Surrealism, Photography and the periodical Press:
An investigation into the use of photography in surrealist publications (1924 - 1969) with specific reference to themes of sexuality and their interaction with commercial photographic images of the period

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Surrealism, Photography and the periodical Press:
An investigation into the use of photography in surrealist publications (1924 - 1969) with specific reference to themes of sexuality and their interaction with commercial photographic images of the period

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Abstract

This thesis examines the use of photographs in surrealist publications in Paris between 1924 and 1969, analysing how images functioned both in relation to surrealism and a wider cultural, social and political context. The thesis contends that developments in the illustrated press had a substantial impact on surrealist publications and that commercial photographic practices were both exploited and subverted by the group.

I defend this assertion by demonstrating how photographers associated with the surrealist movement in its formative years, were closely involved in the process by which the photographic image became a major means of communication. I argue that the surrealists were conscious that photography was central to the circulation of ideas and developed a radical notion of the illustration of text.

The thesis examines how photographs used in surrealist publications were integrated into the complex surrealist project and how due to the currency in images in society, the medium offered opportunities for disruption. In each of the five chapters I examine the surrealist deployment of photographic images to articulate cultural and political radicalism. The thesis argues that the photographs published by the surrealists made an important contribution to contemporary discourse on sexuality.

This thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge as it expands the understanding of photographs published by the surrealist group by exploring their relationship to contemporary commercial images circulating in the press. It analyses works that have been marginalised, many of the images in the first two journals in the inter war period, the images in the illustrated books 1929, Banalité, Le septième face du dé and the images in the post war journals have been neglected as subjects of study.
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Author’s declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work.

Hazel Donkin

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Introduction

This thesis examines the use of photography in surrealist publications, analysing how images functioned in relation to both surrealism and a broad cultural, social and political framework. The aim of the research is to understand how photography was used in surrealist publications and the extent to which this related to the use of the medium in the commercial press. Underlying this is a number of objectives involving the identification of 1. factors which would bind photographers in the orbit of surrealism to the development of illustrated magazines, 2. the extent to which the journalistic use of images was used and subverted in surrealist reviews and 3. the contribution of surrealist photography to contemporary political and social debate, with particular reference to sexuality. The thesis asserts that the photographers associated with the group were intimately involved in the development of the illustrated magazine as the mass apparatus of image consumption, that the surrealists understood the photograph as a mass-produced commodity central to the circulation of meanings necessary to the continuing evolution of a consumer society and that they exploited this in their publications to further their revolutionary aims.

From the outset in 1924 Breton’s aim was a radical transformation of the world. The First Manifesto consolidated his investment in the irrational and the unconscious and defined Surrealism as “Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express -verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner - the actual functioning of thought” and as “based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of previously neglected associations, in the omnipresence of dream, in the disinterested play of thought”. Breton declared. Although Breton focused on automatism at this stage and emphasised the centrality of the ‘marvellous’ and the potential of ‘chance, fear, extravagance, absurdity and the attraction of the unusual’, no formulas were advocated for the surrealist image. Instead Breton

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2 Breton, “First Manifesto of Surrealism” p 47.
suggested that 'there are countless kinds of surrealist images', their greatest virtue being arbitrary and difficult to translate into practical language

either because it contains an immense amount of seeming contradiction or because one of its terms is strangely concealed; or because, presenting itself as something sensational, it seems to end weakly (because it suddenly closes the angle of its compass), or because it derives from itself a ridiculous *formal* justification, or because it is of a hallucinatory kind, or because it very naturally gives to the abstract the mask of the concrete, or the opposite, or because it implies the negation of some elementary physical property, or because it provokes laughter.

Although addressed primarily to literature, this new perception of reality and the potential for images which were 'a pure creation of the mind' would lead to frenetic experimentation by visual artists who endeavoured to produce surrealist art. The visual images brought into the service of surrealism required intensity and passion and due to Breton’s assertion that “Everything is valid when it comes to obtaining the desired suddenness from certain associations”, art produced under the influence of the movement had an organic character.

Although the Surrealists published little on their approach to photography, ideas germinated in the context of the movement and the extent and range of their photographic experimentation is testament to freedom in the investigation of reality. Unlike other avant-garde movements, there is no single identifiable photographic style”, instead the surrealist ‘will to disregard authorship, their appetite for image, their conception of surrealist activity as constantly revitalised, as a form of action rather than an aesthetic, made their productions resistant to the notion of style.”

Photography became central to all surrealist activities as it was recognised as a medium with multiple applications which could fulfil the desire to reconcile art and life. The many innovations in the production and use of photography based images stemmed from a belief that the source of poetic imagination lay in the resolution of the unconscious and conscious states.

Surrealist photographic images are characterised by emotional power and poetic reality; method and process were less important and thus the photographic corpus

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3 Breton, “First Manifesto of Surrealism” p 38.
4 Breton, “First Manifesto of Surrealism” p 41.
of the movement includes disparate images. The works discussed in this thesis range from straight documentary images to carefully crafted works including those which are on the border of printmaking and have a tenuous relationship to photography, such as Max Ernst’s prints for Mr Knife Miss Fork which are based on the cliché-verre technique.

The chronological parameters encompass the inter war period as well as the period from 1945 to 1969. World War Two is dealt with briefly. The official end of the movement in 1969 is used as the cut off point. Although the classic period of surrealism figures prominently in research, the decades after the war remain relatively neglected. Significant texts relating to surrealist art in this period in history of surrealism include Alyce Mahon’s *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros 1938 - 1968*, which contends that the movement survived the war and continued unabated in post war France and through its deployment of “Eros” played a significant role in the culture of post war reconstruction. Mahon concludes that post war surrealism reached its apotheosis in the uprising of May 1968. Sarah Wilson’s contributions to the exhibition catalogue *Paris: Capital of the Arts 1900 – 1968* defines the movement as vital and influential in the post war period, but essentially breaking down as a coherent group under the pressure of fresh developments such as the Situationist movement. Nevertheless it is clear that the war was a watershed for the movement and that this thesis deals with two disparate eras both in terms of the socio-historical context and the moment in surrealism. The thesis offers some historical, social and cultural contextualisation in order to define the conditions within which the group operated in these two periods of time.

Geographical parameters have been defined to focus on Paris. Surrealism did, of course, extend internationally but the focus of the thesis is on Breton’s group and their journals in the French context. VVV is dealt with briefly as a review in exile during the war years when prominent members of the movement left France for

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7 Wilson, S. “Saint-Germain n-des-Prés: Antifascism, Occupation and Postwar Paris” and *Paris in the 1960’s: Towards the Barricades of the Latin Quarter* in *Paris: Capital of the*
New York. For the purposes of this thesis, Paris provided an opportunity to consider the relationship between commercial and surrealist photography at the time of the conception of surrealism which coincided with the rapid development of the illustrated press in the 1920s. Above all the thesis seeks to establish the extent to which the proliferation of photographs in the press both served as an example to surrealism and provided the movement, through the currency of images, with opportunities for subversion.

**Methodology**

This section analyses the theoretical and methodological issues underpinning the research and seeks to locate the thesis within the recent scholarship of surrealist photography. It was *Amour fou*, the influential exhibition and accompanying catalogue containing two controversial essays by Rosalind Krauss in 1985 that made surrealist photography visible. Prior to that there was little literature on the topic and the contribution Krauss made to thinking about surrealism in terms of post-structuralist theory and foregrounding Georges Bataille dominated scholarship for some time. Although this shift has been justifiably criticised, it provided a catalyst for the substantial body of work which consequently developed. In the last decade there has been a growing awareness of the need to engage with surrealism as a complex amalgamation of politics, art and psychology. Ian Walker and David Bate have established the need to consider photographic images published in France by the surrealists in the inter-war years in terms of the radical political and cultural ambitions of the movement at the time. The current project builds on this approach.

Art history has developed a range of methodologies which offer different and enlightening ways of engaging with the complexity of surrealist photography. While I am interested in theoretical approaches to the understanding of the photograph and drawing on that area, the weight of my method has been to read the imagery closely and read it in its material context, by which is meant the

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journal or illustrated book in which it was published. The thesis develops a way of reading images in terms of the cultural history of their production and reception. In doing so the aim is to study the consequences of the dissemination of surrealist photographs in a visual culture which increasingly used the medium to communicate.

The thesis does not seek to fix meaning in the past but to analyse the fluidity of meaning in the visual communication of thought. The thesis locates the images within two contexts. The first is the development of the illustrated press, which is outlined in some detail in the main body of text. Roland Barthes’ ‘mythology’, use of semiotics and exploration of the relationships between subjectivity, meaning and cultural production and consumption as well as Pierre Bourdieu’s social definition of photography have informed the thesis. The approach of both Barthes and Bourdieu addressed the problem of the fragmentary nature of photography, dealt with it as outside of ‘legitimate’ culture and therefore something that people may consume and judge freely. Bourdieu’s assertion in *Photography: a Middle-Brow Art* (1965) that “the popular aesthetic expressed in photographs and the judgements passed on photographs follows on logically from the social functions conferred upon photography, and from the fact that it is always given a social function” facilitated a consideration of surrealist photographs as “discussions”.¹⁰

Although less sophisticated than Barthes’ approach to photography, Bourdieu also provides alternative approaches to the analysis of photographic practices and asserts the fact that the medium was, from the start, an integral part of Western systems of social identification, consumption and expression.¹¹ The ideas which would become central to much of Bourdieu’s later work originate in this early, uneven text.¹² David Hesmondhalgh has argued that it is Bourdieu's systematic

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theory of interconnectedness that provides an effective sociology of cultural production. Bourdieu emphasised the drive for autonomy characteristic of the field of cultural production from the early 19th century onwards as well as stressing the interconnectedness of the field of cultural production with other fields, especially the economic and political fields constituting the 'field of power', but also the educational and intellectual fields. Bourdieu's notion of 'cultural intermediaries', those who mediate between producers and consumers was particularly useful for the discussion in Chapter 1 on the role of prominent critics and experts in the promotion of modernist photography in the developing illustrated periodical market.

The second context pertinent to the thesis is the political and social situation in France, with particular reference to sexuality. World War One had accelerated social and cultural changes that had characterised the early years of the twentieth century. Gender distinctions were disrupted as bourgeois women entered the work force in large numbers and working-class women were increasingly employed outside the domestic realm in the rapidly growing tertiary sector. The fact that women could be independent led to endless debates about the implications of “modern woman” and demands for a return to traditional gender relationships. This tension between progression and repression was evident in every area of French life from politics, medicine and psychoanalysis to art and popular culture. Post war demographic concerns led to draconian laws on birth control and abortion but despite this conservatism and the fact that many of the rights that women had enjoyed during the war were lost once it ended, there was a general belief that profound changes were taking place in society with regards

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1 Hesmondhalgh, D. 'Bourdieu, the media an cultural production', Media, Culture and Society, Volume 28, no. 2, pp. 211 — 231.

1 Bourdieu, Distinction, p. 325.

to sexuality. The reality may have been that women’s role was still fundamentally domestic but there was also an aspiration for freedom and a revaluation of sexuality. These aspirations were fuelled by a number of factors.

A general liberalisation occurred which increased the visibility of sex. An interest in sexual identity, particularly feminine sexuality, dominated psychoanalytic literature and much of the theorising was popularised. Marie Bonaparte who founded the Société Psychanalytique de Paris in 1915 was largely responsible for the dissemination of Freud’s ideas in France, regularly publishing articles in newspapers and popular magazines. There was a widespread acceptance that sex education was necessary, a 1927 article in Détective is indicative of this in the argument that young people were in need of sex education as ‘the sexual question is often at the root of criminality.’ The first gay newspaper Inversions was published in Paris in 1924 with Claude Cahun as an editorial advisor. Alain Corbin noted that although official brothels were in slow decline at this time, prostitution was increasingly visible because of the acceptance of unaccompanied women in hotel lounges and fashionable bars and because women no longer hesitated to solicit openly on the street, from cars, and in advertisements. On stage and on film artists such as Josephine Baker, Louise Brooks, Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo represented modern sexuality. Proust, Colette and Gertrude Stein and were writing at this time and bringing homosexuality and bisexuality to public attention. To some extent the cultural production of the surrealist group, and those in their orbit, should be seen as part of this discourse.

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16 In 1920 the advocacy of abortion or birth control was forbidden. In 1923 abortion was legally defined as a capital crime punishable by decapitation at the guillotine. Chadwick and Latimer, The Modern Woman Revisited, p 5.


18 For instance see ‘Freud a Paris” in Marianne, 15 June, 1938 and ‘Freud, l’homme et l’œuvre’ in Le Petit Parisien, 14 June, 1938.

19 Détective, December 1927, p 5.


This general liberalisation and the attendant discussions on female identity played out in the press occurred at a time when women were increasingly politicised. Although the popular press did not portray women as being politically active during the 1930s, their involvement in the widespread unrest is undisputed.\(^{22}\) Women were also involved in anti-fascist action; Claude Cahun and Dora Maar worked with members of the surrealist groups in *Contre-Attaque* (1935-36) for example. In terms of aspirations the progressive legislation of the Russian revolution had resonance. Post revolutionary Russia was the only country in the world with full freedom of divorce, abortion was decriminalised and legalised in 1920 and communal kitchens and nurseries were established. Despite inherent problems and limitations with this raft of legislation, for a short time these measures represented an unprecedented level of freedom. Trotsky identified Stalin’s subsequent reversal of these policies relating to women and the family as a clear sign of treachery in *The Revolution Betrayed* in 1937.\(^{23}\)

In Paris in the inter war years, those who had been radicalised recognised that although a liberalisation was evident the fact that the family remained the nucleus of society meant that women’s oppression was concrete. The attraction of the Surrealist group to women is understandable when we juxtapose their violent hatred of the family with Jean Montrevel’s article on "Notes on sexual morality in France” published in the socialist journal *Clarté* in 1925

> A word on feminism: this doctrine is the predilection of lazy women with intellectual pretensions ... The amazon will always be an exception and physiology will always impose its laws. Everything within the normal constitution of woman gravitates around one central function: the reproduction of the species ... \(^{24}\)

Breton’s group was uninterested in French feminism, but their insistent

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\(^{22}\) Sian Reynolds provides a thorough analysis of female involvement in the industrial unrest during this time in *France Between the Wars: Gender and Politics*, London: Routledge, 1996.


\(^{24}\) Jean Montrevel in *Clarté* no. 73, 1925, p 15 quoted in Wilson, S. ‘Femininities-
challenges to repressive conventions proved irresistible to female artists. The sustained campaign that the surrealists conducted against the institution of the family ensured that, in terms of sexual politics, the group were perceived as radical in the interwar period as well as after World War Two.

The role of “woman” in Surrealism is complex and has been the subject of much theorising as “the attitude to woman was ambivalent from the start.” The surrealists directly challenged bourgeois morality and conventions and thus proved attractive to many women, but at the same time they understood “woman” as being closely linked to the unconscious, as the incarnation of the marvellous, promoting an ideal of love and women as sexual objects. This dichotomy is evident in surrealist art and photography has often been the site of debates about surrealism and women. Problematic economies of desire surrounded the group. The relationships between works which explore notions of desire and fantasy, including the eroticism of aggression and power and politics are complex and any attempt to fix advocacy within them is misguided. The extent

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25 French feminism has a long and complex history. At the end of the 19th century and in the early 20th century the battle for the vote was not the primary thrust as most of the numerous feminist associations founded between 1870 and 1914 emphasised other reforms. They were more concerned with issues clearly related to the “natural vocation” of women. Feminists of both sexes - and many early advocates of amelioration in the legal and economic situation of French women were men - sought to achieve an “equality in difference” or “equivalence” based on a clearly defined sexual separation of spheres. They wanted women to fulfil their specifically feminine responsibilities to family and nation. Some termed their proposed reforms “familial feminism”. Feminism remained less a movement in France than a mosaic of leaders and groups divided by class and religion who were estranged from the majority of French women. The left generally defined the women’s movement as “bourgeois” and at this time united with the Catholic church and Nationalists to attack feminism. For a succinct survey of French feminism see Boxer, M. J. ‘First wave Feminism in Nineteenth-Century France: Class, Family and Religion”, Women’s Studies International Forum, Vol 5, No. 6, 1982, pp. 551 - 559.


to which the notion of “libidinal politics” is useful is debatable and it is certainly
difficult to come to terms with. Alyce Mahon has developed recent scholarship
on Hans Bellmer which placed his work in the context of Nazi Germany;
Bellmer’s work is typically surrealist, she argues, because it identifies
the monstrous female as a challenge to the established order.

Bellmer’s art must be understood in the light of his experience of a Nazi
regime that despised the Other and operated a libidinal economy of
horror, brutalization and suffering. To understand Bellmer is to
understand his libidinal politics as the active and subversive transgressing
and perverting of that Nazi psyche.

This contextualisation is, of course, crucial when considering these works. Peter
Webb’s interview with the artist which ends with Bellmer’s comment “If my
work is found to scandalise, that is because for me the world is scandalous” is
often cited to evidence a political motivation. However, Mahon’s determinate
reading appears to contradict her introductory statement that “Surrealist
discourse was an avant-garde discourse of fragmentation, difference and
multiplicity, underpinned by an insistence on the indefinable or the process of
becoming.”

In the interview with Webb, Bellmer unambiguously stated that in the production
of the dolls, eroticism was all—important, that they served a cathartic purpose and
that he “wanted to help people lose their complexes, to come to terms with their
instincts as I was trying to do.” Hatred of the Nazis was obviously not the only
concern of Bellmer and it is unhelpful to ignore the paedophilic aspects of his
project. Considering the context of the publication and display of Bellmer’s
work by the surrealists, we can surmise that for Breton it represented a free
treatment of sexuality akin to Sade. The surrealist aesthetic of cruelty was not
straightforward and was indicative of a sexual dynamic based on masculine

[28] In the 1970’s Jean- François Lyotard used Freud’s theory of the libido to develop his
philosophy in which desire and capitalism are inextricable. Lyotard asserted that libidinal energy
can describe the transformations that take place in society. Lyotard, J-F. Libidinal Economy,
[29] Mahon developed Hal Foster’s ideas first published in “Armor Fou” October, no. 56,
authority that was common in the movement. The thesis is based on the understanding that there is no need to resolve or downplay the contradictions within surrealist ideas when proposing that the sexual politics of the group had a revolutionary character.

**Literature review**

The thesis contributes to the debate surrounding the nature of surrealist photography. Literature in relation to surrealist photographers is substantial and has been coloured by a number of factors. Since the 1980s six trends are discernible:

1. The significant body of critical work produced by the *October* scholars, in particular Rosalind Krauss and Hal Foster, provided a catalyst for a radical rethinking of surrealism. A move away from Breton towards Georges Bataille and his notion of “base materialism” led to a focus on extreme images and psychoanalytical approaches to photographs. The interest in Bataille’s journal *Documents* and photographic work culminated in an exhibition at the Hayward in 2006.33 A renewed interest in Hans Bellmer’s work led to a reappraisal of his œuvre in relation to both the context of Nazi ideology and an analytical framework.34

2. Feminist critics have concentrated on uncovering female photographers who were previously neglected or marginalised. The work of Claude Cahun has been made visible and has been the subject of much theorising including an interest in tracing the legacy of surrealism in the work of artists such as Cindy Sherman and Francesca Woodman.35 Francesca Woodman is now often considered as a surrealist photographer”.36 The work of Dora Maar has also been the subject of

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37 Francesca Woodman has been appended to surrealism since her inclusion in Chadwick’s *Mirror Images* in 1998. She is prominent in the forthcoming *Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism* at Manchester Art Gallery, 26 September 2009 to 10 January 2010.
study, notably by Victoria Combalia who was able to interview Maar shortly before her death in 1997.37

3. The surrealists’ complex relationship to gender, including the experiences and conceptions of masculinity of the group has recently been the subject of research. An interest in “surrealist masculinity” has resulted in a number of studies, including work by Dawn Ades, David Hopkins, Amy Lyford and Neil Matheson.38

4. Developments in surrealist photography outside France, including British, Czech and North American works, have generated a range of scholarship.39 As well as the diaspora to the Americas and Europe, surrealism in Japan has been the subject of research. The work of Kansuke Yamamoto and Toshiko Okanoue in particular has been examined in terms of how it related to European surrealism.40


40 Kyoko Jimbo delivered a paper on “Surrealism in Japan: The influence and originality of photographers 1930’s - 1950’s” to the research seminar hosted by the AHRB Centre for Studies of Surrealism and its Legacies on 8th November 2004 at Tate Britain. John Solt has promoted the work of Yamamoto Kansuke, co-curating the exhibition Yamamoto Kansuke: Conveyor of the Impossible at the Tokyo Station Gallery in 2001 and contributing an essay Perception Misperception Nonperception” to the bi-lingual catalogue of the same, published in 2001 by the gallery. Solt’s essay is available to read online at http://www.milkmag.org/solt-kansuke2.html (Accessed 18 August 2009).
5. Photographic work published by the French surrealists in the period after World War Two has been neglected in research. However to some extent, photography has been involved in broader projects which consider the post war period. Mahon dealt with some works; Sue Taylor’s study on Bellmer included a discussion of his “binding” project with Unica Zürn; Molinier’s self portraiture was included in the Desire Unbound exhibition and Breton’s strategy in the post war years has been examined in a forthcoming paper by Neil Matheson.41

6. Finally, there has been a desire to re-focus on Breton and the group in Paris in the inter war period with its particular character of political and cultural radicalism as the context for discussion. Both Ian Walker and David Bate produced studies on this theme and surrealist journals were an obvious site of investigation for these authors. Walker’s City gorged with dreams began to redress the balance from the prevalent focus on staged, studio-based and manipulated photographs by looking at how the surrealists used the tactic of documentary. Walker analysed the photographic content of La Révolution Surréaliste and Nadja with particular reference to the everyday life of the city of Paris. He looked closely at the work of Atget, Brassai and Henri Cartier-Bresson as well as ethnological materials presented in surrealist journals. Bate’s Photography and Surrealism: Sexuality, Colonialism and Social Dissent emphatically restored the political side of the movement and presented surrealist photography as a weapon of resistance. Although these two particular works are key starting points, the thesis asks additional questions and employs substantially different methods.

The thesis owes a considerable intellectual debt to the work of French photographic historians, in particular Christian Bouqueret, Christophe Bertoud, Michel Frizot and Cédric de Veigy. These authors have provided an overview of the development of the medium in France during the inter war years and enabled an approach which places surrealist photography within the history of photography. Bouqueret is a prolific collector, curator and scholar who specialises in the photography of the inter war years; his exhibition catalogue La

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41 See Mahon, Surrealism and the Politics of Eros; Taylor, Hans Bellmer, pp. 181 - 187;

Nouvelle Vision en France: des années folles et des années noires, was an invaluable resource.\textsuperscript{42} Scholarship on Roger Parry is scarce in English and Bertoud’s collaboration with Bouqueret on the exhibition catalogue Roger Parry: Le météor fabuleux proved useful.\textsuperscript{43} Michel Frizot’s A New History of Photography provided a helpful broad survey.\textsuperscript{44} The exhibition curated by Frizot and de Veigy based on Vu magazine afforded further insights and information pertaining to the development of the illustrated press.\textsuperscript{45}

With the issues of the commercial press, the historical and social context, the political and sexual radicalism of the surrealist group and its interdisciplinary nature in the foreground, the enquiry should lead to an assessment of the function of surrealist photography in the two periods in question, analysing its significance in terms of a contribution to discourse on sexuality. The thesis does not pursue a “correct” reading of photographs but seeks to offer original perspectives. The distinctiveness of the thesis is two-fold. Firstly it seeks to expand an understanding of photographs published by the surrealist group, particularly those relating to sexuality, by exploring their relationship to contemporary commercial images circulating in the press. Secondly the thesis looks at works which have hitherto been marginalised. Many images in the first two surrealist journals of the inter-war period, the images in the illustrated books 1929, Banalité, Le septième face du dé and the images in the post war journals have been neglected as subjects of study.

**Chapter structure**

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One is contextual and locates surrealist photographers within the burgeoning publishing industry in the inter-war years. The remaining chapters each function in the manner of a case study, addressing specific surrealist publications and exploring the relationship between the images published within them and those circulating in the commercial press.

\textsuperscript{4} Régardez Vu: un magazine photographie 1928 à 1940, 2 Nov 2006 – 25 February 2007, Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris. Frizot and de Veigy are due to publish Vu: The story of a magazine that made an Era in November 2009 with Thames and Hudson.
Chapter 1 “Modernist photography and commerce in the inter war period” outlines the rapid development of illustrated magazines in the inter war period and traces the relationships between the photographers published by the surrealist group and the independent press at this time of great expansion for commercial photography. The illustrated magazine *Vu* is used as a case study to demonstrate how modern photography was established as an essential medium of communication which disseminated ideas and advertised products. The chapter argues that the commercial experience of photographers was central to their development as practitioners.

Chapter 2 “La Révolution Surréaliste” focuses on the first surrealist journal published between 1924 and 1929. The chapter provides an overview and analysis of the use of photographs in the journal and argues that because of the surrealists’ understanding of the nature of the press, photojournalism shaped their choice of a model of documentary images integrated into text. Bourdieu’s social definition of the medium is used as a means of comprehending the duality of surrealist photography as both uncontrollable in terms of meaning and didactic. The thesis asserts that the involvement in the illustrated press of photographers associated with surrealism, particularly Man Ray who would become central to surrealist photography in the mid 1920s, shaped their contributions to the group and that the prevalence of photographs in the press influenced the manner in which their images were understood. The possible meanings of particular photographs are explored with reference to surrealism as a complex amalgam of politics, culture and psychology. Chapter 3 “Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution” explores the function of photography in the second surrealist journal, published between 1930 and 1933. This chapter argues that despite being separated from the text, photographs form an integral part of the surrealists’ drive towards both political and cultural radicalism and are intimately linked to the textual content of the journal which is coloured by the works of Sade, Lautréamont, Hegel and Lenin.

Chapter 4 “Sexuality, Surrealism and Photography in the 1930s” explores the ways in which surrealism developed the use of photography, with particular reference to the handling of sexuality. The chapter begins with an analysis of
photographs which are pertinent to the theme of sexuality in *Minotaure*, Albert Skira’s art review published between 1933 - 1939, which was surrealist in tone due to the editorial dominance of Breton and Paul Éluard. Five case studies of illustrated books are then offered to demonstrate how photography, due to its social role, offered opportunities to challenge convention in sexuality. The books are Péret, Aragon and Man Ray *1929* (1929), Léon-Paul Fargue and Roger Parry *Banalité* (1930), René Crevel and Max Ernst *Mr Knife and Miss Fork* (1931), Paul Eluard and Man Ray *Facile* (1935), and Georges Hugnet *Le Septième Face du Dé* (1936). The images in the books are explored in terms of how they relate to images circulating in visual culture, particularly magazines. The chapter aims to establish how the surrealists’ vehement opposition to the institution of the bourgeois family and their desire to establish a cultural alternative was conveyed in these publications.

Chapter 5 surveys the use of photography in the surrealist journals published post 1945. The war years are dealt with briefly and some socio-historical anchorage is offered at the beginning of the chapter. This final section of the thesis argues that in the decades after the Second World War, Breton’s group in Paris acted as a political grouping and made a concerted effort to absorb the ideas and images circulating in society and responded to them sharply, using photographs as part of a campaign to challenge Stalinism, nationalism, colonialism and bourgeois morality. Photographs published in the surrealist journals * Médium* (1953 — 55), *Le Surréalisme Même* (1956 — 59), *BIEF* (1958 - 60) and *La Brèche* (1961 - 65) are analysed in order to determine how these images contributed to the surrealist effort to distinguish their radical eroticism in a period of modernisation and increasing sexual freedoms.

The thesis ends with two appendices that form an important supplement to the main text. They consist of a translation of Breton’s “Il y aura une fois” (not readily available in translation) to support the discussion of this text in chapter 2 and extensive extracts from Heindrich von Kleist’s *Penthesilea* (1808) which support the argument in chapter 5 in relation to Bellmer’s cover for *Le Surréalisme Même* no. 2.
Sources
The thesis relies on a range of primary and secondary sources. This section surveys the material utilised. Although the major surrealist journals are widely available in reproduction, three libraries provided access to many of the primary sources not readily accessible. The Penrose collection and the Keiller bequest held by the Dean Gallery Archive Collections and Library in Edinburgh, the National Art Library at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (the Richelieu site as well as the main Mitterand research facility) in Paris provided access to extensive collections. These libraries also facilitated the inspection of various editions of illustrated books so in some cases the limited edition as well as the deluxe edition was consulted. The Bibliothèque Nationale holds a substantial collection of original photographs and the major surrealist exhibitions Desire Unbound and La Révolution Surréaliste also provided opportunities to view photographs first hand.46 A substantial survey of the French press was conducted, particularly in relation to coverage of the legal cases of the Papin sisters and Violette Nozière in 1933 and 1934.

Key primary sources include the inter war surrealist journals La Révolution Surréaliste, Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution and the special edition of the Belgian review Variétés dedicated to surrealism published in 1929. Inter war art reviews studied include Minotaure, Jazz, Cahiers d’re Art and l’Art Vivant. A substantial survey of Vu was undertaken as well as a selective inspection of the following inter war illustrated magazines known as “revues légères”: Voilà (launched to rival Vu in 1931 by Florence Fels and financed by Gallimard), Allô Paris (1933), Paris-Magazine (1931 — 39), Ici Paris (1934), Vive Paris (1935-36), Paris-Sex-Appeal (1934 — 38) and Pour lire à deux (1934). The popular crime magazines Détective and particularly Scandale were examined as well as French Vogue, Marie-Claire and Votre Beauté. The annual special edition produced by Arts et Métiers Graphiques to promote modern photography Photographie (launched in 1930) was also surveyed in full. As well as the illustrated books covered in chapter four, Bras sa”s Paris de Nuit (1933) and

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Voluptés (1935) the edition disowned by the photographer, the French edition of Bellmer’s La Poupée (1936) as well as Man Ray’s La Photographie n’est pas l’art (1937) were examined.

The pamphlet published by the surrealist group in support of Violette Nozière, the young woman convicted of patricide in 1934 was considered. Due to the focus on eroticism it was necessary to read several publications which do not contain photographic material but are central to the development of surrealist eroticism. These include Desnos’ De l’’erotisme: considéré dans ses manifestations écrites et du point de vue de l’’esprit moderne (written in 1925 but unpublished until 1953), Aragon’s Le con d’Irene (1928), Breton and Eluard’s L’Immaculée Conception (1930) and Dali’s La Femme Visible (1930).

VVV the surrealist journal produced in exile as well as the journals published post 1945 in Paris were surveyed. As well as the titles covered in chapter five, the journals produced after Breton’s death including L’Archibras (1967—69), Coupure (1969—71) and Surréalisme (1977) were consulted. In terms of commercial photographic magazines post war research focused primarily on Elle. Because the thesis highlights the inter-disciplinary nature of surrealism it was necessary to engage with the literature that inspired the movement. Primary sources thus include Lautréamont’s Chants de Maldoror (1846—70), Sade’s Justine (1791), La Philosophie dans le boudoir (1795) and Les 120 jour nées de Sodome (1785), Jarry’s Le Sûrmale (1902) and Heinrich von Kleist’s Penthesilea and Kaethchen of Heilbronn (1808) as well as the major manifestoes, prose and poetry produced by the group, primarily Breton, Aragon, René Crevel and Joyce Mansour.

Apart from the secondary sources mentioned in the literature survey above, a broad survey of scholarship relating to surrealism and photographic history and theory was necessary as well as specialist texts on the social and political history of the inter war and post war periods in France. Key texts relating to surrealism
include Dawn Ades *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed*, Renee Riese Hubert’s
*Surrealism and the book* and the exhibition catalogue *André Breton: La Beauté*
convulsive.⁴⁷ Key texts on photography include Walter Benjamin’s “A Small History of Photography” and “Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia”, Roland Barthes’ *Mythologies, Image, Music, Text* and *Camera Lucida* and Bourdieu’s *Photography: A middle-brow art*.⁴⁸ In terms of social and historical context both Claire Laubier’s *The condition of women in France 1945 to the present* and Claire Duchen’s *Women’s rights and women’s lives in France 1944–68* were invaluable.⁴⁹ Whitney Chadwick and Tirza True Latimer’s *The Modern Woman Revisited: Paris Between the Wars* as was insightful as was Susan Weiner’s *Enfants Terribles: Youth and Femininity in the Mass Media in France 1945–68*.⁵⁰

The study was designed to facilitate an approach that can take account of the context of the history of photography and its social and commercial roles. The thesis recognises the totality of the surrealist project and recognises intertextuality within the publications of the movement. Central to this procedure will be the consideration of the siting of the photographs and their relationships to surrounding texts. This approach allows a multi-dimensional view of the images and emphasises the extent to which surrealism relied on the unconscious as a dynamic process. The thesis does not see the photographs used by surrealism as discrete but as part of the complex project of the movement to promote political and cultural radicalism. In summary, the thesis examines the use of photographs in surrealist publications and asks how this is linked to the social role of the medium in the mass media and in what ways this contributed to intellectual and political discourse.

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⁵⁰ Weiner, S. *Enfants Terribles: Youth and Femininity in the Mass Media in France 1945*
Chapter One

Modernist photography and commerce in the inter-war period

Both photography and Surrealism were developing rapidly in the 1920s, the formative years of the movement. Surrealism used photography extensively and found creative success in the medium partly because it could harness the power which photography had achieved at this time in the press and in its ubiquity in everyday life. Artistically this decade was a time of frenetic experimentation with the medium and the range of work exhibited in the Film und Foto exhibition in Stuttgart in 1929 was testament to this, including work from various styles of modernist photography as well as examples of documentary photography and scientific applications. Throughout the 1930s photographs were generally presented in Surrealist journals as independent art works reflecting the surrealist vision.

Surrealist journals do not appear to differ greatly from other journals dealing with art and culture as they too made use of photography, including images from contemporary popular culture. Neither is the use of photographs in Surrealist journals innovative in terms of layout. What was innovative and remarkable about the use of photography in surrealist journals is the strength that the medium achieved in documenting and capturing the surreal. The use of documentary photography integrated into text was the model for the first Surrealist journal, La Révolution Surréaliste (1924 - 1929) where the use of a medium of scientific documentation satisfied the desire of the group to differentiate their publication from those of Dada. It also met Breton’s proposal for an ideal mode of expression for poetic Surrealism, in the First Manifesto of Surrealism.

But we, who have made no effort whatsoever to filter, who in our works have made ourselves into simple receptacles of so many echoes, modest recording instruments who are not mesmerized by the drawings we are making, perhaps we serve an even nobler cause. Thus do we render with integrity the “talent” which has been lent to us. You might as well speak
of the talent of this platinum ruler, this mirror, this door, and of the sky, if you like.\textsuperscript{51}

Breton goes on in this section to state that in his opinion Robert Desnos had come closest to the Surrealist truth as he was able to “speak Surrealist at will” as “He reads himself like an open book, and does nothing to retain the pages, which fly away in the windy wake of his life.”\textsuperscript{52} The documentary photographic images in \textit{La Révolution Surréaliste} also have this lack of pretension; their ability to demonstrate that the surreal is essentially a heightened sense of the real is aided by the fact that photographs do seem, or did so at the time “to have the status of found objects - unpremeditated slices of the world.”\textsuperscript{53}

\textit{Documents} (1929 - 1930, fifteen issues), the journal of the “dissident” surrealists also made use of documentary photographs. Although photography featured in \textit{Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution} (1929 - 1933) the role which it played was markedly different to that in the first journal, photographic images were not dispersed throughout the text but displayed at the back of the journal along with reproductions of painting and sculpture. In \textit{Minotaure} (1933 - 1939) also photographers claimed their place alongside other artists and their work was displayed as self-contained surrealist objects. It was only from the 1940’s that the movement intermittently adopted the use of documentary photography and returned to a journalistic formula reminiscent of its formative years.

At this time of rapid developments in illustrated magazines, the Surrealists clearly understood the power of the photograph and how it could represent the rhythm of modern life in a manner that was accessible and universal. In the inter war period photography had credibility, there was a concurrence between text and image and photographs were not perceived as intentional. Most of the photographers who were attracted to the Surrealists were formed by the independent press in Paris at a time of great expansion for commercial photography. It is pertinent to this study to consider in what ways the spread of photography and its social and commercial roles impacted upon the artistic and

\textsuperscript{1} Breton, “First Manifesto of Surrealism” p 28.
\textsuperscript{2} Breton, “First Manifesto of Surrealism” p 29.
editorial decisions within Surrealism. This introductory chapter serves to outline the development of photography in the media in the post World War One period and to examine the career of the photographer at a time when photography was in the service of editors as their "eyes on the world".  

Although traditional illustrated magazines such as *L’Illustration* (Paris, 1843) had used photographs as models for artists and engravers to work from, it was in 1880 with the advent of the half-tone process that the press set out definitively on the mechanized reproduction of photographs. This method of printing in relief (half-tone) could be used in conjunction with typesetting and therefore gave photography the opportunity of being disseminated widely, through books and the illustrated press. At the same time engraving techniques were improving and by 1910 the photogravure was adapted to the rotary press. By 1913 rotating photogravure was developing rapidly and facilitated a flush of second generation photographic magazines, inaugurated by *Le Miroir* (1913). After the war the innovation of photo-telegraphy and developments in the rotogravure process revolutionised magazine production and page layout. Rotogravure replaced rigid typographical metal blocks with transparent film on a cylinder, thus facilitating free design including the manipulation and overlaying of titles, photographs and text. It was in France that this technology was first exploited to its full potential with the launch of *Vu* in 1928, one of the third generation of photo-magazines which also included *Arbeiter Illustrierte Zeitung* (1925), *Life* (1936), *Match* (1938) and *Picture Post* (1938).

The daily newspapers that had dominated the market before the First World War were eclipsed in the inter war years by the rise of new daily and weekly journals and illustrated magazines which relied heavily on photographs. Suddenly there were endless opportunities for photographers as the burgeoning publicity

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54 Steven Heller used this phrase as the title for his article on picture magazines of the 1930’s in *Eye*, Vol. 7, no. 26, Autumn 1997, pp 60 — 69.


industry courted the young avant-garde because they could supply images which suited commercial purposes but were also strikingly innovative and fresh. The level of demand for photographs is illustrated by the fact that in 1928 *Annuaire de la presse* did not mention any photographic agencies but included eighteen the following year.\(^57\) Magazines, newspapers, books and advertising all sought originality in their illustrations, as this would set them apart from the competition and arrest the attention of consumers. The vitality of the avant-garde was harnessed to drive mass circulation publications. The career of the photographer in Paris in the period between the two world wars was inextricably linked to commercial photography. In the mid 1920s when photojournalism was just starting, the exposure offered by magazines surpassed all other means of dissemination. Editors supplemented the work of staff photographers with commissions for freelance practitioners and material from nascent agencies.

Photographers enjoyed a great deal of creative freedom in their commissions at a time when agencies, artistic directors and editors were keen and stock photography was embryonic. At this time photographers who operated in the commercial market were recognised as successful artists rather than simply as professional photographers, which is how the next wave of young practitioners came to be regarded. The story that Andre Kertész told of his meeting with Sergei Eisenstein in 1929 illustrates how central photo magazines became in the building of a reputation:

> When the Russian filmmaker Eisenstein came to Paris I was told, to my surprise, that he wanted to meet me. We met at 10 o’clock. Where? At the Dôme, of course. And in came this powerful man, and he mentioned to me four photographs of mine from the journal *Vu* that he had in his scrapbook because he was so touched by them. We got on terribly well. I photographed him sitting on my carpet in the Boulevard de Montparnasse.\(^58\)

For young photographers a relationship with the commercial sector was important as it provided a source of income as well as exposure but it was also understood as crucial to their development. In Paris magazines were not part of a giant family owned corporation like their German counterparts and consequently

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people such as Lucien Vogel, who launched *Vu* in 1928, had direct personal control. The world in which photographers worked during this period was small and magazine publishing was dominated by a group of people who actively promoted modern photography both as a fine art and as a commercial tool.

It is clear that from the very beginning modern photography and commerce were bound together, the press developed in parallel with advertising and photography became an essential medium of communication. Photography was a vehicle for the spread of ideas and lifestyle options and it drove the modern publicity industry. Specialist magazines were devoted to the commercial use of the medium, Roger-Louis Dupuis established *Vendre* in 1923 and *Arts et Métiers Graphiques* (soon to be known as *AGM*) was founded in 1927 by the publishers Gallimard, Lucien Vogel and Charles Peignot with a view to produce a luxurious art review and establish a publishing house.60 These three ensured that photography had a high profile and attracted commercial commissions.

Peignot’s typefoundry was a mature business and his expertise and forward thinking meant that he would profoundly influence the direction of French typography. He ensured that the editorial staff at *AGM* included people with experience as well as fresh innovators. The contributors to the review were also leaders in their fields; Peignot was heavily involved in the *Union des Artistes Modernes* (UAM) founded after the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in 1925 by practitioners whose aim was to advance Modernism in all applications of design. Adolphe Cassandre and Alexey Brodovitch were regular commentators on graphic art in *AGM*; Brodovich was responsible for the highly regarded *Trois Quartiers*, the magazine of the elite store *Madeleine* and would become graphic designer for *Harpers Bazaar* in 1934. Peignot extended his business and opened the *Deberny and Peignot* photographic studio in 1930 and appointed Maurice Tabard as director.61 Tabard had been an accomplished portrait photographer in North America and on

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60 [http://elicite.rit.edu.121.3/amghist3.htm](http://elicite.rit.edu.121.3/amghist3.htm) (Accessed 11/10/07) Rochester Institute of Technology, NY maintains this web site, which outlines the history of *AGM* in detail. The web site includes an illustrated database where issues of the review may be browsed.

his return to Paris in 1930 worked in the fashion, advertising and portrait industries.

From 1929 AMG focussed on the use of photographs in advertising to such an extent Christian Bouqueret refers to this campaign as their “hobby horse.”62 Photographie, a special edition of AMG devoted to the medium was published in 1930. It concentrated on international developments and Peignot and Emmanuel Sougez selected the 130 photographs, which were published with the address of the photographer. In 1926 Sougez had created the photographic service of L ’Illustration, for which he became responsible. Sougez wrote the introduction to Photographie and like many other photographers himself had taken on advertising work enthusiastically. There is no doubt that this luxurious edition would have attracted commercial work for the Deberny & Peignot studio. The special edition Photographie was very successful and was subsequently published annually until 1940. The success of this review encouraged AGM to publish other photographic titles such as Publicité from 1934 to 1939, and Photo-Cine-Graphie from 1933, which in 1935 became La Revue de la Photographie with Peignot as director.63 The cavernous studio of Deberny & Peignot was a marvellous place for young photographers to work and to congregate and discuss their work. Tabard recruited Roger Parry, then aged twenty-three, and encouraged him to nurture a personal style. The studio facilitated learning about new tendencies in photography and graphics as practitioners could browse the press and reviews of the international avant-garde and mingle with artists who frequented the studio; Max Ernst for example was a regular visitor.64

Gaston Gallimard was also actively involved in a range of illustrated magazines, his group financed Voilà, a contemporary and competitor of Vu, which Gallimard edited along with La Nouvelle Revue Française and Détective. It was to Editions Gallimard that Parry presented his illustrated book Banalité in 1930, which would catapult him to the forefront of the photography scene. For young photographers commercial work ensured a steady income but it was the

62 Bouqueret, La Nouvelle Vision en France, p 54.
63 Bouqueret, La Nouvelle Vision en France, p 163.
64 Bouqueret & Bertoud, Roger Parry: La Météore Fabuleux, p 14.
publication of books that brought recognition and success. AGM began to publish limited edition books in 1930 and by 1939 had published 46 in total.\textsuperscript{65} These deluxe publications were promoted in the review; a 1933 article on Brassai’s Parisian night photography for instance, coincided with the publication of his monograph \textit{Paris de Nuit}. Other crucial individuals in terms of the promotion of modern photography were Jacques Guenne, director of \textit{L’Art Vivant}, his editor Florent Fels and Carlo Rim who edited \textit{Jazz} and subsequently \textit{Vu} for six years from 1930. These influential critics were determined to foreground innovative photography. Fels, along with Vogel played a key role in the selection of work for the \textit{1er Salon de la Photographie Moderne} in May and June of 1928 in the \textit{Théâtre des Champs-Élysées}, which showcased young photographers and presented retrospectives of Atget and Nadar.\textsuperscript{66} Exhibitions of commercial photography encouraged the notion that this was a new art form and natural territory for the avant-garde because such images were becoming an integral part of the urban environment and experience. In 1931 \textit{La Publicité par la Photographie} in Montparnasse secured the participation of Jacques-André Boiffard, Man Ray, Lee Miller, Kétesz, Tabard, Parry, Sougez, Germaine Krull, Florence Henri, René Zuber and Eli Lotar among others; further exhibitions followed in 1934 at \textit{Studio St-Jacques} and in 1935 at the \textit{Galerie de la Pleiade}.\textsuperscript{67} Room 1 of the \textit{Film und Foto} exhibition in Stuttgart included advertising images alongside press photographs, x-rays, science pictures and experimental works.\textsuperscript{68}

Vogel had considerable experience in the illustrated press before the launch of \textit{Vu} in 1928. In 1906 he was the artistic director of \textit{Fémina} and subsequently founded \textit{Art et Décoration} with his wife, Cosette de Brunhoff. Edward Steichen, who enjoyed a tremendously successful commercial career in America in the 1920s and 30s, produced his first fashion shots for this journal in 1911 when Vogel urged him to produce prints for an extensive thirteen photograph layout of Poiret designs. Vogel edited the elite \textit{La Gazette du bon ton} from 1912 to 1925 and again emphasised the connections between fashion and art by using modern

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{65} http://ellie.rit.edu:1213/amghist3.htm (Accessed 11/10/07)
\item \textsuperscript{66} See Fels, F. “Le premier salon independent de la photographie” in \textit{L’Art Vivant}, no. 4, June 1928, p 445.
\item \textsuperscript{67} Bouqueret, \textit{La Nouvelle Vision en France}, p 54.
\end{itemize}
artists to produce high quality illustrations in limited editions on handmade paper with no accompanying explanatory texts. In 1921 he founded *L' Illustration des modes* which became the celebrated *Jardin des modes* in 1922. He was appointed to the editorial board of *Les Feuillets d'art* by Conde-Nast, the publishers of *Vogue* and also became a director of French *Vogue*. In 1930 it was Vogel who had the idea for the AGM special *Photographie* and it was Vogel who ensured that the most talented of modern photographers were recruited to *Vu*.

**Vu**

*Vu* was a pioneer in journal publishing. *Match*, the sports supplement of *L' Intransigeant*, was the first magazine in France to be printed on a rotogravure machine and it used photographs on the cover and innovative *mis-en-page* in 1927, a few months before the launch of *Vu*. Germany, the source of the rotogravure technology, is often understood as a model for France and in relation to *Vu* the absolute model proposed in the literature is the *Berliner Illustrirte Zeitung* (*BIZ*).\(^6\) It is clear that there is a relationship between these titles but on inspection the German titles are relatively traditional compared to *Vu*. In 1929 photographs were sparse in *BIZ* as there were many pages with text but without photographs. *Vu* included photographs on all pages; Michel Frizot believes that it has a very distinctive *mis-en-page*, a complex design in which photography, text and narrative are unified.\(^7\) This unity is reinforced in reportage produced by one person. “La Villette Rouge” featuring Eli Lotar”s photographs of the abbatoir is a good example of this, the text is credited to Carlo Rim but the article is credited as a “*reportage photographique*” by Lotar.\(^1\) *Vu* was a pioneer in magazine publishing because of the advanced design process which created a balance between blocks of photographs and exposition.

The stated aims of *Vu* were to “translate” the modern world and to deliver illustrated reportage from around the globe. A photograph *could* translate the modern world as it participated in the acceleration of modern life whereas text

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\(^7\) Author in conversation with Michel Frizot, Paris, 17\(^{th}\) January, 2007.

alone was unable to represent this rhythm. The image was universal and immediate, if there was no time to read, a photograph was capable of delivering information quickly. There was a public appetite for images, the development of information during the War had been via photographs and the publication of images accompanied by text appeared to be spontaneous rather than intentional. In 1925 Moholy Nagy wrote

> illustrated books, newspapers, magazines are printed — in millions. The unambiguousness of the real, the truth in the everyday situation is there for all classes. The hygiene of the optical, the health of the visible is slowly filtering through.\textsuperscript{72}

In fact all of those involved in the process had intentions including the photographer, agency, editor, art director and reader. Context is crucial and the photographs in Vu were manipulated and used to “prove” the explanation of the event given in the text.

Every week the editors of Vu received more than two thousand agency photographs as well as work from freelance photographers from which about thirty needed to be chosen for inclusion in the magazine each week.\textsuperscript{73} The exhibition Regardez VU demonstrated that the desire to convey information photographically resulted in a selection of images that the reader would consider to be self evident, factual, and allow them to “witness” an event. This predilection for the most convincing photographs implies a choice of images which have the most potent effect on our perception rather than those which may be helpful to our understanding of the facts. The emotional aspect of the reader as spectator essentially replaced the editorial and the text became a description of the photographs rather than an account of the event. Capa’s reportage from Spain in 1936 demonstrated this well. Coverage of the war was strong in Vu which held a pacifist position and the most popular photographs of the conflict were often not of the actual combat but of individuals caught up in the struggle. The photo essay with a series of shots encourages the idea that the reporting is systematic and temporal like a film sequence. Capa’s photographs are of the faces of the

\textsuperscript{73} The curators of the exhibition Regardez VU attributed this estimate to Alexandre.
Liberman who was appointed to the magazine in 1932.
people involved and they lead the reader through an experience which ends in
death.\textsuperscript{74} The reader has identified with these individuals and this focus on faces
helped to form an understanding of these events. Iconic images in the media are
often those that have an acute emotional impact and achieve symbolic value,
encouraging a vision of the world that accommodates a lack of explanations.

\textit{Vu} aimed to document all aspects of modern life including political events,
scientific discoveries, disasters, expeditions, sporting achievements, theatre,
cinema, art and fashion and therefore included reports that varied widely in form
and content.\textsuperscript{75} Essentially \textit{Vu} carried any contemporary area of pictorial interest.
In total between March 1928 and May 1940 \textit{Vu} carried 167 major reportages,
6,000 reports of big events mostly in the realms of politics and science and 3,000
reports on curiosities or exotic topics.\textsuperscript{76} The diversity of coverage is clear when
one surveys the content of the front covers of the magazine which ranged from
war to frivolity. Inside the magazine this eclecticism resulted in incongruous
juxtapositions; a lynching in North America sat alongside a Hollywood chorus
line for example.\textsuperscript{77} Many of the photographs have a bizarre quality and display a
morbid interest; corpses feature heavily in reports on events such as Chicago
gangland murders and prison riots. There is a sustained interest in people who
are abnormal or deformed, an article entitled “Quand la nature se trompe”\textsuperscript{78}
shows before and after photographs of three people who have had operations to
alter their noses and Kertész had his photographs of the fair published showing
the hall of mirrors, a person who is half man and half woman and an underwater
woman.\textsuperscript{79} Many features offered opportunities to print sexually provocative
images and articles on topics such as beauty contests, theatre shows, the history
of corsets and sport generally included photographs which exposed much
flesh, both male and female. A story entitled “Danse” is illustrated with a
photograph of a \textit{revue} at the \textit{Folies-Bergère} which shows a black “Adam

\textsuperscript{74} Capa, R. “Two deaths” \textit{Vu}, no. 445, 23 September 1936.
\textsuperscript{75} This list was included in the aims of the magazine, set out in the first issue, \textit{Vu} no. 1, 28
March 1928, p 11.
\textsuperscript{76} These figures were compiled by Cédric de Veigy, co-curator of the \textit{Regardez Vu}
exhibition.
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{Vu} no. 519, p 229.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{Vu} no. 113, 14 May 1930, p 462.
Vu no. 125, 6 August 1930.
wearing scanty rhinestone shorts and a white “Eve” wearing a rhinestone bikini. The cover of this issue showed Mussolini reviewing his troops and the text within is focused on Hitler because election results had recently been released.

In the pages of Vu the reader is confronted with a selection of disparate images presented in a manner which gives the impression that they are snapshots from around the world, encouraging an approach which does not differentiate between them. The abundance of mixed images makes it difficult for the reader to consider each photograph in the context of its production; instead the reader becomes a restless visual tourist. Vu used freelance photographers as well as agencies and the avant-garde were in great demand, as they were systematically exploring the difference in perception between the eye and the camera and could produce dazzling images.

**The career of the inter war photographer**

Increased opportunities to publish and the sheer level of demand for photographs ensured that a large number of talented female photographers entered a profession that had traditionally been dominated by men. Women such as Dora Maar, Laure Albin-Guillot, Nora Dumas, Denise Bellon, Germaine Krull, Lisette Model, Florence Henri and Lee Miller were able to establish themselves and publish widely. Dora Maar’s career in the 1930s is in many ways typical and clearly illustrates the domain of ambitious photographers in this period. Maar had returned to Paris in 1927 and enrolled at the Atelier André Lhote where Henri Cartier-Bresson was a classmate. She studied painting at the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs and at the Académie Julian as well as photography at the École de la Photographie de la Ville de Paris with Sougez. Late in life Maar claimed, “My biggest debt from school onwards was to Sougez”. It was he who encouraged her to open a commercial studio in 1930 with Pierre Kefer which was, according to Jacques Guenne, “the biggest and best equipped in Paris.” In four years of business a diverse range of work was produced under the name

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80 Vu no. 132, 24 September 1930, p 945.
81 Dora Maar interviewed in Combalia, V. “Dora Maar: Vida Y Obra” in Dora Maar: Fotógrafa, p 55.
Kefer-Dora Maar and this eclecticism was to continue throughout the decade, which defines her relatively short photographic career. Her work included fashion assignments, documentary photographs of Gaudi’s architecture in Barcelona (1932), archeological illustrations for Germaine Bazin’s book on Mont St. Michel (1933), film stills for Jean Renoir’s Le Crime de Monsieur Lange (1935), a collaboration with Raoul Ubac for the collective book Formes nues (1935), documents of the creation of Picasso’s Guernica (1937), advertising images and personal projects including collage works.  

The high level of demand for photographs in the press, advertising and publishing ensured the success of Kefer-Dora Maar. In-house photographers were important but could not provide all of the images required by newspapers and magazines so freelance photographers offered images or were commissioned and picture libraries were established by magazines and photographers alike. Photographic agents acted as intermediaries for freelancers and some formed agencies. Major foreign agencies also established themselves in Paris, both Keystone and Wide World did so in 1927. Maar suggested that she did not usually make a distinction between personal work and commissions although agreed that she had undertaken uninteresting subjects. Commissions encouraged photographers to develop their practice; there was no clear boundary between commercial and personal work and photographic studios were the loci of both artistic creation and regular work which generally had a pre-determined destination or a function to be mindful of.

For a short time in 1934 after the partnership with Kefer folded, Maar used the darkroom of a friend in Montparnasse, also used by Brassai at this time, before she moved into her studio at 29 Rue d’Astorg. It was at this juncture that she met Andre Breton and the members of the surrealist group at the Union des Intellectuels contre Le Fascisme, later to become Contre-Attaque. In 1935 she exhibited with the surrealists and was a signatory to both the surrealist tract On

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1 Maar became a painter in the 1940’s and although she continued to take photographs and make photograms they were not made public and consisted mostly of snapshots.
2 According to Marie-Loup Sougez, Maar was a regular at the fashion shows. Combalia, Dora Maar: Bataille, Picasso et les surrealists, p 93.
3 Combalia, V. “Dora Maar, Photographer: An Interview with Victoria Combalia” in Art
the Time When the Surrealists were Right and the second edition of the Contre-Attaque statement. Maar then produced a number of seminal surrealist photographs which interestingly but for unknown reasons she refused permission for Rosalind Krauss to include in the L’Amour Fou exhibition in 1984. Maar seems to have blossomed during the mid 1930s and said, “the good thing about the surrealists was that they took women seriously. If they were talented then they were listened to and appreciated. Breton especially took it all very seriously.”

Maar exhibited widely in the 1930s both individually and in group shows. She exhibited with the surrealists and was included in Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism in New York in 1936. She contributed works to exhibitions of contemporary photography and exhibitions of commercial photography; her work was shown in La Publicité par la Photographie at the Galerie de la Pleiade and in Affiches-Photos at Galerie Billiet-Vorms in Paris in 1935. Maar’s photographs were widely published in a broad range of both cultural reviews and popular magazines.

