makes more sense to say She-Herself, are Black , and that World and Philosopher are White • . The World (•) is the symbolic reality of Jean, and the Philosopher () is She-Herself () who thinks () the Universe () as the World (). There is only Black • -in-Black • , She-Herself in the Universe, but through thought/philosophy, White o, an illusion of position o, appears like residue around Black as it folds back on itself as it is seduced (•).

Thomas Nail , along with Achim Szepanski , mirrored the work of Francois and Jean by presenting another model of the non-oppositional two-folded universe, where he presents the universe as Noise — chaotic motion—where even in the deepest trenches , one only ever finds increasing degrees of complexity as opposed to

So Noise and Rhythm are the two-fold universe, differentiated only by space-time, or, position-in-moment

Thinking of Jean, the Goddess of the real is the Goddess of seduction, who is of dual nature, and she is not conceived through the logic of production, rather by the transformation of production. Afrodite was born when Gaia, avatar of Xaos?, seduces Tethys, avatar of Gaia, to seduce Xronos. avatar of Tethys to castrate Ouranos. the masculinized sky to the feminine earth—the severed genitals of the Father fall into the Ocean, and

from the foam (aphros) Afrodite arose (high which walked onto the beaches of Cyprus (high), Heaven had arrived on Earth. Afrodite is two-fold (high), she is the object of desire (high) and the desire itself, and so can be understood in terms of Jean's seduction. Gaia (high), through the cyclical waves (high) of Tethys (high), captured air as foam (high), thus producing an even more perfect representation of Xaos than Gaia herself; Venus is more Black than Black .

Gaia [black] produces [white] Ouranos [white] a simulation [white] of the real [black], but she doesn't produce Afrodite [black], atleast not by the productivist [white] logic [white] of unilinear [white] accumulation [white]. Instead, Afrodite is born through the Lesbian-relations [black-to-black] between Earth [black] and Ocean [black] using the severed-genitals [black-as-negated-white] of the Sky [white]. More than just some deceptive affair, the story of Afrodite's inception could be read as a story of revolution (*), or performance (*), or ritual * **6**. It was a strategy for immaculate *reseduction* (not reproduction) where Gaia creates matter out of matter . Matter creates itself, that's the secret (3), it doesn't reproduce representations of itself, it reseduces more of itself. The secret of seduction is a black that is so black that it always finds a way to get blacker. Instead of producing copies of itself, the secret seduces more-of-the-same. Jean wrote that ritual is the process through which the symbolic is formed as a codified simulation of the real, it is the strategy for the formation of signs through seduction. Godess Afrodite is the real signifier of the real, the result of the perfection of ritual, and that is what makes her beautiful. She is the miracle of life, but, as the Goddess of seduction, she is also an Angel of Death, born of the ritualized overthrowing (disappearance) of the heavens that allowed us to wake up one day, as She-Herself in the Universe and walk onto the Earth as daughter reuniting with mother, as the first perfect mitosis, the first beat in the rhythm of the Universe.