This career pattern was common to the majority of the young photographers who orientated towards surrealism; Brassaï had also trained as a painter and subsequently found employment through the increasing importance of photographic images in the press. Marja Warehime uncovered a wealth of information concerning Brassaï’s early career in Paris by reading his letters to his parents, which were at that point untranslated from Hungarian. She discovered that when he arrived in Paris in 1924 Brassaï was immediately employed as a correspondent for a daily political paper from Brasso, his native city on the Hungarian border and this small income, as well as regular contracts from two

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86 Combalia, “Dora Maar, Photographer”, p 57.
87 Maar had individual shows at Galerie Vanderberg (1932) and Galerie de Beaune (1934 and 1939)
88 Maar contributed to surrealist exhibitions in Tenerife (1935), Belgium (1935), London (1936 and 37), Paris (1936 and 37), Tokyo (1937) and Amsterdam (1938).
90 Brassaï’s letters were subsequently translated by Péter Laki and Barna Kántor in Brassaï: Letters to my Parents, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
German newspapers provided scant but regular wages.\textsuperscript{91} His initial interest in photography was illustrative, he had learnt something about the medium from the photographers who accompanied him and began to take photographs in 1929 to illustrate his own articles. Brassaï claimed that by the end of that year he had so many commissions for articles that he expected to escape constant financial worries as he had sold one article to \textit{L' Illustration} and two to \textit{Vu}. By 1932 AMG had offered to publish his book \textit{Paris de Nuit} which made him famous in 1933 (the same year he became involved in surrealism by agreeing to contribute photographs to \textit{Minotaure}) but in the meantime he sold photographs that would not be included in his book to a wide range of magazines for use as illustrations to such an extent that in the early thirties his work was ubiquitous.

Photo-books allowed practitioners a great deal of creative freedom and were popular with photographers, publishers, collectors and the public. They dealt with a broad range of topics and cities were a particular source of fascination. Brassaï’s \textit{Paris de Nuit} was one of many dealing with the capital including Germaine Krull’s \textit{100 x Paris}, with text by Florent Fels (1929), \textit{Atget. Photographe de Paris} (1930), Moi Ver’s \textit{Paris} (1931), \textit{Paris vu par André Kertész}, with preface and captions by Pierre Mac Orlan (1934), Francis Carco’s \textit{Envoûtement de Paris}, illustrated with 112 photographs by René-Jacques (1938), \textit{Paris}, by Emmanuel Boudot- Lamotte (1939), and \textit{Paris}, photographed by Marc Foucault (1942).\textsuperscript{92} Warehime suggests that Kertész may have provided useful contacts as he had begun photographing for \textit{Vu} in 1928 and Brassaï maintained that his fellow Hungarian offered him advice, indeed his first article for the \textit{Berliner Illustr i rite} was a collaboration with Kertész providing the photographs.\textsuperscript{93}

Kertész had already achieved an international reputation both as an artist-photographer and a photojournalist by 1929 and had exhibited and published widely so naturally he was a role model for young photographers who thought of themselves as artists. After his first solo show in 1927 at the \textit{Galerie Le Sacre du Printemps} Kertész was in great demand as a commercial photographer as

\textsuperscript{92} Gunther, ‘The Spread of Photography” in Frizot, p 573.
\textsuperscript{93} Warehime, \textit{Brassai}, pp. 28 — 33.
magazines recognised the value of his approach. Later in life, speaking of his 1929 shot of empty chairs in the *Champs-Élysées* he said “At that time photography was zero - only the ordinary commercial kind of shots with little or no artistic value. Nobody photographed the chairs in the parks ... I did. Of course, at that time I did not know that this was modern or unique.” This originality was attractive to magazine editors as they recognised energy within these powerful images that set them apart from mere illustrations; the work of Kertész is immediately recognisable in a survey of *Vu* due to its exceptional quality and as a result the photographer enjoyed an enviable freedom of expression. Kertész gives this account of how he produced his “distorted nudes” series

A Hungarian friend of mine introduced me to the editor of the magazine *Le Sourire*, a very French sort of magazine - satiric, risqué. Many artists worked for this publication. They had never published photos before. The editor asked me to do something. I bought two distorting mirrors in the flea market - the kind of thing you find in amusement parks. With existing light and an old lens invented by Hugo Meyer, I achieved amusing impressions. Some images like sculptures, others grotesque and frightening. I took about 140 photographs ... *Le Sourire* published a couple of them, and we planned a book.95

Similarly, Man Ray was often able to present fashion in settings that inspired him using models of his own choice; he sometimes used his own studio containing his own works of art, those made by friends such as Giacometti, Brancusi or Oscar Dominguez or found objects.96 During this decade the conception of young artists of the medium was shaped by photojournalism but also informed by artistic tradition; they wanted their work seen as art and it was. Commerce was keen to embrace the entire catalogue of new visual possibilities provided by modernist photography; surrealist effects, geometric compositions and straight photography all offered a rich resource. The *Foreign Advertising Exhibition* held at the Art Centre in New York in 1931, organised by Abbott Kimball of the American advertising firm Lyddon, Hanford & Kimball, assembled the leading trends in European advertising photography. Exhibitors included Moholy-Nagy, Herbert Bayer, George Hoyningen-Heune, Sougez, Laure Albin-Guillot, Kertész, Kertész, *Kertész on Kertész*, p 75. Kertész, *Kertész on Kertész*, p 82. Hartshorn, W. and Foresta, W. *Man Ray in Fashion*, New York: International Center of Photography, 1990, p 18.
Germaine Krull and Florence Henri; representatives from France won seven of the nine awards, Herbert Bayer won first prize. The following year many of these photographers also exhibited in the Modern European Photographers show at the Julien Levy Gallery. For artists such as Henri who were influenced by the aesthetic philosophy of the Bauhaus, commercial photography was attractive and advertisers applauded an intense focus on the object itself as a novel approach. Previously products had been illustrated by line-drawings of them in use and the focus was generally on the people using them, by contrast these sharp close ups emphasised fashionableness.

Lee Miller was introduced to the world of magazine publishing when she famously met Condé Nast in New York by chance; she was almost ran over by a car and he pulled her out of its path, he subsequently employed her as a model for Vogue where she was photographed by Steichen and befriended by Frank Crowninshield, the editor of Vanity Fair. These contacts helped Miller on her arrival in Paris in 1928 as she had been given an introduction to both Man Ray and George Hoyningen-Huene, director of French Vogue. In Paris Miller worked on both sides of the camera with Huene and his then assistant Horst as well as working for other titles and on collaborations with Man Ray who often passed unwanted commissions on to his assistant. On her return to New York in 1932 Miller continued with fashion and advertising work and in 1934 a Vanity Fair article described her, alongside Huene and Cecil Beaton and others, as “one of the most distinguished living photographers”. Man Ray had achieved this level of recognition from the commercial sector a decade earlier and his career is particularly of interest because from the mid 1920s became central to the development of surrealist photography. The kind of understanding that he had of the commercial world is something that is evident in his influence on the surrealist journals.

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100 Vanity Fair, May 1934, p 51.
On his arrival in Paris in July 1921 Man Ray was quick to establish himself in both the artistic and commercial sectors; in December of that year he had his first solo show in the city and had set up the portrait business which ensured that by the mid 1920s he was very well known and in great demand. He was known as an innovative photographer and as someone who was closely connected to the literary and artistic avant-garde as well as rich and famous socialites. His 1922 portraits of among others Picasso, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Hemingway and Proust on his deathbed along with his fashion shots for Poiret and his association with Le Boeuf nightclub described by Cocteau as “the meeting place of all the best people in Paris, from all spheres of life”\(^\text{101}\) cemented his fashionable status. In July 1922 Vanity Fair published his portraits of Picasso and Joyce. Frank Crowninshield had bought four rayographs and published them later that year in the November issue along with a portrait of Man Ray in a feature entitled “A New Method of Realizing the Artistic Possibilities of Photography” \(^\text{102}\). This exposure led to an extremely successful, sustained and lucrative commercial career for Man Ray who received commissions from Europe and America. In 1934 Brodovitch was appointed as art director at Harpers Bazaar in New York and employed Man Ray, as well as Brassai, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Cassandre. Brodovitch believed that artists must be able to perceive and preconceive the tastes, aspirations and habits of the consumer-spectator and the mob ... must be a pioneer and a leader, he must fight against routine and the bad taste of the mob... a new aesthetic is born. This is an achievement. To deepen this achievement is the problem of the publicity artist. \(^\text{103}\)

By the 1920s technological advances facilitated the development of sophisticated advertising where text was replaced by image and the image was not necessarily a faithful reproduction of the object. In the 1930s Man Ray’s finely crafted and extreme surreal images, involving deep shadows, solarisation, photograms and negative printing were highly sought after for commercial purposes as they appeared to be both magical and modern. In 1931 he was offered a commission

\(^{101}\) Cocteau quoted by Klüver, B & Martin, J. “Man Ray, Paris” in Foresta, Perpetual Motif, p 106.
\(^{102}\) Hartshorn and Foresta, Man Ray in Fashion, p. 14
\(^{103}\) Hartshorn and Foresta, Man Ray in Fashion, p 20.
to produce a deluxe portfolio for the *Compagnie Parisienne de Distribution d’Électricité* depicting electricity and its applications. For this project he used photograms as well as photographs containing photogrammed elements and signed his work as an artist would.\(^{104}\) (Fig 1)

In 1934 Brodovitch commissioned Man Ray to produce impressions of the Parisian fashion collections for the November issue of *Harper’s Bazaar* which featured five pages of fashions transmitted from France directly by short wave, to appear in New York. For his simulated “wirephoto” Man Ray used the photogram technique, placing a piece of fabric and a paper cut-out on top of the photographic paper to give the impression of a new fashion “coming over” the short waves.\(^{105}\) (Fig 2) By the end of the 1930s styles of surrealism had been assimilated into fashion photography and advertising. Nancy Hall-Duncan’s survey of how forms of surrealism influenced fashion photography concluded that the genre drew what it could use effectively from the style including fantasy, mystery, the dreamlike and humour.\(^{106}\) Man Ray lamented the steady professionalism of photographers during the 1930s, promoting instead a violation of the medium and proposing that a “certain amount of contempt for the material employed to express an idea is indispensable to the purest realization of this idea.”\(^{107}\) Chapter Two will consider the nature of photography in *La Révolution Surréaliste* under the direction of Man Ray and explore the relationship between the commercial use of the medium and its presence in the surrealist journal.

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Chapter 2

The use of photography in *La Révolution Surréaliste*

In the inter-war period photography had long since established its place in everyday life through portraiture. Photographic booths were popular attractions at fairs from the mid 1800s and the modern concept of an automated photo booth with a curtain was invented in America in 1925 and appeared on the streets of Paris in 1928. By 1930 Carlo Rim could comment that “Twenty million Kodaks have clicked this summer on all the beaches of the world. The family albums from now on will be peopled by silly grimaces and human hams.”

Photography quickly became increasingly visible in the urban environment as well as in the press in this period. In Paris during the formative years of Surrealism, the conception of photography as a medium was shaped by photojournalism. Photographs made for commercial purposes would have constituted the majority of photographs being made; photographs would generally not have been viewed in isolation as art, but in magazines accompanied by captions or text. The familiarity of this presentation of photography encouraged the viewer to look at the photograph not as a material object but at what the photograph is of, as a window onto another reality, something that the Surrealists were quick to harness. Breton understood the nature of the press with its fragmentation and odd juxtapositions of “newsworthy” events; on the final page of *Nadja* he stated that “A morning paper will always be adequate to give me my news” suggesting a revelatory quality to this “documentation” of everyday reality.

Benjamin outlined this confusion and fluidity within the newspaper in 1934:

> Its content eludes any form of organisation other than that which is imposed upon it by the reader’s impatience ... The editorial offices have long ago learned to exploit the fact that nothing binds the reader to his newspaper so much as this impatience, which demands fresh nourishment every day; they exploit it by continually throwing open new columns for readers’ questions, opinions and protests.

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http://arts.guardian.co.uk/features/story/0,11710,1239610,00.html (Accessed 18/5/07)


Jean-Claude Chamboredon’s discussion of the ambiguities of photography in his contribution to Bourdieu’s book aimed to analyse the vocation of the photographic artist but his observations on the characteristics of the medium are pertinent to this study. Chamboredon was concerned with the problem faced by photographers who wished to create “meaningful” photographs when photography’s signs are often vague, but for the purpose of this thesis we can also consider these remarks in relation to the decision making processes of editors and those responsible for “building something up” with the illustrations in *La Révolution Surréaliste*:

Reference to the object represented always introduces a proliferation of parasitic signs, sketches of uncontrolled meanings, lateral meanings which authorize all possible readings without ever establishing one. Only external and extrinsic signs can remove the ambiguities from photography.  

Chamboredon identified the caption as the most vulgar way used to render a photograph unambiguous, but recognised more subtle forms of neutralising the proliferation of signs which satisfy the same need, such as works in series. What is of interest here is Chambordon’s conclusion that because of the socially defined characteristics of photography it is barely possible to adopt an aesthetic stance towards it. Of course, the cause for concern for Chamboredon’s aesthetes - the social situation of photography and its ambiguous cultural status - delighted the surrealists who relished uncontrolled meanings but they too sought particular responses from the photographs that they published and made use of a variety of methods to do so.

The sentiments contained in the *Manifeste de surréalisme* published in 1924 and the photographic images published the same year in *La Révolution Surréaliste* dovetailed neatly. They met with Breton’s broad and developing notion of the surrealist image deriving power from an appeal to the imagination. Despite having only a rudimentary knowledge of Freudian psychoanalysis in the early 1920s Breton was, in his own words "completely occupied" with Freud at this time because of the overwhelming power he accorded the unconscious.  

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First Manifesto therefore focused on dreaming as a state in which the imagination is unrestricted and the photographic images admired by the group and published in their journal were often dreamlike and evocative. Rene Crevel’s article in *L’Art Vivant* in 1925 on the nature of photography described it as a powerful medium capable of "unblocking and feeding our dreams."

It is important however to establish that Surrealism should not be categorised simply as a desire to escape from reality or the rational into fantasy or the irrational. David Bate has suggested that since Alfred Barr Jr. described Surrealism as "the contemporary movement toward an art of the marvellous and irrational" in 1936, there has been a systematic failure to situate surrealist images within the aims of the movement at any given time. Bate foregrounded the activities of the group and their relations with other intellectual and political organisations to demonstrate that Surrealism did not flee reality, rationalism or what is called the social world, but was a *discourse* which entered into a critique and contestation over what was excluded as "irrational" within it. Vincent Gille has stated that much recent scholarship has reduced Surrealism to a simple artistic movement as the formal perspective has triumphed over political history and what he terms "a passionately human adventure". Gille suggested that this has resulted in the most spectacular works and most simplistic images enjoying the highest visibility. John Roberts has noted that recent scholarship has favoured a history of Surrealism which foregrounds the transgressive imagination of Georges Bataille rather than the politics of Breton which are currently unfashionable. The interest in Bataille’s concept of the "informe" has led to a focus on formally experimental photography. According to Roberts, Rosalind Krauss sees essential anti-realism at the heart of the surrealist enterprise and therefore concentrates on surrealist photography which demonstrates the

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115 Bate, D. *Photography and Surrealism*, pp 7 - 9.
dissolution between reason and unreason at the expense of photographs that establish a very “un-informel” relationship to the world:

Breton’s surrealism was an attack on representation and the idea of the transparency of meaning in the image ... However, in Krauss’s writing surrealism and surrealist photography are assumed to be concerned principally with this, as if the photographers set out to fulfil a specific research programme on representation. The result is the academicisation of the surrealist project as a discourse on the signification of signification. The operations of meaning formation are contained at the level of the image, doing violence to both the political programme of surrealism and the fact that it is the debate over realism and the everyday that actually sustains the debate on representation.118

This move against representation and the “everyday” is arguably why so much attention has recently been paid to Minotaure and particularly to Documents whereas La Révolution Surréaliste and Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution have been relatively neglected.

In 1985 J. H. Matthews stated that the most famous photograph in La Révolution Surréaliste was possibly the one reproduced in No. 8 over the self-explanatory caption “Our associate Benjamin Péret insulting a priest”.119 More recently this accolade would perhaps belong to those photographs which have been the locus of debates about the nature of the relationship between Surrealism and “woman”. Photographs such as Man Ray’s film still showing Lee Miller nude before a window, Man Ray’s image of doubled breasts, the collage with Germaine Berton in the centre120, the series of “hysterical” women121, Atget’s corset shop window122 and Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans la forêt123 have all been the subject of much deliberation.124

120 La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1, p 4, p 15 and p 17 respectively.
121 La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 11, p 20 - 21.
122 La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 7, p 6.
123 La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 12, p 73.
124 See Mundy, Desire Unbound, specifically Lomas, D. “The Omnipotence of Desire: Surrealism, Psychoanalysis and Hystera”, pp. 72 - 73; Ades, D. “Surrealism, Male-Female”, pp 174 - 176 and Foster, H. “Violation and Veiling in Surrealist Photography: Woman as fetish, as shattered object, as phallus”, pp. 217 - 218. See also Chadwick, W. “Lee Miller’s two bodies”
The fact that *La Révolution Surréaliste* was deliberately presented in the style of *La Nature*, a contemporary scientific journal is well documented. The twelve issues of the journal contain a broad range of photographs and most are naturalistic and purposefully engaged with revealing the intensity of everyday life. The majority of these photographs have attracted little scholarly attention to date with the notable exception of Walker’s *City gorged with dreams* which devoted a chapter to the use of documentary photographs in the journal. Walker acknowledged the importance of “siting” and examined the images he chose to deal with in detail in the context of the surrealist journals and books in which they were published. His contribution is seminal because it established the key role of “straight” photography for the surrealists and demonstrated how the group used it as “a simultaneous exploitation and subversion of the standard realist frame within which the medium was then primarily situated”. In terms of the first surrealist journal Walker looked at four anonymous documentary images and used them to “stand for the way that texts and images, theory and poetry, the subjective and the documentary are collaged together in the publication.” This chapter of the thesis develops Walker’s analysis of photographs in the journal as part of a “complex web of poetics and politics” by surveying the use of the medium and discussing a number of photographic images which have to date been neglected.

In a total of the seventy one photographs in *La Révolution Surréaliste* forty-eight are documentary photographs, fifteen of which are photographs of sculpture, architectural detail or artefacts. Thirteen are the kind of documentary photographs of remarkable phenomena that occur in everyday life that are common in photojournalism. Of the remainder, five are photographs taken directly from popular culture including postcards and film stills. Only eighteen

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Ades, *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed*, p 189; Walker, I. *City gorged with dreams*, p 68.


Walker, *City Gorged with Dreams* p 72.

Walker, *City Gorged with Dreams* p 83.

This total excludes reproductions of 2-d artworks excepting collages which include photographic elements.
photographs in the journal have been manipulated either in the darkroom or in
the deliberate arrangement of familiar objects to make them appear strange, yet
such interference in the photographic image is often seen as the distinguishing
characteristic of “surrealist photography”. These figures give an indication of
the function of photographs in the journal to “document the surreal
unostentatiously”.

The idea that photography has an innate ability to estrange was circulating in
Europe in the inter war period. Moholy-Nagy explored the power of the
technology in a mechanistic way demonstrating that the camera generated new
configurations of human sight. Dali saw even the seemingly prosaic
photographic document as a potential surrealist object because “the mere fact of
transposing something seen to a photograph already implies a total invention: the
recording of an UNPRECEDENTED REALITY”. In 1924 when the
movement was on the brink of radical politicisation the use of photography in the
first surrealist journal was dependent upon a number of factors. The group had
two photographers in their midst, Man Ray and his assistant Jacques-André
Boiffard. Pierre Naville who edited the first three issues of La Révolution
Surréaliste along with Péret, was hostile to art but not to the anti-aesthetic
qualities of photography which fitted well with the documentary focus of the
journal. Breton suggested that Péret and Naville were appointed as editors
because “the accent of the review was on pure surrealism ... and that was why the
direction was taken by Péret and Naville who were then the most completely
animated by the new spirit, the most rebellious against any concession.” The
Bureau for Surrealist Research, established in October 1924, was the depository
for all texts and illustrations to be considered for inclusion in the review and it is

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130 Matthews, Modes of documentation , p 45.
131 In 1932 Moholy-Nagy listed eight varieties of photographic vision including: abstract,
exact, rapid, slow, intensified, penetrative, simultaneous and distorted in “A new instrument
Modern Era, p 35.
133 Boiffard was Man Ray”s assistant between 1924 and 1929.
134 See Walker pp. 70 - 71 for an account of the influence of Naville”s insistent use of
images from popular or non-artistic culture on the photographic content of both La Révolution
Surréaliste including, when Breton took over as editor as well as on subsequent surrealist
journals.
135 Breton cited in Walker, City Gorged with Dreams, p 68 - 69.
clear that editorial decisions were communal. It was Éluard’s idea for example to use a Baudelaire quote as the caption for the Germaine Berton montage in the first issue.\textsuperscript{136} It is obvious that Breton was closely involved in the production of the review and that his developing ideas about visual surrealism were influential.\textsuperscript{137} Many of the photographs featured in the journal remained in Breton’s ownership until his death suggesting his personal involvement in their publication as the group leader and from issue 4, as a scrupulous editor.\textsuperscript{138}

Breton actively sought illustrations for inclusion in the review. As an astute art trader Breton was in regular contact with prestigious dealers such as Kahnweiler and was able to arrange for the reproduction of works for use as illustrations from them as well as directly from artists such as Picasso.\textsuperscript{139} He requested a photograph of Picasso’s \textit{Demoiselles D’Avignon} from Jacques Doucet, on whose behalf he had recently acquired the painting, and it was published for the first time in the fourth issue of \textit{La Révolution Surréaliste}.\textsuperscript{140} Breton organised the photographic reproductions of works of art meticulously and grouped them together by artist.\textsuperscript{141} The prints originated from a variety of sources and many carry the stamp, on the back, of the dealer or gallery and many are from Kahnweiler. Breton was of course instrumental in promoting the career of his

\textsuperscript{137} For instance, from October 30\textsuperscript{th} 1925, while the first issue was being prepared, Breton began to note down criticisms in the bureau’s notebook and along with Aragon, Éluard, Morise and Naville, he drove to the printer’s shop at Alençon to oversee the setting of the first issue. Ades, \textit{Dada and Surrealism Reviewed}, p 190.
\textsuperscript{138} All photographs held in Breton’s apartment at 42 rue Fontaine were documented before the sale of contents in 2003 by \textit{L’Association l’Atelier André Breton} and are available to view at \url{http://atelierandrebreton.com/}
\textsuperscript{139} Breton was a shrewd collector himself and was instrumental in selling the work of favoured artists to dealers. He made his first sale (a Picasso for the sum of 350 francs) to Kahnweiler on 14\textsuperscript{th} June 1921. \textit{André Breton: La beauté convulsive}, p 106. He was employed as an art consultant by Doucet in the summer of 1921 and continued to advise him and purchase pieces on his behalf until the end of December 1924. For a summary of Breton’s relationship with Doucet see \textit{André Breton: La beauté convulsive}, pp. 116 — 120. This exhibition catalogue also details Breton’s activities in the promotion of artists, his major business transactions with dealers and his key acquisitions as a collector. On 9\textsuperscript{th} June 1925 Breton sent a letter to Picasso expressing his disappointment with the enclosed Man Ray prints of three of his works which he undertook to publish despite his reservations in the next issue of \textit{La Révolution Surréaliste}. \textit{André Breton: La beauté convulsive}, p 176.
\textsuperscript{140} \textit{André Breton: La beauté convulsive}, p 177.
\textsuperscript{141} His collection included six albums of photographs, specifically marked for potential use in \textit{La Révolution Surréaliste}. The six albums included collections devoted to Arp, Braque and Picasso; Duchamp and Ernst; Ernst; Masson and Magritte; Miró and Man Ray and lastly Dali and de Chirico.
favourite artists and often encouraged them to produce portfolios, in some cases writing a preface himself.\textsuperscript{142}

Breton’s photographic collection included prints ordered from agencies and museums as well as from individuals around the group. The vast number of reproductions of African, Oceanic and South American art and artefacts, again organised into collections, included a set of reproductions of Oceanic objects ordered from a museum in Hamburg; a set of eighteen photographs of objects from Dutch New Guinea from Musée de Bale and a set of photographs of pre-Columbian and South American art from Giraudon, the prestigious French picture archive. Other photographs include a set of six images of lightening strikes from the Parisian offices of Wide World photos, the agency of The New York Times. Many of the reproductions of art and artefacts published in La Révolution Surréaliste are included in these dossiers and many of the other photographs found in the first journal were retained by Breton, facilitating a glimpse into the decision making process involved in turning prints into illustrations.\textsuperscript{143}

Breton took control of the journal in no. 4 because he was unhappy with the wildness of the third issue and furious at Naville’s attack therein on the idea of visual surrealism. The significance of surrealist ideas in relation to the visual arts became a lively debate among the surrealists when it was essentially a literary group in the early 1920’s. Purely pictorial expression was judged as unsatisfactory by Max Morise in his article “Les Yeux Enchantes” published in

\textsuperscript{142} For example in February 1925 Breton wrote to Simone that he had taken Doucet to Masson’s studio but had been frustrated that the dealer had chosen the smallest and most superficial” canvas. He had thus advised the artist to carefully put together, with the help of Kahnweiler or another editor, an album including the latest drawings that he had shown Breton for which the poet would write a preface, with a view to seeking publication in prestigious reviews and surrealist publications. \textit{André Breton: La beauté convulsive}, p 175.

\textsuperscript{143} A thorough survey of the photographs held in the folders confirmed that many of these reproductions were published in the journal. The following photographic prints which appeared in La Révolution Surréaliste were kept by Breton until his death in 1966: Le Centrale Surréaliste, the group portrait featured on the cover of no. 1; Desnos dressed for his Holy Communion in 1910 in no. 3, p 9; the collage by Aragon and Breton, a parody of the work of de Chirico in no. 11, p 8; the photograph of the officials in no.11, p 17; the photo-booth shots used to frame Magritte’s \textit{La Femme cachée dans le fôret} in no. 12, p 73; the press photo of the overturned car in no. 12, p 56; Albert Valentine’s collage \textit{Monument au Morts} in no. 12, p 47; the photograph captioned “\textit{Maison-attendat}” in no. 12, p 25 and Magritte’s collage of the Paris Opéra in no. 12, p 46.
the first issue of *La Révolution Surréaliste* on the grounds that it was rarely free of conscious intention. Naville in his article “Beaux Arts” published in no. 3 denied the possibility of any surrealist painting, accepting only the modest spectacles” of the street, the cinema and newspaper photographs as valid surrealist material. The subversive potential of film and photography lay in their ability to challenge the fact of reality and although Naville lost the argument historically, the group continued to use the medium as a way to “side-step accustomed aesthetic and social norms”.

The surrealists understood the revolutionary potential of photography and film

Taking up Rimbaud’s behest, they wanted to “change life”. But they had also understood the need, first of all, for a profound change in our way of seeing. In order to change life, it was necessary to begin by changing vision.

Breton found the essential element of the “surrealist image” to be elusive, and believed that it was something which would need to be developed in practice. The artists he favoured were all celebrated for their exposure of different aspects of reality. He was meticulous when considering the reproduction of fine art and it was he who decided on the paintings for inclusion in the journal. Breton supported a diversity of illustrations in the journal, the criteria was simply that they should be poetic, evocative and powerful. It is clear that Breton was responsible for editorial decisions relating to photographic illustrations generally, not just reproductions of paintings and sculpture. The original prints used as illustrations in the journal kept by Breton show inscriptions, in his handwriting on the back, providing instructions pertaining to design and page layout.

Under Breton’s control the journal included many more paintings as illustrations however they did not replace photography but rather existed alongside it, and the medium continued to play a prominent documentary role in the journal.
Breton had been involved in magazine publishing since 1919 when he founded *Littérature* at the age of twenty-three. The format of the surrealist journal is often attributed to a wish to be taken seriously, a sense of satire or a desire for high public visibility but it has also been suggested that the bright orange cover was chosen by Breton on a visit to the printers where a pile of old paper stock was offered at a bargain rate.\(^{147}\) André Thirion described his encounter with the journal thus:

> On leave in Nancy, [Georges Sadoul] had brought that first issue of *La Révolution surréaliste* .... Sitting in a beerhouse on Saint-Jean Street, I could not tear my eyes away from that glossy red paper cover that looked so much like a pharmaceutical brochure .... we had to get in touch with them immediately.\(^{148}\)

In her discussion of surrealism Sontag argued that “The less doctored, the less patently crafted, the more naive - the more authoritative the photograph was likely to be” and that it was this idea of an object which virtually produced itself as a result of the photographer gazing on reality with curiosity that excited the group. To Sontag it seemed that the surreal could be defined as “what is most local, ethnic, class-bound, dated” rather than something universal or psychological. This seems to be an unnecessarily reductive definition of the surreal given Breton’s notion of the expansive imagination and the “countless kinds of Surrealist images” and Aragon’s definition of what he calls the “vice termed Surrealism” as

> the disorderly and impassioned use of the narcotic image, or rather the uncontrolled provocation of the image for its own sake and for what it brings in its wake, in the domain of representation, by way of unforeseen upheavals and metamorphoses; for every image, whenever it strikes, forces you to revise the entire Universe.”\(^{149}\)

Nevertheless, Sontag’s comment was insightful. Atget immediately springs to mind and indeed in *La Révolution Surréaliste* many of the photographs published fall into these categories and are characterised by banality.\(^{150}\) Communication is
social and community based and if we understand surrealism as a discourse, the allegorical potential of actively engaging the everyday image and subjecting it to the power of the human imagination is clear. In *La Résolution Surréaliste* the commonplace and the banal are transformed by the photographic process into a poetic, open documentation of modernity at a time when Parisians were increasingly perceptive. “Our culture has become visual” declared Carlo Rim in 1930; the key to the success of surrealist photography is arguably the essential role of photography in communication generally with the proliferation of images in the press, in advertising and in publishing.\(^{151}\) Whereas care was taken to fix meaning in photographs used in these industries, surrealism both exploited and subverted the instability of the photographic image and its public status as a documentary medium.

Despite the fact that since its origins photography has been intimately linked with the development of a commodity culture, the commercial sphere of photography, the everyday image, has been neglected in theorising around Surrealism and photography and has only recently aroused interest. The catalogue for the *Man Ray* show in Paris in 1998 set out to present the full spectrum of his work and raised the fact that “his work extends across various categories, all open to being recycled or deflected into another role or meaning, each feeding off the other” but failed to elaborate on the consequences of this currency in images, instead it focused on technique and process and relied on anecdotes from Man Ray and his associates.\(^{152}\) For example, Serge Bramley noted the appearance of Man Ray’s photograph of a mannequin wearing a Poiret gown taken for his commission at the *Pavillon d’Elegance*, part of the *International Exposition des Arts Décoratifs* in 1925 on both the cover of no. 4 of *La Résolution Surréaliste* (Fig 3) and in *Vogue* one month later. Bramley provided the respective captions but merely stated that the surrealist caption “*ET GUERRE AU TRAVAIL*” (And war on work) could be interpreted in various ways.\(^{153}\)

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Whitney Chadwick discussed the appearance of this photograph in both *La Révolution Surréaliste* and *Vogue* in her consideration of the relationship between Man Ray’s work as a fashion photographer, his surrealist practice and his collaboration with Lee Miller. She concluded that although important differences remained between fashion’s ideal bodies whose polished eroticism allays the threat of female sexuality and the surrealist mannequin which defamiliarised the body and could evoke intense anxiety

The ease with which Man Ray shifted from the reified feminine image signifying glamour and exclusivity to surrealism’s revolutionary critique of modern society suggests that surrealist fashion and fashionable surrealism were not so far apart.

Chadwick then discussed how the redefinition of the female body at this time relied on an abstraction which conflated “woman” and fashionable object, an aesthetic visible in both Man Ray’s fashion photographs and his personal work and argued that his portraits of Miller are essentially collaborations with a performative element nourished by Miller’s experience as a fashion model. This insightful analysis constitutes a significant addition to the previous readings of his work in relation to George Bataille’s *informe* and fetishism. Chadwick suggested that the reproduction of the *Exposition* photograph on the cover of the surrealist journal represented “a revolutionary critique of modern society” but a closer focus on the specific context is fruitful.

Breton assumed control of the journal in no. 4 and in the preface he explained his reasons for doing so. Breton’s text ended with a political commitment to support all revolutionary action and tentatively acknowledged the centrality of the class struggle. The possible meanings of the cover photograph and caption relate to this polemic by Breton as well as specific texts by both Aragon and Eluard and encapsulate the flavour of this issue of the journal remarkably well.

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Breton, A. “Pourquoi je prends la direction de _La Révolution Surréaliste_”, _La Révolution Surréaliste_, no. 4, pp. 1 — 3.
The mannequin is a poetic figure of monumental proportions, an Amazon; the Siégel mannequins used in the display stood seven feet tall and emphasised the strengths of the industrial age and marvels to be found therein, but they also symbolised its weaknesses in their anonymity and lack of emotion. It is telling that the surrealists sent back the first batch of fifteen mannequins that they were sent for use in the 1938 Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme in Paris because they were too “maladroit and unlife-like”, those eventually used were relatively realistic with a range of hair colours and facial expressions. An idealisation and denaturalisation of the female form was however central to the fashion industry in the mid 1920s and Siégel mannequins were favoured in Vogue, a title which was decidedly up market. Whereas titles such as Marie Claire, launched in 1937 would carry articles on cookery and beauty tips, the female readership of Vogue would not generally be expected to cook and would enjoy salon treatments. Figure 4 shows an advertisement for Cartier in the issue published in December 1928, the same issue featured a ski fashion shoot and the magazine at this time was filled with images of an affluent lifestyle. The July 1927 issue featured yachting, in January 1928 readers were offered advice on how to purchase desirable residences on the Rivièra and abroad, the November issue of the same year featured photo essays of the aristocracy enjoying hunting trips. Man Ray”s photograph could be seen to present a view of the bourgeoisie and their materialist values as nauseous.

Eluard”s text discussed the nature of “revolution” in his review of a conference organised by Philosophies, part of a left-wing alliance which included the surrealists and Clarté. Eluard reported an unfounded optimism amongst delegates concerning the extent of revolutionary change in Soviet Russia. He suggested that the nature of Russian society may have changed but that it was nevertheless characterised by inequality, disorder and madness and was far from revolutionary order or wisdom’. Eluard”s concerns about the period of reaction in Russia following the defeats suffered by revolution on an international scale,

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158 For an analysis of the preoccupation with the modern mannequin and its cancellation of the conventional signs of feminine beauty see Tag Gronberg”s ‘Beware Beautiful Women: The 1920”s shopwindow mannequin and a physiognomy of effacement’, Art History, Vol. 20, No.

Vogue (French Edition), December 1928, p 23.
notably in Germany, and Lenin’s death in 1924, although arguably characterised by naivety, were shrewd. The surrealists maintained an affinity with the ideas and protagonists of “October” at a time when most were falling in behind the Party apparatus in Moscow and moving rapidly to the right. Éluard’s fundamental support for the Revolution, his distance from the Party and his naivety facilitated this insight. At this time, when the international bourgeoisie were willing the Soviet state to falter and the left were reluctant to voice concerns, the fact that the surrealists were critical of Russia was extraordinary. They had no personal political ambitions and were unconcerned with the tactical manoeuvres common amongst the organised left. The surrealists’ familiarity with revolution was at this stage essentially based on the French Revolution and it was used in the first journal as a reference several times. Eluard ended his brief report with a quote from Saint-Just and a final warning for those who would accept less than absolute freedom, “The war for liberty must be fought with anger” and fought incessantly by all those who do not accept.”

Aragon’s text “Fragments d’une conférence” was also concerned with the nature of revolution and argued that revolt is born from “love” and “poetry”. He poured scorn on the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs, calling it a “joke” and claimed that it was surrealism with its determination to “attack everything” that embodied the “nouvel esprit” in 1925. Man Ray’s photograph of the monumental modernist tower blocks at the exposition site was used to illustrate this point. The photographer’s professional investment in the exposition once again was harnessed to demonstrate its sterility. The exposition aimed to re-establish the primary position of France in the decorative arts and boost industry at a time of economic downturn. The Eiffel tower was transformed into a huge illuminated advertisement for Citroën and the event was seen by the Surrealists as a festival of nationalism.

The caption accompanying the cover photograph “ET GUERRE AU TRAVAIL” offers a further layer of meaning. Aragon suggested in his text that men were

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160 “La guerre de la liberté doit être menée avec colère et menée sans cesse par tous ceux qui n’acceptent pas. Eluard, P. “Manifestation Philosophies du 18 Mai 1925”, La Révolution
consumed by work and referred to it as “the undisputable god in the West”,
describing it as “squalid”. He claimed that his hands were “pure” as he personally
would never work. Aragon was, of course, familiar with work and had
considerable experience in commerce; he had worked for people who were in the
business of buying and selling culture. He was employed by Doucet and as
secretary to Jacques Hébertot, the manager of the Théâtre des Champs Elysées
who asked him to resuscitate the moribund Paris-Journal when he acquired it. Aragon resigned from the title in 1924; the young surrealist group rejected work
on principle, they saw cultural production for profit as a form of prostitution and
followed Breton’s lead in abandoning paid journalistic commissions.

Breton had described work as having quasi religious connotations and called for
a strike by intellectuals as a means to express solidarity with manual workers in
La dernière grève", his preface to the second issue of La Révolution
Surréaliste. Also, as Walker has pointed out, the surrealists rejected the
prevalent leftist view of manual work as heroic. The task of modelling haute-
couture gowns has been undertaken by mannequins in the image in the same way
that many previously labour intensive manual tasks could be automated because
of their repetitive and mundane nature. The photograph on the cover of the
surrealist journal thus offers myriad associations. Its appearance in Vogue shortly afterwards its publication in the surrealist journal added to these layers of
ideas. Breton’s attack on pretentious writers in his preface, and the fact that
tensions ran high within the group about the boundaries of acceptable literary
ways to earn money suggest that the “work” in the caption could also refer to
professional creative work. This document of the contemporary displays at
the exposition would thus stand as a prime example of creative energies
(mis)directed towards supporting the reclamation of the decorative arts in France
as unique and unrivalled. The photograph itself is essentially the result of a
journalistic contract secured by Man Ray, symbolic of the contradictions within
the “modern world” that Breton refers to in his polemic.

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163 La dernière grève", La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 2, pp. 1 — 3.
164 Walker, City Gorged with Dreams, p 80.
165 See Chenieux-Gendron, J. and Folkenflik, V. Surrealism, New York: Columbia
Photographs never have a single meaning or a static identity and it is crucial to consider context as part of a structure of meaning. Our understanding of the intellectual content of the photographs published by the surrealists benefits from an approach which considers them not in isolation as aesthetic, modernist works of art or as exclusive to surrealism, but in their historical specificity in relation to contemporary concerns and journalistic practices. This approach facilitates enquiry into the function of these images, not only in terms of surrealist tactics but also their contribution, deliberate and incidental, to contemporary debates that were often highly visible in both high and popular culture.

As Ades has noted, the photographs in La Révolution Surréaliste are intricately linked to the text. They often supply an opportunity to pause in the dense journal and they are well placed to do this, they augment the text and allow reflection. They invite contemplation and often have the qualities of mystery desired by Breton, they arrest the attention of the reader and assert themselves on the page as they are self-contained but they are also subject to language. These photographs encourage the wandering of the mind and act as the “springboard of the imagination” sought by Breton but are also part of the dynamic of the page and therefore a context is created for them as they are embedded in text. The photographs in La Révolution Surréaliste function in a similar way to those in the illustrated press in intentionality. Barthes definition of the press photograph as a message can be applied to the use of photography in the journal; text often connotes the image, the images chosen “make ready play with the supposed knowledge of readers” to ensure clear communication and “a fully satisfactory reading”. However in the context of the surrealist journal this journalistic practice is subverted, images rarely illustrate text in the accepted sense (of making the text clearer) and at times their presence seems arbitrary. Also, reading the photographic images used by surrealism is problematic not least because the group were so interested in the “visual” of visual images and their pictures often defy linguistics and thus solid meaning to a great extent. Barthes belief that at the level of mass communication the linguistic message is present...

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166 Ades, Dada and Surrealism Reviewed, p 189.
in every image, even though some are weak in signification while others communicate a frank message, is challenged by surrealism’s use of photography in the first journal. Surrealism understood the increasing dominance of visual culture and exploited the power of the image as argument but also subverted this by wresting the visual from the realm of language and asserting its independent power.

Even at the earliest, most Romantic stage of their development the surrealist group were dealing with many of the issues and themes that other publications were airing albeit from a radically different perspective. Their expressed aim was to concern themselves with “all of the problems that confront us in this era” and it is clear that the group surveyed the press closely, including popular titles in order to sharpen their intervention. The surrealists used the letters pages of the press productively to establish a dialogue with people outside of the group.

In the first issue of La Révolution Surréaliste the surrealist texts on the subject of suicide are supplemented by a series of extracts from press reports and articles on the subject. These snippets are taken from Libertaire, Petit Parisien, Éclaire and Figaro. This issue also includes an item which would become a regular feature in the journal entitled “Extraits de Presse”, as well as the aforementioned titles in this issue the piece refers to Les Nouvelles littéraire, Le journal littéraire, Le Temps, Le Journal du people, L “Éclaireur de Nice, Comedia, L “independence Belge, L “Europe nouvelle, L “Echo d’Alger, L “Information, Liberté and Le Journal. Popular titles as well as the major newspapers and cultural reviews were scrutinised. Photographically, Man Ray dominated La Révolution Surréaliste and Breton’s consistent support for him indicates his position within the group as one able to produce or procure photographs for the journal that could elegantly convey the

169 “tous les problèmes qui se posent à notre époque”, La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1, p 31.
170 Neil Cox has suggested that this idea of publishing snippets from the popular local press was stolen from André Gide’s Nouvelle revue française. Gide collected bizarre news stories and published a collection of rather appauling examples in 1930. Cox, N. “Marat/Sade/Picasso” Art History Vol. 17, No. 3, September 1994, p 403. The range of press extracts published in surrealist journals however was wider than bizarre news stories and covered mainstream news items and cultural reviews.
spirit of the group”s ideas. It was Man Ray who purchased prints from Atget who advertised himself as a documentary photographer and regularly sold photographs to artists.\(^{171}\) The group clearly benefited from Man Ray”s expertise, as well as his recent commercial commissions he had acquired a range of skills in his employment as a young man in various companies including a lettering and layout position for an advertising firm, mechanical drafting for a publishing house and handling the artistic production of a map and atlas publisher.\(^{172}\) He was meticulous and efficient in his practice.\(^{173}\) The imaginative employment of photographic illustrations throughout the journal is evidence of his professionalism in a situation where finances were limited and production unsophisticated and prone to mishaps (in the first issue Masson”s drawing on page 27 is printed upside down). Photographs are placed carefully, are often prominent and careful attention has been paid to detail.

On the front cover of the first edition of the journal published in December 1924 and on the cover of issue 2 the following January, Man Ray is credited first under illustrations simply with “photos”. The first two issues of the journal are arguably the strongest in terms of their use of photographic material and this may be due to the considerable direct input of Man Ray. From issue 3 onwards he is simply credited under “illustrations” along with the other featured artists and his name is absent altogether on the credits for numbers 5 and 12 although in theory he could be present in the “etc.” addendum. The quality of the photographic illustrations in the journal is uneven; issues 5, 8, 9/10 and 11 are particularly weak but there is a periodic return to form notably in the final issue published in December 1929.

The fact that La Nature was a role model for the journal is visible in the layout of the front cover of issue 1 (Fig. 5) which includes three photographic records of group activities and members illustrating the declaration “il faut aboutir a une nouvelle declaration des droits de l”homme.” These photographs convey the

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\(^{171}\) In July 1922 Man Ray moved into his studio/apartment at 17 Boulevard de Montparnasse, Atget lived at number 31. Foresta, Perpetual Motif, p 123.


\(^{173}\) See Amaya, M. “My Man Ray: An interview with Lee Miller Penrose” in Art in America, May-June 1975, pp 55 - 60 for details of Man Ray”s practice.
interests of the group economically; de Chirico’s *Tobias’* Dream (1917) is visible on the wall directly behind Breton, the light in the bottom two photographs is extremely bright as if indicating some kind of illumination and also echoes the shape of the print to the right of the de Chirico in the central group portrait above. The photographs are centralised on the page and imply that the group are serious in their intentions and actively pursue their ambitions in a laboratorial manner. The reproductions are of a good quality with high levels of contrast and the focus is on the faces of the individuals and their total absorption in their experiments. The meaning of these photographs is clear, this is the surrealist revolution and these are cadre. The preface in the first issue is illustrated by a photograph of Man Ray’s *Enigma of Isidore Ducasse* (1920) (Fig. 6) which has no caption and is centrally positioned. The reader’s attention is shaped by it as it both interrupts the text and refers to a text by the Comte de Lautréamont, whose ideas the surrealists had adopted as proto-surrealist thought. This photograph had previously been reproduced in *Littérature* and stands here as a cipher and as a statement of purpose.

This careful presentation of photographs is continued throughout the first issue, which contains ten photographs as well as ten drawings. This level of use of photographs in the publication is to some extent attributable to the proliferation of photographic illustrations in magazines generally at this time although in the mid 1920s many publications remained committed to the use of drawings. It can also be understood as a deliberate anti-art gesture given the lowly status of photography at the time. In *La Révolution Surréaliste* Man Ray was able to present his work as an independent artist, he used the journal to publish photographs of his art; three of the photographs in the first issue are reproductions of his works as well as *Enigma, New York* (1920) and a film still from *Retour à la Raison* (1923) feature. Photographs of the work of other artists are presented in the journal; the first issue contains a photograph of Picasso’s sculpture *Guitar* (1924) constructed from painted, cut-out and folded sheet iron, tin box and wire but there is no aesthetic preoccupation and the vitality of the

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journal came to a great extent from the mixture of visual material.\textsuperscript{175}

The photographic content of the first issue is not representative of the journal as a whole as it contains one third of the eighteen images classified above as manipulated”.\textsuperscript{176} The photographic content of the second issue is very different and even the two images that have been manipulated - Man Ray”s distorted nude of Kiki de Montparnasse (p 26) (Fig. 7) and his \textit{Boulevard Edgard-Quinet, à minuit} (p 22) (Fig. 8) are grounded in reality through familiar subject matter in the former and the caption in the latter. The remaining six photographic images in the issue include a photograph of a mannequin’s head and hands encased in a box to illustrate “Le Bureau de Recherches surréalistes” (p. 31) (Fig. 9), a film still (p 5) (Fig. 10), and four photographs that are typical of photo-journalism. These images are documents of extraordinary sights that are common in everyday life and include the scarecrow on the cover with the caption ART FRANÇAIS DEBUT DU XXe SIÈCLE (Fig. 11), the murky industrial scene viewed through a window that illustrates Breton”s article on strikes (p 1) (Fig.12), the shot of the sensational escapologist/crocodile show at the fair (p 20) (Fig. 13) and the speeding car (p 30) (Fig. 14). The photographs in the second issue are bound to the text that accompanies them however the photographs are rarely discussed in this context. David Bate noted that the collage of Germaine Berton in issue 1 is generally discussed in relation to her crime record rather than being linked to the texts on suicide in the first issue, despite being placed amongst articles dealing with the subject and a direct reference to this by Aragon on page 12. This lack of attention to context allows the appetite of the scholar to determine the nature and function of the photographs, at the expense of their specific historic journalistic context.

In \textit{Perpetual Motif}, Roger Shattuck compared Man Ray”s nude in issue 2 (Fig. 7) to both Ingres” \textit{La Source} (1856) in respect of the pose, and a rare Nadar nude, \textit{Marie Christine Roux} (1855) (Fig. 15). Apart from mentioning that Roux was recognised as the inspiration of Henri Murger”s “Musette” in \textit{Scènes de la
Man Ray’s Enigma (preface); the Retour à la raison film still (p 4); the chair with ghostly hands (p 12); the doubled breasts (p 15) as well as the collage placed before the “Textes Surréalistes” (p 7) and the Germaine Berton collage were included in this category.
bohême (1851), Shattuck did not explore the relationships between these representations further or refer to the text which accompanied this image in the journal. Man Ray’s nude originated from a 1924 photograph of Kiki de Montparnasse, part of a series of five increasingly abstracted images (Fig. 16); in the original print Kiki’s face is in shadow but she is instantly recognisable, her pubic hair is shaved into the shape of a heart, she wears jewellery and fixes the camera lens with a stare. This photograph does bear close resemblance to the Nadar nude; the women differ in that Roux shields her face and the cloth that she stands upon has become geometric for Kiki but the pose is strikingly similar. Both photographs are of contemporary women who can be placed historically in Paris as seminal figures in French culture. Both Roux and Alice Prin were from working class backgrounds and came to be known as the “queen of bohemia” and the “queen of Montparnasse” respectively.

The version of this photograph in La Révolution Surréaliste is the result of dark room manipulation; overexposure and burning in have increased the depth of shadowed areas and the level of abstraction. The comparison to La Source is understandable; the pose is similar, the passive body is flooded in light and set against a dark background. In fact Ingres commissioned Nadar to take nude photographs of Roux on the basis of which he painted La Source.\textsuperscript{177} David Bate noted that when Man Ray arrived in Paris interest in Ingres was a contemporary one\textsuperscript{178} and Man Ray himself referred to La Source specifically in Self Portrait when he recounted the time he made the first nude of Kiki and she came out “modestly holding her hand in front of her, exactly like Ingres’ s painting of La Source.”\textsuperscript{179} This is a common pose but in Man Ray classicism haunts the image; in his treatment of a traditional genre, the tension between pleasure and discomfort is heightened as the body is reduced to a simple, luminescent outline enveloped in darkness. The sinuous form is sensuous but holds horror and cruelty as the body appears distorted, withdrawn and faceless. The body is devoid of individuality because the face, sex, hands and feet have disappeared into shadow.

\textsuperscript{177} Rotzler, W. Photography as Artistic Experiment, New York: AMphoto, 1976, p 11.
\textsuperscript{178} Bate, Photography and Surrealism, p 121.
Kirsten Hoving Powell observed that Ingres’ own distortion of physical form had been noted in 1856 by the critic Théophile Silvestre and also in the early 1920s when André Lhote argued that his nudes were a product of both violence and deference; she argues that it was essentially Ingres who taught Man Ray about the power of deformation and refers to this photograph as fitting in with the text which “describes the foggy, evaporating, vagueness of the dreamstate.” But it is not only in form that this photograph fits the text. In the journal the nude accompanies Rene Crevel’s text “Le Sommeil: Je ne sais pas découper.” The article recounts a dream about tasting human flesh, not through caressing or biting it but actually eating it and Crevel tells of seeing garlands of shed skins, heavy with human fruit decorating his room like the Chinese lanterns seen on Bastille Day. He had woken with a taste of flesh in his mouth and presumed that he had picked one of these fruits in his dream and eaten it, but was struck by the apparent physicality of the taste on his tongue. Man Ray’s photograph alludes to this troubling experience with its display of a radiant, immobile body, elongated and suspended in darkness. The text demands a disquieting image and this affinity between text and photography is evident throughout the second issue.

The photograph of the showman placing his head in the mouth of an alligator (Fig. 13) while submerged in a tank of water provides a preface to Robert Desnos’ polemic on opium. The text argues that opium use results from desperation and that people who have lost all hope and choose to relieve their pain through drug use should be left in peace. The problem says Desnos, is not the medicine, but the malady and until we can relieve the causes of human misery we should not remove the means to alleviate it. The prevalence of opium was a subject of Brassai’s photographs in the 1930s but the article by Desnos was not illustrated literally but with a photograph for which no explanation at all is offered. The reader must marry the text and image and in this process grasp the kernel of Desnos’ argument. Desnos wrote of “souls” who are lost in society and

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would soon find another way of dealing with their deep sorrow should opium be removed, if this were even possible. This impulse to self harm may be foolish he said but it is impossible to eradicate as nature itself is essentially anti-social; Desnos proposed that it is only through an organised reaction against these natural tendencies of humanity that the “social body” is able to seize power.

The photograph is alarming but this is mitigated by the fact that it is clearly a performance. Danger is literally held at a distance, a horrific outcome is unlikely to confront a live audience who are prepared to risk this for the thrill derived from this type of popular entertainment. The photograph captures the pinnacle of the show and renders it simultaneously magnificent and ignoble. The eye is drawn to the centre of the frame and the proximity of the bald head of the man to the mouth of the animal, the effort involved in prizing open the jaws is tangible. At the same time degradation is mooted by the stains on the tank, the black appearance of the water, the wheel replaced by a brick against the wall, the lack of a visible audience and the fact that this moment of tension is in stasis. There is no risk of danger to the reader who is able to observe this curious document, and in conjunction with the text consider the nature of humanity and the parameters of the “social body” and personal liberty at leisure. The text explains and the photograph offers evidence as well as food for thought.

Desnos’ second text in this “Chroniques” section in issue 2 is entitled “La Mort” and Man Ray’s Boulevard Edgard-Quinet, à minuit (Fig. 8) provides a postscript. Unlike the crocodile photograph, this illustration is explained by the caption and has a tenuous link to the text in which Desnos refers to the senses. The article dismisses those who link death to God and the author confides that in death it is not his thoughts or his spirit that concerns him, but his senses. He says he is unable to imagine love without the taste of death because their elusive characters are mixed together somehow,

> Merveilleuses satisfactions de la vue et du toucher, perfection des jouissances, c’est par votre entremise que ma pensée peut entrer en relation avec la mort.

> You, marvels of touch, of the gaze; perfections of ecstasy: you let my thoughts know death.”

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La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 2, p 22.
The photograph with its caption encourages the viewer to meditate upon this by suggesting both the sensual pleasures that might be experienced in Paris at midnight but also evokes their fading away. The film still used to illustrate Naville’s surrealist text (Fig. 10) is also loosely linked to the text but through specific passages, “Je songe qu’un esprit me menace constamment” and “je songe à ces cadavres accumulés à l’ombre des forêts.”\(^{183}\) As joint editor, Naville was keen on using anonymous images as illustrations but even when Breton assumed the position, photographs from popular culture featured in the journal.\(^{184}\)

The attraction of such images stems from their distance from high culture but also from their revelatory quality when displaced and the fact that they often indicate something of the moral climate, or the aspirations people have at any given time. The popular press, advertising, the cinema and theatre provided everyday images which displayed contemporary preoccupations and had an immediacy and intensity. This displacement of everyday material had been explored by Ernst in his collage work exhibited by the group in 1920 at the Galerie Sans Pareil. In *Surrealism and Painting*, Breton described Ernst’s sense of culture as extraordinary and captivating, inherited from

Rimbaud’s famous love for the decorative panels over doors, for silly refrains and the revolution in manners and morals, from the systematic taste that Lautréamont is supposed to have had for a sort of spiritual trench extending from Edward Young’s *Night Thoughts* to certain medical reports, from Jarry’s taunting knowledge of heraldry, and even from the inspiration which Apollinaire sought in catalogues.\(^{185}\)

Robert Motherwell also noted Ernst’s concern with contemporary history and his employment of “the paraphernalia of the external world”.\(^{186}\) This displacement of banal everyday material such as advertising is akin to the intelligent use of the same in *La Révolution Surréaliste*.

\(^{183}\) I dream of a spirit that threatens me constantly” and “I dream of these corpses accumulating in the forest.” *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 2, p 5.

\(^{184}\) No. 1 includes a film still from Buster Keaton’s *The Electric House* (p. 22), no. 3 features a risqué postcard of the actress Phyllis Hawer.


In issue 6 of the journal a photograph of John D. Rockefeller illustrates an article by Crevel entitled “Le Bien du siècle”. Photographs from the collection of Félix Potin were reproduced widely in albums where hundreds of portraits were displayed in this 4 x 7.5 cm format but also as postcards and as trade cards for goods such as cigarettes and chocolate. Potin acquired a vast collection of portraits of contemporary celebrities including portraits of politicians, military figures, royalty, scientists, authors, musicians, artists, athletes and actors and he frequently commissioned commercial studios, including Reutlinger and Nadar to provide the photographs. Like Rockefeller, Potin was from a modest farming background and had built an industrial Empire. The business practices introduced by Potin in the second half of the 19th century constituted a commercial revolution and preceded mass consumption. By the turn of the century Potin’s business had become the major food company in Paris and was almost self-sufficient. In 1906 Potin employed 1,800 people in its huge factories in Paris, by 1927 this figure had risen to 8,000. Félix Potin was ubiquitous in Paris in 1926 when La Révolution Surréaliste was published.

Potin’s portrait of Rockefeller, captioned here as “PHILANTHROPE” sits without explanation in the centre of Crevel’s text. This article is a polemic principally against the ideas of Drieu La Rochelle which had been expressed in a letter “La Véritable Erreur des Surréalistes” published in La Nouvelle Revue Française in August 1925 as well as in an interview which Crevel quotes in his text. Crevel’s article noted that it seemed that the writers in the daily press...
to the Dilemma of Political “Engagement” in Interwar France: André Breton & Pierre Drieu La
and the cultural reviews had all swallowed a pill which had been ingeniously marketed, such was the dissemination of the idea that the spirit of revolution was the new “mal du siècle”. Crevel declared that one would need to have a singular love of paradox and a presumptuousness capable of the most sinister of stupid remarks to speak of weakness in those who will not accept enslavement. Crevel borrows from Voltaire’s Pangloss when he refers to “la révolte des esprits qui ne croient pas et n’acceptent pas de faire semblant de croire que tout soit pour le mieux dans le meilleur des mondes.” The article ends with Crevel claiming that the “mal du siècle” resides in resignation and in the speeches of those who renounce communism and he hails the spirit of revolution as the “bien du siècle”. Rockefeller and Potin appear in the midst of this discussion as interlopers.

Rockefeller’s eyes in the photograph look directly towards the text which declares that charitable efforts by individuals with great personal wealth are driven by egotism. Both Rockefeller and Potin stand here as exemplary representatives of those who bolster inequality and create the conditions for the spirit of revolution. Potin’s photograph of Rockefeller in this context does not present him as a worthy celebrity but rather as a parasite and the commandeering of this mass produced image makes this point elegantly.

In issue 3 of the journal, Péret’s short poetic text “L’Amour des Heures, La Haine du Poivre” is illustrated by the reproduction of a postcard featuring the popular American actress Phyllis Hawer (Fig. 18). Péret’s black humour is well served by the image; the text deals with vérole or the pox resulting in word play with the actresses first name and syphilis. Hawer was well known in France by the time La Révolution Surréaliste was launched, she had played female lead alongside Buster Keaton in Ballooniaats (1923). She was celebrated as one of Mack Sennett’s “bathing beauties” and as a talented comic actress following her performances in his films including Hearts and Flowers (1919). Hearts and Flowers was notably risqué; Hawer’s character cross dresses as a man in order to seduce the female lead and the same sex kissing scenes were prolonged.
the revolt of those who do not believe, accept or pay lip service to the idea that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.” La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 6, p 18.
The disparate photographs published in *La Révolution Sur réaliste* function effectively in engaging with contemporary artistic, social and political issues and the use of “everyday” photographs and a documentary style where the images are tied in some way to the text cements this. In issue 6 Pierre Unik’s humorous short story “Vive la Mariée” is framed by two illustrations, a print by Jean Arp *Un Homme* (Fig. 19) is placed at the beginning and a photograph of a group of bourgeois women identified as “the jury of the *Fémina* prize” acts as a postscript and is captioned “no comment” 192 (Fig. 20) The two illustrations occupy as much space on the two pages as text and enhance its playful and irreverent nature. The image infers that these women are not amused by Unik’s story with its lack of veneration for the institution of marriage but it also illustrates in an economic manner why the surrealists scorned such awards.

The prize was commonly referred to as *Femina Vie Heureuse* but the fact that the title that the magazine was formerly known as is placed in quotation marks arguably refers to Unik’s narrative in which the bride to be loses her bridegroom but luckily is able to replace him immediately, with the encouragement of the men around her, and happily continues with her ceremony and subsequent celebrations. The “lucky life” thus applies to the protagonist in the story and to the affluent women in the photograph who are privileged but given this visual evidence not happy in their conventional and traditional lives. Joseph Delteil had been expelled from the group by Breton in the autumn of 1925 after winning the prize for *Jeanne d’Arc* and this vital story by Unik represents an opposition. Moreover the fresh, abstracted illustration by Arp at the beginning of the text stands in opposition to the documentary photograph at the end. There is a tension between Arp’s “homme” and the women. The exclusively female jury represent here the independent, self-assured and capable “modern woman” and her central place in culture at this time, particularly in the illustrated press in which to quote Whitney Chadwick, she was shown to be

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Unik, P. “Vive la Mairée”, *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 6, pp. 25 - 26. The prix *Femina* is an annual literary award created by the magazine *Femina* (formerly known as *La Vie*
Heureuse); the winner is chosen by a female jury. The photograph is introduced as “Le jury du prix Fémina “vie heureuse”; the caption below the image reads “sans commentaries”.
literally “going places”. She was shown at the wheel of an automobile, at
the helm of a speedboat, in the cockpit of an airplane. She was in control,
self-assured, capable, aggressive, adventurous, independent.¹⁹³

The woman on the far right in the photograph of the Femina jury appears to
represent the stereotypical modern woman with her cropped hair, fashionable
attire and the fact that she is smoking in public. A perceived invasion of the
traditionally male territory of the literary elite may have been a cause of rancour
among the surrealists but the group were no less contemptuous of powerful male
literary figures and in the text it is the institution of marriage which is denigrated
rather than the bride or her hapless companions.

Issue 12 of the journal is strong photographically and includes traditional
documentary photographs as well as technical trickery. It includes a full page
reproduction of Magritte”s photomontage Je ne vois pas la (femme) dans la fôret
and David Bate has provided an analysis of this image as an allegory of “love”,
supported by the fact that it appears in the middle of an “Inquiry into Love” and
that the female figure is connoted as Venus, the goddess of love.¹⁹⁴ The final
issue of the journal contains many other rich photographic images. “Bonne
Année! Bonne Santé”, the three page article by Georges Sadoul examines the
nature of the policing in Paris and explores the political implications of
journalists in the press, particularly in the popular “crime” title Détective,
supporting a stronger police force and promoting draconian laws.¹⁹⁵ The text
uses long extracts from Détective to expose the political nature of the magazine.
The extracts published present the magazine and those who write for it as vicious
and morally bankrupt in their reports and sensational examples of contemporary
legal practice. The article is illustrated by two photographs, Magritte”s
(uncredited) montage Paris Opéra (1929) with the Palais Garnier surrounded by
a field complete with trees, grazing cows and a lake, is placed in the centre of the
page devoted to Détective.(Fig. 21) This surprising image suggests a deep
malaise as it is surrounded by text taken directly from the magazine and its
impressive circulation statistics. The article from the magazine which borders

¹⁹ Bate, Photography and Surrealism, pp. 148 — 149.
¹⁹ Sadoul, G. “Bonne Année! Bonne Santé”, La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 12, pp. 45 -
the image is a report from Haiti by Victor Forbin in which he recounts how the governor had consulted him concerning the punishment of a fourteen year old who had killed his father as Forbin was “from France, a land of justice and civilisation”.196 The Détective article from Haiti is headlined “COMMENT J’AI CONDAMNE A MORT UN ENFANT NOIR” and a lurid tale follows of how the author called out for the firing squad to “finish him off” after witnessing his prolonged execution, resulting in a hail of bullets so intense that the prisoner’s clothes were burnt so that they looked like tinder.197 The image suggests that civilisation” in France is a veneer, represented by the Palais Garnier, which conceals the quagmire that it is built upon. The existence of a subterranean lake beneath the Opéra would have been well known at this time because Gaston Leroux”s novel Phantom of the Opéra was published in series in 1910 and Rupert Julian”s film adaptation was produced in 1925 and re-issued with sound in 1929.

The following page of the article reprints extracts from another recent Détective article which complains that the death penalty against women has merely been a fiction for the preceding forty years. The magazine noted three outstanding death penalties against women and is quoted at length calling for at least one of these sentences to be carried through as a deterrent to criminals such as kleptomaniacs, drug addicts and prostitutes.”198 Sadoul is incensed by this magazine and the fact that it is read widely, he suggests that Détective is replacing the popular illustrated fantastique fiction magazine L ’Intrépide. He warns that France is in moral danger from Détective. The surrealists fostered a deep hatred of Détective, founded in 1928, as it was edited by George Kessel. Kessel”s brother Joseph had organised a literary journal with Horace de Carbuccia, the brother-in-law of the chief of police, Jean Chiappe. Subsequently Carbuccia had become editor of the extreme right wing magazine Gringoire.199

196 “Vous qui êtes de France, pays de justice et de civilisation, que feriez-vous à ma place?” La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 12, p 46.
197 “Donnez-lui donc le coup de grâce cria une voix, la mienne. La vie était puissamment chevi lée dans le corps de ce jeune nègre, 20 ou 30 balles à bout portant, les vêtements brûlaient par places, comme de l’amadou” La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 12, p 46.
This text is illustrated by reproduction of a photocollage, with the title *Monument aux Morts* (1929) (Fig. 22) by Albert Valentin who would become assistant to René Clair the following year. The collage shows a contemporary outdoor summer scene featuring two young women sitting in a park behind a monument, they appear to have undressed to some extent and are sporting fashionable bobbed hairstyles; the women have their backs to the viewer and to the monument but one looks directly at the camera over her left shoulder and we see the other in side profile. The monument has been placed on a brick plinth in a public place as war memorials are but it consists of a reflective metal box contraption which displays the larger than life double image of a young woman. The collage made use of a Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer promotional photograph for "The Song Shop" and "Doll Dance". The back of the original collage reveals text which identifies the image as a photograph of dancers from the new shows and explains that the performers take part in a programme of “fresh air, sunshine and exercise following medical advice”. Valentin has superimposed the monument onto the scene. Again the image of the woman on the left gazes directly at the camera with a knowing look, the inverted representation of the woman smiles and raises her eyes. The collage is beautifully reproduced and presented at the end of the essay as a postscript.

The context of this photograph is essential to the reader’s understanding of its meaning here but it is also open, it has a complex relationship to the intensely political text and is at once both light and sombre. In this instance the photograph is understandable through the caption, through its attachment to the text both literally and implicitly with its references to contemporary women and to the reference to how popular magazines represented women. The photograph may be interpreted as a means of exposing the discourse of criminology, of contemporary preoccupation with criminality, especially female criminality. Tag Gronberg has highlighted the contemporary psychoanalytic discourse on the modern female consumer as a deviant, threatening figure and shown how 19th century ideas about the propensity of women to steal were still current in the mid
These women may also represent the seemingly calm yet perilous nature of French society in 1929 in which the police were an increasingly visible arm of the state.

Issue 12 featured a text by Jacques Rigaut by way of an obituary as he had committed suicide the previous month. The text had originally been published in *Littérature* in December 1920 and is typically focused on suicide and characterised by a world weariness and morbid humour.

> La première fois que je me suis tué, c’est pour embêter ma maîtresse ...
> Le Deuxième fois que je me suis tué, c’est par paresse. Pauvre, ayant pour tout travail une horreur anticipée, je me suis tué un jour, sans convictions, comme j’avais vécu.

The text is illustrated with the type of photograph commonly found in photojournalism which shows a strange sight but one which is plausible in an urban environment. (Fig. 23) A car has mounted the pavement and overturned, it lies there on its side, the reader has no idea at to what has occurred in this instance but in conjunction with the text the image could represent a suicide bid. The car in this unfamiliar, vulnerable position seems to belie its inanimate character and the vehicle itself appears to have expired. The photograph is at once surprising, playful, mysterious and gloomy and thus complemented the text beautifully.

This elegant use of photographs is evident throughout the final issue of the journal. The long article by Thirion on Marx’s theory on commodity fetishism and the circulation of capital “Note sur l’argent” is illustrated with a bland photograph of a shop front with a sign that reads “Fortune and a sinister caption ‘Maison-Attentat’.” (Fig. 24) Walker has translated the caption as “murdering-house” and

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201 ‘The first time I killed myself was to annoy my mistress ... The second time I killed myself was from laziness. Poor and having a premature horror of every kind of work, I killed myself one day, without conviction, as I had lived.” *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 12, p 56.

this is a valid interpretation of this strange phrase although it should be noted that "attentat" often possesses a specifically public sense in French.\(^{203}\) "Un attentat" refers to a terrorist attack, a bombing in a public space, the assassination of a public figure for example. As well as Walker’s interpretation of the phrase being suggestive of the fortune within the house being "nefariously and possibly violently acquired" there is the possibility of a general critique of capitalism and its extraction of profit as "terrorism".

The article by the psycho-analyst J. Frois-Wittmann on suicide is illustrated by two photographs, placed on a double spread to frame and interrupt the text that discusses suicide in youth in terms of the displacement of a death wish upon parents and unresolved "Oedipal" fixation.\(^{204}\) (Fig. 25) The first photograph shows a commonplace domestic item, a small wall mounted shelving unit for housing bric-a-brac above two framed pictures and three vertical empty frames. This item takes on an ominous character because of its juxtaposition with the text. One of the framed pictures shows a crowing Gallic cock, a national symbol of France but also a symbol of paternity and in folklore a harbinger of a death in the family if it should crow at night. The second picture shows a bottle and a single glass on a table, beneath which lie two pairs of shoes or slippers. The photograph is depopulated, human presence is merely suggested and absence is denoted by the vacant frames. The photograph on the opposite page also shows domestic objects, an arrangement of boxes of household implements including scissors, pen nibs, needles and a hatpin. Again because its relationship to the text this photograph has a sinister nature and even the carefully wrapped thread assumes the appearance of a lethal weapon. The design of this double page set up affects a balance and unifies the exposition and the photographs but also asserts the notion of the family generally as a dangerous place.

This illustrative use of photography where images are placed throughout the text to evidence and support it and to provide a stimulus for the imagination was not a feature of the journal which succeeded *La Révolution Surréaliste* and in fact this

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\(^{203}\) Walker discusses the currency of this image in detail in *City gorged with dreams*, see pp. 75 - 79.

\(^{204}\) Frois-Wittmann, J. "Mobiles inconscients du suicide", *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no.
practice would not return until the period after the Second World War. Chapter 3 will examine the function of photography in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* and assert that although images were presented apart from the main body of text, they were nevertheless securely linked to it.
Chapter 3

The function of photographic illustrations in
_Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution_

_Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution_ differs from its predecessor in many ways and in terms of the use of photography the fact that it differs in format is often noted. It has been suggested that the varied illustrations in the second journal are placed at the back as _hors-textes_ for reasons of economy.\(^{205}\) The second review sold substantially less copies than _La Révolution Surréaliste_, the group funded the journal themselves and finance was a problem.\(^{206}\) Both Breton and Eluard regularly sold art from their personal collections to secure publication.\(^{207}\) Matthews however has suggested that this formal change signified an elevation in the status of the medium. He argued that it represented a transformation of the character and function of the contribution made by photographs to the surrealist publication and thus drew a line between the two journals with respect to the role of the medium. He noted the absence of Atget’s work and the fact that Man Ray’s photographs were generally presented as independent surrealist art works equal to the paintings, sculptures and objects reproduced at the back of each issue, a trend which he believed was merely accelerated rather than instigated in _Minotaure_.\(^{208}\) This is not an analysis that stands up to examination.

Matthews failed to note that in fact Man Ray’s work had been presented in this way in the first journal, often accompanied by his signature. In _La Révolution Surréaliste_ his work was never given a full page, but other works of art were rarely presented in this way either as they too were integrated into the text.

\(^{205}\) Ades, _Dada and Surrealism Reviewed_, p 252; Bate _Photography and Surrealism_, p 235.

\(^{206}\) _Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution_ sold 350 copies of its first two issues while _La Révolution Surréaliste_ had attained a circulation of over 1,000. Ades, _Dada and Surrealism Reviewed_, p 251.

\(^{207}\) For example in 1931 _Paris-Magazine_ reported that Breton and Eluard held a sale of “primitive” art in July 1931 to finance the journal; in April 1933 Eluard sold some paintings to Vicomte de Noailles to fund issues 5 and 6. See André Breton: _La beauté convulsive_ pages 203 and 206 respectively.

Matthews failed to elaborate on the wider use of photography in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* which certainly reflected a shift in the preoccupations of the group but nevertheless continued to rely on the mass cultural form of the medium to parade them. This was not simply an accidental similarity between surrealism and the mass media but rather a result of an understanding within the group of the contemporary reception of illustrated journalism as progressive and truthful, and of the potential of the photographic image to shake the reader’s consciousness. In 1952 Breton stated that of all the surrealist journals, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* was by far the richest, in the sense that mattered to us: the most balanced, the best put together, as well as the most fully alive (with a thrilling and dangerous life). It was in this magazine that Surrealism burned with the most intense flame. For a time, we all saw nothing but this flame, and were not afraid to be consumed by it.²⁰⁹

This chapter aims to carefully examine the function of photographic illustrations in the journal, particularly those which have been hitherto neglected in scholarship, and to establish how they formed an integral part of the surrealists’ drive towards both political and cultural radicalism.

Thirty-four of the fifty-two hors-textes in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* are photographic images, including nine reproductions of sculptures and objects and four Man Ray photographs. Of the remainder, nine are documentary photographs, five are film stills, five are photo-collages, two are taken from popular culture and one is an altered photograph by Dali. The only photograph to appear in the main body of the journal is the reproduction of the telegram from Moscow on the first page of the first issue. Taken as a whole the photographs published in the journal, as well as supporting specific texts, generally contribute to Breton’s expressed wish in the second manifesto to use any means necessary to destroy dominant ideas about family, country and religion.²¹⁰ For the surrealists and the commercial press alike, photographs were an indispensable tool of communication used with intention to fix meaning. Despite graphic design even more rudimentary than in the first journal, the


surrealists” use of photography was once again often elegant and incisive. Some photographs, notably those by Man Ray appear less didactic but are nevertheless integral contributions to the themes of the journal, providing images which are open to various interpretations and offer a challenge to the viewer. In the new journal, the reader is led by text and image to engage with a new order of values drawn from the works of Sade, Lautréamont, Hegel and Lenin.

Although the production of the journal is generally understood as signifying a shift towards placing the movement at the service of the Communist Party, tension is evident and the photographs published in the first two issues particularly denote discordance. The first issue, published in July 1930, famously opens with a reproduction of the telegram from the Bureau International de Littérature Révolutionaire which demanded confirmation of allegiance to the USSR. The published response declared loyalty to Moscow in the event of an imperialist war and offered intellectual services. The friction between the “revolution” of the Communist Party and that of the surrealists was illuminated by the response to the recent death of Mayakovsky in April 1930. The first issue of the journal devoted seven pages of text (out of forty-eight pages in total) and a full page photographic illustration to the poet. The text consisted of a long article by Breton, flanked by reproductions of Mayakovsky’s three suicide notes and fragments of his poetry as well as recent press reports and obituaries. The illustration appears on the last page of the journal, in direct opposition to the photographic document of the telegram from Russia.

Both the text and the photograph reveal the difficulties in negotiating a route between poetic freedom of thought and channelling the imagination to practical effect. The journal presents a coherent approach to the death of Mayakovsky; in the response to the telegram from Moscow it was intellectual services that were offered by the group and it is clear that they believed themselves to be in a position to effectively contribute to a live debate on the issue of freedom in cultural production. It is clear that Breton felt an affinity with the futurist poet, they had both invested heavily in love and been disappointed and they understood suicide as a viable option in a world where life became unbearable.
However the article presented a forceful argument on the role of the artist in
society in general and analysed the political exploitation of the poet’s death in
the mainstream press in France as well as the Communist press in both France
and Russia.

Mayakovsky was perceived by Breton as a free thinker, an artist who was
imbued with terrific revolutionary energy and wholly committed to Bolshevism
but who believed that in a sense, art should be free from “politics”. Mayakovsky
believed that art should not serve to coerce, and that rather than support a
particular brand of revolution, it should be revolutionary in spirit. Stalin’s
decree in 1932 eventually deemed that the arts must serve and represent the
state as a tool of propaganda, but the cultural debate about the role of art had
raged during the previous decade and Mayakovsky had increasingly come under
attack. He was seen by the Communist Party as being too individualistic and too
powerful because of his popularity; his plays were delayed in publication and
harshly criticised and he was publicly denounced as a bohemian.  

Mayakovsky’s suicide was attributable to his desire to silence his own voice as he
was unable to compromise his revolutionary spirit as much as his personal angst.

The second suicide note addressed to “Camarades Vappovtsi” published in the
surrealist journal supports this. The poet asks that his peers do not consider
him lazy but understand that he saw no alternative. He then relays a message to
Vladimir Ermilov which presumably refers to an incident that took place a month
earlier. Mayakovsky’s Bathhouse (1930), a direct assault on the cultural
bureaucrats of the regime was declared to be unacceptable by the theatre
censorship committee, it was subsequently altered, produced and failed badly.
Criticisms was harsh, particularly from Ermilov, who suggested in his review in
Pravda that the poet was “playing the game of the Trotskyist opposition”. A few

\[\text{\[\text{For an overview of Mayakovsky’s work and contemporary reception see Mayakovsky, V., El Lissitzky, and Railing, P. \textit{For the Voice}, (3 volumes), Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000. For an account of Mayakovsky’s revolutionary activities from 1922 until his death and documentation of the criticism he suffered see Volume 3, Railing, P. (ed.) “A Revolutionary Spirit” in \textit{For the Voice: Voices of Revolution: Collected Essays}, pp 15 — 30.}\]}

\[\text{\[\text{Mayakovsky’s second suicide note reads ‘Ne m’apparez pas lâche. C’est sérieux, il n’y a rien à faire. Salut. Dites à Ermilov que c’est dommage d’avoir abandonné le mot d’ordre, il fallait va incre. V. M.’ “It’s serious, there’s nothing to be done. Goodbye. Tell Ermilov that it’s a shame he has abandoned the slogan, it was necessary to fight to win”. \textit{Le Surréalisme au}\]}

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days later Mayakovsky erected a huge banner in the Meyerhold theatre, painted with the slogan

You can’t immediately steam out the swarm of bureaucracy.
There wouldn’t be enough bathhouses or soap.
Besides, the bureaucrats are aided by the pen of critics - like Ermilov.

Ermilov protested and RAPP, the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers, ordered that the poster be removed. Moreover, in 1927 Mayakovsky had written a poem for the anniversary of the Paris Commune which included these lines

Seul nous reste le mot d’ordre:  Only we retain the slogan
Vaincre! Vaincre - ou mourir!  Victory! Victory - or death!

Mayakovsky understood that in 1930, with Trotsky’s deportation and the suppression of the opposition with the arrest of many leaders of the revolution, the struggle of ideas within the Party had been won by those who had abandoned the principles of “October”.

At the end of his article Breton berates the “rabble” who, in the case of reporters for Le Monde, Le Soir and Nouvelles Littéraires, took this opportunity to vent a deep hatred of the Soviet Union and to portray futurism as “imperialist” and Mayakovsky as a poet driven by individualism. Breton also attacked the French Communist Party for their report in L’Humanité which presented the poet as a bourgeois who had no understanding of the working class and who had been exposed as a fraud through his resorting to suicide. There is no explicit criticism of the Russian Communist Party but the obituary from Pravda is printed in full and it essentially claims Mayakovsky, in death when no longer a threat, as an exemplary “proletarian poet”. Trotsky’s dismissal of “proletarian art” in Literature and Revolution (1924) was widely known, also Victor Serge’s article entitled “Is a proletarian literature possible?”, written in the Soviet Russia in 1925 but directed at French readers had warned of the dangers of literary constriction.

Breton’s own text ends with a refusal to accept any weakening of the spiritual
University Press, 1975, pp 43 - 44.

The full text of Mayakovsky’s poem, *The First Communards*, (in French) can be found at [http://www.inlibroveritas.net/lire/oeuvre2070-page1.html](http://www.inlibroveritas.net/lire/oeuvre2070-page1.html) (Accessed 12/04/08)
and moral position taken by the poet and a declaration that “proletarian art” was an impossibility.

One of Rodchenko’s portraits of Mayakovsky would have been an obvious choice for the illustration of this text if a simple homage was required. Instead a film still was chosen from Mayakovsky’s 1918 adaptation of Jack London’s *Martin Eden.* (Fig. 26) Breton’s text is thus supplemented by an image so rich in connotation that an intention to convey a complex discourse on the implications of Mayakovsky’s death is clear. The photograph, together with the caption which identifies Mayakovsky playing the main protagonist in his film *He who was not born to money* sets up a series of dichotomies; between individualism and political allegiance, love/poetry and revolution, life and death and social classes. The issue of Mayakovsky’s death is used to analyse the central friction between the surrealists and the Communist Party around the issue of the relationship between individual freedom and political allegiance. The journal opened with what appeared to be an unequivocal statement of support for the Party, but this is tested in articles throughout the issue and counterpoised on the last page of the journal. The photograph expressed myriad concerns, reflected the complexity of the relationship between free thought and directed cultural production and hailed Mayakovsky as one who was able to produce work which was both poetic and political. It seems that the surrealists were able to address these issues more productively using a photograph rather than the text, which is fundamentally devoted to a defence of the poet. The surrealist use of photography is successful here because it is so well suited to allegory. *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* is, according to Ades, a journal of “undiluted surrealism” and the deployment of this image demonstrates this

215 Jack London’s semi-autobiographical *Martin Eden* was published in 1909. It tells the story of a poor worker intellectual who falls in love with a bourgeois woman and becomes a novelist in order to “improve” himself and rise to a position where he would be a suitable husband. Despite his literary success, his project ends in alienation and Eden commits suicide. The novel deals with the difficulties faced by writers and issues of individualism versus socialism.

216 For instance Dali’s “L’Ane pourri” contained conflicting attitudes to political commitment pp. 9 - 12, on pages 10 and 11 the feature “Le Sottisier Surréaliste” ridiculed the dissident surrealists and attacked Desnos’ apparent support for Social Realism in his review of Eisenstein’s *La Ligne Générale* published in *Documents*, no. 4, 1930, p 220, while texts such as Breton’s “Il y aura une fois” pp. 2 - 4 and Rene Char’s “Le jour et la nuit de la liberté” p 23 attempted to marry art and politics in an innovative form.
The novel *Martin Eden* is presented by the author as an attack on individualism and a critique of personal ambition; the central character rejects socialism and pays for this with his life when he loses faith in humanity. Mayakovsky, filled with revolutionary zeal, produced *He who was not born to money* immediately after October 1917 and cast himself as the male lead in the film. In one sense this lends credence to the notion that Mayakovsky was egotistical, and this particular frame, which shows him dressed as a bourgeois, smoking a fat cigar, echoes contemporary accusations of his questionable class consciousness. Breton deals with this in his text and suggests that it is opportunistic of critics to quote Trotsky on the poet in obituaries; in 1923 Trotsky wrote that Mayakovsky had come to the revolution by the shortest possible route, that of “bohemian revolt”. The illustration arguably presents the ruling class as bankrupt in spirit, responsible for and facing death. In the novel Eden died because he had rejected socialism and made poor choices in fighting for personal success rather than for his class. His friend describes the affluent company with which he consorts as a “den of traitors” and arguably, Mayakovsky too was in this position. An important link between Jack London and the Russian poet is that they had both become disillusioned with the organisations they had committed to; London had joined the Socialist Party after being inspired by *The Communist Manifesto* but had resigned in 1916 “because of its lack of fire and fight, and its loss of emphasis on the class struggle.” A few months later, in November of that year, London committed suicide in his Californian mansion. Mayakovsky’s death was partly attributable to the fact that he was committed to a struggle for freedom that he felt had slipped away.

217 Ades, *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed*, p 252.
218 On p.18 Breton cited Trotsky in *Literature and Revolution*, (originally published as articles in Pravda). It is however disingenuous of Breton to call Trotsky’s judgement of Mayakovsky “ cursory” here, given that a chapter of *Literature and Revolution* was devoted to an analysis of the social forces affecting futurism and its strengths and limitations. Much of the text dealt specifically with Mayakovsky, who Trotsky considered to be gifted and able to grow as a poet.
A reader who was unfamiliar with the film or novel would find the image rich in associations but knowledge of the narrative adds layers of meaning. The protagonist, like Mayakovsky, was obsessed by his love for a woman, Liliya Brik in the case of the poet. In the novel Eden explains that he is powerless to resist as Love was too fine and noble, and he was too loyal a lover for him to besmirch love with criticism. What did love have to do with Ruth’s divergent views on art, right conduct, the French Revolution, or equal suffrage? They were mental processes, but love was beyond reason; it was super-rational. He could not belittle love. He worshipped it. Love lay on the mountain-tops beyond the valley-land of reason. It was a sublimated condition of existence, the topmost peak of living, and it came rarely. Thanks to the school of scientific philosophers he favoured, he knew the biological significance of love; but by a refined process of the same scientific reasoning he reached the conclusion that the human organism achieved its highest purpose in love, that love must not be questioned, but must be accepted as the highest guerdon of life. 

The surrealists highlighted Mayakovsky’s diverse talent and modernity in choosing a film still and also aligned him to Luis Buñuel. The first four illustrations in the issue are by Buñuel, the first an unidentified photograph of a bishop fondling the breast of a young woman and three stills from L ‘Age d ’Or (1930). Celui qui n ’est pas né pour l ’argent was similar to L ‘Age d ’Or in that it focused on the theme of frustrated passion and bridged poetics and politics and this is essentially what the surrealist use of the Mayakovsky film still in the journal achieved. The illustration is simultaneously and successfully political and poetic.

The prominent and copious illustrations by Buñuel in the first issue of the new journal demonstrate the importance that Breton placed upon cultural radicalism. In Entretiens Breton spoke of how “exposed” the surrealists were in 1930 because they had cut ties not only with the “literary world” but also with “civilised conformism” and he offered L ‘Age d ’Or as the best example of their frame of mind. Buñuel’s illustrations function as a distillation of this with their vehement anti-clericalism and assertion of erotic desire as a force capable of a violent critique of society. The first illustration is a carefully constructed

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London, Martin Eden, p 176.
Breton and Parinaud, Conversations, p 121.
obscenity which establishes a firm link between blasphemy and eroticism. (Fig. 27) The caption “Are you cold?” echoes the unresponsive expression on the woman’s face but also serves to deride the bishop as one who is charged with pastoral duties, signified by the crosier which denotes his role as “caretaker of the flock”. It is his right hand that molests the woman and the episcopal ring, indicative of discretion and conjugal fidelity to Christ as it touches the Host during Holy Communion, is clearly visible on his third finger. In Spain this is the wedding ring finger. This finger was significant in L’Age d’Or in the context of masturbation; it is prominently bandaged in the final still reproduced in the journal which shows Lya Lys lying on the sofa, satiated. (Fig. 28) This still is captioned with a sub-title from the film “Sometimes on Sunday…” reinforcing the fact that this activity takes place on the primordial holy day of the Catholic Church. This link between blasphemy and eroticism was also emphasised in the second illustration, a film still showing Lya Lys taking the hand of Modot into her mouth is captioned “I’ve blasphemed perhaps…”.

Buñuel’s illustrations introduce an element of sadism, the caption to the film still of Lya Lys sucking the toe of the statue in the garden reads “I have waited for a long time for this moment. Ah! What joy to have murdered our children!” In the film this scene is followed by Modot declaring “My love, my love, my love” while blood pours out of his eye and is smeared over his face. Buñuel declared his debt to the surrealists for their rehabilitation of de Sade “I discovered in Sade a world of extraordinary subversion, in which there is everything from insects to the customs of human society, sex, theology ... it really dazzled me.”223 Sade became a pivotal figure in the surrealist journal as one who, like Lautréamont, had refused to impose limits on his imagination and produced exemplary critiques of society through his works. Breton had come to regard Sade as someone who, like Freud, understood sexuality as our central driving force and who was able to attack the hypocrisy of reigning moral laws through the

exposure of his own era as “an entirely corrupted age” where “the safest course is to follow along after the others.”

An attempt to marry politics and poetry is evident in Breton’s prominent essay *Il y aura une fois* and the accompanying illustration in issue 1. Dors, a short surrealist erotic fantasy by Eluard is placed after the feature on the telegram from Moscow and Breton’s text follows this. It is illustrated by one of Man Ray’s photographs of Lee Miller wearing a wire sabre guard, on her head in this instance. (Fig. 29) There is no doubt that Breton influenced Man Ray’s ideas about the poetics of the image and that there is here an interest in the erotic charge of violence. Jean Gallagher discussed this photograph and agreed with Mary Ann Caws’ reading of the image as one of “female entrapment,” submission to netting and capture” where Miller is “a prey who is rendered simultaneously mute and speaking of objecthood.” Gallagher did not locate the image in the context of an illustration for Breton’s “Il y aura une fois” in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*. Caws did so in the short paragraph in her book that dealt with this image, but focused solely on the caption and concluded that “the haunting is more than a little sexually oppressive and less than innocent.” Despite the brevity of her discussion of the image, Caws awarded it a full page illustration on the adjacent page, as if the image should speak for itself, with the caption, its origin in Breton’s essay, and the surrealist journal as a context.

Whitney Chadwick also discussed this series of photographs and focused on the shot where Miller wears the guard on one of her arms which, like her legs, appear to be bound. The publication of one of these images in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* is not noted, but she used them to evidence the


225 Breton, A. “Il y aura une fois”, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 1, pp. 2—4. As this essay if unavailable in translation, the full text in English has been placed in Appendix A.

ambivalence of Miller”s relationship to both surrealist and fashion images and to
support her argument that these particular photographs contain an element of
performance and that Miller had some control over the portrayal of her body in
this instance. She noted the visual play with juxtapositions of flesh and metal
and the body double of the arm shaped form as well as the fetishist attention to
one body part but stated that Miller”s subjectivity mediates the representation and
conveys strong feelings of defiance offering a challenge to the model”s
traditionally passive objectification. Essentially the argument is that to perform is
to control; Miller is not denied expression in these photographs as she seems to
exude, in the words of Judith Blessing “an exhibitionist self-delight” as she
looks directly at the camera, at times with a “frankly seductive look” and
“engages in a kind of striptease ... for the photographer, who was also her
lover”. Chadwick”s analysis is indebted to recent scholarship which has
explored the notion of gender performance and its subversive re-
territorialisations of sexuality and she cites both Judith Butler and Amelia
Jones. It is doubtful that the sabre guard series as a whole would support
Chadwick”s analysis as Miller”s eyes are averted in most of the shots, and it is
direct eye contact with the camera that generally imparts assertiveness here;
however this exploration of the complex dynamics of power, however difficult,
is important. This thesis acknowledges a tendency in surrealism to present the
compliant female body as an object of male desire but also warns against closed
interpretations and crucially establishes the need for social, political and cultural
contextualisation.

Blessing, A Rrose is a Rrose is a Rrose, p 15.
Chadwick, “Lee Miller”s Two Bodies”, pp. 212 - 213.
See Butler, J. Bodies that Matter, London: Routledge, 1993 and Jones, A. Body Art:
Performing the Subject. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998. Jennifer Blessing”s
exhibition catalogue Gender Performance in Photography is also pertinent here as she traces the
psychoanalytic roots of current gender theory to the late 1920”s when a burst of publications
examined female sexuality and identity, notably Joan Rivière”s essay on masquerade. Her idea of
feminine identity as an alienated social performance rather than inherent was resuscitated by
Lacan in 1958 in “The meaning of the phallus” and since the 1970”s Lacanian constructions of
femininity as masquerade have been developed in various disciplines.
Although Miller addresses the camera directly in the shot published in Le Surréalisme
au service de la Révolution, the shot Chadwick uses as an illustration is the only one of five
Il y aura une fois is an allegorical fantasy which stresses the primacy of the imagination. The text is mostly devoted to Breton’s wish to conduct a surrealist experiment focused on the confinement of young girls in an old, rented house just outside Paris. The illustration would initially appear to support Caws’ interpretation, as the text is generally characterised by machismo and restriction. However this analysis is inadequate and a closer investigation of the image reveals a reference not only to the main narrative from which the caption is taken, but also to the preface and postscript which enclose this, in which Breton wrestled with the relationship between the creative imagination and politics.

Andrew Rothwell has noted that Breton’s introductory remarks introduced political elements to the imagery he used to characterise the powers of the imagination. Breton appears to claim practical creative virtues for mental creative ability. Rothwell noted that the text contains an image of technological progress, the hydro-electric dam, common in Soviet propaganda.

Breton appears here to be assimilating into Surrealism’s discourse a potent political symbol of mastery over nature and hope for material improvement, as if to appropriate for the movement a central role, as provider of imaginative resources, in the revolutionary transformation of society.

The dam is able to transform the energy of water and Breton suggests that “Being wary of the practical power of our imagination is like refusing to use electricity.” Rothwell observed that Breton steps back from this position in the conclusion to the text when the stream returns and it is the “source” of the unfettered inspiration which, although disruptive and unpredictable, promises much more than the rigidity and control of the dam.

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231 A full translation of “Il y aura une fois” is provided in Appendix B as this text is unavailable in translation. This text was kindly translated in full at my request by Eliane Meyer, all translations cited from “Il y aura une fois” belong to her.

232 The caption reads “... ces jeunes filles étant dernières à s’être signalées dans un scandale de maison hantée ...” (Voir page 3) “these young girls should have had an involvement in some haunted house scandal” (See page 3).

233 Rothwell, A. ‘Commitment or Lip-Service? Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, no. 1” in Dolamore, J. (ed.) Making Connections: Essays in French Culture and Society in
The illustration to the essay visualises tension in many ways. There is tension in the juxtaposition of flesh and steel and this is exacerbated by the fact that the traditional subject of the nude is accessorised with steel, a futuristic material. Although the fact that the wire mesh is a sabre guard is not immediately apparent the object has the appearance of both a fashion item and a protective helmet, something which is simultaneously practical and decorative. When the item is identified as a sabre guard it is recognised as a weapon and a defence. The light reflected on the metal grid and the shadow of the grid upon the flesh give the model an unsettling spectral quality but this is mixed with an allure. The fact that the composition is phallic and the model is exposed but veiled by this cold material creates an erotic frisson. It is difficult to focus on anything except the eyes in the centre of the image, as they do hold a challenge and arrest the viewer’s attention. Despite being spellbound by the eyes the viewer’s attention is drawn to the exposed ear which occupies an equally central position. The ear also offers a challenge as it appears to be open, waiting with a sense of expectancy. The viewer thus becomes implicated in this imagined surrealist exercise. The ear can serve as a substitute for both female genitalia and anus and is a receptive opening. It is a vehicle for language and this emphasis on words along with the absurdity of the sabre guard as headwear reinforces Breton’s text in which he eventually abandons the pragmatic harnessing of the imagination in favour of complete freedom. In the photograph the practical use of the imagination is literally turned on its head with this frivolous use of modern technology. This image is ambiguous and does raise questions about economies of desire but it is also extremely rich in possible meanings when read in conjunction with the text and in the wider context of the first issue of Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution.

The second issue of the journal is also notable for polemics as the group aligned themselves with the Communist Party but not with those members in France around L’Humanité. Two photographs serve to deride the official organ of the PCF, one is a reproduction of a worker’s letter to the paper and the other is an
The film still from Buñuel’s *L’Age D’Or* (1930) reproduced in issue 1, showing the scene where the young woman performs fellatio on the toe of a garden sculpture, also uses this juxtaposition of cold material and warm flesh.
image of a man engrossed in a copy of Détective which sports a typical cover showing a bound woman, gagged in this instance. (Fig. 30) The cover of the crime magazine dominates the image and the slogan on the back page “Nothing but the truth” is highlighted. The caption declares that it shows M. Parain, the ex-editor of the crime weekly, and attacks the appointment of someone who had associated with the Kessel brothers and their fascist colleagues as the literary editor of L’Humanité.

These swipes at the French Communist Party were not the main focus of the second issue however as the group was determined to continue with their promotion of cultural radicalism. The first hors texte in this issue is Man Ray’s Hommage à D. A. F. de Sade. Chadwick suggests that the photograph of the severed head acknowledges Man Ray’s “longtime fascination with the eighteenth-century libertine for whom the normative female body was the violated and denaturalized body.” The Surrealists were fascinated with Sade, Man Ray in particular. Sade had featured in the list of “honorary” surrealists in the first manifesto in 1924, the first journal had praised him and his rehabilitation dominated issue 2 of Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution which included Maurice Heine’s seminal text “Actualité de Sade” as well as René Char’s text Hommage which Man Ray’s photograph illustrates. At the same time as criticising bourgeois morality the surrealist journal attempted to establish a surrealist morality in opposition to it and Sade was instrumental in this project. Interpretations of Sade differed in the group but for Breton his violence against conformism addressed political and moral issues and the extreme sexual explicitness of the works was thus less important than their allegorical nature. Dali’s lecture on ‘The Moral Position of Surrealism” is useful here; Haim

236 Rien que la vérité” Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, issue 2, hors textes.
237 The caption reads “M. Parain, ancien gérant de Détective, est actuellement chargé de la rubrique les livres, à l’Humanité.”
238 Chadwick, “Lee Miller”s Two Bodies” p 214.
239 The purpose of this thesis is not to attempt to resolve the problems attached to sadistic imagery promoted by the group. The discussion of Sade focuses on surrealist morality in contrast with bourgeois morality. David Bate explored this particular photograph and the relationship between surrealism and Sade in detail in Chapter 5 of Photography and Surrealism, pp. 145 — 171. He offered a measured analysis which located the surrealists’ interest in visual sadism in their inquiries into to the ‘complex structure of suffering in love.” He acknowledged an imbalance of power in favour of men in the economies of desire but suggested that for the female figure, surrealism offered a discourse in which sexuality was represented outside of ‘bourgeois femininity.”
Finkelstein has suggested that although this text offered no sustained theoretical stance, Dali was in this instance firmly allied to Surrealist thinking as he emphasised its subversiveness and its penchant for scandal. In this lecture, initially delivered to the Ateneo Club in Barcelona, Dali reaffirmed the surrealist commitment to “lay waste once and for all to the ideas of family, homeland, religion.” He stated that “a new moral crisis has been provoked” and threatened those who “persist in the amorality of decent and reasonable ideas.” The surrealist journal constantly attacked bourgeois morality and juxtaposed it with an alternative. The hors textes were instrumental in this and the photographs included were used with intentionality as acute as that of the commercial press.

In the second issue the group also found it necessary to respond directly to a swelling patriotism. The first issue of Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution had attacked nationalism through an exploitation of the official response to the antics of Georges Sadoul and Jean Caupenne when they provoked the army to take legal action against them. Sadoul and Caupenne had, by chance, come across a list of the young men who had succeeded in the entrance exam for the French military academy and had sent the top candidate a personally insulting and violently anti-nationalist missive instructing him to decline his placement. The charges against Sadoul and Caupenne of insulting the flag, the homeland and French officers were subsequently dismissed. The Surrealists were delighted with this publicity and devoted over six pages to the scandal in their journal. The article was illustrated with a copy of the letter sent to Sadoul’s father from the Military Governor of Paris which reproduced a large part of the offending text in the original letter in which the two surrealists “spit on the tricolour”.

Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution continued this campaign to oppose nationalistic values and issue 2 began with a preface consisting of press cuttings relating to the recent Atlantic crossing by the French aviators Dieudonne Costes and Maurice Bellonte and ended with a photograph which ridiculed the actress Marie Costes, the wife of the pilot. The excerpts used represent the nationalist

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21 Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, no. 1, hors-textes.
fervour in the media that resulted from the successful flight wherein Costes’ reputation as a fighter pilot in World War 1 was fully exploited. It is clear that the surrealists would have felt the need to respond to this. The cuttings include effusive letters to newspapers from a variety of readers including one from a young child to Marie Costes, telling her that he personally had prayed to Jesus for the safety of her husband. The articles reproduced in this collated display also focus on Mrs Costes. Marie Costes was well known in France as a singer and actress; a Kertész portrait of her had featured on the cover of Vu in April of 1930.\textsuperscript{242} The cuttings included a story in which the French ambassador commended the fact that Costes had refused all offers of commercial publicity on arrival in America as the pilot wanted his success to be solely the preserve of nationalist propaganda. This cutting is juxtaposed with other stories which used the flight to blatantly promote French products ranging from toothpaste to socks. The reader is also informed that Marie Costes took this opportunity to promote her forthcoming film.

Excerpts from the popular press relating to nationalism are peppered throughout the journal and Vu in particular was targeted for attack due to its prominent position and visibility on newstands. Nationalism had always been a prominent feature of Vu, for example in April 1930 a major article on immigration in New York outlined the system that had been established at Ellis Island in great detail. The focus was on the control of immigrants and the text suggested that the logistics of immigration in North America could teach France valuable lessons in how to filter out “undesirables”. The need for manpower was granted but severer medical and morality controls were deemed necessary to ensure that immigrants could “no longer bring poor health and criminality into the country”\textsuperscript{243}

As part of the survey of the press in issue 2, Eluard ridiculed the special edition of Vu published to celebrate the 100\textsuperscript{th} centenary of the tricolour. The special edition was dominated by propaganda about how much Algeria had benefitted from imperialism in terms of education and medical provision. Eluard ridiculed some of the articles in the issue including, “The most seductive women in the

\textsuperscript{242} Vu, no. 109, 16 April 1930.
\textsuperscript{243} Vu, no. 112, 7 June 1930.
world are French”, “The French military machines are the fastest in the world” and concluded that “La connerie est française, la vérole est française, les porcs sont français ...”. 244 Eluard noted that the cover is coloured red, white and blue. It was at this time that the cover design of Vu was refined and began to include these three colours, previously covers had been restricted to white and sepia. Photographs were used to evidence the claims made throughout the magazine about the supremacy of France and its produce, French wine was pictured and claimed to be the best in the world, the article on the supremacy of French technology used photographs of factories, the article on the military used photographs of ships. The article on French women being the most seductive in the world was illustrated by photographs of six aristocratic women and the article entitled “The triumph of French taste: Parisian Couture” contrasted French elegance to the “hideous Germans” and “monstrous Americans”. 245 The surrealist journal also used photographs productively, both to counter nationalism and to promote internationalism.

In the second issue of the surrealist journal internationalism was introduced as a desirable alternative to chauvinism in the form of the two photographs from the Soviet International Congress of Children in Berlin. (Fig 31) These images show gatherings of Communist youth from across the globe involved in educational activities together. They are essentially staged Soviet propaganda shots and the children appear bored and miserable; the surrealists may have chosen to publish these Soviet photographs to suggest an alternative to war for the future generation but they may also have been aware of the ambiguity of these images. At this time in Paris, because of the polarisation of politics in Europe, there was an enormous curiosity about life in the Soviet state, evident in the popularity of (mostly romantic) accounts of visits to Russia written by liberal intellectuals. Eluard highlighted an article by Mme Titayna published in Lectures pour tous, a photographic illustrated literary magazine, which was an account of her voyage to Russia, “the perfect model of the workers’ state”. 246

244 Damned stupidity is French, the pox is French, pigs are French ...”, Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, no. 2, p 25.
245 Vu, no. 121, 30th June 1930
246 Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, no. 2, p 24.
The photograph of Marie Costes published at the end of the journal is used to pull together various threads of ideas within the second issue. (Fig. 32) Marie Costes is pictured in a domestic interior surrounded by dolls and soft toys, one of which she comically scolds. We are led to believe that this is in fact the home of the Costes as a photograph of her husband occupies prime position on the wall and a framed photograph of Marie Costes is visible on the furniture. The caption Damned stupidity in 1930: Marie Costes inside her little home” referred to Eluard’s article on Vu but also referenced the short text by Lenin’s widow, Nadezhda Krupskaya entitled “Sur Lénine”. The text described how Lenin detested “bourgeois sentimentality” in the image of man at home shown with his wife, children, photographs of the members of his family on the bureau, books, dressing gown, a little cat on the knee, his lordly place of residence where he rests from public life. 

Krupskaya had been made responsible for education policies in the Soviet Union in 1917 and this lends her a gravitas in stark contrast to Marie Costes, who is a comic figure in the photograph. This attack on the bourgeois family is expanded because the photograph mirrors the film still from L’Age d’Or featured in the first issue of the journal where Lya Lys is shown lounging on the sofa after masturbating. The attacks on bourgeois morality throughout the second issue thus culminated in this ridiculing of Marie Costes in the photograph which personified the insidious nature of bourgeois morality.

The hors textes in the third issue were dominated by surrealist objects but also included Man Ray’s Primacy of Matter over thought and a response to the announcement of Marc Chadourne as the winner of the Prix Gringoire. (Fig. 33) The first hors texte was simply captioned “Response to the Prix Gringoire” and referred to Marc Chadourne’s award of the annual literary prize for his popular travel book on China, illustrated by the Mexican artist Miguel Covarrubias. The photograph shows the cover of a Chinese Communist Youth pamphlet which has been designed to conceal the true nature of the publication and disguise it as a romantic novel. The surrealists were keen to counter a romantic image of China.
Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 2, p 17.
by highlighting the persecution of Communists by the nationalist government. The image is complex because it mirrors Covarrubias’ illustrations in *Chine*, which are similar in style, and alludes to their superficial character in a book which fails to reveal the chaotic reality of Chinese society. This photograph was held by Breton until his death along with the photographs from the anti-colonial exhibition.

Man Ray’s *Primacy of Matter over thought*, (Fig. 34) which shows Meret Oppenheim prone and nude is generally interpreted in the context of surrealism and “woman” or the notion of “informe”249 and its context in the third issue of the review which began with a page devoted to Hegel followed by Aragon’s lengthy text “Surrealism and the need to become revolutionary” has been neglected. The preface in the third issue established Hegel as instrumental in the development of Marx’s ideas and lamented the fact that his works were marginalised and not readily available in France. Aragon’s essay begins “La reconnaissance du matérialisme dialectique comme seule philosophie révolutionnaire, la compréhension et l’acceptation sans réserves de ce matérialisme par des intellectuels ... ce sont là les traits essentiels de l’évolution des surréalistes.”250 Hegel was an important figure in the radicalisation of the movement and his ideas were promoted heavily in the third issue as well as no. 5/6 where he was again given the prominent preface position in the journal in Thirion’s introduction of Lenin’s notes and extracts on Hegel’s *Science of Logic*.251 Breton would later outline

an adherence to all the principles of dialectical materialism endorsed in their entirety by surrealism: the primacy of matter over thought; adoption of the Hegelian dialectic as the science of the general laws of movement

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248 The second Chinese revolution had been defeated in 1927. The Chinese Communist Party had capitulated to the nationalist Kuomintang, leading to the harsh persecution and elimination of Communists. The Communist Party passed into illegality at this time.

249 This image provided the cover photograph for Krauss’s *L’Amour fou* exhibition catalogue. Bate discusses it as an example of the “structure of emptiness” that characterised the surrealist female nude, *Photography and Surrealism*, p 157.

250 The recognition of dialectical materialism as the only revolutionary philosophy, the understanding and unreserved acceptance of this materialism by intellectuals ... these are the essential traits of the evolution of the surrealists.” Aragon, L. “Le Surréalisme et le devenir révolutionnaire”, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 3, p 2.

251 Thirion, A. “En lisant Hegel”, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 6, pp. 1 -
of the external world as well as that of human thought; the materialist conception of history in *Non national Boundaries of Surrealism*. 252

Man Ray’s photograph, made from two solarised negatives, provided Breton with an image which illustrated the dialectical relationships that exist in both thought and in nature. The site of the female nude is significant due to the centrality of “woman” in surrealist thought and the belief that she was closer to the subconscious. The nude is a useful site in which to introduce the idea of the Hegelian dialectic as it denotes “purity” and demonstrates well the relationship between “being and nothingness” resulting in “becoming”. For Hegel existence meant pure “being” but was indistinguishable from “nothing” because what is coming into being is, at the same time, also returning to nothing. This concept is illustrated well by the human body which is generally considered to be a permanent structure, but even in the 1920s it was recognised that in fact, most of our tissues are constantly being renewed in a balance between the constant death of old cells and the constant birth of new ones and Breton would have been aware of this with his medical background. The photograph illustrates this dynamic model of nature and establishes dialectics as a fundamental aspect of the nature of reality.

*Primacy of matter over thought* is dreamlike, the body seems to float in space and appears to be both melting away and becoming solid from a liquid state. There is a de-familiarisation of the body; body parts are made strange by their positioning which creates an awareness of flesh and bones and a simultaneous sense of both fragility and strength. The photograph is filled with delicate detail. The body appears “tough”, the skin on the thigh nearest to the viewer appears thickened with visible pores whereas the feet and ankles melt together. The woman seems to be relaxed but also tense and there is a sinister aspect to the image. The use of light and shade produces shadows, particularly at the waist and up the left side of the torso to the armpit, which are troubling and create an angularity in contrast to the smooth curves of the right side of the body. The

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sexual charge in the image is very strong. Oppenheim seems to be in an unconscious state, asleep or dreaming, as she cups her right breast and squeezes her nipple between her thumb and forefinger, her tight leg is raised adding tension. The left hand floats freely, palm upward while the left leg seems to sink. The image was clearly chosen to represent dialectical relationships in thought and in nature and the caption, a basic postulate of Marxism, confirms this intention.

The decisive role of photography in the drive to respond to and offer a perspective on issues that preoccupied the press at any given time is epitomised by the surrealists’ response to the Exposition Coloniale organised by the French government as a celebration of colonial success in 1931 and the trial of the Papin sisters in 1933. Bate has dealt with the anti-colonial images in detail and provided a valuable analysis. He noted the widespread coverage in the press of the colonial exhibition, including numerous special editions featuring photographic picture stories, as well as the fact that the anti-colonial exhibition made extensive use of photographic evidence in displays and in documenting the temporary show. For Bate the surrealist exhibits and their preservation and publication in photographs demonstrated that it was only the surrealists who attacked the ideology of colonialism.

In the case of the Papin sisters, the “before and after” photographic montage published in the fifth issue of Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution (Fig. 35) has come to represent the case itself. The first published account of the murders appeared in La Sarthe du soir on February 3rd, 1933 and reported the events of the previous day as they had unfolded as follows:

The wife and daughter of a M. Lancelin had been the victims of an abominable crime, the most odious ever seen in Mans, committed by the servants of the house, two sisters, Christine and Léa Papin. On returning home in the evening M. Lancelin was alarmed at being unable to enter his home and sought the assistance of a police sergeant and two officers who gained access. They discovered the two bodies on the first floor landing; the head and face of Mme Lancelin had been completely smashed in so that her features were unrecognisable. On first examination it was
difficult to ascertain which injuries had killed them but the back of the bodies were horribly torn open. Two deep knife cuts had opened the lower back of the women and their legs had suffered knife wounds that made them resemble *baguettes*.

The police went upstairs to the door of the maids’ room from where light had been seen from the street below and the newly arrived police superintendent forced the door. The sisters were asleep in the same bed, the hammer used in the crime lay on the floor. They woke up with a start and they then confessed, in faltering voices, that they had killed in self defence. Other officials, including a legal medic arrived at the house to witness the appalling spectacle. Blood had spurted up the walls and stained a table two metres from the ground. A bloody knife was found under the corpse of *Mme Lancelin*. A crushed pewter jug which had lost its handle due to the force with which one of the women had been hit was found on the steps up to the second floor. Around the victims lay their handbags, keys, hair pins and ornaments, splashed with blood. But the most awful find was an eye, lying on the stairs.

This initial report was accompanied by a photograph of the sisters looking demure, allegedly owned by their mother. Dupré suggested that with this report an iconography had been established which would later be revived by the surrealists. The police identification photographs of the sisters were published the following day (Fig 36) and thus the surrealists had the material to produce their “before and after” collage.

The medical report on the victims provided further details. Both women were still wearing their coats when attacked, their skirts had been lifted and their pants pulled down. *Mme Lancelin* suffered injuries predominantly to her head, face and skull, she had been “horribly mutilated”, her head crushed so that one could only recognise pieces of skin, broken teeth, brain tissue and blood. The left side of her brain had been reduced to a pulp. Part of her head had been scalped and the skull was visible with fragments of tin encrusted in it. The lip had been torn off, no cheeks or eye sockets remained; an ear and two eyeballs were found underneath the body. Her genital area was unmolested. *Mme Lancelin*’s watch had stopped at 7.22 pm.

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The injuries of *Mlle Lancelin* were similar but one eye remained intact and she held a lock of brown hair in her clenched fist, her thighs were exposed, she was menstruating and her buttocks and legs were covered in deep parallel cuts, her watch had stopped at 7.47 pm. The lack of bleeding from the cuts indicated that these injuries were inflicted after death; the murderers had attacked the body of *Mlle Lancelin* in a particularly relentless fashion. The Doctor concluded that the women had been attacked with the pewter jug and had then had their eyeballs pulled out while still living. The victims had been “finished off” with a hammer and a knife. The women had little opportunity to struggle, the blows from the jug were extremely violent leading to considerable physical damage. The Doctor identified the most distinctive aspect of the case as the fact that the eyeballs were pulled out using fingers, at a stage when the victims would have been alive but unable to defend themselves due to the level of their injuries. Details of the case, including the testimonies of the sisters provided material for sensational reports in the press.

An interest in the Papin sisters is often used as an example of the tendency of the group to champion female criminals such as Germaine Berton and Violette Nozière, who was tried in Paris for patricide shortly after the Papin verdict. This preoccupation is not the focus of this thesis but it is important to distinguish between these cases and identify the nature of the surrealists’ interest and investment in them. It is clear that the group held a romanticised view of all of these women. Also their interest was not driven simply by a concern for the individuals but by a desire to make productive use of the opportunities arising from their predicaments. Chapter 2 has shown how, in the context of *La Révolution Sur réaliste*, Berton’s case was used to develop a perspective on suicide, and it was this rather than her crime which was the focus. In the case of the Papin sisters it is important to bear in mind the fact that there was an extraordinary level of interest in the case in Mans and in Paris as the details were made public. Also, the wider context of the fifth issue of the journal is important.

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255 The medical report of Dr Chartier as well as the police sketch and photographs of the crime scene are reproduced in Dupré, *La “solution” du passage à l’acte*, pp. 20–29.

in terms of understanding the short text on the Papin sisters by Éluard and Péret and the accompanying photographs.

The photomontage published by the surrealists has been subject to much theorisation and some of this scholarship is pertinent to this thesis as it offers assistance in locating these images in the context of contemporary press coverage. 257 Jonathon Eburne has suggested that the Papin case marked the point at which the group “largely turned away from the investigation of the political and ethical possibilities of violence and turned instead toward clinical analysis of the causes of violence” 258 and this is clear, especially following Lacan’s contribution. 259 However the surrealists, as well a broad section of the public recognised that the excesses of the crime and moreover the conduct of the case had brought morality into sharp relief. The case was exploited by the group to attack the legal system, religion, the state, the bourgeois family and sexual repression in a way that distinguished their position from sensationalist or opportunist interventions.

While the judiciary were hostile to suggestions that the sisters could not be held responsible for their actions due to mental illness, the press were generally

257 Edwards, R and Reader, K. The Papin Sisters, Oxford University Press, 2001 provides a concise overview of recent scholarship. See also Jouvre, N. W. Female Genesis: Creativity, Self and Gender, Polity Press, 1998, pp. 64 - 84 for an elaboration of Neil Cox’s assertion in Marat/Sade/Picasso”, p 404, that the “after” photomontage emphasises a move away from the femininity of the “before” shot towards a “maleness”. Cox as well as Coffman, C. E. Insane Passions: Lesbianism and Psychosis in Literature and Film, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2006, pp. 66 - 69 and particularly Lane, C. “The Delirium of Interpretation: Writing the Papin Affair” Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies” 5.2, 1993, pp 43 - 46 pay close attention to the positioning of the brief report of the Papin sisters by Éluard and Péret next to an article by Paul Nougé on Magritte and the latter’s illustration Vierge Retroussée (Trussed-up Virgin)(1 932) which shows a nun winking at the viewer while revealing stockings, suspenders and high heels under her habit. Finally, Jonathon Eburne’s recently published book Surrealism and the art of crime Ithaca New York: Cornell University Press, 2008 dealt with the Papin case in detail and focused on the surrealists’ developing interest in mental illness and paranoia. Eburne expressed a belief that the violence of the Papin sisters was not defended or celebrated in the same way as that of Germaine Berton and Violette Nozière and that it encouraged a fruitful examination of the violence of individual instincts and unconscious desires within the group. Eburne examined the surrealist interest in coming to terms with the analytical potential that paranoia gained through its psychoanalytic study. In terms of the discussion of the photographs, Eburne concentrated on how the images focus on the transformation of the murderers themselves. He also noted that the practice of collaging collective portraits from individual police photographs was common in the press at this time, p 179.

258 Eburne, Surrealism and the art of crime, p 184.

sympathetic. Despite the ruling of the court that they were mentally sound, Christine and Léa Papin were generally considered to be guilty but insane. Apart from notable examples, reports in the mass media in Paris although patronising and lurid at times, were characterised by a genuine curiosity about the psychoanalytic mystery of the case.²⁶⁰ From the beginning the press questioned the motives and sanity of the sisters and this was fuelled by their behaviour in custody.

Jérôme and Jean Tharaud, two prominent journalists who covered the story for Par is-Soir and whose reports informed Lacan’s article were among the forty journalists in court to report the verdict: “The door opened. Here they are! No photograph can give an idea of the mystery that enters with these two girls... what strange creatures ... the mystery in these girls remains as impenetrable as before the trial.”²⁶¹ The article went on to question the wisdom of the three appointed psychiatric experts in the case, who had, on two occasions reported that both sisters were of sound mind and thus wholly responsible for their crimes. The report ended with a claim that the jury had not understood the case fully as the reports of other medical experts such as Dr Logre, the mental health specialist employed by the defence had been censored.²⁶² Dr Logre had been denied access to the accused and denied the right to speak in court, but had subsequently raised the possibility that the attacks stemmed from a "sexual impulse close to sadism" and argued for further tests by mental health specialists at a conference held for journalists.²⁶³ The notes taken at this meeting by reporters revealed his planned contribution, which was not made public until the case had ended. The Tharaud brothers reported Logre’s notion that the sisters had an incestuous relationship which was complicated with sadism.²⁶⁴ Vu reported the verdict in a front page story entitled “The Papin sisters: A crime without a motive”. The article speculated that the murders were the result of a "monstrous personality" disorder

²⁰ Both the extreme right wing Gringoire and Candide regularly called for beheadings.
²¹ Paris-Soir, 30 September, 1933 cited in Dupré, La “solution” du passage à l’acte, p 86.
²² Dupré, La “solution” du passage à l"acte, p 123.
²³ A journalist from La Sarthe reported on the conference with Dr Logre, cited in Dupré, La “solution” du passage à l"acte , p 90.
²⁴ The notes of the Tharaud brothers are printed in full in Dupré, La “solution” du
passage à l’acte, p 91.
and referred to the judgement of the expert panel of mental health specialists who found them to be sane “a joke,” stating that the main questions surrounding the case had simply not been asked. The article suggests that the most startling aspect of the case was the “intimacy” of the sisters and the fact that the crime included an element of “perverse eroticism” of which there was no mention in the experts’ report. Five weeks after the verdict Âllo Police, the popular crime magazine interviewed Dr Logre and published an extensive report on the case over a four week period entitled “Have we committed two madwomen?”

Despite taking morbid pleasure in the facts of the case which were widely published, rather than vengefulness, popular imagination was focused on the appearance of the sisters. The “before and after” photographs of the sisters were used in the local press to emphasise the “banality of evil” and the horror of the potential threat to bourgeois families from household staff who were relative strangers in their midst. The photographs were also published widely in the Parisian press. On February 9th Détective published the photographs on the front page accompanied by the caption “Angels or Monsters?” followed by a description of the sisters as “enraged sheep”. Christopher Lane highlighted the puns on the visual innocence of the “before” photograph as the oxymoronic term connotes both “faithful members of a flock” as well as derangement “in ways that usefully indicate the precarious social marker between symbolic incorporation and violent expulsion.” Lane suggests that the immense public prurience that accompanied the trial seemed to occur, in part, because all related factors between psychosis and the wider “neurotic” culture were denied, while all dissimilarities were exaggerated. The “before and after” photographs in the popular press emphasised the apparent “normalcy” of the siblings prior to the act implied by the gap between the photographs - the murders - which had demonised the sisters. It was this apparent metamorphosis that had gripped the public imagination. Dr. Logre attempted to address these concerns to the court, and after the trial in the press, when he probed the “abnormal” relationship between the sisters, their persecution complex, their “doubled” morality and their

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Vu, no. 290, 4 October 1933.

Lane, C. “*The Delirium of Interpretation*”, p 55.

Lane, C. “*The Delirium of Interpretation*”, p 37.
sexual sadism. The montage produced by the surrealists appears to dissolve the gap between “before” and “after” by placing these words in quotation marks, as if to alert the reader to the dangers of fabricating a story and by bringing the sisters together in the “after” montage. In many ways, the “after” picture is more natural” than the posed studio photograph and suggests that the potential for psychosis partly stemmed from the unnatural restriction and abuse within the bourgeois family.

The surrealists were particularly interested in sexualised violence and highlighted the sadistic aspect of the crime very early in the proceedings, in May 1933. In 1905 Freud had asserted “the history of human civilisation shows beyond any doubt that there is an intimate connection between cruelty and the sexual instinct” and had developed the idea that the interface between pleasure and suffering was narrow in Beyond the Pleasure Principle in 1920. During the interwar period, because of a general liberalisation of the interpretation of obscenity laws, sexualised material became widely available and mild sado-masochistic imagery was common, on postcards and soft pornography but also in crime magazines such as Détective and Scandale. There was also a notable rise in sado-masochistic fantasies in popular literature, notably the Orties Blanches and Prima series for which authors such as Pierre MacOrlan wrote under pen names.

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270 The law in France relating to obscenity, “outrage aux bonnes mœurs” did not define acceptable behaviour” and thus the law in relation to licentious material was enforced in a haphazard fashion. In the period between the wars a tolerance towards material involving nudity and heterosexuality grew while material including “perversion” or “unwholesome” sexuality, including homosexuality and sado-masochism was increasingly targeted by police. Carolyn Dean provides evidence of this from police reports in the period up to 1939 in The Frail Social Body: Pornography, Homosexuality, and other fantasies in Inter-War France, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, pp. 52 — 59.
271 A survey of magazines revealed the ubiquity of sado-masochistic imagery. In soft pornography the classified ads for “deluxe” collections of photographs as well as the magazines” content featured sado-masochism heavily. Notable examples include Brassaï’s full page photograph captioned “The Wisdom Tooth” of a scantily clad woman, lying in a dentist’s chair having a tooth extracted, one leg lifted high to expose her suspenders, the dentist gripping her head as he leans over her in Pour Lire a Deux, no. 2, July 1934. Paris-Sex-Appeal provides examples of the contemporary preoccupation with satanism and sexual cruelty with features such as “Le Culte de Satan” a story of torture chambers in Parisian brothels accompanied by photographs of bound women, no. 21, April 1935. Scandale, a sensationalist crime magazine launched in 1933 which differentiated itself from Détective through its extensive use of formidable documentation photographie” as declared on the front cover regularly featured similar stories. No. 5, December 1933 for example illustrated “Revelations Scandaleuses” by Georges St. Bonnet with photographs of a woman manacled and chained. This tendency is also
visible in \( V_\nu \).
and in illustration with artists such as Hérouat. This interest in sexualised violence was partly attributed to the war and became a metaphor for moral decline and it is in this context that the surrealists established Sade and Lautréamont as moralist writers and stood in opposition to conventional morality. In his study of literary eroticism in 1923 Desnos had identified Sade as a moralist and his œuvre as “exceptionally intellectual.” Lautréamont had himself defined his work in a tradition of moralistic writers.

In Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution the text and the photographs are bound together by the caption which extracted the last line from the article, They came out, fully armed, from a chant of Maldoror.” Éluard and Péret’s succinct and dramatic text suggested that family life, convent life, and domestic service had fostered a deep hatred in the sisters which had somehow engendered the violence expressed in the murders.

The Papin sisters were brought up in a convent in Le Mans. Then their mother placed them in a “bourgeois” home in this town. For six years they bore duties, demands, insults, with the most perfect submissiveness. Fear, fatigue and humiliations were slowly nurturing hatred inside them: hatred, the sweetest alcohol that secretly consoles, for it promises to marry physical strength to violence one day. The day came when Léa and Christine Papin repaid evil in its own coin, a hot iron coin. They literally massacred their mistresses, plucking out their eyes, crushing their heads. Then they carefully washed themselves and, freed, indifferent, went to bed. Lightening had fallen, the wood was burnt, the sun definitely put out. They came out, fully armed, from a chant of Maldoror...

It is significant that the surrealists chose to make use of the photographs which were ubiquitous in the mass media and provided a focus for interest in the case.

273 Dean cites the following texts as contributions to the debate about the causes and effects of the proliferation of sexualised violence in French culture in the inter war period: Professor Malherman, Le Plaisir dans la souffrance, Paris: Quignon, 1929; Dr Apertus, La flagellation dite passionelle, Paris: Collection des Orties Blanches, 1927; Dr Englische, L’Histoire de l’éroticisme en Europe, Paris: Aldor, 1933 and Anquetil, G, Satan conduit le bal, Paris: Anquetil, 1925.
274 Desnos’ book, a resumé of erotic literature was written at the behest of Jacques Doucet. “Moraliste, Sade l’est plus que tout autres” ; “Du point du vue érotique, l’œuvre de Sade est un œuvre supérieurement intellectuelle.”, Desnos, De l’érotisme, pp. 77 - 78.
275 “Sorties tout armées d’un chant de Maldoror ...” Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, no. 5.
276 Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, no. 5, p 28.
The prominent reference to *Maldoror* is generally neglected in scholarship, or seen as an extension of the admiration held by the group for the satanic hero to the sisters.\(^{277}\) The surrealists had of course been responsible for the “discovery” of Lautréamont when they chanced upon a copy of *Les Chants de Maldoror* in a bookshop and discovered the only copies of *Poésies* in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*.\(^{278}\) *Maldoror* was at the forefront of their minds in 1933 as Skira was about to publish a luxury edition with illustrations by Dali. Indeed there is a full page advertisement for the publication at the front of issue 5 of the surrealist journal. The *actual* remorseless and sadistic violence of the Papin sisters was a match for that of Lautréamont’s poet and the surrealists identified with them as they had renounced conventional morality. In the “after” photograph produced in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* the sisters appear not as “monsters” but as anti-heroes. However the allusion to *Maldoror* is arguably more complex than this because the use of the photographs appears to draw attention to the fact that through them a fiction or a series of fictions was being produced around the facts of the case. The viewer is made aware of the fact that the photographs are not “innocent” because the familiar and official “after” photographs had been collaged by the surrealists to bring the sisters together to mirror the “before” photograph.

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\(^{277}\) Cox did not address the reference to *Maldoror*. Edwards and Reader stated that the reference to one of the surrealists’ favourite texts “gives the action poetic force, lifting it from the realms of everyday and social reality and promoting it to the realms of the literary”, p 55. Jouvre (p 70) and Coffman (p 68) explored the notion of gender in relation to the reference and concluded that for the surrealists, criminally psychotic women stand in for the male cultural revolutionary. In her assertion that the surrealists recuperated what was seen as the poetic charge of the murders for themselves, Jouvre made the observation that in the “before” photograph Christine Papin bears a remarkable resemblance to Breton and this is obvious once pointed out. Ebune noted the reference to Lautréamont but argued that this does not place the sisters in the pantheon of revolutionary heroes” as is usually suggested as the group did not heroicise the Papin sisters in the way that they did Berton or Nozières. Indeed he argued that the case was significant for the group precisely because it complicated any efforts to legitimise their violence as heroic or revolutionary, p 183.

\(^{278}\) Lautréamont had only published two books before his early death in 1870 aged 24. His works had little impact and were dismissed as the worthless ramblings of a psychopath. At the end of the 19th century Alfred Jarry and Rémy de Gourmont showed some interest in them but it was only in the early 20th century, with his discovery by the surrealists, that the author became recognised as significant. In 1917 Soupault discovered *Les Chants de Maldoror* and gave it to Breton to read. Aragon and Breton discovered *Poésies* in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* and published the text with a preface by Breton in *Littérature* in April and May in 1919. In 1925 the surrealists published a special edition of *Le Disque Vert* dedicated to the author. *Les Chants de Maldoror* were published in 1927 by Henri Blanchétier and by Skira in 1934 with 42 illustrations.
by Dali. In 1940 Breton included the author in his *Anthology of Black Humour*. 
Like *Maldoror* the Papin sisters were unique. Lautréamont’s novel is concerned with, among other things, the relationship between reality and fiction. The novel periodically veers from fiction to reality when the author simply abandons the narrative. It is fitting therefore that Éluard and Péret’s text, as well as the illustration, blur the boundaries between reality and fiction. In the text, with the exception of a few lines, it is difficult to extract one from the other but in the end fiction triumphs. In *La Vie immédiate*, published a year before the murders, Eluard had written “I insist on mixing fiction with fearsome realities.”279 At the very start of the first book of *Maldoror* the reader is alerted to the fact that a narrative is being created because they are addressed directly, and this conversation with the reader continues throughout the novel. In the introductory section, Lautréamont warns his readers about the potential for moral contamination, but seduces them nevertheless and positions them as accomplices. The readers of the popular press who were fixated with the photographs of the Papin sisters and simultaneously repelled and intrigued by the case were also implicated in a crime with their own “insatiable thirst for infinity” which echoed that of the sisters.280

There was much speculation in the press about the sexual aspects of the murders when details of the crime emerged. Given this interest, by pushing the sisters together in the montaged “after” photograph the surrealists deliberately evoke lesbianism and sexual abandon, in contrast to the “before” photograph which, taken with the text regarding their upbringing, evokes sexual repression. Unlike *L. "Humanité* which supported the sisters but crudely used the case to attack the institution of the “bourgeois family” the surrealists were determined to exploit the transgressive sexuality of the Papin sisters.281

280 In Book One Maldoror’s mother advises him on his dreams of vicious wild dogs, “When you are in bed and you hear the barking of the dogs in the countryside, hide beneath your blanket but do not deride what they do: they have an insatiable thirst for the infinite, as you, and I, and all other pale, long-faced human beings do. I will even allow you to stand in front of your window to contemplate this spectacle, which is quite edifying.” Lautréamont, *Maldoror and Poems*, London: Penguin, 1978, p 39.
281 Reader and Edwards offer details of the coverage in *L. "Humanité* in relation to the
The positioning of the text and the illustration in the journal has been noted by scholars and it is clear that the theme of sexual deviance runs through this issue. The Papin article is adjacent to a text by Nougé on Magritte which explores the subversive use of metaphor in his work. The text is illustrated by Magritte’s drawing of a haloed, winking nun who has one hand on her heart and the other hitching up her robe to reveal stockings and suspenders. The drawing is placed between the Papin text and Nougé’s essay and it appears to illustrate both through the suggestion of concealed promiscuity. Heine’s text “Actualité de Sade” is prominent in this issue of the journal and its exploration of sadomasochism ends with a quote from Baudelaire “The charms of horror only intoxicate the strong.” The double portrait of the sisters is positioned as the last hors texte and it comes directly after Man Ray’s Monument à D. A. F. de Sade. The two hors textes before this are a reproduction of Freud’s letter to Breton and Valentine Hugo’s illustration of a passage from Maldoror.

The surrealists were intent on probing the complex sexuality of the Papin sisters and this determination to focus on sexual aspects of the case was also seen in their response to the prosecution of Violette Nozière. In the absence of a dedicated surrealist journal the group published a pamphlet in defence of the accused. As with the Papin case, the group only had the press to use as a basis for forming an opinion and the aspect of the case which they chose to highlight was the alleged sexual abuse of Nozière by her father. The response, as in the

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282 See Lane who noted the relationship of Magritte’s drawing of a nun to the essay on the Papin sisters, pp. 43 — 44; Coffman also dealt with the nun drawing in some detail and draws heavily on Lane’s analysis, pp. 67 — 69; Cox noted that the Papin illustration is directly preceded by Man Ray’s Monument à D. A. F. de Sade and Ernst’s Œdipe, p 404.
284 The caption to Hugo’s illustration is a quote taken from Book 1, “Tu dois être puissant car tu as une figure plus qu’humaine, triste comme l’univers, belle comme le suicide.”, “You must be powerful because you have a face that is more than human, sad like the universe, beautiful like suicide” Lautréamont, Maldoror and Poems, p 62.
285 Nozière poisoned her parents in August, 1933 and was put on trial for the murder of her father and the attempted murder of her mother in October 1934. On her arrest she stated that her father had sexually abused her since the age of 12. The case caused a sensation in the press which focused on her personal life. The same medic who declared the Papin’s to be sane interviewed Nozière for the prosecution. Nozière was condemned to death but spared by the president, Albert Le Brun, on Christmas Eve 1934. Capital punishment was replaced by life
imprisonment in Haguenau and Rouen. She was released in 1945 and pardoned in 1963. The Papin case, was both poetic and political and according to José Pierre, it was the revelations of incest that spurred the surrealists into action.

On the 31 August, the newspapers revealed that the murderess had accused her father of abusing her at the age of twelve and that this sexual relationship had then continued. Opinion immediately divided on this issue and, of course, you can count on that being the moment when the affair was going to fire up the surrealists.286

Both the vitriolic attacks on the young woman in the press and the passionate support of the surrealists were inflamed by her questioning of the sanctity of the family and by her apparently liberal sex life. In contrast to the Papin case, the press were extremely hostile towards Nozière and sympathy was reserved for her mother; *Le Figaro* described her as a “monstrous criminal” who had committed her crimes with the motives of money (she had taken money from her parents after poisoning them) and a desire to “live her life among her many lovers and the deadbeats of the Latin quarter”. Claims of sexual abuse were dismissed as a fabrication.287

*Vu* provided extensive photographic coverage of the case notably the issue featuring a front cover of a large close up of Nozière's face, eyes downcast, with the headline “The DEMON of SEXUALITY AND UNHINGED YOUTH”.288 The photographs used in the issue are from Keystone and illustrations in the three page article show the accused with police as well as protesting crowds outside the court, demanding the death penalty and surrounding her car. The article outlined the case and suggested that she had abandoned herself to lewd debauchery. She danced, it said, “at a bar, with a black man, a German, an Egyptian, who knows?” while her parents lay dying. The article suggested that money was not an adequate motive and asked if hate could have been a motivating factor and whether the accusation against her father could be true, but concluded that she was responsible for her actions and showed no remorse. One page of the article is devoted to an essay entitled “The demon of sexuality” by

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288  “Le DÉMON de la SEXUALITÉ ET LA JEUNESSE DÉTRAQUEE” *Vu*, 6 September 1933.
Magnus Hirschfeld, introduced as Director of the Institute of Sexology in Berlin. Hirschfeld connected the crime to Nozière’s “unstable sexuality” and stated that the world was suffering a social and sexual crisis most visible in the cities where youths turned to prostitution merely to satiate themselves. He advocated responsible sex education and the creation of a social climate “in which poisonous flowers like Violette Nozière and her lovers cannot thrive.” He stated that it would be dangerous to believe the accusations of incestuous abuse which, he suggests, stemmed from a pubescent “erotic-hysterical imagination”.

The Catholic press simply refused to report on the case; a small article at the back of La Croix on the first day of the trial stated that prayers were being recited for Mme Nozière and that, unlike the rest of the press, they had no interest in encouraging an interest in the details of such cases, and indeed there were no further reports on the case or the verdict in this title. The response of L’Humanité was dogmatic and focused on the “bourgeois” friends of Nozière, in particular her boyfriend, Jean Daubin, who was involved in fascist activities. L’Humanité stated that his corrupting influence had pushed the young woman into prostitution and crime. The journal suggested that the debate around the case should move on from the issue of incest because of the lack of evidence. It is in this context that the surrealist intervention should be viewed because they stood alone in their acknowledgement of incest and their steadfast support for Violette Nozière. Unlike the case of the Papin sisters, the surrealists were very much swimming against the stream in their support for the accused.

The pamphlet contained eight poems and eight drawings. All of the poems were concerned with incest; Breton’s poem drew attention to the fact that M.

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289 La Croix, 10 December 1934.
290 L’Humanité, 11 December 1934, p 2.
291 Penelope Rosemont has suggested that neither the Papin sisters nor Nozière received any sympathy from the press and that reports served to stir up hostility against these women. Rosemont states that “in all of France, only one group rose to the defence of the Papin sisters and Nozières: the Surrealist group.” Rosemont, P. (Ed.) Surrealist Women: An International Anthology, Athlone Press, 1998, p 48. However this is clearly not the case with the Papin sisters as evidenced by contemporary press reports
292 The 1991 facsimile of the pamphlet edited by José Pierre may be misleading as it contains a number of photographs which were not included in the original publication of 1933. Jeannette Baxter in “The Surrealist Fait-Divers: Uncovering Violent Histories in J. G. Ballard's Running Wild”
Nozière had chosen an apt name for his daughter (viol meaning rape) and quoted directly from the victim’s statement that her father had “sometimes forgotten that she was his daughter”. Breton dismissed the fact that Nozière’s boyfriend was involved in *Action Française* and declared his unconditional support. Éluard’s contribution told of a mother’s betrayal and of Violette dreaming of a day when there are no more fathers, his poem ends with “Violette dreamt of undoing and defeating the ugly knot of vipers that were blood ties”.

E. L. T. Mesens referred to the father’s occupation as a train driver and offered “You do not drive your daughter like a train” ...

Péret also focused on the crime of the father who “could feel the fire of his locomotive” and condemned “all those who piss on the newspapers with their pens”.

All of the drawings portrayed Violette Nozière in some form and Magritte’s presents her sat on her father’s lap, with his hand up her skirt overlooked by another man who holds a briefcase and wears a top hat. The pamphlet was published in Brussels in December 1933 but the package containing the books suggests that there was more than one photograph in the pamphlet and that photo collages were made from press photographs but there was only one photograph included in the original pamphlet on the cover. p 8


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293 il avait choisi pour sa fille un prénom dans la première partie duquel on peut démêler psychanalytiquement son programme ... Mon père oublie quelquefois que je suis sa fille.”

294 Violette a rêvé de défaire
   A défait
   L’”affreux nœud de serpents des liens du sang
   Éluard perhaps takes the title of Francois Mauriac’s family drama Le Noeud de Vipères (The Tangle of Vipers) (1932) as inspiration here.

28 On ne conduit pas sa fille comme un train ...
   Combien de bonnes mères
   Et combien de mauvais pères
   Combien de bons pères
   Et de mauvaises mères
   Aux rendez-vous de la morale bourgeoise
   Te nommeront garce salop
   Violette
   Nous ne sommes hélas pas nombreux
Violette
Mais nous ferons cortège à nos ombres
Pour effrayer tes justiciers

was seized by the authorities en route to France and the publication was eventually made available in October 1934.²⁹⁶ Nozière was condemned to death on the 12th of that month. The pamphlet would certainly have been defined as morally unacceptable.

The group made no use of the press photographs from the case at the time, these were generally unremarkable images of a bewildered and hopeless young woman or represented Violette Nozière as unrepentant, pouting at the camera wearing garish lipstick. Man Ray’s cover photograph simply shows a damaged initial N”.(Fig. 37) The letter could represent both Violette and her father, “V” being integral to the letter “N”, born from it and connected to it intimately. Both Violette and her father had been crushed by their respective crimes. The initial is embedded in wilting violets. Eburne has noted that publication by E.L.T. Mesens and Editions Flamel provide a link to the medieval alchemist and suggests that alchemy was invoked to portray Violette as an agent of transformation.²⁹⁷ The presence of globules similar to mercury support this and also place Violette in a long tradition of French female poisoners.²⁹⁸ Both the Papin and Nozière cases facilitated a broad and rigorous intellectual enquiry within surrealism based on sexual violence.

*Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* ceased publication in May 1933 and the final issue carried an advertisement for *Minotaure*, Skira’s new luxurious art review, designed to compete with *Cahiers d’Art* which quickly became a surrealist vehicle under Breton’s direction but one devoted to art. The first two surrealist journals and the special edition of *Variétés*, “*Le surréalisme en 1929*”, edited by Breton and Aragon, had all incorporated art and politics. In these journals photography had a documentary role. *Le surréalisme en 1929* located surrealism in an artistic context but also distilled the political preoccupations of

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²⁹⁶ The exhibition *La Révolution Surréaliste*, held at the Pompidou Centre 6 March - 26 June, 2002, displayed documents pertaining to the seizure and the tax demands from the authorities for the prolonged incarceration.
In fact Nozière’s choice of poison was veronal but mercury is photogenic and instantly recognizable as a toxin. Poisoning was seen as a typically female crime with its connection to the domestic role of women and also as an underhand method of murder. Nozière joined a long list of French female poisoners from the 17th century (Brinvilliers and Deshayes) to Mauriac’s Thérèse in 1927.

the movement. The photographs in this review provided an overview of Surrealism; there are portraits of the members of the group to denote consolidation but also portraits of Freud, Trotsky and a photograph of Lautréamont’s signature. Humour features heavily in the issue with the images of elephants and cathedrals copulating and Man Ray’s photographs of the blasphemous wc in the home of Thirion and Sadoul. Le trésor des jesuites, Breton and Aragon’s blasphemous play which was indebted to Sade, is illustrated with a film still from Les Vampires (1915) and a postcard of Musidora. At the end of 1933, the group were without a dedicated surrealist journal and published political perspectives in alternative forms, such as the pamphlet used to defend Nozière. In terms of a critique of the bourgeois family, the illustrated book became an unlikely but effective site and the next chapter will examine the photographic illustrations by Roger Parry for Léon-Paul Farge’s Banalité and Max Ernst’s Mr Knife Miss Fork after briefly looking at the photographic content of Minotaure.
Chapter 4

Surrealism and sexuality in the 1930s: Photography in Minotaure and the illustrated books Facile, 1929, Le Septième du Dé, Mr Knife Miss Fork and Banalité

This chapter aims to explore the ways in which surrealism, in the 1930s, developed the use of photography with particular attention to the handling of sexuality. Case studies are mainly focused on illustrated books; Péret, Aragon and Man Ray 1929, Léon-Paul Fargue and Roger Parry Banalité, René Crevel and Max Ernst Mr Knife Miss Fork, Paul Eluard and Man Ray Facile), and Georges Hugnet Le Septième Face du Dé. Minotaure is also examined in some detail. The five books have been chosen as they have been neglected in scholarship and because they provide examples of attempts to make the reader conscious of society’s moral and sexual limitations and its potential for development. Much attention has recently been focused on Claude Cahun’s work and also that of Hans Bellmer in terms of the politics of sexuality, but a broader spectrum of illustrated books reveals how well a fluid engagement with photography served surrealism in its “love revolution”. Surrealism had a fruitful relationship with photography because the movement travelled in the slip stream of this rapidly developing medium and arguably took from commercial photography as much as it gave. The relationship between surrealism and commercial photography is complex but bound up with the fact that the group understood the new role of the medium in society, its focus on desire and its images whose meanings were tied to commodification. Even commercial images which sought to explore the potential of passion were thus limited. In relation to sexuality and to the institution of the family, culturally dominant images provided points of possible subversion and the potential to produce disruptive images.

This chapter will examine how photography offered opportunities to challenge conventional views on love and use eroticism as a tool of revolt in the selected works. Some social contextualisation is offered to support the argument that these works, however problematic and filled with the contradictions inherent in
surrealism, were part of an effort to explode the restraint of sexuality in the 1930s. The context of the 1930s is important in terms of the movement generally because of the political crisis that had split the group, the opposition from Georges Bataille, growing international success and the increased active involvement of women at a time of increasing political instability and a left dominated by the Communist Party. *Mi notaure* was a departure from the surrealist journals of the previous decade and the function of photography in the new journal is indicative of this.

**Minotaure**

*Minotaure* was an ambitious artistic and literary review noted for its high production values and extensive use of colour. Tériade, previously at *Cahiers d'art* was employed as artistic director and, heavily influenced by *Documents*, initially envisaged an editorial team which included Bataille.299 *Minotaure* is generally characterised as a surrealist journal because of Breton and Éluard’s considerable editorial input from the third issue onwards and because although not exclusively surrealist in orientation, it increasingly became a vehicle for the movement. Breton’s commitment to the review is documented in a letter from Éluard to Gala which notes that he and Breton were spending all of their time working on the review.300 The audience for the art review was much broader than that of the surrealist journals and Breton was not in a position to express political views in Skira’s magazine.301 On occasion *Minotaure* addressed political issues in a discussion of art, for example the article “Nationalism in art” in issue 11 attacked cultural repression in the Soviet Union, Italy and Germany, the chauvinism of the French art establishment and its legitimisation of such regimes through collaboration.302 Also, Ian Walker has suggested that because of the surrealist tone of *Minotaure*, ethnographical materials such as the photographs from the Dakar-Djibouti mission must have acquired additional

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299 In fact Bataille only contributed once, in the first issue.
300 Letter from Éluard to Gala dated December 1933 reproduced in André Breton: *La Beauté Convulsive*, p 209.
301 The circulation for Issue 1/2 of *Minotaure* was 3000, this was reduced to 2000 for subsequent issues. See Skira’s introduction to the facsimile of *Minotaure*, New York: Arno Press, 1968.
dimensions, both social and artistic, when reproduced in the context of the review.\textsuperscript{303}

The audience for the review was of course elite and would have included those who regarded \textit{avant-garde} art as fashionable. The advertisements placed in the review, generally in the back pages, for expensive holidays and \textit{haute couture} evidence a readership with abundant disposable income. Man Ray astutely advertised his portrait studio in the review.\textsuperscript{304} In the 1930’s there was a growing international awareness of surrealism, particularly visual surrealism, due to the large exhibitions in Europe and New York, indeed issue 3/4 of \textit{Minotaure} featured a collage of surrealist exhibition fliers from around the world.\textsuperscript{305} Surrealism had succeeded in reaching a wide audience, particularly with visual art because of its exportability, but was increasingly viewed as an artistic rather than a revolutionary movement with a political programme. \textit{Minotaure} is often cited as evidence that the group had “moved from the street to the \textit{Salon}” and although the review was challenging and the art was often “discursive” and engaged the viewer, the reader was essentially a consumer rather than an active participant in the project.\textsuperscript{306}

In \textit{Minotaure} Surrealism was “alternative” rather than oppositional. \textit{Minotaure} provided the opportunity to display surrealist visual art sumptuously but unlike in the earlier surrealist journals with their attendant polemics, images were separated from politics. Compared to the early journals \textit{Minotaure} was not at all balanced, as it represented only one side of surrealist activity. The group struggled to sustain a revolutionary identity and although an affiliation to Trotsky provided a fresh perspective and a moral compass, the pull of the French Communist Party with its stand against fascism and its Popular Front strategy had seriously fractured the group who continued to participate in political

\begin{itemize}
\item Man Ray’s new studio was advertised for portrait work in the back pages of no. 7. \textit{Minotaure}, no. 10, pp. 62 - 64.
\item Susan Rubin Suleiman argued that the group were politically marginalised and moved away from an engagement with the working class at this time in her article “Between the Street and the \textit{Salon}: The Dilemma of Surrealist Politics in the 1930’s”, \textit{Visual Anthropology Review}, Volume 7, no. 1, Spring 1991, pp. 39 - 50.
\end{itemize}
activity but were completely isolated.\textsuperscript{307} In such circumstances a focus on the production of luxury editions appears to indicate an abandonment of revolution, Nadeau and Aragon certainly thought so.\textsuperscript{308} However, Breton’s attempt to initiate political activity amongst writers and artists via the establishment of the International Federation of Independent Revolutionary Art in association with Trotsky and Rivera in 1938 demonstrates a political tenacity. Although unsuccessful, this drive to form an opposition and to work against the general historic current remains significant. The surrealists were confined, their audience was limited and increasingly artistically based. The luxury market was more robust than others and the avant garde took advantage of this at a time of severe economic crisis when opportunities to publish were limited.

Although photography was abundant in \textit{Minotaure} the scope for its use was limited. The humour and sharp politics evident in the first two surrealist journals were absent. In \textit{Minotaure} “art photography” is recognisable as belonging to the range of modernist prints that were then widely circulated not only in popular culture and the art press but in specialist reviews such as AGM’s special edition \textit{Photographie} where the focus was on aesthetics. \textit{Minotaure} was a luxurious product in which photography generally functioned as art and satisfied a taste for beautifully reproduced prints which could stand alone and be appreciated.\textsuperscript{309} Man Ray’s portraits of women and the nudes by both Man Ray and Brassaï reproduced in \textit{Minotaure} reflected the resurgence of this subject matter in

\textsuperscript{308} Nadeau argued that the surrealist movement had failed at the moment “when Breton classifies himself ... in the category of the artists” rather than that of the workers. Nadeau, M. \textit{The History of Surrealism}, London: Jonathon Cape, 1968, p 202. Aragon had stated that the surrealists were effectively censored through their work being made available in increasingly limited editions in which their thought was considered a luxury item by a bourgeois audience precisely because of its revolutionary character. Aragon, A. “Le Surréalisme et le devenir révolutionnaire”, \textit{Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution}, no. 3, p 3.
\textsuperscript{309} There are over 700 photographs in the review, the majority of them are art photography or reproductions of 3 dimensional art. 192 of the photographs are “photographic art”, 143 are art reproductions, 177 are ethnographical documentary photographs (including reproductions of art and artefacts). Of the remaining images 112 are popular culture (although 105 of these are accounted for by Eluard’s postcard collection in no. 3-4), 22 are portraits, 8 are advertisement images and 22 are film stills. There are also 127 documentary photographs in the review although most of these are included in a small number of articles as illustrations including Péret “s Au paradis des fantômes” on mechanical toys (no. 3-4), Callois “Mimétisme” (no. 7), the article on birds of the night (no. 7) and the article on Lautreamont in no. 12-13. The photographs
which accompany these articles account for over half of the documentary images used in the review.
modernist photography generally. The first issue of *Photographie* in 1931 had been devoted to the portrait and the content reflected the various formal directions within photography. Similarly the surrealist nude, along with the nudes of New Objectivity and the neo-classical nudes of photographers such as Laure Albin Guillot were circulated widely in reviews, both popular and specialist as well as photographic books. It is inevitable that *Minotaure* became a showcase for the surrealist current in contemporary photography with works presented in the same format as the specialist photographic reviews.

The thirteen issues of the review offer reproductions which include the full spectrum of surrealist art works. Man Ray and Brassaï dominated the review in terms of photographic art but full page reproductions of the work of Ubac, Alvarez Bravo, Bellmer and Dali were also published. Work in series such as Brassaï’s *Grafitti Parisiens*, as well as the *Sculptures Involontaires* that he produced with Dali were collated and displayed in A4 format to enhance their visual impact. Unsurprisingly, images of the city and of women dominate the subject matter of the full page photographic art reproductions. It is these images of women - Man Ray and Brassaï’s nudes, Bellmer’s dolls and Ubac’s Amazons - along with others in which women’s bodies are displayed, worshipped, de- familiarised, fragmented and violated, that the debate has centred recently in relation to surrealism and sexuality. This is not the place to revisit these arguments but it is useful to consider these images in the context of *Minotaure* where they promote an emotive alternative aesthetic to the rigid formalism of New Objectivity and neo-classicism. Breton developed his concept of a revelatory experience of visual art at this time and the review offered some of the most experimental modernist photography of the decade both as photographic art reproductions and as allusive illustrations to text.

Speaking of Proust in 1923, Jacques Rivière suggested that he “allowed the work of art its powers of seduction, a certain illusory flight of thought, an unleashing of its instinctive and deceptive powers” 311 The same quality is imbued in both

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310 *Minotaure* no. 3-4, *Grafitti Parisiens*, p 7; *Sculptures Involontaires*, p 68.
the photographic art reproductions and many of the documentary images used in *Minotaure*. This is clear from the outset in the first issue on page 1 where Éluard devotes a poem to an inspiring and unnerving mask from Bali made of grass. (Fig. 38) The images of a forest which dominate Ernst’s “Les Mystères de la Forêt” is a further example of work that relies on the unconscious as a dynamic process and speaks to the visual rather than the verbal.312 Brassaï’s nudes also have this quality, they are seductive in their familiarity but proceed to unnerve. The image which introduced Maurice Raynal’s article on the nude in the first issue of *Minotaure* (Fig. 39) bears a resemblance to many nudes prevalent in the commercial press, for example it is superficially close to Heinz von Perckhammer’s *Extase*, published in *Secrets de Paris*.313 (Fig. 40) However the fact that Perckhammer’s shot and Brassaï’s study differ considerably becomes apparent almost immediately. The focus in the soft pornography is on the breasts and the woman’s orgasmic expression and the body is bathed in light in soft focus. Brassaï’s nude also emerges from darkness but despite the fact that the body is in sharp focus, it is unfamiliar because of the vantage point, the lighting and the fact that the head is unseen. Images in *Minotaure*, particularly those related to sexuality, are often designed to antagonise rather than for leisure consumption. The nude here has become an object that the viewer is unable to negotiate comfortably.

The three Brassaï nudes in the centre spread of the article reinforce the sense that these images are not for leisurely consumption. (Fig. 41) They take the traditional subject of the female nude from the back, but de-familiarise it. The lower image in particular resembles a strange bulbous, phallic fruit, nestled in cloth. The distance of these images from a more conventional treatment is enhanced by their placement opposite drawings by Renoir and Seurat as well as a number of unremarkable contemporary photographic nudes of the kind used by artists as study documents. These rigidly posed compositions have a level of artificiality which emphasises the surreality of Brassaï’s nudes which accentuate the fine details of the living body. The skin is seen to be sensitive with clearly visible hairs, moles, goose bumps and traces of scars. The challenge to tradition

313 *Secrets de Paris*, no. 6, October 1934.
is made greater by the relationship of Brassaï’s images to the text. Raynal applauded painters such as Courbet, Seurat and Renoir for their ability to freely re-make the human body but base their aesthetic on a respect for tradition and a knowledge of the old masters. In the mid 1920s Raynal had proposed an idealisation of the perennial monuments of art history and the attempt to establish a new aesthetic orthodoxy and was an enemy of surrealism. At the end of his article on nudes Raynal invited the reader to dismiss the “live nude photographs” which illustrated the article as “dead”. 

Minotaure was not alone in publishing nudes. A tolerance of nudity is evident in the inter war years, Bouqueret has noted the widespread dissemination of the photographic nude as it ceased to be a taboo subject and was considered harmless as long as it was presented in a particular way. The depiction of pubic hair, for instance, was forbidden. The emergence of the nude was related to an interest in physical fitness, the benefits of sporting pursuits and fresh air and a healthy and natural eroticism as well as to psychoanalytic theorising on the need for corporeal knowledge. Bouqueret stated that it was this “new body”, both male and female, that was interrogated by modernist photography; as a scientific object by New Objectivity, as neoclassical and as “subversive and subverted, fantastical, of flesh and desire, disturbing and transfigured” by surrealism.

There was an abundance of nudes in Photographie and other cultural reviews. Jazz regularly included nude studies and produced a special edition on nudism in February 1930. Three notable “art photography” publications were devoted to the nude, Masclet, D., La Beauté de la Femme, the exhibition catalogue for the First International Salon of Nude Photography in Paris in 1933; Formes Nues, published by Éditions d’Art Graphique et Photographique in 1935 and Natkin, 317

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315 Nous avons réuni ici quelques nus vivants photographiés; vous reconnaîtrez aisément qu’ils sont morts, plus morts qu’eux-mêmes peut-être.” Raynal, M. “Variété du corps humain” Minotaure, no. 1, 1933, p 44.

316 Bouqueret notes that specialist books as well as popular magazines generally included what were considered to be morally acceptable “nude studies”, La Nouvelle Vision en France, p 206.

For example *Jazz*, No. 9, August 1929 included 3 nudes by Krull.
M. *Le Nu en Photographie*, published by Éditions Mana in 1937. The photographers featured in these books were generally the same practitioners who supplied “nude studies” to photographic weeklies such as *Vu* and the *revues légères* which emerged in the 1930s. Above all it was these frivolous magazines which spread and popularised the nude.

The currency in images did not respect boundaries between art and popular culture; it has been suggested that Dora Maar produced both conventional and experimental nudes, depending on who commissioned them but there appear to have been no discernable borders. Maar’s image of Assia, a popular model, wearing a white mask and reaching up to grasp a gymnastic ring (Fig 42) was featured in *Formes Nues* and also in *Secrets de Paris* as a full page spread. Her portrait of Assia and her shadow (Fig 43) had been reproduced in the second issue of the magazine as *La Belle et L’Ombre* opposite a short story entitled “Le drame de Loch-Guidel et le secret satanique des renards argentés”. *Secrets de Paris* was typical of the genre with its juxtaposition of amusing, mildly titillating material, sensationalism and trivia. Nude photography, Hollywood publicity shots and sporting themes which were generally revealing were displayed alongside landscapes, animal portraits and sentimental portraits of children, sometimes nude or deshabille. An interest in the naturalist movement is apparent in articles such as “Secrets of the clandestine Nudist camps”. *Paris-Sex-Appeal* featured “A day at a nudist’s house” and such titles generally included many photographs of women and men, barely dressed or nude. An article in the first issue of *Vive Paris*, which was dominated by sanitised nudes, noted the cultural ubiquity of nudity:

*If you had to establish the comparisons, the differences, the distinctions or the contrasts between the pre-war era and that in which we live, it would be easy to reduce it to small respective definitions:* The sole

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321 *Secrets de Paris*, no. 9, January 1935
322 *Secrets de Paris*, no. 2, June 1934
323 *Secrets de Paris*, “Secrets des camps clandestins de Nudisme integrale”, no. 6, October 1934.
occupation of the woman of 1900? To dress herself! That — no less unique — of our contemporaries? To undress themselves! And I would say: - What has been the greatest discovery of this first year of the twentieth century? And I would respond: - Christopher Columbus discovered America. We, without any trouble, we have been able finally to “discover” woman!\footnote{Vive Paris, “Nu 1935”, no. 1., October 1935, p 19.}

To some extent the cultural production of the surrealist group and those in their orbit should be seen as part of this discourse.

Sexual tension in Minotaure is manifest and the deep eroticism is often disconcerting. Man Ray’s Minotaure, the frontispiece to issue 7 holds an ambiguity which cannot be resolved. (Fig. 44) The image is at once a bull’s head and a woman’s torso. The figure is clearly female but is androgynous; the upper arms are pronounced and strong. In Rogi André’s photograph of Jacqueline Lamba as Ondine, used as a preface to Breton’s “La Nuit du Tournesol” (Fig. 45) in the same issue, again the body is not fixed but suggestive and mysterious. Images which are redolent of sexual violence and cruelty indicate Sade’s constant presence in Minotaure. Bellmer’s doll, presented in a double page spread in issue 6 and as illustrative material for Eluard’s Appliquée in the following issue as well as Ubac’s shattered female warriors are indebted to his exploration of the limits of sexuality. However, the most shocking images in the review are arguably the documentary images that illustrate Heine’s article in issue 8.\footnote{Heine, M. “Regards sur l’enfer anthropoclasique” Minotaure, no. 8, pp. 41 — 45.} Heine understood perversion as a highly imaginative, creative activity and Sade represented the highest development of this imaginative creativity. Heine’s book on perversion was published in 1936 and he conducted extensive research on the topic.\footnote{His piece in Minotaure is centred on the sadistic and violent crimes of Sade, Comte de Mesanges (another 18th century aristocratic libertine who appeared in Sade’s 120 Days of Sodom) and Jack the Ripper. The narrative is an imagined discussion between these shadowy figures about the pleasure taken in the degradation of their victims. They are joined by an expert in forensic autopsy who provides details of...
common traits in sadistic crimes and the effect of various tortures on the human body.

The discussion in Heine’s narrative is aided by documentary photographs, handed around by the participants and these constitute the illustrations in the article. (Figs 46, 47 and 48) The first two images were taken from an 1899 book on the sadistic crimes of the Ripper and the remaining images are from legal medical annals. Heine was impressed by Havelock Ellis’ idea that perversions (or “erotic symbolisms” as he called them) indicated the “potently plastic force of the imagination” and were what distinguished humans. These documents of sadistic crimes were not included for their sensationalism, as they were in titles such as Scandale, but because images are important to the understanding of the sadistic imagination. The materiality of the photographs, taken with the text, conjures up the force of eroticism and the level of violent visual imagery required to satisfy a sadistic imagination. Sade’s books resort to visual imagery. These photographs aimed to help the viewer think about desire analytically and scientifically. Although variable, photography which deals in sexuality in Minotaure displayed a diversity of ideas about eroticism and generally appealed for a recognition of the sub-conscious and attempts to open up a new landscape of vision.

Breton understood Surrealism as part of a progressive dynamic and believed that the production and reception of art could not be separated from the general social process which included the class struggle. Although Minotaure was a radical departure from the political aggression of the earlier reviews it was nevertheless a site of surrealist investigation. The review provided a forum for writers and artists referred to by Breton as those

... who realize that their work confuses and baffles bourgeois society, who very consciously aspire to help bring about a new world, a better world, [and] owe it to themselves to swim against the current that is

Footnotes:
328 The two sources of the images are given at the end of Heine’s article on page 45 as Prof. Lacassagne, Vacher l’Eventreur et les crimes sadiques, Lyon: Storck, 1899 and Annales d’Hygiène publique et de Médecine légale, 3e Série, tome XXXIV, no. 1, Juillet 1895.
12/7/09)
dragging them into passing for mere entertainers, whom the bourgeoisie will never let up on.\textsuperscript{30}

The surrealists were able to circulate images and ideas in Minotaure and in illustrated books. Although the audience was small and narrow, the art review and surrealist illustrated books released photographic images into circulation which challenged prevalent views, particularly on sexuality.

**The Illustrated Book**

Although the production of illustrated books flourished in the inter war period, it was not until the late 1930s that the widespread use of photographs began to challenge the dominance of drawings which was established in the nineteenth century and ‘modernised’ in this period by artists such as Valentine Hugo. The technology to provide photographic illustrations was available in the 1920s but it was orientated towards the mass production of the illustrated press and although a number of documentary and technical books used the medium, photography as art had failed to find a place in books.\textsuperscript{31} In the 1920s books which were illustrated with photographs were rare and the Surrealists were pioneers in this area; in 1922 Champs délicieux, inspired by Breton and Soupault’s Les champs Magnétiques (1920) was published in a limited edition of forty copies with a preface by Tzara. Champs délicieux included twelve gelatin silver prints of photograms, printed by Man Ray from negatives made by re-photographing the twelve original images. Bouqueret believes this publication to be nothing less than the origin of a new type of work, the prototype of a genre which would blossom at the end of the decade.\textsuperscript{32} As well as deluxe limited editions, books were published with a larger audience in mind; Germaine Krull’s Métal proved popular in 1927 and established the fact that there was a market beyond a small number of elite collectors. It was however, the elite who would have access to the books published by photographers associated with the Surrealist group, with the notable exception of Brassai’s work which was more widely consumed in Paris de Nuit.

\textsuperscript{30} Breton, A. ‘Political Position of Today’s Art’ (1935) in Manifestoes of Surrealism, p 215.
\textsuperscript{31} Bouqueret, La Nouvelle Vision en France p 146.
\textsuperscript{32} Bouqueret, La Nouvelle Vision en France p 146.
The illustrated book provided photographers, in collaboration with writers, an opportunity to combine both art and illustration and further explore the potential of the relationship between text and image. Although Breton’s comments towards the end of Nadja suggest that he considered the photographs to be unsatisfactory his meaning is ambiguous. “La partie illustrée de Nadja fût trés insuffisante” he said, and given that the photographs that he cites were retained in the revised edition of 1963, one could assume that he meant, at least partly, that he would have liked there to be more, indeed he regrets the absence of particular images. In 1928 Breton declared “And when will all the books that are worth anything stop being illustrated with drawings and appear only with photographs”, artists associated with surrealism rose to the challenge and the book became a site for carefully crafted experimentation.

Illustrated books published in the inter war period by artists and writers aligned to surrealism included a number of titles which developed the cohesion of text and photographic image: Péret, Aragon and Man Ray 1929, Claude Cahun Aveux nos Avenues (1930), Léon-Paul Fargue and Roger Parry Banalité, René Crevel and Max Ernst Mr Knife Miss Fork, Paul Eluard and Man Ray Facile, Hans Bellmer La Poupée, Georges Hugnet Le Septième Face du Dé, Camille Bryen and Raoul Ubac (credited as Raoul Michelet), Actuation Poétique (1935), Bryen and Ubac (credited as Ubac Michelet) L ’À venture des Objets (1937), Cahun and Lisa Deharme Le Coeur de Pic (1937), Man Ray La Photographie n ’est pas l ’art, Hugnet and Bell mer Oeillades ciselées en branche and Bellmer and Eluard Jeux vagues de la poupée (1939). It is notable that the majority of these titles deal in sexuality. To some extent it was a focus on the notion that eroticism could convey revolt that proved the avant garde credentials of surrealism. Photography was an ideal medium to promote a “love revolution” because it was (and is) widely used to disseminate ideas and norms about sexuality. It is for this reason that films and magazines are often good indicators

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334 “Et quand donc tous les livres valables cesseront-ils d’être illustrés de dessins pour ne
plus paraître qu’avec des photographies” Breton, A. *Surrealism and Painting*, p 32.
of sexual mores. Hugnet subverted this in his collages, Bellmer did so also to some extent with his references to images of crime scenes in the doll works. In terms of the audience for illustrated books, photography by this time had an established market and was a medium that interested collectors. Some buyers would have been attracted by the risqué nature of some of these titles. However, a focus on sexuality was not just about surrealism or their audience, it is indicative also of a broad cultural trend to foreground sexuality and the demand for surrealist photographic books was linked to this.

**Facile**

*Facile* is an ambiguous work. It is revolutionary in form because the cohesion between photography and text and the creative use of solarisation resulting in a *photopoème* in which “meaning progresses in order with the reciprocity of writing and figures: reading becomes interwoven through alternating restitchings of the signifier into text and image.” The surrealists produced limited and deluxe editions to promote the idea that the book, as a rare object, was an object of passion.

The visual impact of *Facile* is dependent to a great extent on the outstanding quality of the production. The de-luxe edition in particular is a perfect example the ambition of the group to promote the idea of the rare book as an object of passion. Because of the production values the tonal range is apparent and the images have remarkable depth. The surprising element of the image in which a silhouette is crossed with a prone portrait is thus accentuated as the image appears to literally emerge from a mist before the reader’s eyes (Fig. 49) The experience of reading the book is breath-taking, such is the shock of revelation and beauty. Solarisation leads the eye around the contours of the body and its undulations in a visual caress. Man Ray’s medium is voyeuristic by nature in both the production of images and photographs as objects.

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In terms of content *Facile* is an intensely sensual expression of Éluard’s love for his wife and as such a testament to the elevated position in which surrealism placed “love”. Hugnet described Éluard’s love poetry thus:

> Love poems such as the poems of Eluard are poems of perpetual recognition. Love is clothed in the most beautiful images, unusual, disturbing in their purity, torn trembling and dazzled from the dream which gives them their inevitable, somnambulant air. From the time of his first books, Éluard’s poems have always been endowed with this luminosity, with this fine exactness in the flux and reflux of images.\(^\text{337}\)

Man Ray, once again, met the challenge of surrealism with these remarkable images. Hubert stated, in her illuminating analysis, that neither Eluard or Man Ray aspired to make Nusch immediately recognisable or to distinguish her from others; rather she became the mediator of beauty and thus acquired universality.\(^\text{338}\) “You take the place of each one and your reality is infinite” Eluard wrote.\(^\text{339}\) Éluard’s text is at once a tender homage to his wife and an evocation of the creative power of “woman”, the very thing that the surrealists sought to harness; the images represent this idealisation of “woman” and “love” because photographic manipulation has abstracted and de-familiarised the body, given it a spectral luminosity and placed it beyond reach. Nusch is an obscure object of desire in *Facile*. Éluard and Man Ray had “the courage to affront with open eyes the bright daylight of love in which the obsessive ideas of salvation and the damnation of the spirit blend and merge, for the supreme edification of man”.\(^\text{340}\)

Hubert stated that Nusch’s head is shown only once but in fact she is given her head, if not her face or full facial features, in five of the eleven images.\(^\text{341}\) Although the model is carefully posed, she appears comfortable in her nudity and natural grace and is recognisable as Nusch. These images are a celebration of the female body and sexuality far removed from the images of women found in contemporary magazines which were concerned with surface and based on

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\(^{338}\) Hubert, *Surrealism and the book*, p 74.  
\(^{339}\) “Tu prends la place de chacun et ta réalité est infinie”, *Facile*, p 5.  
\(^{340}\) Breton, “Second Manifesto of Surrealism” *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, p. 80
artifice. Man Ray’s photographs are akin to Dora Maar’s images of Assia (Fig. 50) which focus on natural beauty and sensuality. At the same time, despite the use of solarisation, the portrayal of the body in Man Ray’s photographs matches the requirements of the contemporary ideal for the female nude, including a healthy allure, a clear skin and a sense of freedom. *Facile* renders the multiplicity and confusion of the surrealist attitude toward “woman”.

**1929**

*1929*, a book of poetry by Aragon and Péret, illustrated by Man Ray was published clandestinely in Belgium with a print run of 215 copies. Breton edited the book and chose the title. The books were seized at the border before reaching France. *1929* was censored because of the overtly pornographic images and the blasphemous nature of the poetry. One line of text is sufficient to comprehend the offense, “The prick and the cunt in a confessional in the church Saint-Augustin.” The book is divided into two and into the four seasons with Péret providing the poems for “Spring” and “Summer” in the first section and Aragon those for “Autumn” and “Winter” in the second. A single photograph by Man Ray measuring 4 inches by 3 is presented alone on the page, one before and one at the end of each suite of poems. Little has been written on the book, perhaps because it is easy to dismiss as mischievous pornography, as surrealist art sometimes is. Mahon stated that the purpose of these images was to shock the public. John Baxter has suggested that the book was devised simply to raise funds for the Belgian publishing company, and that this erotic edition was proposed to help E. L. T. Mesens to balance his books. Baxter cites Aragon’s diary entry which confirms the meeting where Mesens’ financial difficulties were discussed. But contrary to Baxter’s assertion that *1929* was conceived as potentially lucrative pornography, there is no evidence to suggest that the book

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343 “… some sorts of surrealism are indistinguishable from pornographic trash.” Cumming, L. “Surreal Thing” (Review of *Desire Unbound at the Tate*), *The Observer*, September 23, 2001, p 10.
345 Baxter, J. “Man Ray laid bare”, *Tate Magazine*, Issue 3, January/February 2003
was designed as such even though Durozoi states that *Surréalisme en 1929* was partly financed by sales.\textsuperscript{346}

1929 forms part of surrealist erotic expression and like Aragon”s *Le Con d”Irène* involves explicit sexual depictions. Man Ray”s photographs, more so than Masson”s orgiastic illustrations for Aragon”s book, enhance the connection to pornographic modes of representation. However, 1929 is far from straightforward pornographic depiction, it is a parody of “The Song of Songs” in the bible.\textsuperscript{347} The Song is “lyric verse” and the lyric tends to be defined by brevity, sensuality and musicality as well as being a subjective form, expressive of personal feeling toward specific subject matter and addressed to a particular listener.\textsuperscript{348} The poems in the 1929 echo this form:

\begin{quote}
Amour amour amour à mon con  
Amour amour amour à ma pine  
\end{quote}

moreover the poems echo the content of the Song. Although traditionally understood as a portrayal of the relationship between God and his people, the Song of Songs is about human sexual fulfilment, fervently sought and consummated in reciprocal love between woman and man, in its literal sense and theologically relevant meaning.\textsuperscript{350} What links the literal sense of the Song to the visions of synagogue and church is the insight that the love that forms human partnership and community, and sustains the whole of creation, is a gift of God”s own self.\textsuperscript{351}

What distinguishes the Song most sharply from other works of biblical literature is not the fact that it takes human sexuality seriously but rather the exuberant, thoroughly erotic and non-judgemental manner in which it depicts the love between a man and a woman. The emotions of the two young lovers - their yearnings and pleasure in each other - occupy the textual foreground, almost blotting out conventions to which romance and sexual relations are generally

\textsuperscript{346} Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, p 181.
\textsuperscript{347} The Song of Songs” is a book of thirty-one love poems in the bible, also known as Solomon”s Songs” or “Book of Canticles”.
\textsuperscript{349} “Love love love to my cunt/ Love love love to my cock” Péret”s poem for March, 1929, p 15
\textsuperscript{350} Murphy, R. *The Song of Songs*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990, p. 103
Murphy, *The Song of Songs*, p. 105
subordinated elsewhere in scriptural sources, although social context is not entirely absent as there are references to this in the Song. It is not a treatise on free love, it does not celebrate eroticism for its own sake, and certainly not ribaldry or promiscuous sex, but rather the desires of an individual woman and man to enjoy the bond of mutual possession. The mutuality of feelings is a striking feature of the Song, their admiration is reciprocal and comparably intense. There is no sense of masculine dominance and mere submission of the female, it is indeed the woman’s voice that resounds most loudly in the poetry, eager to initiate as well as to respond to affirmations of love. The woman relishes her lover’s ardour and eroticism is given full play. There is nothing inhibited or tentative about the woman’s desire for sexual fulfilment, nor are the man’s physical intentions disguised. "Spring song" provides a sense of the Songs as a whole:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Stamp me in your heart,} \\
\text{Upon your limbs,} \\
\text{Sear my emblem deep} \\
\text{Into your skin.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{For love is strong as death,} \\
\text{Harsh as the grave,} \\
\text{Its tongues are flames, a fierce} \\
\text{And holy blaze.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Endless seas and floods,} \\
\text{Torrents and rivers} \\
\text{Never put out love’s} \\
\text{Infinite fires.}
\end{align*}
\]

The Song includes the proposition to “Drink deeply of love” and it is this that 1929 sought to exploit. Péret’s April poem reads:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{BÈNIS ô rouge pine} \\
\text{ce jeu de yes deux couilles} \\
\text{Nous voulons dieu c’est notre pine} \\
\text{Nous voulons dieu c’est notre con}
\end{align*}
\]

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352 Murphy, The Song of Songs, p. 97
353 Murphy, p. 102
354 Falk’s translation of poem 28, p 47.
355 Song of Songs, poem 18.
356 “Bless oh red cock/ this game of your two balls/ We want our cock to be God/ We
want our cunt to be God”, Péret’s poem for April, *1929*, p 17.
All four of Man Ray’s photographs are carefully lit to capture the detail of the sex act portrayed. “Spring” shows a couple in the missionary position, the male is nude and in a (rare) vulnerable and exposed situation, his whole body is visible whereas only the genitals of the woman are shown, her thighs splayed. (Fig. 51) The penis (or possibly a dildo) penetrates the vagina but just enough to allow a full view of the performance. When all of the four photographs are viewed together it is clear that the couple are Kiki and Man Ray. Baxter cites Aragon to confirm this but physically both are recognisable in the images.357 Kiki’s mouth is distinctive as is Man Ray’s physique, pale skin and dark hair.

What then is the nature of these explicit images in the context of 1929? Gille has suggested that the publication of 1929 is an example of the group subverting the genre of eroticism in its crudest manifestation and this is clearly one aspect of this publication.358 The images in 1929 are dissimilar to popular contemporary pornography which never depicted sex acts but focused on images of alluring women. Men rarely featured and when they did so, were generally fully dressed.359 Depictions of sex acts were of course available and were advertised in the classified sections of soft pornography. Libraire de la lune for example, advertised a series of “photos libertines” including “The 32 poses of love”, Brutal possession” and “Audacious caresses” as “real and daring poses, everything is visible to give you the illusion of real life, of the flesh and the movement of two or more people.”360 The photographs published in 1929 are essentially documents of love making, albeit staged for the camera, but nevertheless, far removed from the clinical images in pornography. An

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358 Gille, V. “Love of books, love books” in Surrealism: Desire Unbound, p 130.
359 Pour lire a deux was marketed to couples and always featured lovers in an embrace on the front cover in colour. The man was always fully dressed in a variety of outfits including a tuxedo, military uniform, suit and tie etc. while the woman was dressed in a glamorous and revealing way. The cover of no. 4 (September 1934) showed the man in a leather jacket, roughly pulling the woman towards him by her scarf. No. 5 (October 1934) portrayed a sailor in a blue suit and gold epaulettes with a woman wearing a bikini outfit. This continued throughout the publication, men were generally wearing suits of some description while women were scantily clad or nude. Male nuders and men dressed in revealing sportswear did appear in titles such as Paris-Sex-Appeal, as has been noted, but they generally appeared in isolation. Apart from kissing couples, there are no depictions of love making. Paris-Sex-Appeal, no. 25, August 1935, published a rare photo of a man intimately touching a woman, almost on the breast, as he rubbed sun oil into her body to illustrate a narrative.
360 Classified advertisement in Pour lire à deux, no. 1, June 1934.
understanding of the decision to use these particular images is perhaps aided by Michel Leiris’ comments on the artificiality of erotic books

... what generally displeases me about erotic books written to be published underground is that they come out as completely artificial. The characters seldom have any substance, they’re placed in all kinds of postures as if they were mannequins. Ultimately, it doesn’t mean anything, it’s a kind of bluff, without any real authenticity.

An autobiographical approach helped Leiris to avoid this superficiality when he touched on eroticism in *L’Age d’homme* (1939). René Crevel’s disillusionment with the Parisian gay scene in *Mon Corps* (1925) is also pertinent here. Crevel’s frank confessions describe the impossibility of expressing his sexuality in a superficial gay culture based on exploitation and crude caricatures. The inclusion of images of “real” sex in 1929 may have been prompted by a desire for genuine depictions.

The illustrations, like the text in 1929, confront the Church’s preoccupation with sex with a parody of the love lyrics in the Bible which celebrates the physicality of love. 1929 was a crucial time for the group and Breton’s assertion that the poetic imagination and political action can be reconciled are strengthened by 1929 which arguably places “pornography” in the service of revolution. 1929 is not simply concerned with transgression but advocates the spiritual possibilities of a union based on elective love. Breton, as editor, was able to counter Bataille’s “vulgar materialism” and his engagement with “baseness.” These photographs do not represent an idealisation of love, or woman, but common sexual practices. In contemporary popular pornography the woman’s face was generally visible and was used to involve the viewer in the scene and titillate, where the woman does not entice the viewer with her facial expression another part of her body was foregrounded and submitted to the viewer. The women were represented as available for sex but generally passive, there were exceptions to this but they involved women enacting common male heterosexual fantasies such as domination and lesbianism. Images of women pleasuring themselves

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361 Interview with Michel Leiris by Madeleine Gobeil, *SubStance*, no. 11–12, 1975, p 50.
362 On the covers of *Pour lire à deux* the men are always in a dominant position (literally and physically in the image). The women are held in an embrace, eyes closed in abandon, or they
gaze up at their partner having been seduced.
were very rare, even the woman depicted reading pornography in the nude in *Pour lire a deux* gazed at the camera, passively waiting for her man.

The images in 1929 do not favour the woman’s body over the male and do not show facial expressions, the viewer is detached from the scene. The second illustration for “Summer” is a close up shot of imminent vaginal penetration, the penis is shown nudging into the *labia minora* and it is the female genitalia which are the focus of the shot, the pubic hair and vagina emphasised in deepest blacks. (Fig. 52) Pubic hair was censored in popular pornography, magazines ensured their market position by packaging sex in a way which ensured that they would not be forced under the counter. The removal of pubic hair was one way of maintaining a “tasteful” presentation and the adoption of the brilliant lighting used by the film industry to achieve the “glamour look” achieved a degree of idealisation which allowed images with undisguised erotic intent to be permitted.

There is no idealisation, aestheticisation or mystery in Man Ray’s images, they are frank and obtrusive in comparison to sanitised representations. The illustration for “Autumn” shows fellatio, an act that the surrealists would defend against claims that it was “perverted” and “indecent” in their defence of Charlie Chaplin. (Fig. 53) Again the image is carefully lit and focused to emphasise the act, Kiki’s painted lips are printed in velvet black. “Winter” suggests the anal penetration of the woman. (Fig. 54)

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169 Paris-Sex-Appeal, no. 19, February 1935, published a photograph of a woman sat upon a table with her legs spread wide, wearing red knickers, both hands at her crotch, smiling at the camera but this is the only example found in the survey.

364 Pour lire à deux, no. 28, 1936.

365 *Hands off Love* was signed by thirty-two surrealists but largely composed by Aragon. It was first published in Transition (September 1927) and subsequently in *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 9 - 10 (October 1927), pp. 1 — 6. The tract is translated in Hammond, P. (ed.) *The Shadow and its shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*, 3rd edition, San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2000. The tract is dominated by a vitriolic personal attack on Mrs Chaplin but it is essentially the institution of marriage and bourgeois hypocrisy that the surrealists had in their sights. Once again a response had been provoked by press reports; full details of Mrs Chaplin’s divorce complaint, including scandalous claims of her husband’s sadism and a fetish for virgins, had been made public by her lawyer. In North America the document was sold to the public and allegedly introduced a wide section of the population to the word “fellatio”. Details of Mrs Chaplin’s indictment were published in France, it was in *Le Grand Guignol* that the surrealists read the accusations that in sexual relations Chaplin’s attitude and conduct had been “abnormal, perverted, degenerate and indecent.” *Hands Off Love* asserted that there was “something comic in taking the practice of fellatio - for example - to be abnormal, against nature, perverted, degenerate and indecent. (All married people do it, Chaplin rightly remarks)” The Surrealists idealised Chaplin as one who was driven by pure love and spontaneous passion. Lita Grey’s
indictment is quoted at length in Lynn, K. S. *Charlie Chaplin and his times*, New York: Cooper Square Press, 2003, p. 310
Surrealist erotic expression was of course, heavily indebted to de Sade. In 1923 Desnos had established his centrality to the development of erotic literature in both spirit and form in *De l’erotisme*. Desnos argued that the serious and philosophical mind considered morality as a search for knowledge of humanity and thus had to include the complete study of sexual faculties without condemnation or apologies. He continued “which man concerned with poetry, inquiring contingent or remote mysteries, does not like to retire in this spiritual retreat where love is at the same time pure and licentious in the absolute.”

Sade had revolutionised erotic literature as an intellectual writer who had known no restrictions in his descriptions of lust, who had accurately examined depravation but had done so “without a single line which was vulgar or out of place.” The function of 1929 was undoubtedly to shock but it was to Sade’s morality that it aspired. The images may have resembled the vulgarity of hard pornography but their power to arouse is diminished by their candour and in the context of 1929 they are far removed from the insipidity of pornography. Man Ray did publish mediocre works akin to pornographic modes of representation, which functioned as such for the reticent collector but the photography published in 1929 is free of the sterility that characterised them. 1929 takes love and lust seriously while at the same time telling a joke at the expense of the Church.

*La Septième face du Dé*

Hugnet’s collage work has often been characterised as surrealist in its focus on desire and as a homage to dada, in terms of typographic bravura and a satirical treatment of mass media images. Hugnet had extensively researched dada and it was his essays on the movement which initially attracted Breton to this young,

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367 Desnos, *De l’erotisme*, p 81.
368 Man Ray’s “lesbian” shots of Nusch Éluard and Amy Fidelin sold well and were famously bought by Henri-Pierre Roche among others. Baxter, “Man Ray laid bare”, p 1.

versatile writer. Hugnet's essay on collage focused on Ernst's contribution to the development of the medium and stressed the centrality of irrationality. This section will argue that although Hugnet’s book was clearly indebted to dada, it was wholly steeped in surrealism and aimed to realise the broad political ambition of the surrealist group in the mid 1930s. Breton’s interpretation of Hegelian dialectics to resolve oppositions of the unconscious world and the material world and his desire to “break down the barriers in art which divide familiar sights from possible visions, common experience from conceivable initiation” encouraged artists to disrupt sensibility by revealing the marvellous in the everyday. Hugnet’s subversion of media images and language involved satire and reinforced a surrealist eroticism based on a marriage of poeticism and vulgarity but moreover foregrounded the centrality to surrealism of investigation”. Hugnet questioned the nature of reality and the point at which images begin in an exploration of the mysteries of thought, a means of reconciling consciousness and unconsciousness, dream and life, reason and madness, and of explaining man to himself.

Hugnet’s “poèmes-dé-coupages” are presented as twenty chapters, each a double page spread, with the poetry on the left hand page including a mixture of graphics and a range of typefaces and symbols and on the page opposite a collage including fragments of both images and text sourced from the mass media.

Hugnet made use of a variety of magazines and journals, but advertising imagery and slogans are prominent and predominant use of photographs from the “revues légeres” is evident. Women posed provocatively, shielding their faces in

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373 Hugnet, G. “1870 to 1936” in Read, Surrealism, p 218.

374 In his essay ‘Détournement d’images’, Sam Stourdzé identified a number of sources for Hugnet's collages including the two images from Allo Paris (March 1934) that were used to produce the ‘Trileuse’ collage in La Septième face du Dé (Fig. ... in volume 2 of the thesis). See Baum, Buot and Stourdzé, p. 168.
affected modesty, in ecstasy or in sado-masochistic scenarios were their stock in trade. The content as well as the format of Hugnet’s work echoes that of these magazines, as the cover of Voila from 1931 testifies. (Fig 55) Pictorial and verbal collage was common in both dada and surrealism as was the recycling of titles which has the same hallucinatory effect. The title of the book originated in Mallarme’s Un Coup des Dés N’Abolira Jamais le hasard (1897), and established Hugnet’s book in a tradition of experimentation but also raised the surrealist preoccupation with chance and how this is balanced with artistic intention.

The book is well known but relatively neglected in scholarship and it is Duchamp’s cover design, featuring Man Ray’s photograph of Why Not Sneeze, Rrose Sélavy? (1921) and elaborately decorated title letters with the names of Surrealist heroes, which has received most attention to date.375 (Fig. 56) The cover is a perfect introduction to the book; Duchamp’s work has a sexual dimension, equal attention is devoted to text and image and the artwork includes photography and etching. The reproduction of the readymade had been recycled from the photograph used to illustrate an article on Duchamp in Cahiers d’art written by Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia, published as Duchamp completed his design for Hugnet’s book.376 The assisted readymade was carefully constructed from multiple parts including a bird’s cage, cubes of marble crafted to resemble sugar lumps, a thermometer, and a cuttlefish bone. It alludes to sexual incapacity; the cold marble is incapable of raising the temperature of the thermometer and this is juxtaposed to the violence and involuntary nature of a sneeze. The object is not what it seems to be, its appearance suggests lightness but in fact it is heavy. This echoes the ambiguity of Hugnet’s work and its simultaneous characteristics of lightness and something more weighty. The names inscribed into the title letters of the cover include the established literary

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375 Duchamp provided the cover for the limited edition of 294 copies as well as a second design for the cover of the twenty deluxe editions featuring a photograph of two unwrapped cigarettes, lit in such a way to present deep shadows to the side of each cylinder of tobacco that had been “stripped bare”.

376 Gabrielle Buffet-Picabia’s article appeared in Cahiers d’art, XI, Nos 1—2, 1936. The reproduction used in the Hugnet design was made from the same photograph by Man Ray that

Heroes of surrealism, Romanticism and Symbolism feature heavily. Sade, Rimbaud, Lautréamont, Vaché, Lewis, Swift, Roussel, Borel, Nouveau and Jarry are all present. Achim von Arnim was pertinent because of his ability to create imagery unified by his aesthetic, moral and political ideas, Maturin because of his confusion of dream and reality. Freud is prominent and the centrality of the clinical unconscious is supported by the inclusion of Paracelsus. Saint-Just stands for revolution and Heraclitus stands as he who Hegel considered as a precursor. Chaplin and Allais, along with Jarry, highlight humour. Uccello is the only visual artist featured. Agripppe signals the surrealists’ elevation of woman”.

John Ford was presumably included because of his work “*Tis Pity She’s a Whore* (1633) which explored incest as a violent crime of passion, translated into French by Maeterlinck in 1894 as *Annabella*. The play would feature in Artaud’s *Le Théatre et son Double* (1938). Maeterlinck’s introduction to the play in 1895 offers insight into the surrealists’ admiration “The play is a horrifying poem of love without mercy, frank and bloody. It is love in its violence, in all its beauty and in its almost supernatural horror.”

Hugnet’s book was carefully crafted throughout. Hugnet’s bookbinding studio *Livre-Objet* (1934 - 40) produced innovative work; his 1939 collaboration with Bellmer, *Oeilades ciselées en branche*, an adulation of pubescent femininity was bound with pink paper and a white paper doily and the first 30 copies were perfumed to enhance the sensory experience. La Septième Face Du Dé was printed in an edition of 294 copies, 20 copies were printed on blue paper, several of the black and white collages were hand coloured and the book was hand sewn. In the book the balance between text and image evident on the cover continues inside; text and images have been juxtaposed carefully and although Hugnet was primarily a writer and the text seems to dominate (the poems appear on the left

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For a thorough analysis of this collaborative effort see Taylor, *Hans Bellmer*, pp. 102 - 103.
hand of the page which the reader would instinctively read first), graphic images connect the facing page and the eye is thus led to the photographic collage and then back to the poem. Hugnet’s poems echo the “found” fragments of text, photographs and old engravings on the opposite page in both style and content.

Poem number six (Fig. 57) reads

\begin{verbatim}
Devant le feu
les femmes sont des écrans de verre
mannequins de salamandres à tête de hache
moeurs costumes langues différents
double et douloureuse sensation
\end{verbatim}

echoing the collage with its doubled, filmic image which holds a threat of violence. The fragments of text in the collage provides a narrative and locates the scene at night, in the desert, “de la vengeance” is the final phrase. A sense of a competition of wills is heightened by the remote and hostile terrain. The photographs reinforce the exotic theme, the head and breasts of a woman, a powerful and magical being accompanied by a lion, loom large as a surreal version of Paracelus’s salamander (Fig. 58) or alternatively as a monstrous, man-eating Sphinx. Robert Sobieszek interpreted this image as “the bust of a female, divided in half vertically, presumably by the salamander’s axe” but it is ambiguous, a number of interpretations are valid and there is a sense that it is the woman who is the fire element here.

Sobieszek’s illuminating analysis of La Septième face du Dé interpreted the book as a significant contribution to the surrealist corpus. He also established links to Picabia’s mechanomorphic lithographics and paintings of the decade 1900-1910 and early 1920s as well as Moholy-Nagy’s “photoplastiques” and the photographic work of Éluard and Dali published in Minotaure. This seminal work, he said, is comparable to Breton and Soupault’s Les champs magnétiques (1921) and Ernst’s pictorial novels because it was the first extended use of

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381 Literally translated the poem reads “Before the fire/ women are glass screens/ salamander models head axe/ moral disguises various languages/ double and painful sensation”

382 According to Paracelsus, Salamander was one of the four elemental creatures, the mythological fire spirit. This medieval illustration was reprinted in Hall, Manly, P. The Secret Teachings of All Ages in 1928 (self published) and identified as a woodcut from Paracelsus’ Auslegun von 30 magischen Figuren.

photomontage in a serial, narrative format. All of the images in Hugnet’s book are charged with violence and eroticism and appear to support the view that surrealist images foster hostility towards women and express castration anxiety. Sobieszek noted the fragmented narrative involving the internal voyage of a young girl or girls through sexual initiation, deflowering, submission, confinement and violence but also acknowledged the disintegration of this narrative in the second half of the book and Hugnet’s renunciation of his own story at the end, in the text of the last chapter. Sobiesek concludes

.. they are for the most part clearly orchestrated literal and narrative images, albeit somewhat confusing and esoteric. Some are even frightfully complex and hermetically pathological, while others remain more straightforward and simplistically fetishistic. 384

Sobiezek also stated that the book was an excursion into the sexual pathologies of the 1930s and that because of their construction, the text and collages are wide open to multiple interpretations. Unfortunately this study was not followed by a great deal of further scholarship although in his 2003 essay on Hugnet, Stourdzé analysed the book as a fine example of visual poetry, akin to Breton’s *poèmes-collages* as opposed to a visual narrative. 385 Elza Adamowicz suggested that Hugnet’s *La Septième face du Dé* may amount to more than the fetishistic exploitation seen in mass media images and likened it to the work of Hannah Höch. Adamowicz concluded however that whether Hugnet’s work stages a simplistic pleasure in fetishism or a more complex deconstruction of the mechanisms of fetishisation, his manipulations reduce the image to a closed system of fixed meanings. The literalness of Hugnet’s pictorial and verbal statements, she said, leaves little resonance or interstitial space which would trigger the creative engagement of the viewer/reader as the collages are designed for instant gratification. She concluded that the work compares unfavourably with both the metaphorical collages of Breton and Ernst’s suggestive compositions. 386 This view is challenged by the author.

Hugnet was not a trained artist and certainly not of Ernst’s calibre but his collage work is far from simplistic. It is related to Ernst’s collage novels as sequential

385 See Baum, Buot and Stourdzé, p 176.
work based on the notion of changing authorship in elements found in commercial contexts. In “What is Surrealism?” (1934) Ernst drew attention to the fact that the movement was “flowing freely” at this time in terms of ideas about artistic production and noted that surrealist artists developed ambitions to freely, bravely, and self-confidently move about in the borderland between the internal and external worlds which are still unfamiliar though physically and psychologically quite real (“sur-real”), registering what they see and experience there, and intervening where their revolutionary instincts advise them to do so.387

Hugnet’s use of collage was inspired by the poetic approach of both cubism and dada. Ernst’s work and Éluard’s photomontages were clearly an influence but Hugnet himself compared this work to Breton’s “objet-poèmes”.388 At this time, when Breton understood Hegel as a unifying force, rather than being simplistic or a response to the process of fetishisation in the mass media, La Septième face du Dé can be viewed as a result of what Steven Harris has called a growing maturity in the surrealists’ understanding and use of Hegelian, Freudian and Marxist sources, as well as the development of a parti pris that, while breaking conceptually with bourgeois cultural values and precepts, resisted any instrumentalization of the aesthetic sphere in the political struggle (which would use art as a weapon), in favour of a broader conception of what culture could be.389

Hugnet did not simply respond to mass media images but rather commandeered them because of their ability to aid him in the confusion of image and reality for the purpose of revolt. In this free and violent work Hugnet follows Lautréamont in an attempt to “deliver man from his illusory obsessions; throwing all notions of good and evil into the scales”.390 The collages are filled with surrealist motifs including shells, light bulbs, dungeons, bondage, mannequins, corsets, eyes, shoes, feet, hands, limbs, nudes, birds, reptiles, scorpions, flies and octopuses. Because of their focus on particular aspects of sexuality - sado-masochism, the occult, youth - it was the “reveus légers” that provided Hugnet with an endless supply of material which he could re-present in dream-like tableaux. The

387 Ernst, M. “What is Surrealism?” in Matheson, The Sources of Surrealism, pp. 508 - 509.
388 Hugnet, G. ‘In the Light of Surrealism” in Barr, Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism, p 51.
390 Hugnet, “1870 - 1936” in Read, Surrealism, p 189.
collages were inspired by the notion of the surrealist image as an internal vision but the use of mass media images anchored them in the everyday reality.

Although Hugnet joined the surrealists formally in 1932 at the age of thirty-two, he had been involved with the avant-garde for many years and had been particularly close to Desnos in the early 1920s.\textsuperscript{391} He was wholly committed to surrealism, intensely political, heavily influenced by Freud and considered himself to be a sexual radical. His collage work demonstrates an acute awareness of the desired function of the surrealist image at this time. Breton understood the difficulties in both automatic writing and visual automatism however “The Automatic Message” published in \textit{Minotaure} in 1933 reinforced automatism as a goal.\textsuperscript{392} In terms of visual art Breton was less concerned with process than the creation of images which were revelatory, related to dreams, a manifestation of our unconscious life. In \textit{Les Vases Communicants} (1932) Breton had sought “to cast a conduction wire” between dreaming and consciousness and advocated images that were spontaneous and intuitive and rationally conceived. Breton complained in \textit{Les Vases Communicants} that some of the surrealist objects reproduced in the third issue of \textit{Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution} had been overly determined and lacked the suggestive power that certain almost everyday objects were able to acquire by chance.\textsuperscript{393} Hugnet maintained a faith in automatism

\begin{quote}
In my own opinion, it is desirable that Surrealism, in it poetic activity, should give the fullest scope to dream activity and automatism, as it did in the beginning. Surrealism has always upheld what Tzara so clearly defined by the term: \textit{poésie-activité-de-l ‘esprit.} \textsuperscript{394}
\end{quote}

The process involved in the production of the \textit{poèmes-découpages} adhered closely to Tzara”’s dadaist instruction, the text as well as the pictorial elements of the collages were “cut out”. Hugnet was close to Breton at this time and his elegant manipulation of “found” materials seemed capable of generating the ever-

\textsuperscript{392} Breton, A. “Le Message Automatique” \textit{Minotaure} no. 3-4, pp. 55 - 65.
expanding associations which would allow the reader to “wander around the image” in the way that Breton desired. Photographic elements introduced a snippet of reality into the reality created by Hugnet, added a materiality and a series of associations that were not controlled by him. These are open images without fixed meanings.

The cover of *La Septième face du Dé* offers an invitation to view the work as a combination of playfulness and a serious poetic. The prominent reference to Mallarmé encourages a supposition that the book has a philosophical side and deals “with subjects of pure and complex imagination and intellect.” The page layout of the book echoes that of Mallarmé and when Hugnet stated that in these works he was interested in “supressing metaphor for the sole advantage of the image”, it indicates an interest in exploring what he called “extra-literary problems”

Obsessed by the word, Mallarmé devoted himself to the secrets of publicity, its use of typography, the power of attraction given to certain parts of phrases set in larger type. Extra-literary problems: poetic problems.

*Un Coup De Dés* asserted that “All Thought expresses a Throw of the Dice” and a mixture of chance and craft represent the nature of *La Septième face du Dé* as a whole. The collages are assembled by the artist but strive for “the disintegration of poetry, this contempt for beauty of images, this negation of poetic and non-poetic.” Mallarmé’s work is set out using different font sizes and makes use of empty spaces that create shapes on the page and encourage the reader to read vertically, in opposition to the Western tradition. Hugnet also uses space and composition creatively to both inspire and unnerve the reader. The text and the images have equally significant roles, Hugnet dissolves the rigid boundary between them and uses graphic symbols to create a rhythm and intensify the strange quality of the images.

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395 Mallarme used this phrase in his preface of 1897 to *Un coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard*. http://poetryintranslation.com/PTTBR/French/MallarmeUnCoupdeDes.htm#_Toc160699747 (Accessed 1/08/09).
396 Hugnet, “In the Light of Surrealism” in Barr, *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism*, p 51.
398 Mallarmé’s 1897 preface to *Un coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard.*
Hugnet, G. "1870 - 1936" in Read, Surrealism, p 206.
Three quotations function as a preface to the book, one from Lautréamont (credited as Isodore Ducasse) “Poetry must be made by everyone. Not by one”, one from Xavier Forneret, ‘The greatest thief that I know - it’s me - if you read me” and one from Saint-Just ‘The revolution is in the people, not in the fame of some celebrities’. These serve to establish the revolutionary criterion of the work and justify the content of the book as well as the process of the recycling of images and words from popular culture. Forneret is pertinent not only because he experimented with composition, using very large font and printing only on one side of the page, but because his work parodied popular contemporary horror fiction.

Hugnet’s melodramatic poèmes-dé-coupages mirror the style and content of the revues légeres in marvellous images which playfully present and celebrate the absurdity of the imagery in these sensationalist magazines. Hugnet’s references to Forneret, Lautréamont and Saint-Just link creativity to political struggle and thus place the book in the service of revolution. In the mid 1930s with the ongoing debate on revolutionary culture, Hugnet’s book was presented as both aesthetically radical and political. It was not simply “art” but an intervention which involved harnessing some of the “paraphernalia of the external world” which represented a particularly poetic expression of modernity. The material taken from magazines and used by Hugnet is akin to Dali’s conception of the post card, particularly the pornographic post card, as the “most lively document of popular modern thought, a thought so profound or so sharp that it eludes psychoanalysis.”

Hugnet alluded to Mallarmé’s other symbol of poetry “the stars” in the first collage. (Fig. 59) The main text on the collage reads “The stars and the

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400 “La poesie doit être faite par tous. Non par un.” Isodore Ducasse. “Le plus grand voleur que je connais. - c’est moi. - si vous me lisez” Xavier Forneret. “La revolution est dans le peuple, et non point dans la renommée de quelques personnages” Saint-Just. Forneret (1809 - 1884) was neglected as a writer but was brought to public attention by his inclusion in Breton’s Anthologie de l ’humour noir (1939).


402 In Un Coup De Dés Mallarmé’s last image is the polar constellation. Dorothy Betz
suggested that with this image Mallarmé posits that which endures out of the poetic act and thus
victims of fur never go out”. Three photographic fragments of female faces are displayed side by side with sinister two word captions pasted below which can be read horizontally across the images or vertically beneath each one. The central image, which may not be a photographic representation, shows only a nose and painted lips and is captioned with “POISON GOSSIP.” The surrounding images are faces split in half, to the left the woman’s eye looks directly at the camera and the caption reads “STARVATION CONFUSION.” The face to the right is heavily made up and gazes vacantly past the camera, this face seems to be a drawing rather than a photograph and this emphasises the construction and artificiality of femininity; the caption reads “SUFFOCATION PORTRAITS.” These glamorous women appear as sirens, extreme in their femininity and tyrannous. In this first collage, the combination of text and image connect sex to cruelty and this is made explicit in the reference to fur. The extract of text which reads “of fur” is positioned centrally, directly underneath the women and is small in comparison to the other text. It also stands out because it is set against a shaded background. As we read the text from top right to bottom left, as a throw of the dice, there is no definitive order of words but there is a sense of stability to the main text whereas the other text, boxed in and pasted onto the portraits may be read apart, with the photographs.

The representations of women in the collage resemble Leopold von Sacher-Masoch’s “goddess of love” in Venus in Furs (1870) with her red lips and marble like complexion and indeed it is only the head of the woman that the narrator sees in his dream at the start of the novel as she is wrapped in fur. It is no coincidence that the narrator in the novel fell asleep while reading Hegel. Hegel proposed a concept of “genuine love” which could resolve the divisions of the

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403 The narrator in Venus in Furs is awoken from a dream about a “goddess of love” by his servant who notes that he fell asleep while reading Hegel. The main narrative centres on the character of Severin who is obsessed with violence and outlines his ordeals at the hands of his lover Wanda. Severin convinces Wanda to fulfil his fantasies of a woman that treats him like a slave to prove his love. The novel is a psychological study, with an element of comedy, of the lengths humans will go to for love and has a political ending which concludes that women are cruel in love because of social oppression and that men and women can only become equal partners and companions when women achieve equality in work and education. Sacher-Masoch
world and heal alienation. For Freud fur, among other things, represented the female sex and men developed an attachment to it through a fear of castration.\textsuperscript{404} Flaubert’s posthumously published satirical encyclopaedia, the \textit{Dictionary of Received Ideas} (1913) had simply equated fur with wealth but it was in the inter war period that fur had became firmly associated with glamorous women through Hollywood.

A further textual reference to fur appears in the tenth collage which shows an image of a woman whose identity is concealed. (Fig. 60) Her face is obscured by a raised arm as well as two fragments of abstract collage. The reference to fur reinforces the fetishism in the image which transforms the woman into a collection of body parts. The text suggests transformation through the use of a "new magic substance" which can work in "a few days", echoing cosmetic advertisements and the superimposed, oversized lips and hand suggest the outcome of such treatment. This fragment is beautifully coloured, emphasising artificiality, the lips and nails are red, the hand itself vibrant pink and the ring green and gold. The text in the bottom half of the collage warns of the dangers of "rummaging about in clothes and furs", suggesting that this artificial beauty had a previous incarnation as ‘huntresses from a haunted house’, reminiscent of Breton’s wishes in “Il y aura une fois”. “So simple to be beautiful” reads a fragment of text in collage six (Fig. 57) and there is a continual questioning, throughout the book, of the ramifications of beauty and the body as commodities. Unease thus accompanies any pleasure taken from these images.

Contemporary cosmetic advertising campaigns, including the ubiquitous Elizabeth Arden series (Fig. 61) and the Helena Rubenstein campaigns emphasised the scientific basis of beautification (Fig. 62). The artifice of glamour was made explicit in a publicity photograph from Paramount demonstrating the mechanised make-up procedures used by the studio to achieve a flawless finish (Fig. 63). Hugnet appears to parody this in collage nineteen where a beautician, whose head has been replaced by a corset representing the ideal female body shape, treats clients in a room resembling an open dungeon.

where clients are tied up or appear languid and helpless (Fig. 64). The text reads
The interior of the ruins seemed so bare, poisonous and pink, there more than a
year.” This satire based on “bourgeois” models of femininity would become a
regular feature in surrealist journals after World War Two when Joyce Mansour
deployed her caustic wit at the expense of contemporary women’s magazines.

Hugnet drew attention to the social and psychic effects of the commoditisation of
sexuality as the women in the collage appear unable to resist “beautification” and
face their desires. The site of the treatment invokes a ritual and scientific
rationality is replaced by the fetish. Hugnet fetishised and confronted the beauty
industry, turning its irrationality upon itself.

Fetishism is a theme that runs through La Septième face du Dé. For both Freud
and Marx the fetish was a meeting of erotic and materialist desire and the revues
légères provided Hugnet with material to exploit this. Many of the collages
focus explicitly on sexual fetishism using images of body parts (Fig. 65), sexual
practices (Fig. 66), material objects (shoes) (Fig. 67) or tactile materials (Fig 68).
However, the other concept of fetishism, as idolatry, is pertinent here because of
the surrealist investment in non-Western religious objects and because of
Hugnet’s emphasis on ritualism. Some of the collages involve explicit ceremony
(Figs. 66, 69 and 70). All three notions of the fetish involve attributing value or
power to an object and the juxtaposition of them in Hugnet’s book suggest a
political function for surrealist fetishisation aimed at exploiting the interface
between irrationality and commodification. The second collage (Fig. 71) in
particular offers a sense of giddy helplessness in the face of sexual drives, the
 commodification of sexuality and a consumerism based on desire. The
fragments of text include “an hour with the blonde”, “daily horoscope”,
tomorrow is alive in the windows”, “dare”, “caresses - a full range for rainy
days”, “big and small little girls are opposed to speed” and “the scandalous one
began” contribute to the intoxication and lewdness in the image. The two
cabinets have slots for the insertion of money, on the left a woman sits on top of
the box which contains a selection of women, body parts and pieces of
machinery as well as a bowl of fruit topped with a phallic object tinted red. The
opposite cabinet holds a collection of objects with sexual connotations including
a crab, fish, wine and a bird. The bottom cabinet shows a scene of satyrs or
revellers jumping around a fire in a frenzied dance. Between
the cabinets a host of winged creatures are captivated by the incantation of a
man. The woman in the lower half of the collage appears to be suffering the
consequences of indulgence; she is out of control, a vulgar leer on her face as she
desperately claws at her shift. Hugnet brought together these psychic, sexual and
social forms and surrealism — what Foster has called ‘the hidden glue of the
collage’ — and married the elements of fantasy and reality, creating a
hallucinatory image which interrogated unconscious desire at the same time as
contesting the notion of a benign social world.

The vitality of Hugnet’s collages stems from the integration of explicit eroticism,
considered as central to the ‘modern spirit’ and revolt against ‘everything that is
disappointing in artificial, everyday life.’ The cruelty inherent in popular
magazines is harnessed and re-presented to provide the reader with a disquieting
experience which aimed to provoke an intellectual and moral questioning rather
than instant gratification. *La Septième face du Dé* demonstrates how at this
juncture, in the mid 1930’s, Surrealism strove to unify art and a revolutionary
political perspective.

**Mr Knife Miss Fork**
The relationship between love and marriage is one of the themes explored in
René Crevel’s *Babylone* (1927). Crevel’s novel inspired work by Man Ray as
well as Ernst, who produced, with Crevel, an illustrated edition of the first
chapter of the novel in 1931 entitled *Mr. Knife Miss Fork*. This section of the
text had been published alone in *Transition* in 1929 and had been well
received. The book was produced in a limited edition of 255 copies. The text

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407 Man Ray *Mr Knife, Miss Fork* (1944)
408 On January 21st 1930, F.Scott Fitzgerald wrote to his editor from Paris:
“In the foreign (French) field there is besides Chamson one man, and at the opposite
pole, of great, great talent. It is not Cocteau nor Arragon (sic) but young René Crevel. I am
opposed to him for being a fairy but in the last *Transition* (number 18) there is a translation of the
is centred on an extended middle class family who are attempting to deal with the fact that the father has deserted them and fled to England with the mother’s beautiful cousin Cynthia, the only character given a name. For most of the text events are relayed through a child narrator, the daughter of the estranged couple, who retreats into a fantasy world to escape the dullness of everyday family life and the defamation of her father and his lover. The child’s imagination is unrestrained and preoccupied with recent events, and her innocent musings offer an astute judgement on the bourgeois family. In the child’s imagination the two runaway lovers who are represented by cutlery, “Mr Knife and Miss Fork”, enjoy the delights and fulfilment brought by love. In Paris the rest of the family are consumed by rancour and the child is able, through her imagination, to refuse “to be caught up in small talk, small things, small people.” The attraction of this novel for Ernst as an illustrator is clear given its black humour, the preponderance of birds, and the child narrator’s “absurd imagination and penchant for the bizarre” in the words of her mother.

The mother, “on the threshold of her thirtieth year ... already resigned to the dreariest and most useless of virtues” is the epitome of “a good mother of a family.” This austere, graceless woman has submitted to boredom while her own mother persisted “in the rhythm of contempt that served as metronome for her entire existence.” The husband’s character is barely sketched and essentially replaced in the text by a figure captivated by Cynthia imagined in his daughter’s imagination.

The power of the nineteen illustrations is difficult to appreciate in reproduction. They were made by a process which was a development of the cliché-verre
printmaking technique.\textsuperscript{414} The process involved a combination of drawing and frottage on pieces of thin, translucent paper which were then used as photographic negatives to create a reverse image on photosensitive paper. The luminosity of white on black and the “chalky” effect add texture and depth to these images which are presented with captions taken directly from the text and printed in red ink (as are the page numbers) on protective paper. The illustrations are generally positioned adjacent to the quotation that has been chosen as the caption and thus are intimately related to the text. They all present a visualisation of the girl’s perception of events and her night and day dreams.

The grandfather and Cynthia are the only characters to feature in them. The grandfather is an eminent psychiatrist, presented as a materialistic paterfamilias in the text and the caption. He brands Cynthia “a whore” but is not available to explain the term or the meaning of death to his granddaughter when she asks her mother to do so. It is unlikely that he would have been helpful in this situation as we are told that recently, when asked by his daughter about how to approach sex education as a parent, he was unable to offer a satisfactory answer. In the illustration paterfamilias is “all hair”, a dour, impotent figure, pensive and crushed by the scandal brought on his family.\textsuperscript{415} (Fig. 72)

Cynthia is heroic, a stunning and vivacious young woman adored by all the family before her betrayal and a bewitching Venus in the mind of her cousin. (Figs. 73, 74) Cynthia possesses qualities that her own mother lacks; beauty, hedonism, sexual allure, spontaneity, romance, confidence and initiative. In their imagined adventure it is she who leads. The child imagines her father to be very happy with this woman who, unlike when with his wife, he can “have a good time with very often now that there are only the two of them and they can laugh and sing.”\textsuperscript{416} The child’s conception of sexuality is evident in her idea that her father and Cynthia will stay in rooms “always with the twin beds as close as possible to each other, talk a long time before going to sleep and stay in bed late every morning” and that he will buy her “beautiful dresses with very low

\textsuperscript{414} Rainwater suggested that the process was developed with Man Ray. Rainwater, R. Max Ernst, Printmaker” in Rainwater, R. Max Ernst: Beyond Surrealism, New York: The New York Public Library, 1986, p 16.

\textsuperscript{415} Boyle, Babylon , p 17.

\textsuperscript{416} Boyle, Babylon , p 9.
necks.\textsuperscript{417} The child describes Cynthia’s pretty bosom that moves up and down because she is out of breath. She imagines that her Papa is very happy as he caresses Cynthia, and laughs because he imagines two little birds enclosed in her dress. He declares “You know Cynthia, I love you. I am in love with you. When we go down hallways, I am always mad to kiss you”\textsuperscript{418} (Fig. 75)

When the grandmother demands to see the article on the couple printed in the London press, the child commits the “marvellous photograph” of Cynthia to her memory before delivering the newspaper. The image shows Cynthia in her sensuous finery whereas the father is shown in a small portrait pasted onto his lover’s skirts. Cynthia is an active champion of love. The cover photograph (Fig. 76) demonstrates her initiative and the passion of the affair. Miss Fork appears to have swept the phallic Mr Knife off his feet, the dotted line behind her suggests a bold movement towards him whereas he seems only to quiver. She has advanced from the corner of the room where a fantastic picture hangs. The abstracted, vibrant image is brilliantly highlighted and seems to pulsate with energy, echoing the bottom half of Mr Knife. Their embrace is very close and the tip of the knife is embedded in the prongs of the fork. The representation of the lovers as cutlery signifies partnership.

In \textit{Entretiens} Breton identified the surrealist idealisation of love as belonging to the Cathari tradition of “courtly love.”\textsuperscript{419} Bate defined this tradition as one in which love is “unhappy” and where “Perpetually unsatisfied in a sublimated devotion, the loved and longed-for Lady becomes an abstract ideal, exalted beyond any actual woman.”\textsuperscript{420} Bate went on to discuss the female nude in surrealist photography as love personified, as the unattainable thing craved by the group and a basis for inspiration. In Ernst’s prints, the nude, and indeed Miss Fork stand in for the image of the idealising of love; the imagery in the book stems from a narrator who glorifies love in the persona of Cynthia who has all of

\textsuperscript{417} Boyle, \textit{Babylon}, p 9.
\textsuperscript{418} Boyle, \textit{Babylon}, pp. 7 - 8.
\textsuperscript{419} In \textit{Entretiens} Breton stated that the Surrealists “elevated to the zenith the meaning of that “courtly” love that is generally thought to derive from the Cathari tradition”, Breton and Parinaud, \textit{Conversations}, p 111.
Bate, *Photography and Surrealism*, p 153.
the qualities of the surrealists” ideal woman. She is youthful and inspirational and has strength and passion. The child refuses to surrender her ideal view of the affair in favour of a more realistic version when she has the opportunity to do so on meeting her father. But it is not only in the child’s imagination that love has triumphed, it is evidenced on the front page of a London newspaper and in the fact that divorce papers had been issued. The reader is not told whether this happy romantic love can endure but what is clear is that it was not evident in the bourgeois family and that narrow domesticity could never foster it.

**Banalité**

The final illustration in *Mr Knife Miss Fork* (Fig. 77) shows „... Cynthia, her pearls, her feathers, her miracles ...“, an image, the text suggests, as fanciful as the song sung in the forest in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* about the perfection of love in the springtime, the perfect time to wed, but it is this verse “With a hey and a ho and a hey nonino” that the child uses as a mantra. In Shakespeare’s romantic comedy the idea that love is tortuous is mocked and love is not portrayed as unattainably perfect. Rosalind, the clever, independent heroine, is aware of the foolishness of romantic love but has fallen in love and believes in a version of it that can survive in the real world. The dangers within the institution of the family were of course recognised by Freud, and also Bataille who understood it as a site where sexuality shifts around beneath a veneer of respectability, his text “Figure humaine” was illustrated with a photograph of a wedding party pictured outside the family hardware business.\(^{421}\) (Fig. 78) However, while there is no cause for hope with Bataille, the surrealists held on to the possibility of liberation. Roger Parry, who was under the influence of surrealism in the 1930s was attracted by this and produced a work in *Banalité* that was indebted to Breton’s idea of the illustrated book and also contributed to this complex discourse on the family.

*Banalité* is surreal in atmosphere.\(^{422}\) Léon-Paul Fargue’s poems and prose, based on nostalgic recollections of his own childhood and adolescence was

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\(^{421}\) *Documents*, no. 4, 1929

\(^{422}\) In the first manifesto, Breton described Léon-Paul Fargue as “surrealist in atmosphere”,

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Breton, Manifestoes of Surrealism, p 27.
initially published, without illustrations, in 1922 by Gallimard’s Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française and republished in a new edition in 1928. Soon afterwards Gallimard announced the publication of an edition illustrated with photographs, a radical proposition at this time when literature was generally adorned with drawn illustrations, although Breton had experimented with text and photography in Nadja. Gallimard aimed to capitalise on the growing market for deluxe editions and had enlisted a number of young artists to produce a series of publications including Dante’s L’Enfer (1930) with lithographs by Jean Fautrier, Gide’s Les Caves du Vatican (1929 - 30) with etchings by Jean Emile Laboureur and Mallarmé’s Poesies (1928) with etchings by Raoul Dufy. These publications, along with Banalité, were presented among others at the Théâtre Pigalle in January 1930 in an exhibition of NRF deluxe editions. Parry had ambitions not to illustrate a book but rather to create a series of photographs to accompany a book that had touched him personally; his friendship with André Malraux (at that time art director at Gallimard) and his contacts at NRF facilitated his Banalité project. Banalité brought Parry immediate critical acclaim in France and abroad. Julien Levy bought Parry’s photographs from Banalité as well as two prints subsequently published in Photographie Modernes (n.d) and exhibited them in two shows Surréalisme and Modern European Photography in early 1932.

Banalité was published in a limited edition of 332 copies with 16 black and white photogravures, credited to Parry and Fabien Loris. Loris was an artist, actor and musician, and a close friend of Parry who would collaborate with him in future projects in Africa and Tahiti in the early 1930s. The photographs in Banalité include straight prints, photomontages, super-impressions, negative reversals and five photograms produced using paper cut outs provided by Loris. Each photograph is printed on a full page and although they relate to an aspect of Fargue’s text they are visual interpretations rather than illustrations. Parry’s work was hugely influenced by Tabard and his apprenticeship under him at Deberny and Peignot had acquainted the young photographer with the full

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423 Bouqueret and Bertaud, Roger Parry. Le Météore Fabuleux, p 95.
424 Bouqueret, La Nouvelle Vision en France, p 72.
spectrum of modernist experimentation. Tabard had exhibited in Stuttgart at *Film und Foto* (1929) and had returned with a gift for Parry of Roh and Tschichold”s *Foto-Auge* (1929) which included Moholy-Nagy”s “Peinture Photographie Film” as well as Werner Gräff”s seminal anthology of New Vision photography *Es Kommt der neue Fotograf* (1929) and Hans Richter”s book on avant garde film illustrated with stills *Filmgegner von heute ´filmfreunde von morgen* (1929). Parry had already acquired for himself Renger-Patzsch”s *Die Welt ist Schön* (1928).426

Parry shared Tabard”s interest in still life and a tendency to produce darkly lit, theatrical compositions and developed a distinctive modernist style, influenced by cinematic mise-en-scène. His work is generally characterised as surrealist because it is enigmatic and deals in the subjects and iconography of visual surrealism. *Banalité* presents Paris as a site of the marvellous and once again, the narrator is a child. In the photographs people are often represented by objects such as gloves or a bird. Parry was interested in the relationship between fantasy and reality however, his attraction to surrealism was also based on radical politics; Parry was born into a working class family in the 18th arrondissement in 1905. He was inspired by the Russian Revolution in 1917 and throughout the 1920s he was associated with anarchists and communists. Loris described himself and Parry as “what you could call cheerful bohemians; passing whole evenings putting the world to rights, discussing politics and conjuring up projects that would never see the light of day.”427 A central aspect of *Banalité* is an exposure of the bourgeois family. This is not to say that Parry saw the project as political, or that the book itself is political but rather that it engages art philosophically with an area which is part of everyone”s human experience.

The title of the book suggests trivia but it is also a concept that has strong positive and negative connotations and Fargue invested it with a powerful emotional charge. Fargue”s exploration of the implications of an ordinary view of the extraordinary, and an extraordinary understanding of the world of
These acquisitions are documented in Bouqueret and Bertaud, *Roger Parry. Le Météore Fabuleux*, p 18.

ordinary is arguably indebted to Mallarmé”s concept of the ordinary. Fargue”s readers are made aware both of the strangeness of Parisian society as seen by the narrator, and of its ordinariness in the same way that in Mallarmé”s prose and poems “... the world of the ordinary is defined not as a one dimensional and absolute reality, but as a perception dependent on standpoint and a willingness to engage imaginatively with what could be described as different and other”. Plate 12 (Fig. 79) relates to the text which describes Fargue”s adventures at the Landelle residence which he visited regularly as a boy. The large apartment on Rue Montaigne was located on the fifth floor and featured an immense balcony which ran around the whole house and from which you could look down upon five streets. Fargue told of how he would look down at the cars and the mysterious silhouettes of passers by with his group of friends and, excited by the recent and well publicised murders in Paris (by Gamahut and Marchandon), would predict catastrophes and wish for something terrible to happen. In fact two years later, two houses along from the Landelle house, one of the most notorious murderers in 19th century France, Henri Pranzini, killed a prostitute named Madame Regnault, her maid and 12 year old daughter. Parry”s photomontage seems to allude to this as the bearded figure holds a large butcher”s cleaver, Pranzini”s murder weapon. What seemed to interest Parry in Fargue”s text was how the extraordinary and the uncanny were related to the everyday, the domestic, the familiar. Parry”s image attempts to reconcile these opposing terms as it alludes to actual passers-by below the Landelle residence, the boy”s interpretation of them as well as murderous villains, both real and imagined.

In Banalité Parry was clearly influenced by the developments in experimental photography that he had studied closely (Figs. 80 and 81). Maurice Cloche”s Alphabet as well as Breton”s use of text and photography in Nadja were obvious

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429 Hélène Stafford, in her book Mallarme and the poetics of everyday life: a study of the concept of the ordinary in his verse and prose, New York: Rodopi, 2000 argues that in Mallarmé”s writing there is the powerful pull of the craving to escape ordinariness, but also a need to rejoin it and to explore its positive and negative potential.

430 Banalité, p 60.
points of reference but Parry was influenced more generally by surrealism’s exploration of the interface between dream and reality. Both Fargue’s text and Parry’s images are intense and they correspond closely. However, while the text marries an exuberance and appetite for life with melancholy, Parry’s plastic interpretations focus on the strangeness and violence of these memories and place them outside of reality. The images for Banalité seem to adhere to Breton’s assertion in Nadja that “Perhaps life needs to be deciphered like a cryptogram.” Parry’s attraction to Fargue’s work is understandable, the author was arguably at the height of his success at this time and his work is a sensitive description of life which made use of popular language and is filled with abundant imagery. In Banalité Fargue inhabited an internal zone where reality merged with imagination. Parry’s photographs are graphically strong and depopulated apart from ghostly figures in the railway shots and a hand belonging to a dead body but his everyday objects vibrate with energy and this, in part, accounts for the unity of the work because this vibration echoes the energy of Fargue’s text. The fact that the images are free from human presence gives them a generality, Fargue’s reminiscences are autobiographical and emotional but Parry’s photographs counter this and address a common experience of family life and youth in which darkness and cruelty are present both in reality and in imagination. The text is peppered with extreme violence, explicit and implicit, as the narrator develops an awareness of brutality in everyday life and recalls vividly imagined dangers. This is accompanied by joy and comfort, whereas the photographs highlight themes of sadness, tension and violence.

Two photographs are presented before any text appears in the book and function as epigraphs which establish the fact that the images are not representations of actual objects but are figments of imagination. The first is the most abstract image in Banalité, a photogram made using a cut out paper shapes. (Fig. 82) It is

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*Maurice Cloche was at this time directing mise-en-page and typography at Deberny and Peignot along with Maximilien Vox. Cloche had requested instruction in photography from Tabard who refused, but sought permission from Peignot for Cloche to use the studio at night to experiment. Cloche produced the photographs for Alphabet, in which each letter is given a word followed by a photograph. Alphabet was published in 1929 by AMG. Parry knew Cloche well*
and admired his work and Bouqueret and Bertaud have identified similarities in this work and that of Parry and Loris. Bouqueret and Bertaud, Roger Parry, *Le Météore Fabuleux*, p 17. Breton, *Nadja*, p 112.
a complex image which is highly evocative and open but contains references to familiar objects rich in associations. The white cut out shape suggests a pigeon perched upon an urban brick wall facing a clear and expansive night sky. The bird is erect and alert, absorbing the atmosphere, stretching out and exposing as much of its body as possible. There is a sense of adventure and a will to experience life, the whiteness suggests purity and innocence. In the text Fargue expressed the exploratory energy of youth as well as the need for stability. The bird is grounded but has the ability to fly freely before returning home; the narrator in the text was loved and well cared for and could escape to the realm of dreams and imagination. The image has positive associations and introduces an element of mystery.

The second illustration is a close up of a ghostly train engine; trains feature heavily in the poems and prose as the boy loved them passionately. (Fig. 83) In this negative print the engine is magnificent and powerful, much detail is evident and intricacy as well as strength is emphasised. The relationship between reality and dream is further emphasised in the third illustration which is divided into two parts, the lower part shows a pair of eyes and the upper section is filled with floating paper boats. (Fig. 84) The eyes are drawn and do not look directly at the viewer but are dreamy and preoccupied, unidentifiable images are reflected on the pupils and on the brow and boats too. The final image before the long prose which dominates the book is a rail platform. (Fig. 85) The preceding prose is concerned with the “other side” of the town, beyond a border of “a string of wild gardens that smell of absinthe and bugs” where a phantom tramway is found.

This mysterious side of the city is present throughout Fargue’s text, viewed from the relative safety of the narrator’s life. All of these preliminary photographs of trains, boats and the bird involve mobility or journeying. This fourth image is filled with vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines and the ladder is central. In all of these images the viewer gazes upwards from a low vantage point and is encouraged to aspire to the unrestricted revelations of the mind.

Parry made use of his commercial style which focused sharply on the substance of the object and relied on expressionistic lighting which created extreme highlights and long, deep shadows. In Parry’s commercial work (Fig. 86) and in
his personal work Parry developed a careful mise-en-scène where the objects functioned as signs. In Banalité the viewer encounters a complex array of signs and is aware that they are not looking at an actual object but a memory or a scene visualised by the narrator that the photographer has made plastic. The starkness and generality of Parry’s images facilitate an intimacy with the memories and imaginings within the narrative which could not be achieved by text alone.

Plate 5 (Fig. 87) alludes to the suicide of the narrator’s friend, Albert. In the text Fargue described his tentative friendship with this boy who was an “outsider”. He was invited to Albert’s house for dinner and was impressed by the affluence of the family and their homely abode but especially by the attractiveness of his friend’s mother. The boys eventually lost touch and Albert’s suicide is reported to Fargue some years later by his cousin who tells of how he shot himself in the mouth. The family, he says, had no idea anything was wrong and simply found his body on the landing. In the text there are indications of discord, the mother is, by her own admission “nervous” and Albert says at one point “Me, I need someone to pull me out of the shit.” Fargue was keen to see the boy’s collection of framed and mounted insects but was disappointed because although they were housed in an impressive cabinet far superior to his own, they were “not is a good state”. Fargue described insects with broken antennas and legs and the top part of their mouth worn away. There are little piles of yellow dust on the velvet beneath the abdomens which indicated that the insects had been eaten away by parasites.

The photograph seems to echo this sense of decay and disintegration. The gun and hand are the focus of the image but the flooring is central and is lit to emphasise texture and a significant amount of dust. Apart from an upturned palm and fingers the body is unseen and the debris evokes the powdery particles to which something is thought to be reduced by death. Parry’s focus on materiality is in contrast to Fargue’s treatment of the death which is simply reported in a brief quotation of the cousin’s news, after which the narrator’s thoughts turn immediately to the boy’s mother. The text and particularly the photograph prompt contemplation of Albert’s forlorn existence and his
inability to find solace in his materially wealthy, but emotionally dysfunctional bourgeois
family. A critique of the bourgeois family runs through this work and the photographic images contribute to the notion that this institution, relatively new at this point, was poisonous rather than noble. Fargue was deeply wounded by his personal family experience, he was born outside marriage in 1876 to a seamstress, his father was an engineer whose family refused to accept the liaison and although his parents created a family unit, Fargue senior did not legally accept his son until 1892, and did not marry until 1907. Fargue loved his parents intensely and was devastated by his father’s early death in 1909 but a sense of melancholy pervades his works which deal with the family. Vulturne, also published by Gallimard in 1928, is particularly pertinent.

There was a family. Its life, its gay moments. Its child .... The window open to the sun .... Friends at their table, happy, at the coffee hour. Their return from work. The time of their toilette with their almond soap .... Their voices in the rooms, calling each other, their poor eyes, their humble gestures. They walked gently alongside life, in the sadness and the shame and the joy .... All of that, dead!!

Plate 6 (Fig. 88) refers to the interest that Fargue’s father had in chemistry. The illustration is placed after a passage which revealed the unhappy family life of Fargue senior and his brother who received no money and “more kicks than caresses” from their parents. Fargue recounted an occasion when the boys were taken to the Champs-Elysées by their grandfather who stood on the kerb and pointed to the passing carriages saying “That’s what I could have had, if I hadn’t had you.” Fargue told of his surprise when finding out from his mother about his late father’s intense love of chemistry and that he kept a laboratory, as he had only known him as a sad, sombre man and when “all hope was already lost”.

Parry’s photograph focuses on lost hope, the “spirit of research” and inventiveness of Fargue’s father when young is mourned here. The fingers of the discarded gloves are echoed in the scorch marks on the table which indicate endeavour; the two central measuring jugs, with their spouts aligned seem

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434 These biographical details are taken from Katherine Knorr’s review of Jean-Paul Goujon’s biography Leon-Paul Fargue, Paris: Gallimard, 1998. The translation of Vulturne is also hers. See Knorr, K. Leon-Paul Fargue (Review) New Criterion, 1 April 1998, Vol. 16, No. 8, p 71.
expectant but the crystallised liquid on the bottle behind them suggests abandonment. Whereas Albert had been unable to establish a place for himself in society, Fargue’s father had relinquished the life he could have led because something else was expected of him and he was unable to resist that pressure, such was its strength. Parry’s psychological expressiveness conveys a profound sorrow.

The tensions created by family life and the responsibilities of motherhood in particular are expressed in two further episodes interpreted by Parry. Plate 11 (Fig. 89) shows a static carousel horse, Fargue recalled how the children imagined themselves as soldiers and told of a competition in which they had to hook rings onto lances as they rode, prizes were given to the most successful and to children who had shown bravery or managed to spear a particularly difficult ring. The attendant mothers also battled as their sense of injustice was fuelled by competitiveness on behalf of their offspring, “Yes madame, that is cheating! He got a prize because he went on so many times! And that great big girl, there! Would you put kids of that age on a wooden horse? I ask you!” In Parry’s photograph the animal too is pierced and will travel in endless circles. The horse assumes a militaristic air. Protectiveness spills into physical violence a few pages later. Fargue recounts an incident at the park when a big boy planted a spade in a heap of sand and said “All the kids who knock this spade over will have their ears pulled!” Fargue could not resist temptation and at the moment when the boy threw himself at his heels, Fargue’s mother was swiftly upon him. She slapped the boy with deliberate force. Parry’s photograph presents a mountainous pile of grainy sand with a bucket, a sand pie battlement already made and a territorial spade atop. (Fig. 90) The bucket is decorated with a picture of an animal which, although difficult to define, resembles a bear, a symbol of ferocity in the protection of kin and particularly maternal protection. Ominous dark clouds gather above.

Fargue communicated a desire for stability and told of how he hated moving house and would be consumed with sorrow when he found out that the family

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436 Banalité, p 52.
437 Banalité, p 55.
was to leave an apartment. His response was to embrace the walls for long periods in the same way that his grief at losing a favourite housemaid “la mère Jeanne” was manifested in a physical attachment to her old clothes. This short passage which ends the long prose ends on a sombre note in which Fargue considers the final departure of death. Parry interprets this in Plate 14 (Fig. 91) with an image of an abandoned house. The lack of control felt by the narrator is echoed in the upturned photograph; this family has literally been turned upside down. This space is claustrophobic, despite the fact that the door is ajar, because the decoration in the hallway matches that of the room and therefore the opportunity to exit is somewhat limited. The panelling, the crossed pattern of the empty coat hooks and the shadows of the door frame on the wall contribute to a sense of entrapment. The rope lying on the floor lends the flavour of a crime scene and the viewer seems to be backed into a corner. The family home may be a “haven in a heartless world” but it can also be a prison. Parry’s photograph evokes the notion of the family as a site of danger.

These two books, *Banalité* and *Mr Knife Miss Fork* differ in many ways but both offered an artistic contribution which stemmed from surrealism, to the discourse on the institution of the family in the early 20th century. Unlike Ernst and Crevel, Fargue and Parry were not surrealists yet within the orbit of the movement produced a work which was essentially held together by surrealism and an important aspect of this adhesive is politics.

The political impact of the group was not confined to wrangling within the left, whether it was with the Communist Party or *Contre-Attaque*. Neither was it confined to tracts, resolutions or gestures and activities. Surrealism failed to galvanise an alternative opposition on the left but the politics in surrealism was also situated in its capacity to present the flip side of modernity, the psychic unrest inevitably produced by capitalism and an alternative to conformity. This is a key to surrealism’s longevity; it has resonance in the 21st century because its politics although uneven, were rigorous enough to maintain a consistent moral opposition to nationalism, the state, the church and the family. The political value of art for the surrealists resided in its potential for transcendence. These illustrated books appear to meet Breton’s appeal in the First Manifesto for
“fairy
tales for adults”. They provide an exploration of inner consciousness but also meet the Hegelian ambitions inherent in the Second Manifesto to project ideas and images into the external world. Chapter 5 deals with the two decades following the end of World War Two in France. While recognising that this is a different historical context and a period when developments in the illustrated press advanced rapidly, this final section aims to explore how the surrealist group continued their interrogation of representations of femininity in the popular press and their investigations into sexuality during the 1950s and the sexual revolution of the 1960s.

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438 Breton, “First Manifesto” in Manifestoes of Surrealism, p 16.
Chapter 5
Sexual Radicalism: Photography in post-war Surrealist journals

During and after World War Two the surrealist movement continued to mobilise people around political and moral issues. This chapter concentrates on the activities of the surrealists in post war Paris but also deals with the war years very briefly. This brevity is partly because the geographical focus of this study is on Paris and the cadre of the group were in New York and partly because in war conditions there were limited resources available for reproducing photographs. When Breton returned to France from New York in 1946 the situation politically, socially and culturally had changed radically and many of the changes related to the position of women including the establishment of female suffrage in 1944. Breton fought to sustain a surrealist distinctiveness and did so through his preoccupation with the occult. The group was also distinctive in their anti-Stalinism in the French context. Anti-colonialism and eroticism remained as central concerns and it is the latter on which this chapter focuses. Following an outline of surrealist activity during 1940 - 1944 in both Paris and New York, including some discussion of the photographic content of VVV, there is a summary of the political and cultural situation in Paris in the post war years with a short analysis of the ways in which Breton’s group operated in this new climate. The chapter then looks in some detail at post war sexual norms using Elle magazine and the ways in which the surrealist group addressed questions of sexual morality in their journals.

During the war both the surrealists who were in exile and those who remained in France maintained a belief in art as a weapon of resistance. However, life in exile was very different to that under occupation and while Breton’s experience nurtured his interest in occultism, myth and primitivism, those in France who wished to promote surrealism were organised in La Main à plume, founded by Noël Arnaud and Jean-François Chabrun in 1941. The group published twelve volumes of literature and numerous tracts as well as a review and did not exclude ex-surrealists such as Éluard and Hugnet from activities. The group galvanised people who had been involved in the Réverbères group with Chabrun, as well as those around Breton in the South prior to his departure and young artists who
would become prominent in the post-war avant garde. The group was active both artistically and politically and became increasingly active in the Resistance.439 The review, published by Lucien Caro, a prominent figure in the underground press during the occupation, was modest but included drawings (usually as a frontispiece in each edition) as well as poems and articles. Only one photograph was reproduced, an anonymous portrait of Péret as a matador, the frontispiece to no. 8 which featured his poems Les Malheurs d’”un Dollar.440

Breton understood his war-time contributions as acts of resistance and VVV was founded as a surrealist review in exile in New York in June 1942. The review was a collaborative effort with David Hare, a young sculptor and photographer who was close to the exiled surrealists and the cousin of Kay Sage. Hare edited the review with Breton and Ernst as editorial advisors who were joined by Duchamp in issues 2/3 and 4. Together with Breton’s address to Yale students in December of that year, the review represented a confident assertion of the surrealist perspective. Breton’s speech to students claimed surrealism as the only credible movement for emancipation.441 VVV was a carefully produced publication which provided a balance between art and ideas that had been absent in surrealist journals since the demise of Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution in 1933. The editorial in the first issue established the interdependency of art, ideas and action and the rule of creative freedom.

We believe that the only valid criteria of the livingness of ideas is their capacity to inspire us to creation ...our goal in everything is freedom ... we support Historical materialism in the social field and Freudian analysis in psychology ... We welcome those images which make us stronger on our way to action ... We don’t like propaganda art of the last decade, poor style and a clumsy moral consciousness. Also experimentalism” - art that is conceptionless and lacks social direction is also not attractive to us.


440 The artists who provided designs for the journal were Tanguy (frontispiece, no. 2); Tita (frontispiece, no. 4); Dali (double page frontispiece, no. 6); Miro (frontispiece, no. 7); Picasso (double page frontispiece, no. 9); Rius (illustrations in text to accompany his poetic text, no. 10); Magritte (frontispiece, no. 11) and Picasso (5 illustrations in the text of this edition which is pays homage to the artist, no. 12). 265 editions of each issue were published between May 1941 and May 1944.

In terms of illustrations, photographs dominated VVV and were presented both independently and as illustrations which often complimented text in the incisive manner that was seen in the use of photography in the first two surrealist reviews in the inter war years. Breton’s “Prolegomena to a third Manifesto of Surrealism or Else” was illustrated with a photograph credited to the National History Magazine of an unidentifiable and bizarre animal captioned as a “portrait of Père Duchesne”, reinstating the surrealists radical credentials.\textsuperscript{442} This use of appropriated photographs, where identity is fluid, was used by Duchamp in the catalogue for the First Papers of Surrealism exhibition in New York in 1942. Artists were therein represented by “compensation” photographs, some of which were likenesses. Duchamp’s own photographic representation, a Ben Shahn image of a tenant farmer’s wife, saturated in social hardship in 1935, certainly was.\textsuperscript{443}

The focus of this study is on France but it is worth noting the dominance of photographs in VVV and the increased number of contributions from women artists and writers. It is also worth noting that Duchamp’s Allégorie de genre: portrait de Georges Washington, published in no. 4 was originally commissioned as a cover for Vogue, but was rejected by the magazine; the torn iodine-soaked gauze with stars nailed onto it resembles a blood stained bandage or sanitary towel.\textsuperscript{444} There was photographic art in VVV, often presented in full page.

\textsuperscript{442} In 1939 and, Aragon and Elsa Triolet had visited New York at the invitation of The League of American Writers, a Communist party front organisation which attracted prominent writers between 1935 and 1942 who were keen to combat fascism. Aragon had spoken at the Third Congress of the organisation at Carnegie Hall and had been received by Roosevelt. Breton may have wished to raise the political position of surrealism in opposition to the Communist party. His photographic reference to the French Revolution(s) established a link with a tradition distinct from the Soviet Union. Two of Aragon’s speeches to the Congress are reproduced in Griffiths, D. A. “Les Deux discours inedits d’aragon au 3eme Congres de la ‘League of American Writers’”, le 2 Juin 1939”, The Romantic Review, Jan - March 2001: 163 (13). 
\url{http://find.galegroup.com/ixr/start.do?prodId=SPJ.SP01} (accessed 26/02/09)

\textsuperscript{443} Thanks to David Hopkins for bringing this image to my attention at a workshop on ‘The Secret Life of Surrealist Photography” organised by the The Centre for Surrealist Research at Manchester University on June 20, 2002.

\textsuperscript{444} Alexander Liberman asked Duchamp to make a portrait of the first president to the United States for the cover of the February 15, 1943 issue of Vogue. Duchamp produced a satirical collage images based on the profile portraits of Washington made popular by the English painter James Sharples in the 1790’s. The “stain” portrait consists of a double image, featuring Washington’s right profile and trademark wigged coiffure, and a map of the United States, with part of Mexico and Canada in black on either side, when the work is turned on its side.
Duchamp’s entry was rejected by Liberman and other members of the editorial staff at *Vogue*, who deemed the shoddy and highly suggestive materials used in the assemblage, which was made
spreads and much use of documentary photography but very few of the photographs published displayed the female body. David Hare published his partially obliterated and headless nude in the first issue whose title “The retroactive wish as a reality” evokes the Stalinist practice of tampering with photographs to remove undesirable individuals and thus rewrite history and Duchamp enclosed a torso behind chicken wire on his remarkably tactile cover for issue 2/3. Seabrook’s sensationalist account of his experiences of Haitian Vodou and intense meditation in New York and in Africa, were illustrated by two photographs, one of a naked woman wearing a full mask and collar and one of Seabrook wearing a robe with eyes closed and head bowed. This was typical of Seabrook’s eroticism but it also represented an increasing preoccupation of the surrealists at this time with the occult and the capacity of the mind. Female contributors included Helen Levitt, Jacqueline Lamba, Maria Macumba, Isabella Waldberg, Bernice Abbott, Dorothea Tanning and Leonora Carrington. The active involvement of women in surrealist publications would become a characteristic of the post war journals which continued the pre-war investigations into sexuality. Three young women in particular, Nora Mitrani, a Jewish poet and Trotskyite who studied philosophy at the Sorbonne during the occupation, Joyce Mansour, a poet whose first collection of violently erotic poems were published in France in 1953 and Mimi Parent, a Canadian

from padded material covered in surgical gauze that had been soaked in iodine and then fixed to the cardboard support by thirteen gold coloured stars, to be inappropriate for a portrait of the father of the country. Although the red streaked gauze was intended to represent the red and white stripes of the American flag, there is no doubt that the associations with violence and death perceived by the Vogue editor reflected Duchamp’s anti-nationalistic attitudes at a time of patriotic fervour induced by war-time propaganda. When Duchamp contacted the editor to find out why his work had not appeared on the front cover of the magazine he was told that it was not right” for Vogue and returned it to him, along with a cheque for fifty dollars for “expenses”. Duchamp immediately sold the work to Breton who published it in VVV.


As well as David Hare both Frederick Sommer and Clarence Laughlin were published in VVV. Images by Irving Penn and Elen Levitt were used as illustrations. Penn illustrated Waiting” by Carrington in no. 1 and Levitt provided two illustrations for Callois’ text “The Myth of Secret Treasure in Childhood” in the same issue.


The image of the masked woman possibly originates from the same photo shoot as Seabrook’s three images of women in leather masks and collars published in Documents to illustrate Michel Leiris’ article “Le “Caput Mortuui” ou la femme de l’âlchimiste”. No. 8, 1931, pp. 21 - 25. Leiris said of the images reproduced in Documents that he was sent the photographs by Seabrook who had “conceived them and had them produced under his instructions in New
York”. In his VVV article Seabrook’s story takes place partly in New York where he met a Quaker girl” and the image is captioned “Quaker girl in mask”.
artist, were active and prominent members of Breton’s group in the post war period. 448

On his return to France Breton found that things had changed dramatically. At the end of the war in Paris, elections revealed a new political landscape: the old Radical Party and the right had been decimated due to their submissiveness to Vichy and the Germans. The largest party in France in 1945 was the Communist Party, closely followed by a new party, the Mouvement Républicain Populaire (Christian Democrats) and the Socialists. 449 De Gaulle’s “national unity” cabinet of September 1944 included two Communists and representatives from a variety of political groups who had played a vital role in the resistance and liberation. 450 After the election of 1945 de Gaulle presided over an alliance until his resignation in January 1946 and “tripartism” lasted until tensions stemming from the Cold War led to the expulsion of the Communists from the government in May 1947. 451 The communists retained a high level of political influence through their dominance of the trade unions. Political instability led to no fewer that twenty-four governments taking office between December 1946 and May 1958 until de Gaulle returned to form a new government and French politics was subsequently dominated by the problem of Algeria and civil unrest.

The surrealists were criticised on their return to Paris for their absence during the war. The political and cultural dominance of the Communist Party alongside Jean-Paul Sartre’s prominent philosophy and anti-capitalist stance led to their...

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448 Mitrani was born in Bulgaria in 1921 and raised in Paris. Mitrani’s mother was sent to Auschwitz when German troops took Paris and her daughter studied at the Sorbonne with a false identity. Mahon, A. “Hans Bellmer’s Libidinal Politics”, p 257.

Mansour was born in England in 1928 to Jewish Egyptian parents and came to Paris via Cairo in 1953. Later that year her first collection of poems Cries were published in France and were acclaimed by Jean-Louis Bédouin in Médium. At that point Mansour joined the group.

Parent studied at the École des Beaux Arts in Montreal and was married to Jean Benoit. She joined the surrealist group officially in 1959 and was subsequently represented in all of the major collective exhibitions. Durozoi, History of the Surrealist Movement, p 682 and p 688.

449 In the October 1945 general elections the Communist Party won 26.1 percent of the vote and 148, deputies, the MRP won 25.6 percent of the vote and 143 deputies, the Socialists (SFIO) won 24.6 of the vote and 135 deputies, the Radicals obtained only 9.3 percent of the vote and 31 deputies. Haine, W. Scott, The History of France, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000, p 172.


marginalisation. Surrealism, with its interest in eroticism, occultism and myth was portrayed as impotent during the war years and ridiculous and irrelevant in post war France. The power of the Communist Party affected art practice. The debate within the party about the nature of art was a continuum from the debate of the 1930’s, whether you could combine modernist art making with political commitment. Aragon had become the major spokesman on realist art, accepting the Russian re-assertion of socialist realism in the 1940s which led to frequent challenges from Breton in the press. André Fougeron was determined to be a militant political artist and committed himself to the aesthetic pronouncements of the Communist Party. The Communist Party also recruited two high profile artists although neither adhered to socialist realism. At the end of the war, Picasso’s work was less aggressively avant-garde than it had previously been, and he partly expressed the theme of human solidarity by joining the Communist Party in 1944 and famously produced the dove for the World Peace Conference of 1949. The other pre-war avant-garde artist to join the PCF was Léger in 1945 who became an official personality of the party. At this time, as an artist he chose subjects that were edifying with an element of egalitarianism. There was an extremely rich variety of art in Paris at the time including artists such as Boris Taslitzsky and Francis Gruber who made figurative work which related to the period but was not linked to socialist realism.

In art, two opposing tendencies dominated the post war period, realism (often tied to a political significance) and a number of divergent currents which

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452 For instance, in 1947 Tzara (by then a member of the Communist Party) publically derided Breton and his group during his lecture on “Surrealism and the post-war period” at the Sorbonne; Sartre described Surrealism as an “outmoded, parasitic movement” in his essay “What is Literature” in 1947. Mahon, *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros*, p 113.

453 Stalin had achieved complete state control of the arts in 1932 with his decree that a mythic, heroic representation of class struggle should be the blueprint for “realism”. The policy was policed by Zhdanov, whose attacks on “improper” cultural productions became virulent in the summer of 1946. His texts were published in translation in France from 1947 onwards, where socialist realism was reaching its apogee espousing his principles, and its advocates were becoming more and more dogmatic. Wilson, S., “La Beauté Révolutionnaire”?, Réalisme Socialiste and French Painting 1935 — 1954’’ *The Oxford Art Journal*, October 1980, pp. 61, 66 - 67.


developed within abstraction. Sartre’s texts on art were influential and Frances Morris has noted that ‘much of what Sartre wrote on art had been anticipated and was echoed by others of his generation and drew on the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, was heavily indebted to Henri Bergson and was richly infused with ideas generated by Marxism and Surrealism’. Existentialism is an important element to consider when looking at the art of the period, but the way that artists understood and related to the dada and surrealist legacy also informed developments in abstraction.

The surrealists were active in the art world, (Breton held court in the Cyrano as well as being involved in exhibition organisation for galleries such as L’Etoile scellée) and arguably provided a touchstone for artists who sought theoretical anchorage. Sylvain Lecombre has argued that at this time, Surrealism was far from infertile and offered both gestural/lyrical abstractionists as well as “anti-art” artists such as Dubuffet and Fautrier a method and theory, based on “automaticism” on which to ground their “painting without tradition”. Sarah Wilson also noted a rapprochement between surrealism and Art Brut. Breton’s Surrealism and Painting as well as the collected Surrealist Manifestoes were re-printed in 1945-6. Despite some hostile reviews, Breton’s group had notable success with their Surrealism in 1947 exhibition at Galerie Maeght which opened on July 7th of that year. The catalogue, generally noted for the cover designed by Duchamp and Donati featuring a false breast, included thirty eight essays expanding the themes of the show, including contributions from Breton and Péret as well as Bataille’s “Absence of Myth”. The show established an alternative to art in the service of party politics and displayed a wide range of styles from an international collection of artists, both established and new. Visitors were introduced to Wifredo Lam, Enrico Donati, Maria Martins, Jean-Paul Riopelle

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- Durozoi reports that the exhibition had forty thousand visitors, including many young people, including Jean Schuster (aged sixteen at the time) who was inspired to arrange a meeting with Breton following his visit to the show. Durozoi, History of the Surrealist Movement, p 472.
and David Hare. Lecombre has noted the prominent role of Camille Bryen (a well-known artist who, along with Michel Tapié, had been involved in Réverbères before the war and was on the fringes of surrealism in the post war period) in organising the first group show of “lyrical abstraction” L’Imaginarie in 1947 and participating in the first exhibition to bring together American and French abstraction, Confronted Vehemensces, in 1951. COBRA emerged in 1948, influenced by surrealism, the Situationists took on board some of the ideas of the surrealists and elements of surrealism were evident in a strand of what was termed “New Realism” by Pierre Restany in 1960.

In terms of politics surrealist activity involved interventions generally in the form of tracts or articles which established a surrealist position regarding key contemporary issues such as the wars in Indochina and Algeria and the revolutions in Hungary in 1956 and Cuba in 1959, as well as participation in anti-colonial activities. Breton and the surrealists played a pivotal role in the high profile “Declaration of the 121”, the denunciation of the French government’s colonial adventures and terrorism in Algeria signed by intellectuals including Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre, Michel Leiris and Alain Robbe-Grillet in 1960. Later that decade, polemics would dominate the surrealist contribution to the struggles of May 1968. Intellectuals in France played an important role in helping to shape public opinion at a traumatic time after the war, when the country was faced with moral uncertainties around collaboration with the Nazis, de-colonialisation and Americanisation. The surrealists were therefore marginalised but far from insignificant to cultural and political debate. Along with their new hero in Charles Fourier, Sade continued to play a significant role for the surrealists in both challenging the morality of French society and proposing an alternative based on freedom. “Rupture inaugurale”, a surrealist tract on cultural and political liberty published in 1947, criticised the Communist Party as well as Sartre and expressed faith in Sade and Freud. The frontispiece is a photograph of Sade’s ruined castle in La Coste (Fig. 92) which has the appearance of a face in profile with eye, nose and mouth, accompanied by the following caption

463 See Mahon, Surrealism: The Politics of Eros, for a full account of the exhibitions held in 1947, 1959 and 1965 and the political activity of the group in Paris in the period after the war.

The hard stone profile of the Marquis de Sade still looks at the horizon, at everything that has disappeared for him on this plain where
men make prisons in which to lock up those who have loved. This chapter deals with the ways in which the surrealist group, once re-established in Paris, engaged with sexual morality in their journals in a climate of modernisation and in the 1960s, increasing sexual freedoms. There was no dedicated surrealist journal until the launch of Néon in January 1948. This journal was primarily a literary review, with a format similar to that of a dense newspaper, and contained negligible photographic images. There was also no engagement with contemporary social or political issues until the final issue.

This chapter therefore concentrates on the period from 1953, when Médium. Communication Surréaliste was launched. Initially produced in 1952 as Médium, a news-sheet, the new series was more ambitious and included a limited number of images, including photographs. In 1956 Le Surréalisme Même was launched with Breton as editor as a broad cultural review with a political aspect. Literature dominated but culturally it had a wide range, including popular culture. New artistic talent was included but work from the 1930’s was also reproduced. The review included enquêtes and paid close attention to the press both in the analysis of stories which dominated the contemporary news and by publishing a feature “Notes” which was similar to the “Extraits de Presse” column in La Révolution Surréaliste. Le Surréalisme Même was published by Jean-Jacques Pauvert.

This luxurious review was replaced by BIEF in 1958, which was edited by Schuster and published by Eric Losfeld at Terrain Vague. It had a circulation of 5000 and a much smaller budget than its predecessor. However, it made

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464 Rupture inaugurale “was a statement on cultural and political liberty, published in 1947 with fifty-one signatories, shortly after attacks by Tzara and Sartre on the Surrealists. It criticised the Communist Party as well as Sartre and expressed faith in both de Sade and Freud. The frontispiece has the caption “Ruins of de Sade’s castle at La Coste (Vaucluse)” and the quotation: Le dur profil de pierre du marquis de Sade regarde encore l’horizon, tout ce qui s’est evanoui pour lui dans cette plaine où les hommes font des prisons pour enfermer ceux qui ont aimé” (Pierre Guerre).


465 In terms of illustrations Médium was dominated by drawings but did include 24 photographs over the four issues including 14 portraits, 7 documentary images, 2 reproductions of photographic art and one art reproduction.

An enquête on strip-tease was published in nos. 4 and 5. An enquête on a Gabriel Cornelius von Max painting was published in no. 3.
intelligent use of photographs on the cover and offered more engagement with current events.\textsuperscript{467} The photographs are visually attractive and served to entice the reader. They were presented with a caption which was often humorous. With the exception of the sombre portrait of Pêret on the cover of issue 9, published shortly after his death and the portrait of Franco on his yacht on issue 4, the images are visually strong. The images of the parachute show at the \textit{Foire du Trône}, with its doll performers and audience (Fig. 93) and the bioluminescent squid (Fig. 94) are marvellous images. The image of the heavily decorated woman on the cover of issue 12 (Fig. 95) is visually striking and was used to criticise Russia, the caption reads “This woman, wearing several hundred kilos of jewels, was presented to Russian dignitaries during their recent trip to India”, followed by a quote from Malzolm de Chazal’s \textit{Sens Plastique II} “Leave the lectures to the judges, and make a tribunal of flesh”.

The first issue of \textit{BIEF} used the arresting image of a nun brandishing a shotgun (Fig. 96) and the caption placed her as a missionary concerned about the physical and moral decadence of the population in French Polynesia where “the church was despised by the indigenous population along all with other foreign institutions”. The cover of issue 2 continued with the anti-colonial theme with a photograph of a young African woman typing (Fig. 97), “Write to us, response guaranteed” is the caption, noting that participation and the response may involve helpless laughter. The penultimate issue of the review used a photograph of the huge crowd and a television crew at the preview of the \textit{EROS} exhibition. The caption simply quotes the press as reporting that “the youth of today are not interested in surrealism at all”. (Fig. 98) The most bizarre cover is the photograph of the “window display of condoms from Barcelona” in issue 8. (Fig. 99) A range of anthropomorphic condoms which have been “dressed up” as a variety of limbless characters including the devil, a Christian and a clowns have been arranged in a tableau with a number of extended but “bare” condoms in the foreground. The caption includes a quote from Empedocles suggesting that these

\textsuperscript{467} The photographic content of \textit{BIEF} is restricted to a single photographic image on the cover of each of the twelve issues and one full page back cover advertisement for Jean Boulet’s \textit{La Belle et la Bête}, Paris: \textit{Terrain Vague}, 1958.
strange beings have been created under the dominance of “Strife”. The covers of BIEF often engaged the viewer through humour and the unostentatious documentation of the surreal.

La Brèche followed BIEF in 1961, it was also published by Losfeld with a 5000 circulation, and Breton’s influence as editor is clear as the eight substantial issues of the review all bear his stamp. La Brèche was presented in a clearer, more professional A5 format than the chaotic BIEF with a table of contents, lengthy articles and photographic illustrations printed on glossy paper. The enquête was featured and there were “Notes” which engaged directly with current political and cultural debates. The fact that the surrealists could produce this array of publications given the divisions within the group throughout this period is to a great extent testament to Breton’s drive. It is Breton’s journals, Le Surréalisme Même and La Brèche that dominate the discussion in this chapter although images from the other journals are featured.

Le Surréalisme Même had a small square format (approximately 19 cm) and was glossy and professionally produced with extensive use of colour both on the cover and inside. In terms of illustrations the review contains twice as many photographs as either drawings or reproductions of paintings and of the photographs, documentary images are the most numerous. The use of documentary photography in the review, particularly the early issues, was similar to that in La Révolution Surréaliste; the image of the dead crocodile with a human hand extending from its stomach which illustrated Mansour’s story “Le Perroquet” (Fig. 100) or Jehan Mayoux’s grotesque postcard from Morocco “Maroc a la Belle Époque” (Fig. 472)

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468 Empedocles of Agrigentum was an ancient Greek philosopher who wrote on two themes, Nature, the history of the natural physical world including the origin of species and Putrifications, quoted here, on moral topics. According to Empedocles mortal beings were created under the influence of both ‘Love’ and ‘Strife’. Creatures were generated that were fantastical as well as ‘natural’ in appearance, depending on the dominant influence. [http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/empedocles/](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/empedocles/) (Accessed 23/6/09)

469 In terms of illustrations La Brèche is dominated by drawings and paintings. There are 133 drawing reproduced in the review as well as 106 reproductions of paintings. However, the review also includes 78 photographs, including 21 documentary images, 19 art reproductions, 15 portraits, 14 reproductions of photographic art, 5 film stills and reproductions of 4 photographic commercial advertisements.

470 Le Surréalisme Même contains 77 drawings and 68 reproductions of paintings compared to a total of 145 photographic reproductions. Of the photographs 13 are taken from popular culture, 41 are reproductions of 3-dimensional art, 15 are photographic art, 26 are
portraits and 50 are documentary.

471 Mansour, J. "Le Perroquet" Le Surréalisme Même, no. 1, Autumn 1956, p 46.

472 Le Surréalisme Même, no. 1, Autumn 1956, p 151.
101) showing corpses shot to pieces would both be at home in the pre-war journal. Similarly, the unrelenting censure of foes and the acidic wit of the pre-war journals was evident in the photograph of Picasso (Fig. 102) which illustrated Péret’s long article written in response to the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution. Picasso is shown surrounded by friends, (including Aragon and Cocteau) all smiling and laughing; the caption reads ‘December 1956: A few days after the bloody repression of the revolution, all is going well in the Côte d’Azur.’

In the post-war period the surrealist dichotomous notion of love, incorporating a freedom of eroticism and a capacity for cruelty, endured and investigations into desire continued. There was a continued frankness and a tendency to focus on personal experience both in the enquêtes and in the photographic art published by the group; Molinier, Bellmer, Oppenheim and Duchamp all produced work which was intimately personal. Playfulness and humour continued to be key modes of expression. As well as promoting the surrealist notion of love, the group maintained their keen interest in the mass media and responded directly to contemporary concepts of ‘femininity’.

The 1950s and the 1960s are distinct in terms of sexuality because although women gained more independence in the 1950s and cultural change was instigated, it was not until the following decade that real revolt occurred, sexuality was discussed openly and political and legislative changes were made. In the immediate post-war years motherhood was the principal role of women according to the state and their true fulfilment lay in “accepting their feminine nature”, expressed in their life in the home. The 1950s were characterised by consumerism and women’s magazines, particularly Elle promoted ideal “femininity” in the period. Elle, launched in November 1945, is significant not only because it was the best selling magazine for women on the market (according to Elle itself, by 1955 one out of six French women read it) but also it could cast itself as representative of the Fourth Republic because it had

474 Two succinct accounts of the condition of women in France in the post war period are provided by Laubier, The Condition of women in France 1945 to the present, and Duchen, Women’s rights and Women’s Lives in France 1944 Ŕ 1968. London.
initially been sold as a supplement to *France Soir*, formerly the clandestine *Défense de la France* of the Occupation period.\(^{476}\) *Elle* is also indicative of the "americanisation" of French culture after the war, due to the founder Hélène Lazareff having spent five years in the United States working on magazines including *Harper's*.\(^{477}\) In the 1950s, although domesticity was the ideal, this was combined with increasing levels of independence and a defiance of traditional morality, particularly among young people. These contradictions are evident in magazines and popular culture and the surrealists exploited them alongside offering an alternative morality based on freedom.

Kristin Ross has noted that it was a mark of the particular rapidity of French modernisation that so much of the country’s intellectual effort of the period took the form of a theoretical reflection on “everyday life”

{Henri Lefebvre evoked the almost cargo-cult-like, sudden descent of large appliances into war-torn French households and streets in the wake of the Marshall Plan. Before the war, it seemed, no one had a refrigerator; after the war, it seemed, everyone did.\(^{478}\) The deprivation of the war years gave way to American style consumerism and although ownership of items such as cars and white goods was uneven increasing urbanisation, changing working and living patterns as well as extensive marketing campaigns created consumer demand.\(^{479}\) Appliances were heavily promoted and advertisements glamorised domesticity and the home. (Fig. 103) Barthes demonstrated this effect in his essay on “Soap-powders and detergents” where he described the exaltation of cleaning products.\(^{480}\)

In the media, the image of a neatly dressed and well groomed housewife standing proudly by her refrigerator was ubiquitous. (Fig. 104) In *Médium* the surrealists combined a satire of this phenomenon with anti colonialism by simply


\(^{479}\) Duchen noted the uneven distribution of domestic appliances in the population in terms of class but also in terms of geography with Paris being ahead of the rest of France in ownership. *Duchen, Women ’s rights and Women ’s Lives in France 1944 R 1968*, p 73. Between 1954 and 1957 six times more people moved to cities than between 1945 and 1949, the majority to the Paris area. New housing estates often increased the distance between home and workplace, generating a demand for car ownership and modern work patterns generated a demand for time-saving devices and products. *Laubier, The Condition of women in France 1945 to the present*, p 28.

reproducing a page from a Frigêco promotional magazine. Frigêco, a French company, had engaged in some opportunistic marketing and placed their product in the home of Christian de Castries, the French commander at the battle of Diên Biên Phu. The promotional photograph, dedicated and signed by the general’s wife, featured on “La Page Héroïque” and paid homage to the defeated general, it shows Madame de Castries opening the fridge which is placed alongside general’s trophies. The surrealists made no comment upon or amendment to the page from the booklet but simply allowed the irony of portraying the commander of the military and political disaster that marked the beginning of the end of the French colonial empire as a hero, five months after his release from captivity, to speak for itself.

In the late 1950s modern women were active in the public sphere as well as home-makers but despite acquiring rights, the role of women was determined by the Napoleonic Code which legally asserted the subservience of women to their husbands and women’s magazines such as Elle essentially promoted this as a mindset. The popular weekly advice column in Elle “Courier du cœur” penned by Marcelle Ségal and prominent on the first page of the magazine is indicative of this. A reader named as “Petit Miss” wrote that since her marriage the previous year, she had become obsessed with the idea that her husband was unfaithful and when she had confessed her fear to him he had become angry. The letter goes on to describe symptoms of depression. The response was brutal

You exaggerate. There are, of course, sad things. A jealous woman for example, who destroys her happiness and exasperates her husband with vain tears.

In BIF, which had a page layout similar to a newspaper, Joyce Mansour parodied the advice column by writing her own “Conseils”

Is your husband evading you? The heavenly master is in need of a regime. Urinate in his soup and content to be near you, he will stretch

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481 (Fig. 105) Frigêco, Médium, no. 4, January 1955.

482 In November 1953 the French army decided to occupy the Diên Biên Phu valley, establish an air base there and effectively deny the Viet Minh passage to Laos. A fortified camp was constructed and preparations made for the expected battle which began on March 13th 1954 and lasted for eight weeks. French forces had hugely underestimated their enemy and were relentlessly slaughtered at Diên Biên Phu; 10,863 prisoners were taken, only 3,290 survived to be released four months later, altogether 7,573 bodies were left behind. Castries was among those interned in camps and was released in August 1954, [http://www.dienbienphu.org](http://www.dienbienphu.org) (Accessed 11/06/09)
Elle, no. 399, 27 July 1953, p 3.
out. Be gentle but skilful at stuffing fatty goose. Octopus, messages. And strands of mandrake. Tease his fondness with a bristle shaving brush, sprinkle his medal with blood and soot. Above all, smile when in your arms he dies and despite himself it’s you that he’s thinking of.\textsuperscript{484}

Mansour also wrote an article entitled “Practical advice on waiting” which began “To be a woman you have to be beautiful, you also have to know how to wait.”\textsuperscript{485} Tips were offered on how to wait in a range of locations including a railway station, a restaurant, and at home and how to express feelings of jealousy and nonchalance. Women were advised never to wait in the street. The article ended “Are you at University? Are you fit to marry? Are you good at doing everything? If not, wait until you are before speaking of marriage.” This sense of the expanding role of women and their responsibilities is evident in the content of women’s magazines which focused on family and a well-run home but contained a broad range of articles on beauty, fashion, the arts, popular culture, marital advice, childcare, D.I.Y, cookery, voting in elections, social and political issues and work. These were often combined, “What to wear to work” for example and saving time was a central theme.\textsuperscript{486} Françoise Giroud’s feature “Je n’ai le temps de rien faire” expressed frustration with the demands of modernity as early as 1946.\textsuperscript{487} (Fig. 106) Mansour’s article used humour to convey this onerousness.

Despite the fact that domesticity defined ideal femininity in this period, social changes and popular culture ensured that the aspirations of young women moved beyond home and family. Role models such as Françoise Sagan and Brigitte Bardot in France and Marilyn Monroe in America foregrounded sexuality and individualism. Despite the fact that Elle attempted to domesticate women such as Bardot and Juliette Greco by focusing on their marriages, Sophia Loren by publishing her recipes for Italian food with accompanying photographs of her making pizza and even Simone de Beauvoir by presenting her as a typical French woman who cooked pot-au-feu beneath her eccentricities, the challenge to traditional morality was clearly understood.\textsuperscript{488} In BIEF José Pierre counterposed

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item Mansour, J. “Conseils” BIEF, no. 1, 15 November 1958.
\item Mansour, J. “Conseils pratiques en attendant” BIEF, no. 12, 15 April 1960.
\item Elle, 13 February 1956.
\item Elle, 9 April 1946.
\item Elle covered Greco’s marriage and her home life on 6 July 1953, Bardot’s marriage on 29 June, 1959, Loren on 30 March 1959 and de Beauvoir on 3 January 1955.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
a “cult of virility” in the media characterised by ridiculous militaristic role models (he referred specifically to General Massu in relation to “killers with stripes”) with the young and radiant film stars who were idolised because of their exaltation of love and eroticism.489 It was above all Bardot, the emblem of l’”érotisme exacerbé” he said, the enemy of good behaviour, pot-au-feu and the French family, who represented “our values of eroticism”.490

In Le Surréalisme Même the surrealists were careful to establish their distinct values of eroticism” from the start with Duchamp’s cover for the first issue, the photograph of Female Fig Leaf. (Fig. 107) The original sculpture was made in galvanised plaster in 1950 but how it was made is a matter of debate as Duchamp did not divulge the process; it could be a cast of a real woman’s genitals but it has been linked to the mannequin in Étant donnés (1946 — 66).491 Duchamp made two casts, one for himself and one which he gave to Man Ray as a farewell gift when the latter left New York for Paris in 1951. With Duchamp’s permission, Man Ray made an edition of ten casts in plaster painted brown later that year, ten bronze casts were made in 1961.492 The photograph used in Le Surréalisme Même is an optical illusion; the sculpture has been photographed in such a way as to present the concave object as convex, using lighting and possibly retouching. It is possible that Duchamp took the photograph himself, or instructed a photographer but no photographer is credited. Jean Clair has suggested that the sculpture was photographed using illuminating gas and this would account for the light green glow of the image.493 Duchamp was fond of optical devices and was known to retouch photographs. He made use of nineteenth century photographic processes and was particularly interested in the experiments in the chronophotography of Etienne Marey494 which developed the

489 General Massu was instrumental in the “Battle of Algiers” in 1957.
490 Pierre, J. “Ne pas confondre” BIEF, no. 1.
484 David Hopkins identified the cast as “obtained from the pudenda of the “nude” in Étant donnés. After Modern Art, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, p 55.
491 The Tate also connects the work to Étant donnés. Tate Online. Female Fig Leaf 1950, cast 1961 by Marcel Duchamp. http://www.tate.org.uk/servlet/ViewWork?workid=22017&roomid=3533 (Accessed 12/06/09).
492 Cowling, E. Surrealism and After: The Gabrielle Keiller Collection, p 90.
494 Duchamp’s use of nineteenth century photographic “tricks” including “spirit”
photography, multiple photography and composite photography were outlined by Rhonda Roland
recording of vibration using ordinary illuminating gas. This process would also connect the image to Duchamp’s Large Glass as well as Étant donnés. 1° la chute d’eau / 2° le gaz d’éclai rage (Given: 1. The Waterfall. 2. The Illuminating Gas).

The significance of the moulded character of the nude in Étant donnés as well as the sculptures which were produced alongside it has been noted. Dalia Judovitz cited d’Harnoncourt’s summary of the nature of the mould in relation to Étant donnés and subsequently applied it to the small sculptures.

The paradox of an impression taken from life, captured in lifeless material, works to create a form of realism that seems highly artificial, so intimately related to the real thing and yet so remote.

Judovitz argued that Duchamp’s definition of a mould as a ‘photographic negative’ highlighted the ‘hyperreality’ of the apparition of the nude, alluding to its artificiality as an object but also as an art object. If we read Duchamp’s notes in relation to the photograph of the sculpture it is clear that what has been achieved in the process is a return to the “appearance” of the object. The photographic negative of the mould has become a “positive” photograph. The complexity of Duchamp’s self-referentiality in relation to his work contributes to the ambiguity of the image. The concavity of the sculpture and the apparent

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Shearer and Stephen Jay Gould in their proposal to Yale University Art Gallery for an exhibition entitled Hidden in Plain Sight: Decoding Duchamp’s Art and Science in 2001. Their presentation is available to view at http://www.marcelduchamp.net/multimedia_paul_mellon.php (Accessed 12/06/09)

Michel Frizot, noted that Duchamp’s Nude descending a staircase (1911-12) was very likely to have been influenced by the studies of movement, similar to those of Muybridge, carried out by Albert Londe and Paul Richer in the late 19th century. Frizot, A New History of Photography, p 251.


In the Large Glass the bachelors, underneath the bride, are filled with illuminating gas and the gas then passes from left to right through a chemical apparatus, where it condenses and finally falls to the ground as sludge. The last stage of the transformation was never realised and the other transformations are only fragmentarily indicated. Chalupecký, J. & Wilson, P. Marcel Duchamp: a Re-Evaluation, Artibus et Historiae, Vol. 6, No. 11, 1985, pp 128 - 129. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1483262?origin=JSTOR-pdf (Accessed 12/06/09)


Duchamp defined the mould thus “By mould is meant: from the pt of view of form and colour, the negative (photographic); ... e.g. The mould of an object in chocolate is the negative apparition of the plane of several curvatures ...” Marcel Duchamp: In the infinitive. A typotranslation by Richard Hamilton and Ecke Bonk of Marcel Duchamp’s White Box, Northend: The typosophic society, 1999 p 54.
convexity of the photograph result in a confusion of gender; the female sex is both concave, a cavity, curved inward and convex, bulging outward. It is ambiguous as it veils the sex, in the process of production and in the title but also reveals it. It holds the shock of Courbet’s explicit realism but draws attention to the contrived nature of the subject; if the sculpture was based on a mould of the vagina of the mannequin in *Etant donnés* (1946 — 66) it is entirely artificial and removed from reality. It would also mean that the photograph had made something public, which at that time was private as Duchamp had not disclosed this work. The image is at once intimate and remote, it is familiar but made strange and it evokes the profundity of surrealist eroticism.

In the same issue the reproduction of Jindrich Heisler’s frontispiece for de Saë’s *La Philosophie dans le boudoir* (Fig. 108) raised the central role of the surrealists in the defence of their publisher Pauvert at his censorship trial in 1956. Heisler’s frontispiece offers a glimpse via a mirror reflection into de Saë’s boudoir where “everything is sacrificed to the senses” pleasure”. The image is placed strategically in the journal between extracts from Magloire Sàint-Arde’s poem *Tabou* from Haiti and a feature on the criminal case of two young women widely reported in the press as the epitome of juvenile “delinquency”. The women’s audacity, imaginativeness and depravity were celebrated by the surrealists as worthy of Sade, their actions a measure of the reality of post war French society and a challenge to it, satisfying the surrealist aim to “démoraliser” or undermine bourgeois morality.

For women part of the reality of post war France was the increased sophistication of marketing campaigns. In her article “Des chats et des magnolias” Nora Mitrani examined the range of “femininities” offered to women. Alternatives included Dior’s red-lipped sex siren modelled on Marilyn Monroe or their exotic distant princess to the look pioneered by existentialists but subsequently promoted by Elizabeth Arden of bare lips but eyes accentuated with heavy black

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499 In December 1956 Jean-Jacques Pauvert was put on trial for publishing *Philosophy in the Bedroom, 120 Days of Sodom, Justine and Juliette*. Breton along with others including Bataille and Jean Cocteau defended Pauvert in court. The ruling upheld censorship, although de Saë’s position in French literature was established and details of the proceedings were published by Pauvert in 1957 in an edition edited by Maurice Garcon, *L’Affaire Sade*.

500 “Le premier voeu du surréalisme... devient chaque jour plus dévorant: il faut
dénoncer” Sénelier, J. “Passage aux Étoiles” *Le Surréalisme Même*, no. 1, p 32.

kohl, illustrated by a photograph of the intellectually glamorous actress and singer Juliette Greco. (Fig. 109) The text examined a variety of ways in which women expressed their identity and responded to contemporary models of femininity. The article begins with a full page photograph of Monroe (Fig. 110), coiffured, made-up, naked except for jewels, leaning into the camera pouting, eyes half closed and averted from the camera. She represented for Mitrani the sumptuous creature of technicolour cinema who, squeezed into red velvet, mouth and eyelids half closed, gain access to the harsh world of men.” On the page opposite, a Man Ray shot of a woman’s face has been cropped to show only the eyes, directly addressing the camera. Mitrani suggested that a woman’s eyes were revelatory as they could seem to convey a wish to “pierce the cocoon in which she is enclosed as an object of desire and embark up on a dialogue with the world”. This text explicitly rejected Jean Paulhan’s assertion, expressed in Happiness is Slavery”, his preface to Histoire d ’O, that women’s true nature was submissive.

Dominique Aury published Histoire d ‘O under a pseudonym in 1954, as a challenge to Paulhan (her lover at the time) as he had suggested that women were incapable of writing erotica. Aury’s novel about a young woman’s fantasies of sado-masochistic sex with both men and women was written with an erotic intensity that is almost hallucinatory in the introductory section. It won the Prix Deux Magots almost a year after it was published which brought it to the attention of the vice squad and led to the prosecution of Pauvert.502 The surrealists defended Aury’s unfiltered erotic prose, which they understood to be empowering to women but not Paulhan’s idea that this frank female sexual fantasy revealed a natural subservience in women in everyday life. Mitrani suggested that in surrealism “woman” is “loved” and “ambiguous”, both “the warm inhabitant of the cocoon and that of the external world where her soul is most lucid”. Woman assumes two roles, she said, sometimes a carnal creature, a public rose” and sometimes Nadja, a sibyl with “eyes ringed black”, but she is neither a beautiful flower nor a helpless animal. Mitrani explored in this text

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what it was to be a woman and concluded that this ambiguity and a complexity
caracterised the female who was very conscious of gender.

This discussion of how women could operate in a climate where many were
given increasing access to educational and employment opportunities alongside
men continued in Mitrani’s article in issue 3. Mitrani discussed the various
ways in which women could demonstrate their equality with men. She dismissed
women who believed they had achieved equality because they had the vote and a
cheque-book, as well as women who simply mimicked men in the world of work
and thus abandoned their sex. It was in their love-life, she suggested, that
women could attain fulfilment, either by following Simone de Beauvoir’s
advice, conducting a relationship on their own terms, dressing like a man and being
the dominant partner or by turning to literature and “Madame d’O” for
inspiration. The surrealist group made good use of women members to
contribute to contemporary debate and women were prominent in the reviews,
particularly Mitrani and Mansour. They contributed articles on a variety of
subjects as well as literature and there appears to have been a concerted effort
to foreground them; in issue 2, the four photographs of contributors shown
opposite the contents page are all women. (Fig. 111)

Mansour and Mitrani would continue their visible leadership within the group in
BIEF, the review that succeeded Le Surréalisme Même. The preface of the final
issue of BIEF, “In Defence of Surrealism”, is a transcript of a group interview
aired on BBC radio, made by Jacques B. Brunius in which Mansour and Mitrani
were interviewed along with Octavia Paz and Robert Benayoun. Mansour
noted, in her contribution, that it was sex, above anything else, which continued
to provoke moral outrage. Mitrani, in her long speech stated that a political and
social revolution in the Marxist sense would never be enough for the surrealists
and although reformism had won higher standards of living in the last few years,
little had changed in a meaningful way. She argued that the only solution was to
band together with those rare individuals who held common spiritual values.
There is no doubt that Mitrani was developing a response to Simone de Beauvoir

Mitrani, N. “Des Esclaves, Des Suffragettes Du Fouet” Le Surréalisme Même, no. 3,
pp. 60 - 61.
The photographs show Leonora Carrington, Meret Oppenheim, Marie Wilson and Nelly
Kaplan. Le Surréalisme Même, no. 2, p 2.
BIEF no. 12, April 1960.
in her two essays for *Le Surréalisme Même*. *La Deuxième Sexe*, at the time of its publication in 1949 had been regarded as sexually scandalous rather than an analysis of patriarchy and a call for action but de Beauvoir”s critique of Sade was widely read when published in 1951/52 and immediately translated into English.\textsuperscript{506} Although Mitrani teased de Beauvoir, suggesting that her example of dressing like a man and dominating in sexual relations” was a way forward that would make some of her readers smile but not suit others, much of Mitrani”s article in *Le Surréalisme Même* echoed elements of de Beauvoir”s feminist philosophy in that it insisted on sexual difference and used the concept of ambiguity.

In this period it seems that the group struggled to offer a distinct and rigorous intellectual contribution and it was their vehement anti-Stalinism (including a search for political alternatives to the Communist Party) and their systematic investigations into sexuality that set them apart. Breton”s championing of the pioneering socialist-feminist Flora Tristan in the same issue of *Le surréalisme même* as Mitrani “s article on de Beauvoir reinforced the group”s identification with a tradition of imaginative militancy.\textsuperscript{507} Similarly, Breton”s consistent enthusiasm for Fourier (based on his criticism of capitalism and the traditional family) as well as a belief that utopianism was a rich and hopeful vein to mine creatively, led to Jonathon Beecher publishing Fourier”s newly discovered *L”Archibras* in *La Brèche*.\textsuperscript{508}

In the late 1950s the surrealists were marginalised in a discourse on eroticism increasingly dominated by the Situationists and those around Bataille“s *Critique*, including established figures such as Pierre Klossowski as well as younger writers such as Phillipe Sollers and Barthes. Bataille published *L”Érotisme* in 1957.\textsuperscript{509} In *Médium* the group had attacked Klossowski in an article by Mitrani entitled “Diptyque de l”amour et du sang-froid” which dismissed him as an “old


\textsuperscript{507} Breton, A. “Flora Tristan”, *Le surréalisme même*, no. 3, Autumn 1957, pp 4 - 12.

priest” and “an apologist for Christianity”. Mitrani conceded that Bataille was less catholic with a keener sense of eroticism than Klossowski but was nevertheless his “spiritual brother”. Mitrani’s article began with a lyrical assertion of the potential power of eroticism, it offered an intense experience, she said, which could overwhelm and produce “a radiant joy in being lost, like a beetle in the heart of a July rose.” There then follows an account of Walter Ross Ashby’s experiments in cybernetics and criticism of the way in which the human mind was therein understood to function, as having the goal of maintaining a balanced state whenever its equilibrium was threatened. Conversely Mitrani celebrated episodes of imbalance in the brain or “head storms”, as she understood them to feed creativity. She argued that experiments to create a machine that assumed the functions of the human brain were of interest only if a definition of thinking was used which incorporated chaos. Irrationality was central to surrealism of course but Mitrani is also likely to have been familiar with Trotsky’s notion of the “whole mind.” In Literature and Revolution Trotsky had emphasised that in terms of progressive and creative work a purely logical approach was inadequate:

> One must judge this question not with one’s reason, which does not go beyond formal logic, but with one’s whole mind, which includes the irrational.

Mitrani ended her text with quotations from the climax of Jarry’s Surmâle when scientists, desperate to force Andre Marcueil, a “superman” capable of endless love-making, to fall in love with a particular woman, create an electro-magnetic device which they hope can inspire love. The machine did produce love but it was the machine that fell in love with the man and their love was fatally consummated. Jarry’s “erotic science-fiction” inspired Jindrich Heisler to make a film of the novel; a study for the project or possibly a still was reproduced in the cover of a special surrealist edition of L’Age du cinema.
launched *L’Age du cinéma* in 1950. This special edition included a list of films to be seen and a films to avoid as well as articles by Kyrou, (on *L’Age d’or*), Toyen, Péret, LeGrand, Man Ray,
(Fig. 112) The photograph shows a pain-racked Marcueil who has fled naked from the disastrous experiment and thrown himself upon the entrance gates where he dies, twisted into the iron-work with remnants of the “machine-to-inspire-love” clinging to his head.515

Two photographs illustrate and supplement “Diptyque de l’amour et du sang-froid”, an image conveyed to the group by Oppenheim entitled La Selle d’abeilles and Laforet’s L’Énigme (Fig. 113). Both present the surrealist sense of eroticism as acute when compared to Klossowski’s exploration of the connections between mind and body in his novels. Mitrani cited Klossowski’s Roberte ce soir (1953) extensively in her text and held the mixture of transgression and sacredness in contempt. Also, the surrealist understanding of the human brain is presented as superior to that of contemporary cybernetics. La Selle d’abeilles is a photograph that was found by Meret Oppenheim in a magazine in 1952.516 It is an image redolent of the unostentatious documentation of the surreal and marvellous in La Révolution Surréaliste. Both this image and Laforet’s L’Enigme offer surprising juxtapositions which are humorous and, viewed in conjunction with the accompanying text, encourage an idea of the human brain as incredibly sophisticated and raise the significance of lateral thinking. Oppenheim’s found image epitomised the surrealist inquiry into sexuality. It evoked a dangerous eroticism and recalled Mitrani’s statement at the start of her article about the potential for intense adventure and the wonders inherent in love, echoing her phrase “the body burning with a thousand stars.”

For Breton and the surrealists love was both spiritual and carnal, love and eroticism were one

Love, only love that you are, carnal love, I adore, I have never ceased to adore your lethal shadow, your mortal shadow. A day will come where man will be able to recognize you for his only master, honouring you even in the mysterious perversions you surround him with.517 and Oppenheim’s image, with its intense erotic charge, addressed the notion that desire is ubiquitous in life.

Breton, Mitani and Schuster. The 150 deluxe editions included an original signed lithograph by Wilfredo Lam as well as five original strips of film.

515 Jarry, The Supermale, p 122.
An effort to distinguish a surrealist perspective and maintain notoriety for provocation and the antagonism of the bourgeoisie is evident in *Le Surréalisme Même*. A continued emphasis on de Sade and the luxurious reproduction of art and literature outside the limits of bourgeois representations were part of this effort, culminating in the 1959 EROS exhibition. The second issue of the review published a Molinier photograph on the cover. (fig. 114) Breton had identified a convulsive beauty in Molinier’s work when introduced to it in 1955 and had arranged for the artist’s first Paris exhibition in January-February 1956. It was Molinier as a painter who produced work with “lightening flashes not seen since Moreau and Munch” that Breton lauded as a “genius” in *Surrealism and Painting*. The artist turned to photography in the 1950s and established the erotic iconography which would subsequently characterise his work. Shock was an important element of Molinier’s work and the intensity of his challenge to orthodox morality as well as the blasphemy of his cross-dressing and imagery led to a decade long association with the surrealist group.

The cover for the review is a photographic portrait, in which a face bathed in light, lips parted, peers out of the darkness at the camera. The model is dressed in a veil and gloves of black lace, emphasising the luminosity of the exposed skin. When compared to a Molinier self portrait there is no doubt that this image is a document of the artist’s erotic self transformation. (Fig. 115) The face on the cover of *Le Surréalisme Même* has been identified as that of a doll, whose face was moulded and made-up to resemble the features of one of Molinier’s daughter. This along with the text printed on the inside cover which reads

Sheltered in my beauty/ by the window of my eye/ I observe/ “the secret”/ without respite/ without mercy”, offers a violent eroticism and the excessive black lace and blue hue of the cover evoke death” would support the image as a self-portrait. The ambiguity of the image is fascinating and voyeurism is a central aspect of the work. Molinier’s image is unstable and the viewer confused; the gender of the model is unclear when it should be apparent given the two body parts on show, a face and a hand. The image possesses the qualities

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admired by Breton in Molinier’s work, a dark symbolism in which woman is presented as a “superb beast of prey”, a marvellous creature, “the devilishly insinuating temptation shining in their eyes as they offer themselves without shame”. Molinier was used as an erotic chimera and the photographs presented in the frontispiece and postscript (Fig. 116) support the idea of Molinier’s image here as a “guide or gatekeeper to secret worlds associated with sensuality and visions”. The fishing line is baited with a tiny “angel”, a naked, winged creature on a mission to hook the reader and to dissolve the threshold of reality and imagination.

The reconfiguration of the body is also the subject of Bellmer’s cover for issue 4 of Le Surréalisme Même, entitled Tenir au Frais. Bellmer’s cover was produced as part of his work in 1958 which explored binding the female body with string (Figs. 118); he had been inspired to produce these images of Unica Zürn by crime photographs of a female victim tightly bound with wire. The image has been discussed by Mahon and Taylor who both offer insightful analyses. Mahon noted a formal beauty and the viewer’s role as voyeur. The title she says, could indicate surrealist “black humour” but could also relate to butchery and Bellmer’s interest in the cut-up body and the slippage between flesh and meat. Mahon considered the work as collaborative and interpreted it as an exploration by Zürn of the psychology of violence, similar to Bellmer’s interest in the psychology of fascism. Ultimately, Mahon characterised the work as an image of sexual violence haunted by a will to evil which “must be understood in the light of his experience of a Nazi regime that despised the Other and operated a libidinal economy of horror, brutalisation and suffering.” Taylor identified these images of Zürn as the most spectacular expression of the “tying motif” in Bellmer’s oeuvre. Like Mahon she noted the banal domestic setting which contributes to the shock of the macabre image. She also noted the necrophiliac overtones of the title. Taylor apprehended the work psychoanalytically, leading

520 Breton, Surrealism and Painting, p 246.
521 Deborah Bright offers a summary of the chimera as utilised by both Symbolism and Surrealism and notes that in genetics, a chimera is defined as an organism that is partly male and partly female. Bright, D. (ed.) The Passionate Camera: Photography and Bodies of Desire,
to an interpretation of it as Bellmer’s response to a psychological emergency, namely Zürn’s increasing mental instability and his mother’s ill health.

Bellmer’s interest in constriction was thus the result of a fear of abandonment and “the photographs of Zürn speak most chillingly of the artist’s desperate, clinging need for the comfort represented by the female (maternal) body.”

Both Mahon and Taylor noted the use of the Bellmer’s work on the cover of *Le Surréalisme Même* but offered no further contextualisation in relation to the review. The issue featured a number of articles, including an article by José Pierre on Heindrich von Kleist, illustrated by a portrait of the writer and a photograph of the actress Maria Wimmer in her recent role as the heroine of *Penthesilea* (1808), which may have led to the editorial choice of Bellmer’s image as the cover. (Fig. 119) The surrealists were attracted to Kleist’s “remarkable portrayal of sexual frenzy” as well as the idea of a sovereign women’s state. A renewed interest in *Penthesilea* was sparked by Julien Gracq’s adaptation of the play in 1953 for Jean-Louis Barrault’s production the following year. In *Médium* in 1954 Mitrani had interviewed Gracq at an advance-premier of the show at the *Théatre Marigny*. Gracq stated that his play was a “free translation” that, “pretty much followed Kleist’s text line for line in terms of meaning”. The theme of the play held a fascination for him he said, because the characters remain relative strangers and rather than behave like actors they unleash natural passions and because Penthesilea is, in the end, transfixed by her actions. Gracq observed that the play is filled with constant and sudden alternations of contrary signs, masculine and feminine and the brutality of the warrior against yielding tenderness.

In his article on Kleist in *Le Surréalisme Même* Pierre noted that in his personal life and in his writing, Kleist was absorbed in extreme feelings. He stated that
Ubac had produced his photographic work on the myth in the late 1930s but interest was ignited after the war. Leonor Fini produced illustrations for *Penthesilée de Kleist* in 1958.

Kleist is understood to have suffered bouts of mental instability throughout his life. In 1811, aged thirty-four, he shot himself and a companion, Henrietta Vogel thought to have been in his work, Kleist had explored the ecstatic tyranny of love as profoundly as de Sade. For Pierre the fact that Kleist could produce two works “stunningly beautiful in their common obsession with *l’amour fou* was proof of genius.”

He was referring to “Penthesilea” and “Kätchen von Heilbronn”, a play also written in 1808 as a partner volume to “Penthesilea”. Both women are driven by a need for love but while Penthesilea is literally consumed by her desire for mastery over her loved one, Kätchen’s acquiescence in the face of mistreatment by Count von Strahl, the object of her affections, eventually results in a happy marriage. These characters are completely governed by their devouring passions; Kätchen, on first sight of Strahl in the house of her father was stricken as if by lightning “at his kiss and threw herself out of a window, breaking both of her legs.” Despite the fact that Strahl threatens to take a horse whip to her and verbally abuses her, she is compelled to follow and be near him, sleeping in his stables. Bellmer’s work is imbued with an incredible tension that connects it to the chaotic collisions experienced by the modern individuals portrayed by Kleist.

As well as matching a general surrealist interest in love and violence, Bellmer’s cover serves to introduce Kleist’s grotesque erotic conflict in which love is brutal and no general solution to human conflict is offered. The image particularly evokes the tragedy of Penthesilea. Kleist’s tragedy has two causes, the excess of the queen of the Amazon’s passion and the displeasure of the Gods at her infringement of the law of the Amazons. Penthesilea is not destroyed by the internal force of her love for Achilles (as is maintained by the High Priestess of the Amazons, the representative of the state in the play) but by external authority, by the angry violence of the Gods; it is Mars who causes the confusion in her mind that leads ultimately to catastrophe.

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In a letter to his publisher Kleist said that the two dramas ‘belonged together like the plus and minus in algebra’. Hebling, The Major Works of Heinrich von Kleist, p 176.

Kleist, “Kaethchen of Heilbronn” in Pierce, F. E. Fiction and Fantasy of German Romance: Selections from the german Romantic authors, 1790 to 1830 in English translation. London: Oxford University Press, 1927, p. 253

Kleist, “Kaethchen of Heilbronn”, in Pierce, p. 254 and 301 respectively.

Bellmer’s cover connects with Kleist’s drama on a number of levels, it conveys extraordinary emotional distress but also the physical frenzy of the drama. The drama has a high level of general violence, including a scene (here recounted by Meroë, an Amazon princess) where Penthesilea throws herself upon the body of her beloved (him dying by her own hand) tearing at his flesh with her teeth along with her dogs

And throws — throws herself on him, oh Diana!
With the whole pack, and pulling at his crest,
For all the world a dog with other dogs,
One’s at his breast, the other takes his neck,
She drags him down so hard it makes the ground quake!
He, crimson with his own blood, writhing, reaches
Out to her soft cheek, touches her, and cries:
Penthesilea! My bride! What are you doing?
Is this the rosy feast you promised me?
But she — a lioness would have heeded him,
However ravenous and wild for prey,
Howling her hunger through the snowy wastes —
She sinks — tearing the armor off his body —
Into his ivory breast she sinks her teeth,
She and her savage dogs in competition,
Oxus and Sphinx chewing into his right breast,
And she into his left; when I arrived,
The blood was dripping from her mouth and hands.536

When Penthesilea realises that it was she who had torn her lover apart she insists that it was a mistake:

So it was a mistake. A kiss, a bite,
The two should rhyme, for one who truly loves
With all her heart can easily mistake them.537

In German, the words “kisses” and “bites” (küsse and bisse) actually do rhyme and Penthesilea seeks justification for her actions in the coincidence. The theme of binding is evident throughout the drama in relation to both Penthesilea and Achilles. Penthesilea binds Achilles with a garland of roses.538 At the end of scene twenty-one, Odysseus suggests that Achilles should be “tied and gagged” when Diomedes states that he is “mad” as he sets off to meet the attack of

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Kleist, Penthesilea, p. 74.
Penthesilea and her dogs.\textsuperscript{539} At the beginning of scene twenty-two, the high priestess, alarmed at Penthesilea’\textquotedblright s derangement orders her assistant to bind the queen with ropes. \textsuperscript{540}

Bellmer’\textquotesingle s narrative “Le Père”, published in the same issue, a story of the revenge of two young boys on an authoritarian priest, is loosely linked to the cover image with its theme of cruelty. However the violent eroticism, the binding and the references to “food” undoubtedly tie Bellmer’\textquotesingle s Tenir au frais to Kleist. Bellmer’\textquotesingle s cover communicates the connection between love and violence; in Kleist’\textquotesingle s play Penthesilea’\textquotesingle s death is portrayed as a “moral suicide”, an act of intense volition.\textsuperscript{541} The image of Zürn’\textquotesingle s bound body is in turn testament to “the destructive power of the forces that rule human life - the internal compulsion of passion and the external coercion of authority” in relation to both artist and model.\textsuperscript{542}

A further issue that neither Mahon or Taylor mention is the fact that Tenir au Frais is a collage rather than a straight photograph.\textsuperscript{543} This enhances Mahon’\textquotesingle s reading of the work as anagrammatical as well as the butchery association. The collage is evidently carefully crafted; collage afforded the artist mutability, allowing him to further formally transform the female body, a necessary requirement of his erotic desire. Even in the coloured reproduction on the cover of the review the detail visible in the string cutting into the flesh expresses immense cruelty and pain. Anatomically and in terms of scale the image is incorrect; the artist has welded body parts together and the torso with visible vertebrae implying leanness is oddly juxtaposed to the fat of the ample bottom and thighs, again reinforcing the butchery associations. Bellmer’\textquotesingle s cover has a macabre fascination and lends itself well to the general surrealist inquiry into “the complex structure of suffering in love” as well as providing a beautiful allusive illustration to the article on Kleist.\textsuperscript{544}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{539} Kleist, Penthesilea, p 122.
\item \textsuperscript{540} Kleist, Penthesilea, p 124.
\item \textsuperscript{542} This is Stahl’\textquotesingle s phrase although he denotes “divine” authority in relation to Kleist’\textquotesingle s drama. Stahl, p 90.
\end{itemize}
The fact that this piece is a collage is well documented. It was catalogued as “collaged photographs and gouache” for instance at the exhibition *Surrealism: Desire Unbound*, 2001-02.

“The complex structure of suffering in love” is Bate’s phrase. Bate, *Photography and Surrealism*, p 171.
In terms of distinguishing a surrealist perspective on eroticism, the *enquête* offered an opportunity to situate the group in the midst of a debate when Barthes published his essay on strip tease in *Mythologies* in 1957. The surrealists responded directly to Barthes in their *enquête* in issues 4 and 5 of *Le Surréalisme Même*, publishing a broad selection of responses and a concluding contribution by Gérard LeGrand. The *enquête* was designed to both challenge Barthes and conduct an extensive survey on the phenomena of strip-tease. The initial three questions (different for men and women) focused on personal experience of and ideas about strip tease. The introduction that followed asked directly “Do you agree with Barthes that strip tease curbs any spontaneity and imaginative, inventive eroticism?” Contributors included writers and artists closely associated with surrealism, as well writers and performers of erotica, and writers who were involved in a discourse on sexuality. It is notable that almost half of the published respondents (eight out of nineteen) were women, women who would have been considered as morally audacious. Michèle Perrein for example, was renowned as the *Elle* journalist who had revealed that Minou Drouet, the eight-year old poet published by Julliard and lauded by critics, was in fact not the author of her works but a fake. The story was a sensation in the press and Julliard subsequently published Perrein’s first novel *La Sensitive ou l’innocence coupable* in 1956. Perrein’s story of Odile, a sexually manipulative and dangerous young woman was then published, in an abridged version, in *Elle*. The work of writers such as Perrein, de Ligneris and Kaplan (who wrote as well as directed) represented powerful modern femininity.

The *enquête* approached the topic in typically surrealist “laboratorial” fashion. Although LeGrand was dismissive of Barthes and his ideas as “bourgeois” in his

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545 *Mythologies* contains fifty-four (only twenty-eight in the Annette Laver’s English translation) short journalistic articles on a variety of topical subjects, the majority of which focus on various manifestations of mass culture. These texts were written between 1954 and 1956 for the left-wing magazine *Les Lettres nouvelles*. McNeill, T. (1999) “Roland Barthes: *Mythologies* (1957)” p.1 [http://seacoast.sunderland.ac.uk/~os0tmc/myth.htm](http://seacoast.sunderland.ac.uk/~os0tmc/myth.htm) (Accessed 12/06/09)

546 Bellmer, Kyrou, Mitrani, Molinier, Mansour, Oppenheim, André Pierede Mandiargues, Monique Watteau, Max von Svanberg, Henri Raynal and LeGrand.

547 François de Ligneris (published the erotic fantasy *Fort Frédérick* in 1957, Paris: Grasset); Henri Raynal (published *Aux Pieds d’Omphale* in 1957, Paris: JJ Pauvert); Nel ly Kaplan and Zinaïde de Rachevski (an exuberant erotic dancer and regular cover girl).

548 Edgar Morin, Robert Droguet, Roger Callois and Michèle Perrein.

the "Minou Drouet Affair".
editorial, “How can we talk about eroticism in the same terms as margarine?” he said, it was only he and Raynal who disagreed with the analysis, others essentially agreed with it (as far as it went). The surrealists seem to have attempted to outdo Barthes with their investigation. Barthes’ focus was narrow, and despite the fact that this was intentional and that Barthes carefully qualified his statements (he noted that he refers only to Parisian strip-tease for example) the enquête, by comparison seemed to examine strip tease from a variety of angles. The responses explored, among other things, strip tease in comparison to erotic film and literature, the perspective of women as spectators, psychology and the male spectator, censorship, the demoralised state of modern eroticism, commercialisation and crucially, the potential of the act as artistry. Barthes, in comparison, with his muted approval of “amateur” events, appeared to lack the insight into “the spontaneity of the erotic imagination” evident in the enquête.

Mitrani’s description of the dancing she experienced in Barcelona and LeGrand’s admiration for Lilly Christine, the athletic burlesque star of New Orleans famed for her aggression and feline grace (Fig. 120), suggested that strip tease could, through powerful and magnetic performance, involve the audience in an emotional experience.

The debate about erotica was not abstract, at this time the sex industry was developing rapidly as a mass market phenomenon. Playboy was launched in the United States in 1953 and the first calendar printed in 1957 for 1958; Lui, the French equivalent was launched in 1964. It was the success of American strip tease which had encouraged Alain Bernardin to open the “Crazy Horse Saloon” nightclub in 1951 on the prestigious Avenue George V. Bernardin lobbied to have the law against nude performers moving onstage revoked and due to this redefinition of obscenity laws, the club elevated strip tease to performance.

This relatively new phenomenon inspired a range of responses, including that of Barthes. Le Grand noted that in Revue Hommes et Mondes, Emile Vuillermoz had argued that strip tease proved the existence of God as it demonstrated his

551 Mitrani in Le Surréalisme Même, no. 4.
sculptural genius”. Joan Miró produced Striptease in 1958 and Umberto Eco described Lily Niagara’s act at the Crazy Horse in “The Socratic Strip” in 1960. In 1958 Francois des Aulnoyes published Histoire et philosophie de l’érôtisme and Histoire et philosophie du strip tease, two volumes notable for their titillating photographic illustrations rather than their paltry text, which used images by Roland Carré of Harcourt Studios among others. In 1961 Denys Chevalier produced a similar book which concluded with a harsh critique of the surrealist enquête. Chevalier saw strip tease as a powerful modern erotic spectacle and was scathing about the debate around “myth” and scornful of the analyses. He picked out the female responses in Le Surréalisme Même, particularly those of Mansour and Perrein which denied identification with the stripper, for criticism, describing them as „idiotic.“

The illustrations used for the enquête made little use of promotional or documentary images of striptease itself; one Carré portrait of “Melody Bubbles” (Fig. 121) (a shot from the same series was used by Chevalier) introduced the final instalment of the enquête. Two Molinier photographs, one in each issue, appear to challenge Barthes’ idea that it was adornments which intervened to bury any initial provocative intention in strip tease. (Fig. 122) Molinier’s reliance on the ritualistic “classic props” of stockings, stiletto heels, masks, silk dildos, velvet covered beds and gilded mirrors do not diminish his fierce eroticism. These photographs of rituals, where everything is inflated and theatricalised amount to an interrogation of the viewer, who becomes caught up in the contradictions. Part of the dynamic tension is created by the fact that the viewer becomes a voyeur. Because of the “props” the images conjure up the reassuring ritual which negates flesh” that Barthes speaks of, but this familiarity is dispelled as the intensity and aggressive energy of the photographs tips this

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553 Revue Hommes et Mondes, a magazine which dealt with politics, literature, economics and science, was a point of reference in the French press in the post war period.
556 Roland Carré had a prolific career in glamour photography and in the 1950’s worked for titles such as Leg Show, Nu Français and Folies de Paris et de Hollywood. In 1957 Barthes said “In France, you are not an actor if you havn’t been photographed by Harcourt Studios”. Barthes, R. “The Harcourt Actor” in The Eiffel Tower and other mythologies, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p 19.
558 Chevalier, Métaphysique du strip-tease , p 187.
into something else, an instability which causes unease. Molinier represents genuine eroticism and audacity here and “drags into the light a hidden depth” that Barthes understood to be lacking in strip tease. “My eroticism veers towards reality”, Molinier said in his own response to the enquête, and it is the spectacle of strip tease, the fact that it channels desire into a mere spectacle, which proved deceptive for many of the respondents. Authenticity was central to surrealist eroticism and realism in cultural production is a concomitant of the personal nature of surrealist investigation. In 1995 Annette Messager expressed her admiration for the veracity of Moliner’s work and of surrealist photography generally when she compared her own work to fairy tales

And tender, like fairy tales where the ogre devours ten adorable little children. But everyday life is altogether much more cruel, surprising and tender. That’s why I much prefer surrealist photography - Paul Nougé, Man Ray, Claude Cahun, André Boiffard and Pierre Molinier — to surrealist painting, because it really is in touch with reality. When the interviewer adds Bellmer to her list she responds

Yes, of course ... it’s so touching and so sordid at the same time. Overall the responses to the enquête are characterised by intrigue rather than dogma and Molinier’s images served well as illustrations. The notion of eroticism as a spectacle was an anathema to the surrealists but in 1959, on the cusp of the “sexual revolution,” it was something that was in gestation and the discourse around strip tease reflected a real movement of ideas.

In the 1950’s feminine sexual allure became a mass market commodity and to succeed as a woman, with the goal of pleasing in mind, it was essential to have either sex appeal or “charm” and preferably a mixture of both, certainly if you were young. Elle devoted an issue to it in 1953, with Bardot on the cover in a languid pose and attempted to establish whether “sex appeal” was a desirable quality and alerted readers to the difference between charm and sex appeal and educated them on the judicious use of both. (Fig. 123) When the “teen” magazine Mademoiselle was founded in 1962 the target reader, aged between fifteen and twenty was understood as an object of consumer culture who focused on themselves, particularly on their physical appearance. Girls were encouraged to enjoy their independence to the full while ensuring that their “fun” did not
jeopardise their ultimate goal of domesticity. Weiner claimed that it was the
departure from this sentimental notion of feminine youth as a “premarital swan
song” which alarmed critics of the young women writers in the 1950’s such as
Michèle Perrein, Françoise Sagan, and Lucette Fina. Whereas a modern erotic
spectacle was acceptable, the graphic description of sexual encounters in the
context of contemporary life in novels with precocious narrators as young as
their authors often met with hostility. Chevalier’s disdainful treatment of
Perrein suggests that his unconditional support for strip tease did not necessarily
lead to an appreciation of explicit contemporary literature.

The boundaries of “acceptable” eroticism were shifting quickly at this time; the
fact that Fellini’s La Dolce Vita, with its frank treatment of sex, including
homosexuality, the “orgy” scene and the strip by Nadia Gray, won the Palme
d’Or at Cannes in 1960 indicates a changing set of values. However, in the
period directly prior to the major change in people’s ideas about sex in the
1960’s, liberalisation was a cause of confusion and anxiety as well as excitement.
We look upon the joke in the photograph from Médium (Fig. 124) as simply
sexist today, but it stemmed partly from a negotiation of the excitement
generated by increasing sexual freedom and frankness. The eroticisation of
girlishness was of particular concern. Bardot was just sixteen when she first
appeared on the front cover of Elle and it was this that brought her to the
attention of Roger Vadim. When she played an immoral adolescent in his And
God Created Woman in 1956, it was her seventeenth film; she epitomised the
femme-enfant and was, in person and in her screen roles, as de Beauvoir noted,
reduced to a physical identity. Surrealist investigations into sexuality and
photographic works should be situated in this fluid discourse.


Female writers who included eroticism as a primary theme in their work encountered
difficulties in publishing than their male counterparts. For example Gallimard had cut
Leduc’s Ravages (admired by de Beauvoir) in 1955. Anonymous or clandestine publication with
publishers such as Pauvert or Losfeld became was important. It was only in the 1960’s that
women in France were granted the right to publish without the authorisation of a male sponsor.
Routledge, 2006, p 1422.
Challenges to Catholic morality were, of course, welcomed by the Surrealists but many responses to the strip tease enquête were measured. Explicitness was not adequate in itself to meet the demands of surrealist eroticism which required honesty. This is why, in 1968, the group applauded Vera Chytilova’s *Les petites marguerites* (1966) as the perfect incarnation of subversive femininity/feminine subversion. Their gestures as free as their bodies. Their bodies are their privilege and their protest. Spontaneity of eroticism is the key to their attitude. Since *L ’Age d ’Or* or the Marx Brothers films are rare which match surrealist excess in this, *Les Abysses* and *Les petites marguerites* are two sides of the same coin.\(^{565}\)

The absurdity and playful sexual exploration in *Les petites marguerites* appealed to the surrealists. A celebration of the breaking down of sexual repression is understandable given the real difference to peoples’ lives that changes in the 1960’s brought about. People won increasing control over their own bodies; the impact of the legalisation of the contraceptive pill in 1967 is evident when we consider a feature from *Elle* in 1961 about a married woman from Nantes (a PhD student) entitled ‘I am 32. I am desperate. I am pregnant with my 6\(^{th}\) child’.

The cover of BIEF (Fig. 8) contributed to the debate with its reference to birth control.\(^{567}\) One result of a change in values was an outpouring of images with a sexual content, the comic results of which are shown by the advertising photographs for Hartog reprinted in *La Brèche*. The visual content of these American advertisements for shirts bore no relation to the product and relied instead on the gratuitous exposure of breasts, they were celebrated in *La Brèche* for their “refreshing extremism”.\(^{568}\) (Fig. 125)

Both BIEF and *La Brèche* rejected the luxury of *Le Surréalisme Même* in favour of a more modest format but *La Brèche* was a more substantial journal and care was clearly taken with the use and reproduction of images. The preface to the first edition justified the new journal as necessary in order to meet the demands of a diverse and changeable audience. This was deemed to require flexibility and a shift “beyond political action”, which was “more than ever” problematic, back to the “poetic re-evaluation of thought”. The preface proposed that this was productively based on the principal of analogy and concluded with an aphorism

\(^{565}\) Le font de l’air”, *Archibras*, no. 3, March 1968.
\(^{566}\) *Elle*, 7 July 1961.
\(^{567}\) *Bief* 15 July 1959
\(^{568}\) *La Brèche* June 1964
from Lichtenberg “Don’t judge men on their opinions, but on what their opinions have made of them”. Breton as editor was keen to nurture a distinctive identity for the group and thus maintained a vehement hostility to the Communist Party and political dogma, and publicised artists and writers who were broadly faithful to “surreality”. The new journal appears to highlight the legacy of historical surrealism as well as promoting artists who identified strongly with the group and produced vital work which could be categorised as surrealist in the post war period.

Film stills from *Les Abysses* (a film inspired by the Papin murder case, directed by Niko Papatakis in 1963) (Fig. 126) were published in *La Brèche* to accompany an article on the film, together with the original “before and after” images from *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* (Fig. 35) and a Ted Joans photo-collage (Fig. 127). Papatakis’ film was turned down by the Committee of the Cannes Film Festival in 1963. Breton, as well as de Beauvoir, Sartre, Genet and Prèvert published texts in *Le Monde* expressing admiration for the film and André Malraux, then Minister of Culture, following a private screening, insisted that the film represent France at the festival where it created a scandal due to the frenzied violence. Papatakis’ film gave the sisters (played by real-life sisters Francine and Colette Berge) a clear motive for the murders and portrayed them as incestuous lesbians who were uncontrollably violent before the crime. The film stills served to place *Les Abysses* in a trajectory of support for the sisters which stemmed from the surrealists declaration in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* in 1933, reprinted in full in *La Brèche*. The article predominantly concerned *Les Abysses* but generalised from the Papin case to touch upon the civil rights movement, explicitly with Joans’ collage and implicitly in the text. The article concluded that the Papins’ crime was inevitable, born from anger, relentless oppression and what Christine Papin had called the “mysteries of life”. Papatakis and Vauthier, Joubert said, allowed the viewer to get to the very heart of the excessive violence of those “thirsty for freedom of expression”. When Joubert wrote of the inevitability of “others”, those “dying like dogs” suffering the fate of the Papins, there is no doubt that he


was referring to blacks in North America; 1963 was a milestone in the fight for civil rights. Joans’ collage was placed on the opposite page to these concluding remarks and shows a black man, accompanied by a white woman, rumbling off in a cart as if to the guillotine. Crosses have been placed over what has been denied or censored, including mixed race liaison as indicated by the dancing shoes and the crux of the crime committed, sexual relations; the woman has a large cross between her legs and another at her breasts. Joans juxtaposed misery with hope and affixed signs of change to the imagery of repression.

America’s ship has literally come in but the nature of the cargo is unclear. The central figure gazes up at a newt, a sign of transformation, and clutches an anatomical diagram of the reptile, an image of metamorphosis; Malcolm X is evoked in name and image. Joans’ collage provided a rich appendix to Joubert’s text.

A desire on behalf of the group to highlight their legacy and vitality is also evident in their central role in Seitz’s The Art of Assemblage show in New York. Benayoun reported back from the exhibition in issue 6 of La Brèche. By that time the group had already claimed the sophisticated and skilful, stamping Rauschenberg and Johns with the spirit of surrealism with their inclusion in the 1959 EROS exhibition in Paris and would go on to pay homage to James Rosenquist in 1964. In the New York show the debt of contemporary art to dada and surrealism was made clear in Pierre’s preface to the issue.

Happenings”, according to Pierre, were indicative of dada enjoying a reprise because the war had re-enforced irony. Furthermore, in the same issue a film still from Jean Léon’s Aimez-vous les femmes?, a popular black comedy based on cannibalism scripted by a young Polanski, was juxtaposed with a documentary photograph of Oppenheim’s Banquet (Fig. 128) at the opening of the EROS

571 In May 1963 images of police brutality against protestors in Birmingham (Alabama) were televised and published widely and gained international support for the Civil Rights movement. The March on Washington where Martin Luther King delivered his ‘I had a dream’ speech was held on August 28th of that year. In September, the bombing of a Baptist church in Birmingham resulted in the deaths of four young girls and led to rioting. Issue 5 of La Brèche was published in October, 1963.

572 The Art of Assemblage, MOMA, New York, October 2 — November 12, 1961.


574 At EROS In 1959 Rauschenberg Pierre, J. “Comment réussire un chef d’œuvre de “pop”. En hommage à James Rosenquist” in La Brèche, no. 6, June 1964, pp. 48 - 49.

575 Pierre, J. Preface to La Brèche, no. 6, June 1964.
show, suggesting plagiarism and claiming credit. The tendency to present new artists in a surrealist tradition is evident in the final issue of *La Brèche* where an article on Rimbaud is illustrated with Heisler’s *Objet* (1943) (Fig. 129) as well as work by Jean-Claude Silverman and Ugo Sterpini. The younger artists are thus presented as a vibrant development on an unwavering surrealist path.

In terms of photographic art, work by young artists is limited in *La Brèche*. Heisler’s runner and Štyrský’s blasphemous collages are imaginative and humorous and had enduring appeal. Štyrský’s work was reproduced in issue 4 of the journal, which was dedicated to him. (Fig. 130) The collages presenting baby Jesus, Mary and an American cardinal slipped easily into the context of post war consumerism. Baby Jesus” upside down horseshoe foretells misfortune, his halo is a pineapple ring and his bread is represented by a mass produced pre-wrapped loaf. Mary is recognisable from the title *L'Annonciation* and the fact that she is surrounded by religious symbols, but she is receiving her message from Gabriel over the telephone, sat on top of a symbolic dish of eggs, legs somewhat splayed, dressed in high heels and a revealing shift. The cardinal is a baseball pitching machine on legs. With marching boots and armed with balls, the figure has an air of militarism and purposefulness.

Mimi Parent offered new photographic work in the first issue with her idea of creating a series of portraits of the collaborators on *La Brèche*, four of which were published. The text focuses on Parent’s own image as it is the most unusual and was surrounded by a set of coincidences that were made much of in the article. Parent designed her portrait to represent how, as a child, she had been afraid of lightning and convinced that she would be struck dead by it. With the other images it is not made clear exactly how they were designed and how much input the individuals pictured had in the composition of the images, but it could be assumed that the choice of character at least was theirs. Benayoun chose to be pictured in an astrological setting, absorbed in a game which would determine birth. Radovan Ivsic’s profile was merged to a vast rocky landscape. Breton’s choice was less whimsical, he is portrayed as a revolutionary crusader and returned to the birth of surrealism and the metaphorical “black mountain” referred to in *La Révolution Surréaliste* (Fig. 131)

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576 *La Brèche* no. 6, June 1964.
577 Denis, Y. “Deux gloses de Rimbaud”, *La Brèche* no. 8, November 1965, pp. 57 - 66.
Anonymous photographic material was used by Huguette and Jean Schuster to produce “cartoon” montages dedicated to various members of the group. The image dedicated to Elisa and André Breton shows an attractive young blonde in a bikini who is used to poke fun at André Malraux, then the Minister of Culture, and portray him as lustful. (Fig. 132) The image dedicated to Marianne and Radovan Ivsic shows two young girls who have been made to appear to be having a conversation about their future prospects given the recent changes in the social position of women in France. (Fig. 133) “How am I going to make a living if I can’t martyrise myself!” one girl laments, understanding that the option of a role as housewife is no longer promoted. “In the best hotel in town!” her young friend replies, suggesting prostitution.

*La Brèche* was particularly strong in the creative use of documentary photography The images published to illustrate the articles on “Mme Zka’s” sexualised dolls (Figs. 134) and the remarkable “anatomical machines” of the Prince of Sansevero. (Figs. 135 and 136) are particularly notable documentations of the surreal. The dolls were featured in the same issue as Benayoun and Pierre’s essays on assemblage and these works were introduced as such in Selz’s text. Over a dozen photographs of the dolls were published in the journal.

The dolls were produced by a woman in a hospital for the mentally ill, “a lady lost in her obsessive daydreams” Selz called her. Her craft is compared to that produced in convents, institutions, and bourgeois and peasant households, performed absent-mindedly (automatically) to the accompaniment of “the purring of prayer” or the “crackle of the hearth”. Madame Zka had a talent for dressmaking and the dolls had been meticulously made with close attention to detail. Selz noted that in his conversations with the maker, individual dolls evoked memories of travels and husbands and that an “obsessive sexual fear” dominated and covered all of the dolls’ bodies. Madame Zka is described as

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578 Our hands cannot grip tightly enough the rope of fire that stretches up the black mountain ... we remain committed in principle to any revolutionary action” Breton, A. “Pourquoi je prends la direction de *La Révolution Surréaliste*”, *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 4, p 3.

suffering from “ecstatic erotomania in the form of fantastic paranoia” in the text. Photographs document how each doll could be undressed and how all had erotic signs in profusion. Erect penises and in some cases a “phallic eruption”, a collection of bulging organs, are revealed beneath the carefully reproduced Polish army uniforms. This strange collection serves well as a cover to the second issue of the review. Assemblage is described as part of the structure of dreams where the detail is inscribed in the parts, and the dolls are about confrontation, choice of elements and additions.

The images of the Sansevero anatomical models are equally remarkable. The two models, a man and a woman, are known as “anatomical machines” and depict the system of blood vessels of the human body. They were commissioned by Raimondo de Sangro, Prince of Sansevero and manufactured by the anatomist Giuseppe Salerno in the 1760s and until recently were believed to be the result of anatomical preparations based on the injection of embalming substances. The models were regarded as curiosities as well as teaching objects and are thought to be unique. It has now been proven that the circulatory systems was artificially fabricated with a mixture of pigmented waxes, an iron wire and silk fibres, probably following techniques commonly used by anatomists of the time.\textsuperscript{580}

In her article Paule Thévenin noted that in the Sansevero chapel in Naples, the models are displayed in the basement in ornate glass cases, some of which can be seen in the photographs. Due to a lack of evidence as to production methods, legends were attached to the models which nominated Raimondo de Sangro himself as the scientist responsible and even suggested that the experiments were carried out on live subjects. The fact that eyes had been placed in the female model and the tiny heart and bones of a child laid at her feet added to their macabre nature. Thévenin celebrated de Sangro as an accomplished inventor and free thinker who was persecuted during his lifetime as a “sorcerer” who had made a pact with the Devil.\textsuperscript{581} The way in which the models have been photographed and presented in the review enhance their fantastic appearance. The close up of the female on the cover, taken from a low vantage point and the cropped shot of the male both remove the context of the glass case, allowing the viewer to

\textsuperscript{580} http://www.homepages.ucl.ac.uk/~tcnmrf/machines.htm (Accessed 26/06/09)
Théveni n, P. “Raimondo de Sangro, Prince de San Severo, Savant Impénitent” _La Brèche_ no. 7, pp. 14 - 16.
indulge their fascination. Such proximity to the models facilitates a consideration of their physical make-up but also of materialism. These objects which caused anxiety in the eighteenth century were celebrated in La Brèche for this reason as well as their marvellous quality.

There is no doubt that the surrealist group were influential and vital in the 1950s and early 1960s, young artists had refreshed the group and helped to present two cohesive shows in 1959 and 1965 with surrealist eroticism at their core. There is also no doubt that the post war journals did not share the cohesion of the exhibitions and that a chasm had developed between older members of the group and younger people who threw themselves into the “festival of the oppressed” of the late 1960s with faith in change. Sarah Wilson described “orthodox” surrealism as under attack at this time but as “bleeding out into other movements” such as Nouveau Réalisme. The surrealists were left behind, supportive and excited bystanders. L’Archibras marked surrealism as historical and failed in its aim to “bang on doors and windows”. Visual images and photography were limited and literature dominated. The first issue displayed the back catalogue of surrealist journals on the cover, and much of the interior was taken up with a feature on the 1965 exhibition, with text by Mansour and photographs by Suzy Emboalong with notable obituaries for Breton. It was Duchamp, with a rare lyricism, who stated Breton’s insistent commitment to love in a world “adrift”,

I never knew a man who had a greater capacity for love. He was a lover of love in a world which believes in prostitution. That was his sign.

There is a tacit condemnation here of the paucity of commercialism and late capitalism generally. In the post war period, the photography in surrealist journals was sometimes able to aid in the subversion of this “prostitution” and offered an alternative of “truth without boundaries”. The post war surrealist reviews are variable and those published after Breton’s death in September 1966, L’Archibras and Coupure, indicated the disparity of the group, leading to the end of surrealism being announced by Schuster in Le Monde in October 1969.

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Duchamp’s obituary to Breton was printed, along with other obituaries taken from the
Despite its volatility, Breton’s group was able to offer young people an alternative both artistically and to Stalinism in the post war period before it was overtaken by the Situationist International. In an interview in the early 1980’s Lefebvre suggested that, partly because of Cuba, in 1956-57 it was felt that there were going to be a lot of things happening outside the established parties and organised movements ... there was going to be a spontaneity outside of organisations and institutions ... movements that leave behind classic organizations.586

One could argue that the Surrealists were part of this sea-change, they were a vital group but also historic and essentially a “classic” organisation in this sense, and for that reason it was inevitable that they would be replaced by small groups like the Situationists as young artists explored new directions.

Conclusion

After 1986, when Rosalind Krauss made 'surrealist photography' visible, scholarship focused on the identification of a 'surrealist aesthetic', often based on Bataille's notion of the informe but alternatively rooted in Sontag's declaration that surrealism lay at the very heart of the photographic enterprise in the creation of a duplicate world, of a reality in the second degree. Since then a considerable amount of photographic work associated with the movement has been uncovered and it has become clear that a single identity for surrealist photography is an impossibility due to its diversity and its range of deployment. The medium proved itself to be such a useful tool in attempts to reconcile external reality and the interior world of the subconscious that it is evident in all of the group's activities and investigations into the poetic force of the visual image both staged and spontaneous. The thesis acknowledged this fragmentation and aimed to investigate how photography, because of its status in visual culture, was developed by the surrealist group in Paris as a medium of surrealist communication in their journals and illustrated books.

The argument was centred on the fact that because photography had a social function, whether journalistic, personal, educational or political, it had subversive potential which was exploited by the surrealists to challenge social, sexual and moral codes, provoke a reaction and propose a new morality based on freedom. The concomitant development of Surrealism and illustrated magazines in the 1920s facilitated both a pool of images for appropriation as well as opportunities to circulate Surrealist images in the forefront of contemporary visual culture. The political aspects of Surrealism have arguably been underplayed in recent scholarship and the thesis sought to contribute to the understanding of Surrealist photography by exploring how the medium was used to advance the revolutionary aims of the movement.

The thesis traced the development of illustrated magazines during the formative years of surrealism. It explored the impact of the quickly developing mass media

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on photographers who were considered as artists who could supply the industry with innovative images. In the analysis of the photographic content of *La Révolution Surréaliste* in chapter two it was proposed that the illustration of text was heavily influenced by Man Ray, who developed a poetic notion of the image and its relationship to visual surrealism. Man Ray's expertise in meeting commercial demands arguably sharpened his ability to fix his thoughts on paper as well as his understanding of the potential power of the found or re-cycled image which relied on decontextualisation. The third chapter dealt with the use of photography in *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* and argued that although this second journal used photography in a different way to the first, photographs transcended a straightforward illustrative role and in some cases the text and the photograph were equal rather than the image accompanying the text. Chapters two and three surveyed the use of photography generally in these two publications, emphasising the diversity of the images. The images were understood to be in close communion with the literary, philosophical and political elements of the movement. In chapters four and five which deal with the 1930s and the period after 1945, there is a particular focus on sexuality. The analysis of the illustrated books in chapter four illuminated the extent to which surrealism challenged sexual conventions and the institution of the family and noted the subversion of predominant images to do this.

The distinctiveness of the thesis is two-fold. Firstly the thesis develops the contention that the photographic images used in surrealist publications are organically related to the use of the photographic image in visual culture as the major medium of communication. Although connections between surrealist photography and commercial work has been noted in scholarship, the thesis brings an extra perspective based on an analysis of the relationship between photographers close to Surrealism and the periodical press. Surrealist photography is thus relocated within the framework of the circulation of images in society. The thesis is also distinctive because many of the images discussed have been neglected in scholarship to date: in particular there is a lacuna in scholarship in terms of the photographic images published in surrealist journals in France in the post World War Two period. Many of these images have not been the subject of discussion to date or have been divorced from the context of
the journals in their interpretation. A fresh perspective on images such as Bellmer's *Tenir au Frais* (Fig. 117) is offered which considers possible meanings in this multi-disciplinary context.

The images published in the illustrated books *Banalité* and *1929* have also been neglected in scholarship. In the case of *1929* this is surprising given that the focus of many studies of Surrealism has been desire and eroticism. The neglect of *Banalité* is perhaps less surprising as Parry was on the margins of the movement but the surrealist nature of his work generally and in these particular images is indisputable. Also, the theme of the family, a central aspect of Fargue's book, has not been explored in great detail in research into Surrealism despite its status, along with nationalism and religion, as a major target of the group's violent hostility. The fact that the political side of Breton's group was, and still is to some extent, unfashionable as well as a focus on desire has perhaps contributed to this neglect. Our understanding of the Surrealists' approach to sexuality is aided greatly by considering the priority they awarded the defeat of the institution of the bourgeois family.

The theme of the family was raised in chapter two with the discussions of Unik's short story 'Vive la Mariée' illustrated by an Arp print and a group portrait of the jury of the *Fémina* prize (Figs. 19 and 20). It was also discussed in chapter three in relation to the discussion of the photograph of Marie Costes in the context of the second issue of the journal and in relation to the defence of Violette Nozière. However, it is in chapter four with the discussion of *Mr Knife Miss Fork* and *Banalité* that this theme is developed. The analysis of Ernst's illustrations centres on the ways in which his images of the inner world of the child narrator focus on the triumph of love in stark opposition to the stifling account of middle class family life in Crevel's text. The discussion of *Banalité* analysed the relationship between text and illustration and concluded that a critique of the bourgeois family runs through the work. Parry's images in particular contribute to the notion of the family as a sinister, tense and violent site. Both of these books are exemplary in their exploration of inner consciousness at the same time as projecting ideas about love and marriage into the external world. Chapter four also demonstrated how the illustrated books *1929*, *Facile* and *Le Septième Face*
du Dé proposed an alternative to the clichéd and “passive” desire circulated in consumer culture. The analysis of 1929 demonstrates how Aragon and Péret's poems as well as Man Ray's photographs parodied *The Song of Songs* in the bible. This book is generally understood as mischievous pornography designed to shock but the discussion in the thesis identifies the ways in which the poems and the illustrations subvert the exuberant and erotic depiction of the love between a man and a woman in the biblical text.

In the post war period, when eroticism was incorporated into the consumerist boom, the surrealist group, although intellectually and politically marginalised, made an important and distinctive contribution to the discourse on sexuality. The final chapter examined the impact of the increased involvement of women members in the group. During this period a continued insistence on ‘love’ and therefore eroticism as humanity’s major driving force generated literature and visual images which were sexually provocative to a great degree. Even in the late 1950s, on the cusp of the sexual revolution, surrealism’s representations and celebrations of eroticism were shocking. Many images, Duchamp and Bellmer’s cover images for *Le Surréalisme Même* for example (Figs. 107 and 117), challenge notions of “taste” and “morality” even today. The discussion on Bellmer's image situated it in relation to Kleist's *Penthesilea* and argued that the cover was directly related to the group's preoccupation with the writer at this time and to the article by Pierre in the same issue. This image has not been interpreted in this way previously and the links between Kleist's text and Bellmer's image are stated clearly and evidenced with extensive textual quotations in the chapter and in Appendix B.

It is clear that surrealist photography had, and continues to have, a profound influence on both commercial and artistic photographic practice. While a rich legacy is evident in the work of artists such as Cindy Sherman and Francesca Woodman it is important to understand surrealism as a project which ended in the latter part of the last century. The thesis established that surrealist photography needs to be seen in the context of the surrealist movement as it
existed at a particular historical moment. Contemporary artists may have strong affinities with the movement but our understanding of surrealist photography is
diminished if we divorce it from the context in which it was produced and the totality of the surrealist vision. It is this surrealist vision, to some extent, which will ensure a continued academic interest in the movement because the ethical engagement of Breton’s group, although messy, possessed a gravitas which appears commendable in our unsettled times.
Imagination is not a given, it is conquered. Huysmans asks, “where, when, in which latitude, in what landscape could I find this enormous palace risen, where these domes reaching for the sky, these phallic columns, these pillars emerging from a hard and reflexive surface?” This is a pessimistic if lyrical way to eradicate everything we think, everything that should be. This palace “risen”, this “palace”. Past tense, useless splendour. It dismisses as gratuitous — almost fictitious — our need to behave differently from the norm (only if sexually: “phallic” columns). This is the sign of a guilty weariness, of our unforgivable doubts as to the real power of the mind. The growing use of that hopeless excuse “it was only a dream” (especially in films) confirms the hypocrisy of it, and doesn’t deserve to be argued about.

So, why not say it? Huysmans knew that the visions he had — outside time — were destined to drive the world “forward” as well as “backwards”. Unless it is a somewhat desperate attempt to protect yourself, there is no point in investing what should be with the terrifying impossibility to be and have been simultaneously.

I know how the argument goes: “the mind is always constrained by time and space. The representations it constructs are dependant on the strength of the emotions they arouse.” This is truly fetishistic. What we term the past will always win through our weakness. Anthony’s nights, Mexico in the times before the Spanish invasion, an unknown photograph from last century: all of you here and there, if you need to move, don’t make too much noise.

Where are the snows of tomorrow? My claim is that the borrowings of our imagination (and I shall endeavour to prove it need not borrow) should not bow to life.

Between the so-called clichés and ideas to open, there will always be a difference, giving imagination the winning hand over the mind.
Once more the question of energy transformation is posed. Being wary of the practical power of our imagination is like refusing to use electricity in the hope of bringing hydroelectric power back to its absurd status as a waterfall.

The imaginary is what tends to become real.

A propos of this, I would like to rent (not even buy) a property just outside Paris (1). Not too grand, 30 rooms maybe, with as many long dark corridors as possible (I can darken them myself if need be). It would have 4 or 5 hectares of wooden terrain, a brook or 2, or even better a couple of ponds. I would of course do my best to make the place safe (burglars need not be offended, safety has nothing to do with them!).

The various people I ask to visit should be able to come and go as they please. These preliminaries should be easy to establish; a tunnel (existing or not), not much harder.

From the outside, it should not look so much like a hotel as an old fashioned inn: this is more unsettling. Inside, this inn will welcome those I choose to come and swap exhausted ideas for exhausting ones.

We will invite 3 young women to stay and endow them with an annuity. These girls should have had an involvement in some haunted house scandal. They will be made to feel at home, but if they do not suit, they should be replaced immediately. In an emergency, we shall provide additional help (it might even be a young man, well versed in this kind of thing if unwittingly). However, there should never be more than one man at any given time.

The girls will be provided with the occasional companion. These will be females who have shown promise as mediums, have a particularly strange imagination or are very beautiful.

In each bedroom we will place a tall clock with a dark glass face, which will be wound up to strike midnight especially well. Whilst inside the property walls, no one is allowed to have sex (whatever the temptation) on pain of eviction. Green-shaded desk lamps will provide the only source of light. The shutters are to be kept closed at all times.

The reception room is to be whitewashed and lit by unseen ceiling lamps. The only furniture in this room (save a pair of authentic Merovingian armchairs) is to be a stand on which is placed a perfume phial, bound with a pale coloured ribbon. Inside the bottle a rose is trapped, its petals and stem discoloured, dead.
This very bottle can be seen today June 9th in the south facing window of the 
chemists which stands at the corner of rue Lafayette and rue du Faubourg 
Montmartre.

With this ends our list of arbitrary conditions.
Butterflies in natural flight will be taken up by men and commented upon, then 
we shall see if a bed sheet is made to envelope male and female bodies (which 
address shall I write?). Or, perhaps, when it is held up, incomprehensibly high, 
its function is to render a body imaginary, regardless of its reality. This would 
seem to prove that the human mind does not get away with fear. A while ago, I 
was told of a charming ghost story; 2 men, sporting a traditional ghost costume 
were having fun scaring the unsuspecting by walking around a cemetery night 
after night. On one of these nights, a freethinker dressed like them and started to 
follow them at close quarters. Upon seeing him, they scarpered. I have to 
confess to favour the first 2 men over this last one.

We also need a mysterious well, a replica of Luna Park’s, perhaps less free but 
more diverse, more insistent and a lot prettier.

There will be five bedrooms, their doors and windows sealed up, with no access 
possible (even if all guests swore never to look in).

In the first and biggest bedroom, we will have all our dummies (made of wax or 
other materials). They should be neither posed not higgledy-piggledy but 
arranged in a way reminiscent of total abandon. This, of course, should be done 
before the room is walled up.

In the second bedroom, there should be a jumble of eccentric looking luggage, 
tall sunflowers and other party accessories of the mind. Its walls should be 
entirely papered over with love letters.

The third bedroom will look like a luxurious nursery with only a cradle in it. The 
cradle should be partly slashed and contain a well-placed knife. It should bring 
to mind a ship in distress, leaning on floor waves of exaggerated blue.

Only I will know what happens in the fourth bedroom so that another I trust 
might know the purpose of the fifth one.
Neither him nor me, nor indeed any other person should possess the ideological key to the whole project (2).

The worst of it is, from the outside, the first bedroom will be indistinguishable from the second or the fifth.

The conversion work should be done so as to prevent any indiscretion. I want to keep things simple for the moment, so I won’t elaborate on the furnishings for the lived-in spaces; suffice to say the look needs to be austere. The extreme disparity of that whole look needs to appear a necessity, not whimsical. I think our taste can be trusted.

We shall maintain the utmost level of bodily hygiene. I haven’t decided yet whether to provide the household staff with two pure blood white Greyhounds or Bull Terriers or forgo them completely.

The point I wish to make here is the advantages to be had when the mind is placed in the best poetic position. We needn’t unlock the secrets of such a community just yet. I shall reiterate my reasons for writing this: we need to focus on the poetic point of view to the exclusion of all else. Needless to say, I do not prone the utopian only, I merely point to a source of strange, mostly unpredictable movements.

If we were to agree to find that source (as I’m sure we will) and to follow its path, we would find the promise of a magnificent torrent able to upset the mountains of boredom.

We cannot help but think or project like this when confronted with contemporary blind architectures. They are so much more idiotic even revolting than those of the past. We shall be so bored inhabiting them, secure in the knowledge that nothing will ever happen.

But, what if, what if a man there and then decided that something should happen? What if he dared venture, perhaps on his own, on the path stricken down by chance? What if this man took a risk and wrestled the past for its mysteries?
First, he would have to cleanse his mind of childhood fairy tales, the tales we loved so much before we realised how deceitful they were.

What if the poet decided to enter the lair, open his lips and utter the words: “once upon tomorrow ...”

(1) My only problem is my lack of financial means.

(2) You think me childish? So much the better.
Appendix B

Extracts from Heinrich von Kleist *Penthesilea* (1808)

Penthesilea struggles to comprehend the intensity of her love for Achilles:

Oh cursed by all the gods! Do I not feel,
Just when the Greeks are fleeing me all around,
That the mere sight of this one, single hero
Could touch and paralyze my inmost soul
And make me, me, the conquered one, the vanquished?
Where does this feeling come from that has power
To cast me down, yet has no breast to live in?588

Meroë, an Amazon princess recounts the moment when Penthesilea throws herself upon the body of Achilles, tearing at his flesh with her teeth along with her dogs:

She cries, and, with the strength of madness, draws
And draws the bow until the two ends kiss,
And raises up the bow and aims and shoots,
And drives the arrow through his throat; he falls:
A yell of triumph rises from our people.
Yet he still lives, most pitiable of men,
The arrow jutting out behind his neck,
He rises, gasping, falls head over heels,
And rises once again and wants to flee;
But now “Attack!” she cries, “Tigris! Attack!
Hyrkaon! Sphinx! Attack, Melampus! Dirke!”
And throws — throws herself on him, oh Diana!
With the whole pack, and pulling at his crest,
For all the world a dog with other dogs,
One”s at his breast, the other takes his neck,
She drags him down so hard it makes the ground quake!
He, crimson with his own blood, writhing, reaches
Out to her soft cheek, touches her, and cries:
Penthesilea! My bride! What are you doing?
Is this the rosy feast you promised me?
But she — a lioness would have heeded him,
However ravenous and wild for prey,
Howling her hunger through the snowy wastes -
She sinks - tearing the armor off his body -
Into his ivory breast she sinks her teeth,
She and her savage dogs in competition,
Oxus and Sphinx chewing into his right breast,
And she into his left; when I arrived,
The blood was dripping from her mouth and hands.589

The theme of binding is evident throughout the drama in relation to both Penthesilea and Achilles. Penthesilea argues that

... only I
Know how to fell him. Comrades, this metal here
Shall draw him with the tenderest embrace
(Since it’s with metal that I must embrace him!)
Closely, and painlessly, unto my heart.⁵⁹⁰

She binds Achilles with a garland of roses:

Around your temples, back behind your neck -
Down to your arms, your hands, your legs, your feet -
Up to your head again - and now it’s done.⁵⁹¹

and tells him

For there’s another chain I still intend
To wrap around your heart and bind you with,
As light as flowers, more durable than bronze.⁵⁹²

At the beginning of scene twenty-two, the high priestess orders her assistant to bind Penthesilea

...quickly with a rope,
Across those forking paths, lay out a snare,
Covered with brush, for her advancing tread.
And when her foot is caught, pull the rope tight
And drag her down just like a rabid dog;
That we may bind her, carry her back home,
And see if there’s a way we still might save her.⁵⁹³

Penthesilea herself, realising that it was she who had “tore him apart” asks

Did I kiss him to death?
HIGH PRIESTESS
Oh Heaven!

PENTH ESILEA
No? Didn’t kiss him? Really tore him? Speak?
HIGH PRIESTESS
Woe unto you! Go hide yourself away!
Let everlasting midnight cover you!
PENTH ESILEA

⁵⁸⁹ Kleist, Penthesilea , pp. 127 - 128
⁵⁹⁰ Kleist, Penthesilea , p. 38
⁵⁹¹ Kleist, Penthesilea , p. 87
⁵⁹² Kleist, Penthesilea , p. 89
⁵⁹³ Kleist, Penthesilea , p. 124
- So it was a mistake. A kiss, a bite,
The two should rhyme, for one who truly loves
With all her heart can easily mistake them.\footnote{Kleist, Penthesilea, p. 145}

Kneeling before Achille’s body Penthesilea speaks to him:

How many a maid will say, her arms wrapped round
Her lover’s neck: I love you, oh so much
That if I could, I’d eat you up right here;
And later, taken by her word, the fool!
She’s had enough and now she’s sick of him.
You see, my love, that never was my way.
Look: When my arms were wrapped around your neck,
I did what I had spoken, word for word;
I was not quite so mad as it might seem.\footnote{Kleist, Penthesilea, p. 146}
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Surrealism, Photography and the periodical Press:
An investigation into the use of photography in surrealist publications (1924 - 1969) with specific reference to themes of sexuality and their interaction with commercial photographic images of the period

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Ph D

2009
Volume 2 of 2
Illustrations
Fig 1 Man Ray, *Electricité* (1930) photogram commissioned by the *Compagnie*
Fig2

Pourquoi je prends la direction de l’É. S. : André Breton.

POÈMES :
Louis Aragon, Paul Éluard.

RÊVES :
Max Morise, Michel Leiris.

TEXTES SURREALISTES :
Philippe Soupault, Marcel Noll, Georges Malraux.

Les pirates voyagent : Benjamin Péret.

La halle de la faim : Robert Desnos.

Glossaire (suite) : Michel Leiris.

Nomenclature : Jacques-André Boiffard.

Fig3

Man Ray (1925) Cover of La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 4.
La qualité d'œuvre de Cartier a conquisé cette marcheuse : un long collier en perles de pêche.

Triomphe des Diamants
Fig 4  Hoyningen-Huene, Advertisement for Cartier using Siegel mannequins, *Vogue* (French Edition), December 1928, p 23.

Fig 5  Front cover of *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 1.
Fig 5  Front cover of *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 1.
PREFACE

Le procès de la connaissance n’étant plus à faire, l’intelligence n’entrant plus en ligne de compte, le rêve seul laisse à l’homme tous ses droits à la liberté. Grâce au rêve, la mort n’a plus de sens obscur et le sens de la vie devient indifférent.

Chaque matin, dans toutes les familles, les hommes, les femmes et les enfants, S’ILS N’ONT RIEN DE MIEUX A FAIRE, se racontent leurs rêves. Nous sommes tous à la merci du rêve et nous devons de subir son pouvoir à l’état de veille. C’est un tyran terrible habillé de miroirs et d’éclairs. Qu’est-ce que le papier et la plume, qu’est-ce qu’écrire, qu’est-ce que la poésie devant ce géant qui tient les muscles des nuages dans ses muscles ? Vous êtes là bégayant devant le serpent, ignorant les feuilles mortes et les pièces de verre, vous croisez pour votre fortune, pour votre cœur et vos plaisirs et vous cherchez dans l’ombre de vos rêves tous les signes mathématiques qui vous rendront la mort plus naturelle. D’autres et ce sont les prophètes dirigent aveugles forces de la nuit, l’aurore botche, et le s’épouvante.

Le surréalisme t tes du rêve à qui la nuit est réalisme est le enchantement de l’âme, de l’éther, de la cocaine, de la nourriture et aussi chaineux, nous pas, nous ne nous ne pourrons pas, piquons pas et nous rêvons, et la rapidité des aiguilles des lampes introduit dans nos cerveaux la merveilleuse éponge dégue de l’or. Ah ! si les oiseaux étaient gonflés comme des dirigeables, nous visiterions les ténèbres de la Mer Morte. La route est une sentinelle dressée contre le vent qui nous enlace et nous fait trembler devant ses fragiles apparaissances de rubis. Nous, collés aux échos de nos oreilles comme la pieuvre horloge au mur du temps, vous pouvez inventer de paupières histoires qui nous ferons sourire de nonchalance. Nous ne nous échappons plus, on nous dit : l’idée du mouvement est avant tout une idée inerte, * et l’arbre de la justice nous apparaît. Le cerveau tourne comme un ange et nos paroles sont les grains de plomb qui tuent l’oiseau. Vous qui la nature a donné le pouvoir d’allumer l’électricité à midi et de rester sous la pluie avec du soleil dans les yeux, vos actes sont gratuits, nos nôtres sont rêvés. Tout est chuchotements, coïncidences, le silence et l’éclat de la nature nous parle de notre propre révélation. L’arbre chargé de viande qui surgit entre les pavés n’est surnaturel que dans notre étonnement, mais le temps de fermer les yeux, il attend l’inauguration.

* Berkeley
Fig 6  Man Ray (1920) *Enigma of Isidore Ducasse* in *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 1, preface.

Fig 7  Front cover of *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 1.
Oui nos rêves. Cette petite fumée, après quoi s’acharne toujours notre course aux sécrétions, semblait s’évaporer et c’est à recommencer. Et nous cherchions un feu nouveau. Je pense à cette jarre qui dans un décor de Chirico, tout près de cette maison, dont vous écrivez, Béton, qu’elle devait abriter un sphinx, reste sur une scène vide après le départ — enfin — des danseurs importants. Allons-y de notre petit symbole.

Les danseurs importants, ce sont les divertissements quotidiens et qui ne gardent même point cette séduction pittoresque dont la qualité-certaine n’est pas grande, mais dont nous espérions qu’elle pourrait aider encore à quelque illusion passe-temps. Mais le temps ne passe, ni ne cale. Les danseurs sont partis et ont bien fait de partir. La jarre est seule sur la scène. Une fumée sort de la jarre. Me direz-vous qu’un loup y est caché qui fume banalement sa pipe ? Qu’un appelé le loup instinct sexuel ou de conservation, ne s’attende pas moins de la jarre, de notre sommeil, la fumée, les rêves. Et ces rêves, cette fumée ne sont point la somme d’une jarre, d’un loup, d’une pipe, non plus que d’un sommeil, d’un corps, d’un instinct.

Nous n’avons pas la stupide célébration de nous séparer en tranches, en quartiers. Rêle et impondérable un mugue s’éveille de mes heures libres. Mais au réveil il me faut avouer que je me rappelle moins les images que cet état qui en naquit. Recommencant une vie contrariée, l’essai avec les moyens de ma petite expérience aux yeux ouverts, de savoir en sens inverse ce que nous pensons baptisant processus, et, parti d’un état vague mais péremptoire cherche des prévisions qui ne parviendraient du reste point à me sembler indéfinissables.

Au fait et à mesure que le jour mélange du rêve nocturne, l’état qui en fut le résultat, s’engorgerent, je suis, pour le recruter, contraint de courir après un plus grand nombre d’images, de reste. Ainsi naît cette hantaison de l’art. On prend la jarre, un loup. On prend un corps, un sexe. On prend une toile, des pinceaux. On prend du papier, une plume. Hélas il n’y a plus ni fumée, ni rêves. Un enfant interrogé au matin expliquera sa joie ou sa terreur nocturnes par un seul fait. A moi les accessoires du mage auraient été multipliés, deux heures après triplés et ainsi de suite.

Donc nous cherchions les sensations nées et transfigurées capables de recréer un état vague et suffisant. Je rêve d’un goût de chaise humaine (non corrigée, ni morcelée, mais manquée). Je me réveille avec une surprise dans ma bouche. Comment y vint-elle. Je crois que j’ai vu des guirlandes de peau décortiquées. Ces guirlandes embaumaient ma chambre, abondantes de fruits humains semblables à ces lampions du 14 juillet. Je suppose que j’ai dû caurrir un de ces fruits, le manger.

Mais cette hypothèse et les images dont j’ai tentation de l’embellir ne suffisent point. Je suis sûr d’un goût de chair dans ma bouche. La langue est une chose noire dans la géographie des rêves, et pourtant quand j’ai eu de dîner, ma langue, oui, ma langue pensait qu’il n’était guère difficile de devenir anthropophage.

Veillons un rêve qui n’est guère pittoresque. Pourtant je le donne pour un de mes plus étranges. Il m’a hanté tout un jour et tout un jour à la recherche de cette secousse qui me fit l’égorgerce de Dieu, j’eussé de balir une lueur qui n’arrivait jamais à me mener si haut que cette fumée au goût de chair humaine.

Notre sommeil coupé en deux, nous nous apercevons que l’esprit libéré n’en chenaille point toujours à ces soirées normandes qu’il plait à nos minutes lumières d’amonceler. Bien plus que des dauphins ou les éruptions des volcans de porcelaine si mince cette retouche par le voile qui me voit par exemple de rêver que je ne rêve point et aussi une combinaison des plus strictes et plus inévitables rapprochements.

Evolué en sortant, je me surpris occupé à quelque travail inlassablement logique. Mais suis-je là car j’ai eu un rêve qui ne l’était pas

RENÉ CHERUEL.
CHRONIQUES

Man Ray (1925) Boulevard Edgard-Quinet, à minuit. La
Le Bureau de Recherches surréalistes

Les quelques appels qui ont été lancés pour inviter le public à venir se présenter au Bureau de Recherches ont été entendus. L'indifférence qui demeure le rempart le plus solide des multitudes se trouve enfin brisée. Quelques critiques, ignorants tout de la question et obéissant à des devoirs de groupe, ont tenté de plairemer devant l'audace de cette manifestation ; quelques autres mieux informés, se sont émis ; d'autres y ont vu un danger réel. Certains ont tenté de nous faire à ce sujet un succès de curiosité ; il n'y a qu'une bien pauvre idée de nos intentions qui puisse justifier cet état d'esprit.

Néanmoins le nombre des personnes que nous avons invitées augmenté de jour en jour, et bien que l'intérêt de leurs démarches soit variable, il commence à justifier cet espoir que nous plaçons dans l'avenir que chacun jour doit nous révéler.

Le Bureau des Recherches surréalistes est ouvert depuis le 27 octobre 1924, 12, rue de Grenelle, Paris, tous les jours, sauf le dimanche, de 4 h. 1/2 à 6 h. 1/2. Deux personnes sont chargées chaque jour d'assurer la permanence. Plusieurs communiqués ont été envoyés à la presse à ce sujet, dont celui-ci, que nous reproduisons en partie et qui conserve toute son actualité : « Le Bureau de Recherches surréalistes s'emploie à recueillir par tous les moyens appropriés les communications relatives aux diverses formes qu'est susceptible de prendre l'activité inconsciente de l'esprit. Aucun domaine n'est spécifié à priori pour cette entreprise et le surréalisme se propose de rassembler le plus grand nombre possible de données expérimentales, à une fin qui ne peut encore apparaître. Toutes les personnes qui sont en mesure de contribuer, de quelque manière que ce soit, à la création de véritables archives surréalistes, sont instamment priées de se faire connaître ; qu'elles nous éclairèrent sur la genèse d'une invention, qu'elles nous proposent un système d'investigation psychique inédit, qu'elles nous fournissent des fragments de leurs rêves, qu'elles nous exposent leurs idées les plus instinctives sur la mode aussi bien que sur la politique, etc... ou qu'elles veulent se livrer à une libre critique des œuvres, qu'elles se bénissent enfin à nous faire confiance de leurs rêves les plus curieux et de ce que ces rêves leur suggèrent. »

Le Bureau de Recherches doit être avant tout un organe de liaison. Et c'est bien le sens que prend son activité. Il faut que cette curiosité que nombre de personnes éprouvent à notre égard devienne de l'intérêt réel, que toutes les visites qui nous sont faites au Bureau de Recherches manifestent véritablement qu'elles apportent nouveau. Indépendamment des journalistes dont les visites nous entretiennent en contact avec un public très étendu, nous avons accueilli des personnes très différentes d'intentions, dont plusieurs ignorent à peu près tout de la question du surréalisme. Parmi eux, ceux qui sont venues nous voir par simple sympathie, sans toutefois apporter leur adhésion partielle ; ceux-là étaient infiniment nombreux. Il y avait un plus grand nombre encore d'individus actifs. Enfin nous avons connu quelques êtres dont les résolutions étaient extrêmement semblables aux nôtres ; ils sont déjà à nos côtés, agisant...

AVIS

En vue d'une action plus directe et plus effective, il a été décidé dès le 30 janvier 1925 que le Bureau de Recherches surréalistes serait fermé au public. Le travail n'y pourra, mais différemment, Antonin Artaud assume depuis ce moment la direction de ce Bureau. Un ensemble de projets et de manifestations prévues que les différents comités exécutent actuellement en collaboration avec A. Artaud, seront exposés dans le no 3 de La Révolution Surréaliste. Le Bureau central, placé que toujours même, est désormais un lieu clos, mais dont il faut que le monde sache qu'il existe.
Fig 10  Uncredited film still, La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 2, p 5.
Fig 11  Cover of *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 2.
Fig 12  Breton, A. ‘La Dernière Greve’, *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 2, p 1.
Chroniques

Sévérité générale :

La liquidation de l’opium

J’ai l’intention non dissimulée d’épuiser la question afin qu’on nous fasse une fois pour toutes avec les sollicitants dangers de la drogue.

Mon point de vue est nettement anti-social.

On n’a qu’une raison d’attaquer l’opium. C’est celui du danger que son emploi peut faire courir à l’ensemble de la société.

Ce danger est faible.

Nous sommes nés pourris dans le corps et dans l’âme, nous sommes congénitalement malades ; supprimez l’opium, vous ne supprimerez pas le besoin du crime, les cancers du corps et de l’âme, la propension au désespoir, le crétinisme né, la vérole héréditaire, la fraîcheur des instincts, vous n’empêcherez pas qu’il n’y ait des âmes destinées au poison que qu’il sort, poison de la morphine, poison de la lecture, poison de l’isolement, poison de l’incapacité, poison de l’incapacité, poison de la folie, poison de l’alcool, poison de l’absinthe, poison du tabac, poison de l’anti-socialité.

Il y a des âmes incurables et perdues pour le reste de la société. Supprimez leur un moyen de folie, elles en inventeront dix mille autres. Elles créeront des moyens plus subtils, plus terribles, des moyens abjectement dénigrés. La nature elle-même est anti-social dans l’âme, ce n’est pas par une usurpation de pouvoirs que le corps social organisé réagit contre la petite naturelle de l’humanité.

Laissons se percer les perdus, nous avons mieux à occuper notre temps qu’à tenter une régénération impossible et pour le surplus, inutile, odieuse et nuisible.

Tant que nous ne serons parvenus à supprimer aucune des causes du désespoir humain, nous n’aurons pas le droit d’essayer de supprimer les moyens par lesquels l’homme condamné se débrouille du désespoir.

Car il faudrait d’abord arriver à supprimer cette impulsion naturelle et cachée, cette pointe spécifique de l’homme qui l’incite à trouver un moyen qui lui donne l’idée de chercher un moyen de sortir de ses maux.

De plus, les perdus sont par nature perdus, toutes les idées de régénération morale n’y feront rien, il y a un déterminisme inévitable, il y a une incurabilité indubitable du suicide, du crime, de l’idiotie, de la folie, il y a un cocaïne invisible de l’homme, il y a une incurabilité du caractère, il y a un châtiment de l’esprit.

L’apathie existe, le tabac doré existe, la mégalomanie euphorique, le vice, l’usurpation. L’enfer est déjà de cette monde et il est des hommes qui sont des dévots belliqueux de l’enfer, des êtres destinés à recommencer éternellement leur évolution. Et assez illogique.

L’homme est maudible, l’âme est faible, il est des hommes qui se perdent toujours. Peu
Le Plaisir :

La Zone du Néant

La morte, encore, se défendant. Elle interdisait à l'esprit de se plier à des fins. Le vouait au désertirement absolument comme à la mortalité, elle faisait de lui les projets qui lui comprenaient un avenir à court terme, elle le dévêtait de toutes ses ambitions et s'unit comme une nature explicative et compréhensive, comme elle s'approche. Si bien que ses parties s'éloignent et se séparent de sa vie dense. L'esprit à travers les écrans et les présentations discutées, même dans la plus unique intuition, étais ses clochettes dans la lumière lumineuse. Et cela repugne à sa pureté d'âge comme à l'amour de sa vie intense.

Désormais il ne condescendra plus à donner aux écrans qui traversent sa muraille cette forme ordonnée, claire et souriante à des lumières folles. Ses émotions intellectuelles, il ne les laissera plus à la prêcher en concepts, peu lui chauve l'architecture. Il vivra seulement l'expérier à l'esprit.

Les collines, l'atmosphère des pervedes, le deuil des cryptes, le héroïne et le coup, l'attaque aux feuilles de chaux, les lumières de sang traversent son regard comme un fil de la vierge. En vain le nouveau des divinités trépette ses ongles contre sa porte.

Et comme les aspects figurés de la pensée sont sans doute les seuls où elle se retrouve et mesure sa marche, éveiller l'aurore d'après le puits, l'été par l'hiver, où elle approfondit son pouvoir de possession sur la fuite linéaire des débuts énumérés dont elle sait capable, ce refus lui livre tout son domaine. Il est seul et il ignore une durée qui lui cède le pas. Il n'est plus pour lui de point de repère.

Le voilà tout entier à vivre le cours coulaible et brûlant de l'esprit. Il ne se traduit peut-être plus que par d'interieurs déplacements de masses émocives. Il portera en lui ces élans sourds et boulimiaux, reniant sans fin le madrémont brillant d'une étoile d'or. Voilà l'autre, aveugle et sourd, traversant les places désertes et les plages où l'aigle égorge le moine, celui que le Suréalisme a rendu avant grand vivant que mort.

FRANÇOIS GÉRARD.
Fig 16  Man Ray (1924) *Kiki.*
Fig 17

Portrait of J. D. Rockefeller, La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 6, p 28.
L’AMOUR DES HEURES, LA HAINE DU POIVRE

Un cru, deux crus, trois crus et voici notre maison fête. Devant elle se dresse une épée de sorcier qui, sous l’influence d’un rayon de soleil, tend à devenir un monde nouveau, une planète de feutres étoilés dont le désir de rotation autour d’un couple de héros, se manifeste pas un léger hullement qui est le signal du départ pour les 48 coureurs engagés dans la course de Paris à l’étoile polaire en passant par tous les nouveaux cinémas des capitales européennes. Les voici partis ; mais tandis que dans les cours de nos voyages de temps à autre dans les forêts de sel, les coureurs disparaissent un à un comme des gouttes de rosée, cette fois-ci ils se multiplient à mesure que croît la distance qui les sépare de leur point de départ, mais que, pour cela, diminuer celle qui les sépare de leur but. Et voici que maintenant, leur taille devient de plus en plus éclatée, si bien qu’un ne tente pas à les confondre avec la vitesse, il les vire de sa course d’inscriptions chimiques que je ne comprends pas. Une perte-tentée qui s’agitait faiblement sous la poussée du parfum des roses tapissant un antherne voisin, je vis la vitesse se courir d’inscriptions chimiques que je ne comprends pas. Un chien aboyait si près de moi que mon fauteuil fondait sous moi comme si l’émotion lui avait coupé les jambes et je me trouvais étendu sur le dos — comme un hamerton — au milieu d’une tarte aux abricots qui s’était à un bout du palais de ma part et le vengea de mon inconvénient en me longant au visage un jet de sallée de sucre, en sorte que je fus obligé de tenir, pendant un laps de temps que je pus éviter à cinq heures au moins, le rôle d’un crap de vigne attent de phylloxera. Je n’en fus pas plus satisfait que cela et manifestait hauteur ment mon mécontentement en m’obistant à produire des haricots verts sujets au lieu du raisin que l’attendait de moi.

Au bout de cinq ans donc, une ancre de marine tombant près de moi sur un champignon qui ne survivait pas à cet accident, me rendit ma forme humaine, non sans la modifier sensiblement ; par exemple, je n’avais plus que quatre oreilles à chaque joue ; par contre j’avais trois têtuequies dont un, celui du milieu, qui avait la forme, la couleur et les dimensions d’une framboise. C’est alors que l’idée de la vérole se présenta à mon esprit : un dé à jouer dont le chiffre 1+1 était visible se planta devant mes yeux avec l’intention de s’y maintenir invain et contre toute. Néanmoins, vous devez bien penser que la volonté d’un de je ne compte pas devant celle d’un homme que n’effraye aucun péril, outre pas l’idée d’un beau de chaussure tenant au-dessus de sa tête à la vitrine de 73 mètres à l’heure. En un clin d’œil, je fis de ce dé la papier de macaroni. Mais, je vous le demande, que restera-t-il des papier de macaroni et même du macaroni lorsque les plumes d’hiver et les vents de l’univers seraient décéler vus ? Je ne suis pas même l’un à plafond ! Et alors, que va-t-il-y qu’il advienne des rochers de cérémipe qui marquent l’entrée des forêtres où
« Vive la Mariée ! »  avec un maçon en blouse. Tout le monde regarde. Un grand autocar noir passe sur le boulevard. Il s'arrête devant un urinoir. La boutonnière fleurie, descend la mariée et les garçons d'honneur, les pommettes roses vil. Ils entrent dans l'autocar et font la queue, chacun attendant son tour. Arrive un curé. La mariée cherche autour d'elle du fer à toucher. Le curé s'arrête devant l'urinoir, bouscule ceux qui attendent pour passer avant eux. Le conducteur de l'autocar maintient de son siège, et se met à courir. Il revient une minute après avec un agent. L'agent interpelle, mais avec douceur, le curé qui est aux prises avec deux garçons d'honneur. Le curé fait comprendre qu'on ne peut décamper ainsi dans un urinoir avec une robe. Le curé s'incline, et fait un geste de désespoir, l'agent s'éloigne.

Le curé, avisant soudain un homme qui passe se précipite vers lui et lui parle à voix basse. Après un petit entretien, ils ont l'air d'accord. Le curé broche une pièce de vingt sous à l'homme. Celui-ci la met entre ses dents, puis enlève son veston, sa pantalon, son gilet. Il est en chemise. Le curé alors enlève sa soutane, et revêt les vêtements de l'homme. Celui-ci cherche comment il va bien mettre cette soutane, lorsqu'il l'agent, l'aperçoit de loin. Voyant qu'il est en chemise, le représentant de l'autorité appelle un contrôleur et court avec lui sur l'homme, qui n'a pas encore endossé la soutane du prêtre. L'homme voit les agents, lâche la soutane et s'enfuir en chemise, poursuivi par les deux agents. Voilà donc le curé en civil, mais avec sa soutane sur les bras. La mariée descend de l'autocar pour
aller toucher la plaque en fonte d'un arbre, croyant qu'elle est en fer. Le curé est embarrassé par la situation. Ne pouvant réprimer plus longtemps son envie, ne sachant pas ce qu'il faut, il en affuble brusquement la mariée, puis s'engouffre dans l'urinoir. À ce moment le marié en sort. Il voit un curé, et s'aperçoit avec terreur qu'il a le visage de sa femelle. A ce spectacle il bondit, et court en criant :
« On a changé ma femme en curé. » Justement, sur le trottoir d'en face, voici une boutique d'armurier. Il achète promptement un revolver et revient devant l'urinoir. Le chauffeur de l'auteur trompe pour faire remonter dans sa voiture toute la compagnie. Fou de rage, le marié tire sur la machine-cure qui s'effondre, puis il se relève la cervelle en disant, avec une pose théâtrale : « Pataïta. »
Mais, demandant qu'il achèterait le revolver, l'homme en chemise, ayant réussi à déester les agents, était revenu, juste comme le curé sortait satisfait de l'urinoir. Le curé avait repris sa soudaine à la mariée stupéfaite. L'éclat du était à nouveau vécu, les mènes de la noce s'étant soulagés.
L'homme en chemise et le curé y étaient entrés, avaient renvoyé leurs vêtements respectifs, et étaient sortis de l'urinoir. A ce moment précis reconnaît le marié avec son revolver. Il avait donc tiré sur le curé, le prenant de loin pour la mariée changée en curé. Mais était vraiment le prêtre qu'il avait tenu.
Tout le monde remonte en voiture. L'auteur domine.
La noce repart.
Quelqu'un qui passe crie : « Vive la Mariée ! »
Pierre UNIK.

LE JURY DU PRIX FÉMINA "VIE HEUREUSE"

SANS COMMENTAIRES

Fig 20 Photograph of the jury of the Prix Fémina, La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 6, p 25.
Surréaliste, no. 12, p. 47.

Fig 21 Magritte, photomontage of Palais Garnier, La Révolution

COMMENT J'AI CONDAMNE A MORT UN ENFANT NOIR

... Un nègre de 14 ans avait franchi le toit de la petite maison qui faisait la visive. Le gouverneur d'Haïti, le général R., ne fit l'honneur de me consulter. Vous qui êtes de France, pays de justice, et de civilisation, que pensez-vous en face?

C'est un nègre qui porte un curieux costume, tout-ce-qui comme tel... Le bonheur patriote repose, la ville de France par des malheurs.

... Moi qui suis compagnon du peuple... Moi qui suis compagnon du peuple... Tout ça c'est justice.

Après avoir été promené par la ville, le jeune nègre est fusillé par vingt agents de police, liens, qui visent mal. Sept sauvés ne réussissent pas à la tour... Donnait-il donc le coup de grâce à une voix, la même. La vie était paisiblement chez elle dans le corps de ce jeune nègre, 20 ou 30 balles à bout sur le chemin trahissant bien des phrases, comme un cadeau.

(Détective, no 25, 15 avril 1929.)

Et dans le même numéro (éditorial) : « Que préfèrent le bon peuple notre Louis Belle et Emile Le Coq, qui viennent d'assassiner Mr Barry. »... L'un et l'autre étant âgés de moins de 16 ans ne peuvent être condamnés à mort. Le maximum de la peine est au emprisonnement de 20 ans dans une colonie corrigendaire. Ils seront libres, indépendamment au maximum, l'un à 22 ans, l'autre à 30 ans, et finis sur le
Surréaliste, no. 12, p 47.  

Fig 22  
Valentin, A. (1929) Monument aux Morts, La Révolution  
Surréaliste, no. 12, p 47.
Fig 23 Photograph of overturned car, *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 12, p 56
et que de ce fait, la valeur qu’il avait assumé de lier par des chaînes d’acier à la durée de
la fatigue des prolétaires, représentait peu à peu sa liberté, animant une foule d’objets de-ci,
de-là, au hasard des désirs, des hasards et des escroqueries.
Voici donc mon héritage imbécile qui fait sonner comme il se doit ses pièces de vingt francs
dans sa poche. Comme c’est demain le 25 dè-
cembre, jour où l’on souhaite leur fête aux
gens qui s’appellent Noël (le
seul prénom du calendrier que
jamais un si petit ne portait) il
achetera une étiquette qu’il
aimerait enterrer, entre tous
et qu’il échangerait
contre le
petit poids d’or
qu’il a dans sa
main. Il se
ravise, il pêche le
26 au matin, en
allant à son
bureau. Pour
quelque raison, ce matin du 26,
quantité d’argent sa pièce d’or
au réducteur, ne lui
demandera-t-il
pas, à cet
homme, une
nouvelle vie?
J’ai cru des
esclaves qui
reprendrent leur
argent à chaque
achat qu’ils fai-
saient, sous pré-
texte qu’il était
inutile que cet
argent servit à
d’autres pour le
même usage. Au-
cun tribunal ne
peut les coura-
ger à l’aide d’un
raisonnement lo-
gaque, imbécile
nouveau frère, si tu
imites ces es-
crues, tu aurais du l’ôter tous les jours à ta table.
Je sais ce qui l’empêche de le vivre à des
manières aussi productives. Tu n’as pas
l’argent dans ta poche (les pièces de stabili-
sation étant toujours à la frappe) mais des
billet de banque, c’est-à-dire un morceau de
papier dont tu le doutes un peu que la valeur
n’est pas bien sûre?
On ne te laisse même plus en main,
sauf à de rares instants, la substance qui est
l’incarnation matérielle de la monnaie. Quelque
tout ce qu’il fasse en ce sens s’oppose tous les
days davantage à cette augmentation, c’est
une question de vie ou de mort pour le capi-
taliste que d’augmenter sans cesse la force
productrice du travail social. La production
de l’or et de l’argent constitue une part
importante des affaires de la production
capitaliste, on a été amené à développer les
moyens accessoires, le crédit, qui représente
la valeur en marchandises, y a le rôle de la
monnaie, mais, sous quelque forme qu’il
soit jusqu’à lui (lettres de
change, chèque, billet d’échange) ne constitue
qu’une table de tromperie, car
penses bien
qu’on n’a jamais
vu l’idée
aveugle
de faire du
papier un équi-
valent général.
Puissance'
marquée d’hostilité,
tu reçois des
mains du prêtre,
ami du
haut-cour comme le porc
c’est de truffes
que le noble
animal porte
jambon, m’ex-
cuse de cette
complication
obligeante) un
petit franc de
l’un de
par les
Chambre
de commerce sur
la place,
dont tu n’auras
jamais la vue,
qu’est à la merci
d’un mur de ma-
bois aux Antilles,
ou plus simple-
ment d’une châ-
ture de mouches,
pouvoir mar-
cherien,
toujours
que dans l’hé-
ureux temps de
l’avant-guerre
avait la joie de
contempler, dans ta main sale, un peu de la
sueur humaine que ton idéalisme trans-
formait en argent. Mais mesure-toi, bien que
du vivre à l’époque de la révolution pro-
laborieuse, tu ne perds pas de chances.
C’est avec
le crédit cette fausse monnaie sans laquelle la
société capitaliste est impossible, que tes parcelles
du quartier Saint-Sulpice sont enrichis.

(*) Marx : Capital, Le procès de circulation du capital, 2e Section, Ch. XVII.
Fig 25 Illustrations for ‘Mobiles inconscient du suicide’, *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 12, pp. 43 – 43.
Fig 26  Film still of Mayakovsky in *He who was not born to money* (1918). *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 1.
Fig 27  Luis Buñuel, As-tu froid?, Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution, no. 1.
Fig 28  Luis Buñuel (1930), *Parfois le dimanche*, film still from *L’Age d’Or*, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 1.

Fig 29  Man Ray, *Lee Miller with sabre guard*, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 1.
"... ces jeunes filles étant les dernières à s'être signalées dans un scandale de maison hantée..." (Voir page 3).

Photo MAN-RAY.
Fig 29  Man Ray, *Lee Miller with sabre guard, Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 1.
Fig 30  Photograph of M. Parain reading *Détective, Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 2.
Fig. 31  Documentary photographs of the Soviet International Congress of children in Berlin, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 2.
Fig 32  Portrait of Marie Costes, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 2.
Fig 33  ‘Response to the *Prix Gringoire*, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 3.
Man Ray (1929) *Primacy of Matter over Thought, Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 3.
Fig 35  Montage of the Papin sisters, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, no. 5.
Fig 36  Police identification photographs of the Papin sisters (1933)
Man Ray, Photograph produced for cover of pamphlet produced by the surrealist group in defence of Violette Nozière, 1933.
Fig 38  
Mask (Bali), Minotaure, no. 1.
Variété du corps humain

par MAURICE RAYNAL

Les variations du corps humain, spécialement du
nu féminin, à travers le temps et telles que l'art les a
réalisées, semblent dues à des facteurs assez divers
pour qu'il soit facile de décider si l'art imite ici la
nature ou si la nature copie l'art.

Au fond, l'abondance ou le dénudement et toutes
autres circonstances de lieu, de temps, de climat ou
d'événements ont été les vrais stimulateurs réalistes
des qualités plastiques du corps humain.

Beaucoup plus que les lois de la Divine Proportion,
le bonheur ou la vicissitude sont à l'origine des variat-
ions de la forme humaine. Pour une fois, et à son tour,
l'art est venue après corps dans l'établissement de ces
variations, à la façon des théories esthétiques ou scien-
tifiques formulées après la création des mouvements
artistiques ou celles des inventions scientifiques des
ignorants. En attendant les transformations possibles
du la chirurgie esthétique ou à l'élevage, l'art
semble n'avoir contribué à l'évolution du corps hu-
main que d'une manière seulement quantitativa.

Il faudra donc une fois de plus faire bon marché du
croquemitaine de l'éternelle Beauté. Les plus belles
conceptions du nu artistique féminin n'ont jamais
été le produit pur de la spéculation esthétique. De
tout temps, les canons artistiques, ces plus inhumains
des codes, servirent seulement à l'enseignement ou à
l'Académisme, son couronnement immédiat. Et sans
qu'il soit possible de voir dans le Cubisme certaines
contradictions puisqu'il constituait avant tout le
déchaînement définitif du lyrisme plastique le plus

Fig 39        Brassai (1933) *Nude, Minotaure*, no. 1.
Fig 40 Heinz von Perckhammer (1934) *Extase, Secrets de Paris*, no. 6
et portée au goût de l'abstraction. Ces vertus ont peut-être contribué en quelque sorte à la création du corps mince d'Islas. Mais il est certain que les rigueurs du climat égyptien, immondice et sécheresse alternées, en attendant les fameuses dix plaies d'Égypte, sont pour quelque chose dans la création de ces corps gracieux et de ces visages émaciés.

La Renaissance alternera la vénérée des Vénitiennes bien nourries et casanères avec la grâce grasses, de ces fausses maigres, se rattachant bien plus à l'ethnographie qu'à l'art. Venise triomphante, lumineuse et riche pouvait admettre qu'un nu capitone, luxuriant et doré. À Florence, ville bourgeoise, hypocrite, tourmentée, riche et lard, convenait mieux un nu plus ardent, plus inquiet, plus avaré, aux proportions plus discrètes, plus raffinées certainement.

Fig 4.1 Brassaï (1933) Nudes, Minotaure, no. 1.
Fig 42    Dora Maar (1935) *Assia with ring*, *Secrets de Paris*, no. 9.
Fig 43  Dora Maar (1934) Assia and her shadow, Secrets de Paris, no. 2.
LA NUIT DU TOURNESOL
Par ANDRÉ BRETON

J'envisage, il faut l'avouer, à faire ce sort, je crains du tapis dans l'inconnu sans limites. Toutes sortes d'ombres s'approchent autour de moi. D'abord, pour me rendre, pour m'apparenter de hauts murs que j'aurais pris à frapper d'inconnu. On voudrait bien croire que ces murs ne seules rien qui puisse tenir au dévouement d'un épisode singulièrement éminents de ma vie : à maintes reprises (1) on a été amené à enlever par rapport à diverses circonstances intimes de cette vie, une série de faits qui me semblait de nature à rebuter l'attention psychologique, eu moins de leur caractère inviolable. Seule, en effet, la référence précise, absolument consciente, à l'état émotionnel du sujet au moment où se produisent de tels faits, peut fournir une base solide d'appréciation. C'est sur le modèle de l'observation médicale que la sur-évaluation a toujours proposé que la relation se soit entrée. Pas un incident qui peut être écarté, pas même un soin ne peut être mis en cause sans que rentre aussitôt l'arbitraire. La mise en évidence de l'inconsistance immédiate, confondante, de certains événements nécessite la stricté authenticité du document humain qui les caractérise. L'œuvre dans laquelle tu t'inscris une interrogation si poignante est trop belle pour qu'il soit permis de rien y ajouter, de rien en soutirer. Le seul moyen de lui rendre justice est de penser, de donner à penser qu'elle est vraiment écrite.

Mais la distinction de planifiable et du non-planifiable s'impose à moi comme aux autres humains. Je n'échappe pas plus qu'eux au besoin de tout du dévoilement de la vie extérieure pour indépendant de ce qui constitue spontanément une individualité propre et qui s'apovient à chaque minute de refléter selon ses facultés particulières le spectacle qui se joue en dehors de moi, il me sert pour citer étrangement difficile d'attrister que ce spectacle s'organise semblable comme pour moi seul, se tend plus en apparence qu'à se conformer à la représentation antérieure que j'ai eu. Cette difficulté s'accolent du fait que la représentation en question s'est manifesté à moi comme toute fantastique et qu'étant donné le caractère manifestement capricieux de son développement, il n'y avait aucune probabilité à ce qu'elle pouvait aboutir à corrélation sur le plan réel : à plus forte raison de corrélation continue, impliquait entre les événements que l'esprit s'était pas à agir et les événements réels un incendie parallèle. Pour si rare et peut-être si étrange qu'elle puisse passer, une telle conjonction est assez troublante pour qu'il ne puisse être question de passer outre. Rien ne servirait, en effet, de se cacher qu'une fois établie elle est sans possiblités de faire seule le tort en état, jusqu'à nouveau ordre, toute la pensée rationaliste. De plus, pour pouvoir être angélique, il faudrait qu'elle n'était pas à l'extrême l'esprit qui est amené à en prendre consistance. Il est impossible, en effet, que celui-là n'ait pas une certaine félicité et d'improvisation extraordinaires, un retournement de terrier et de joue papillons. C'est comme si tant et tant la nuit prolongée de l'existence humaine était perçue, comme si la nécessité naturelle consentant à se faire qu'en avec la nécessité logique, toutes choses étaient livrées à la transparence totale, réalisées par une chaîne de verre dont se n'apportait pas au maître. Si c'est une simple illusion, je suis pour l'abandonner mais qu'un peu d'abord que c'est une illusion. Au contraire, si, comme je le crois, c'est l'humilié d'un contact, tout en tout élémentaire, de l'homme avec le monde des choses, je suis pour qu'on cherche à déterminer ce qu'il peut y avoir de plus caractéristique dans un tel phénomène et aussi pour qu'on tente de comprendre le plus grand nombre possible de communications de l'ordre de celui qui va suivre. C'est seulement lorsque ces communications auront été réunies et confrontées qu'il pourra s'agir de dégager la loi de production de ces échanges mystérieux entre le matériel et le mental. Je ne me propose encore rien tant que d'atténuer l'attention sur eux. Ils n'apparaissent pour moi exceptionnels qu'en est aujourd'hui d'humeur à le croire, en raison de la manière en laquelle est tout le caractère nettement révélé qui les distingue au premier chef.

Il faut que je vous explique un peu en détail.

**Jack.** - Vous reprochez à mon couteau d'être trop expéditif, et moi, c'est à votre brasier que j'oppose ce grief. Il n'était empêché de vérifier si ma partenaire n'était pas enceinte, et par honneur il se trouvait qu'elle l'était.

**Le Comte.** - Pour moi, je ne recevais mes victimes que toujours exactement vierges. Mais prétendez-vous donc qu'il soit dû à brûler une matrice et, qui plus est, une matrice pleine?

**Le Professeur.** - Les organes abdominaux qui opposent à la combustion la plus longue résistance sont la vessie pleine d'urine et l'intestin. Cette résistance de l'utérus à la combustion nous permet de reconnaître le sexe du cadavre, qu'il serait impossible de déterminer, si la matrice n'existant plus.

**Le Comte.** - Vous pouvez m'en croire, car je confesse avoir prodigieusement usé du feu dans les divers supplices qui s'appliquaient chez moi. Un de mes bourreaux, par exemple, n'avait pas son pareil pour maintenir sa patiente sous une cloche de fer rouge qui lui servait de bonnet sans appuver, de manière que sa cervelle fondait lentement, et que sa tête grillait en détail.

**Le Professeur.** - La tête est tapissée; chez l'adulte elle se réduit, d'après Tardeau, à la dimension de la tête d'un enfant de douze ans. On peut considérer, dans les modifications que subit la tête, deux périodes. Dans la première, les parties molles se racornissent, elles se dessèchent; la bouche s'ouvre; nous avons pu constater ce fait sur la plupart des cadavres. La rétraction des parties molles suffit à elle seule pour diminuer le volume de la tête.

**Le Marquis.** - Vous devez ici opter du bonnet, mon cher comte.

**Le Professeur.** - Dans une deuxième période, grâce à la dessiccation à laquelle les os du crâne sont soumis, ils deviennent friables; alors le crâne éclate, au niveau des parois, soit qu'il y ait eu, ce qui peut arriver dans un incendie, un choc par suite de la chute d'un corps étranger, ou qu'il se soit fait, à l'intérieur de la boîte crânienne, un dépagement de vapeur qui en disjoignit et fait éclater les parois.

**Le Comte.** - Parle, la chose est d'évidence! La cervelle se met à bouillir, et c'est l'histoire de la marmite de M. Papin, dont il faut que le couvercle se soulève pour laisser échapper la boue. Voilà pourquoi le bonnet rouge de mon bonnetier n'entraînait une lâcheté le crâne du sujet. Il fallait voir cela éclater, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah!

**Le Marquis.** - Il est donc prouvé que le feu agit tout aussi bien que le fer sur le corps humain et le découpé, pour ainsi dire, avec une égale autorité.

**Le Comte.** - Ce qui m'engage à le préférer au couteau du révérend Jack, c'est qu'il fait mieux encore et qu'un cadavre traité en conséquence par le feu...

**Le Professeur.** - Je vais, messeigneurs, vous faire passer l'image d'un cadavre sur lequel on voit le siège des amputations; la calotte crânienne a éclaté, le thorax et l'abdomen sont ouverts, les côtes sont nettement sectionnées, les os des membres émergent des vaisseaux carminés.

**Jack.** - Voyons donc cela. (Après avoir attentivement considéré la planche III) Je n'ai rien fait de mieux dans toute ma carrière.

**Le Comte.** - Mais il me semble que, d'entrée de jeu, il n'est pas nécessaire de nousérer choses si loin: on a toujours le temps d'y venir et il est bien permis, je pense, de mourir quelques balles sur le visage de la perfection. Par exemple, j'aimais exccen-

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Fig 46 Illustration for Heine, M. ‘Regards sur l’enfer anthropoclasique’, *Minotaure*, no. 8.
Fig 47 Illustrations for Heine, ‘Regards sur l’enfer anthropoclasique’.
Le Comte. — Les médecins de ce temps n’ont pas, que je sache, renoncé au jargon des anciens docteurs. Mais pour en revenir au fait, vous me ferez crédit, j’espère, si je vous certifie que cette chair humaine, culle à point, est furieusement bon et fait bien souvent mes délices.

Le Professeur. — Veuillez, messieurs, jeter un regard sur ce corps de femme en attitude de combat. La poitrine et le ventre sont ouverts; les organes sont Bernel au dehors, les yeux et la bouche sont ouverts; les gants sont croqués, une partie des vêtements sur lesquels on distingue encore des fragments de passementerie sont tombés à côté d’elle.

Le Marquis (très doucement par l’examen de la planche V). — La plaisante façon de déshabiller une femme !

Le Comte. — Comment se rattrap, messieurs, que les éléments de la nature agissent moins sûrement que la main de l’homme ?

Le Professeur. — Les poumons sont durs, rétractés et présentent l’aspect du mou de veau noir. Le cœur, en rigidité, est saillant, sorti de son péritoine, rempli de sang coagulé en masse compacte, et fait sou

vent Bernel au dehors. Voilà, d’ailleurs, l’un de ces courts culs...

L’ombre de Maria de Los Dolores Domínguez. (C’est une jeune fille de dix-huit ans, pieds nus, nœuds en berzinge des monticules de Sévigné, qui se dresse, le yeux agrandi, et pousse des cri lamentables.) — Tien voila le cœur de celui qui m’a empêchée d’être la plus heureuse des femmes; de celui qui m’a privée de l’homme qu’adorais. C’est le cœur de mon père que je viens d’assassiner goûtez-en si tu veux, Jus Diant !... C’est le cœur de mon père !... C’est le cœur de mon père !... (Au comble de la fureur, elle met ses vêtements tout en lambeaux et se déclare l’être avec ses angles.) Oui, c’est le cœur de mon père que j’ai fait rôti pour le manger; si je puis, je mangerais aussi l’être ! (Elle bondit au centre de l’amphithéâtre, arrache au milieu du professeur l’ombre de cœur et s’effondre en la partant à sa bouche.)

Le Marquis (se précipitant sur les traces de Dolores). — Couvrons vite, mes amis, il faut la rejoindre... Quelle femme est-elle là ! Ma Juliette n’en pas fait autant...

Un grand froidement agite les ombres, puis tout se désagrège ou s’efface.

MAURICE HEINE.


Fig 48 Illustrations for Heine, ‘Regards sur l’enfer anthropoclasique’. 
Fig 49  Man Ray (1935) Plate from *Facile*. 
UNE brune chasseresse d’images, que les longues étapes ne fatigueront pas. Une franchise de garçon, avec la maîtrise d’une femme. Dora Markovitch. Je regrette qu’elle ait tronqué son nom. Précédé de celui de son métier, le Kéfer. Ce nom est devenu une onomatopée guerrière : Kéfer-Dora-Maar. Pour moi, je me souviendrai surtout de la jeune fille au teint chargé de colliers lourds, qui m’apparait, il y a déjà longtemps, ces images un peu vieilles, ces arbres semblaient griffer les murs. Elle était alors élève de Soucras qui avait découvert son talent, avec cette humilité que l’on ne peut saisir. Elle s’est, depuis, épanouie. Mais elle n’a cessé d’appliquer la méthode de son maître.

Dans un charmant jardin de Neuilly qu’elle a aménagé la villa de ses parents, M. Kéfer a fait construire un studio, une belle architecture et qui est, sans aucun doute, le plus vaste et le mieux aménagé de Paris. Il est l’objet de la ville entière et que nulle autre que Dora Markovitch ne pourrait utiliser ces lumières, ces écrans et ces fumées mêlées de feu qui ont, chez elle, un effet qui provoque les rires, l’hier et les jours le moins, pourquoi pas aux mille... Pour savoir quelle passion Dora Markovitch porte à son art, il faut l’observer, vêtue d’une longue blouse blanche, cercner autour du modèle, chercher comment les gestes les plus naturels favorisent les effets plastiques, jouer avec des lumières, obliquer les ombres à ne pas grincer. Le studio prenait à certains moments l’aspect d’une salle de danse. Un complot contre le modèle était scientifiquement conduit. Dora Markovitch refusait les effets trop facilement imités, l’âme équivoque, les déformations arbitraires, tandis que son associé déplaçait les projecteurs, inclinait les plans, y eut un moment de saturation, pourra-t-on dire, où le modèle lui apparaît conforme à la vie et à l’idée qu’elle ait...
Fig. 51  Man Ray (1929) *Spring, 1929.*
Fig 52 Man

Ray (1929) Summer, 1929.
Fig 53  Man Ray (1929) *Autumn, 1929.*
Fig 54  Man Ray (1929) Winter, 1929.
Fig 55  Cover of Voila, no. 7, May 9, 1931
Fig 56  Cover of *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 57  Collage 6, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 59 Collage 1, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Comment
triompher en peu de jours
d’un illuminé
BATTU PAR UNE MER DÉCHAÎNÉE

TOI QUE J’ADORE
Il faut eviter le danger
On continue de fouiller
Vêtements et fourrures

Chasseresses d’autrefois
à la maison hantée

Fig 60 Collage 10, La Septième face du Dé (1936)
UNE FIGURE MAQUILLÉE EST RÉPULSIVE

parce que l’emploi excessif des fards implique la nécessité de cacher quelque imperfection de la peau.

PARTOUT où il y a une réunion de femmes élégantes, il est visible que le maquillage est démodé. Le rouge peut être encore employé, mais son usage ne doit jamais être apparent. La poudre peut protéger l’épiderme, mais elle ne doit pas se voir. Une jolie peau est celle qui est naturellement belle, si claire, si fine et si douce qu’il n’y a aucune nécessité de cacher sa texture naturelle sous une couche de fards.

Si vous conservez simplement votre peau en bonne santé, elle sera jolie. Vous devez la nettoyer à fond afin que les pores restent ouverts et actifs. Vous devez la tonifier pour stimuler la circulation qui l’éclaircit et la revitifie. Et vous devez alimenter les tissus pour la consolider douce, ferme et non ridée. Miss Arden a créé la Venetian Cleansing Cream, L’Ardena Skin Tonic et l’Orange Skin Food pour subvenir à ces besoins importants de l’épiderme. Si vous employez ces préparations chez vous, matin et soir, selon la méthode d’Elizabeth Arden, vous n’aurez aucun besoin de recourir à des artifices pour que votre peau paraisse fraîche et jeune.

Demandez un spécimen de la brochure d’Elizabeth Arden intitulée: “A LA RECHERCHE DE LA BEAUTÉ”, décrivant le traitement rationnel de la peau selon sa méthode scientifique.


Elizabeth Arden conseille les préparations suivantes pour conserver votre santé et votre beauté:

Venetian Cleansing Cream. — Nettoie, blanchit les taches noires et le gras qui s’accumulent dans les pores. Elle blanchit et corrige la peau, elle la rend levre plus ferme.

Venetian Ardena Skin Tonic. — Revigorant, rafraîchissant et clarifiant la peau. Il favorise et stimule la circulation sanguine.

Venetian Orange Skin Food. — Une crème nutritive, rafraîchissante, rassurante et aromatisante, qui tonifie et conserve la peau fraîche et blanche.


Venetian Special Astrigent. — Un tonique alimentant les tissus, renforçant le teint et remettant l’équilibre dans les pores qui sont dégarnis.

Poudre d’Elosion. — Une poudre de maquillage solide, pur, pore à absorbe, blanchit (sans de fards), blanche, froide, légère, pâle, diaphane, et transparente.

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ANVERS : l’Hopital Belge

(Frais de réimpression)
La Science rénove la Beauté

Le traitement électro-tonique de Helena Rubinstein.

La beauté, montrée ainsi que toute chose vivante à l'évolution naturelle, subit, en outre, des altérations artificielles : manque de soleil, sous-manger approprié, dérèglement glandulaire, etc. dont les effets désastreux s'aggravent chez la femme à mesure qu'elle avance en âge.

Sous l'effet d'un traitement de la chirurgie esthétique, la femme doit, sous peine de déserter, employer des traitements plus énergiques, plus prononcés, au premier rang desquels se place le nouveau traitement électro-tonique de Helena Rubinstein.

A quel moment doit-on recourir à ce traitement ? Nous dirons que ce moment est venu lorsque l'effet de la fatigue et de son obscurité. La peau n'a plus ses couleurs naturelles, et délie les rides qui apparaissent. Les lèvres, les yeux, la peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, sont des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. La peau des joues, la peau des lèvres, est des rides qui apparaissent. 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Sous l'anonymat de Boum-Films, il commence par couvrir de publicité les journaux de cinéma, dans lesquels des lettres hurlées de dix centimètres annoncent :  

**Boum-Films**, 178, av. des Champs-Élysées  
**commence bientôt**  

**UNE BELLE PINTADE**  
adiv la célèbre pièce de TRISTAN BERNARD

— Cela consolidera toujours mon « standing », se dit M. Larméy, et puis, quelqu'un à court d'idées, voyant bien aujourd'hui, va peut-être m'offrir de me réserver les titres de **Une belle Pintade**... Comme je ne les ai pas encore payés, ce sera tout bénéfice ! Mais personne ne vient...  

Aucun de ces spectateurs, M. Larméy décide de ne plus perdre de temps et il se met à convoyer, à son bureau, des vedettes en renom (trois ou quatre pour chaque rôle, d'ailleurs).  

À la fin de la première journée de cet exercice, il pouvait dresser une liste d'artistes qui - dans le futur - recevaient les interprètes de **Une belle Pintade** :  
*Mary Glory*  
*Violette Hamon*  
*Renée Lefavre*  
*Sara Vertova*  
*Fernand*  

que suivraient une demi-douzaine d'artistes de moindre importance.  

Pendant ce temps, ses « rabatteurs » avaient travaillé.  

Et ils avaient découvert un homme du monde d'une quarantaine d'années, dédaigneux, grand amateur de petites femmes et qui disposait de deux cent mille francs.  

Il l'amenèrent à Larméy.  

— Cher monsieur, a-t-il offert, un excellent ami Durandard m'a dit que vous vous intéressieriez au cinéma. C'est très bien...  

Mais, en ce qui me concerne, j'ai de grandes productions en tête et je ne travaille qu'avec mes propres capitaux.  

— Ce n'est pas une exception en ce genre. Pour la première fois qu'il veut s'intéresser au cinéma, je ne puis pas l'aimer à s'imposer.  

M. Larméy se convainc dans son fauteuil (à crédit) :  

— Évidemment... Mais comme je vous l'ai dit, la très grosse partie de mes capitaux est immobilisée dans mes productions actuelles...  

Ah ! mais pensez ! J'ai une idée. J'ai acheté, il y a quelques temps, les droits de **La belle Pintade** ! Au début Tristan Bernard... De l'or en barre quoi ! J'ai une distribution formidable, Veyre... J'avais mes rentes pour tourner ça... Le devis est d'un million...
Fig 64  Collage 15, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Collage 15, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 66  Collage 15, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 67  Collage 15, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
(De gauche à droite)

PERDUS ET TROUVE

DANS DES CIRCONSTANCES ÉTRANGES

PEINTS

AVEC CETTE LETTRE ÉTRANGE

SUR LE

NOIR

DU RÉEL

QUEL QUE SOIT LE TEMPS

INUTILE!

Fig 68  Collage 15, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 69  
Collage 15, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 70  Collage 15, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 71  Collage 2, *La Septième face du Dé* (1936)
Fig 72  ‘Paterfamilias’, ill. No. 11, *Mr Knife Miss Fork* (1931)
Fig 73 ‘Death is something like cousin Cynthia’, ill. No. 4, *Mr Knife Miss Fork* (1931)
Fig 74  ‘... flowers as sweet as your hair’, ill. No. 9, *Mr Knife Miss Fork* (1931)
Fig 75

Ernst, M. ‘... it is two little birds she has closed up in her dress’. Ill. No. 8, *Mr Knife Miss Fork* (1931)
Fig 76  Ernst, M. Cover photograph for *Mr Knife Miss Fork* (1931)
Fig 77  ‘... Cynthia, her pearls, her feathers, her miracles ...’, ill. No. 19,  
_Mr Knife Miss Fork_ (1931)
Fig 78 Illustration for Bataille, G. ‘Figure humaine’, *Documents*, no. 4, 1929.
Fig 79  Parry, R. Plate 12, *Banalité* (1930)
Fig 80
Moholy-Nagy, L. *Untitled* (1923)
Fig 81  
El Lissitzky, *Mannequin* (c. 1925)
Fig 82  Parry, R. Plate 4, *Banalité* (1930)
Fig 83 Parry, R. Plate 4, *Banalité* (1930)
Parry, R. Plate 4, *Banalité* (1930)
Parry, R. Plate 4, *Banalité* (1930)
Fig 86  Parry, R. Advertising work for Nouveltex (c. 1930)
Parry, R. Plate 6, *Banalité* (1930)
Fig 88  Parry, R. Plate 6, Banalité (1930)
Fig 89 Parry, R. Plate 11, *Banalité* (1930).
Fig 90    Parry, R. Plate 14, *Banalité* (1930)
Fig 91  Parry, R. Plate 14, *Banalité* (1930)
Fig 92  Frontispiece for ‘Rupture inaugurale’, 1947.
Fig 93  Cover of BIEF, no. 8.
Fig 94  Cover of BIEF, no. 8.
Cette femme, qui porte plusieurs centaines de kilos de bijoux, a été présentée devant les dignitaires de l’U.R.S.S., lors de leur récent voyage en Inde.

« Laissons les sermons aux juges, et faisons de la chair un tribunal. »

(Mikhaïl de Chazal, Jean Guesné 11, 1941.)
Les indigènes (des îles Marquises), qui étaient jadis les plus beaux et les plus virils de la Polynésie tropicale, et qui pouvaient compter quelques 75,000 âmes, ne sont plus qu'une poignée d’hommes, presque les seuls ou ne transmirent sans doute pas plus d’un millier de pairs. Ils languissent dans leur décadence physique et morale, tout en gardant leur force : ils mutilent les institutions étrangères, qu’elles soient administratives, commerciales, ou religieuses, mais ils sont honnêtes et fidèles en amitié pour peu qu’on leur témoigne une certaine sincérité.

Fig 97  Cover of *BIEF*, no. 8.
Fig 98  Cover of *BIEF*, no. 8.
Fig 99  Cover of *BIEF*, no. 8.
cruauté, incapable de fuir un supplice qu'elle approuvait, oiseau humain dans sa
fouffure humide, proie d'un chasseur qu'elle avait choisi.
Le perroquet rota. C'était un perroquet belge.
Le soir, tandis que la mer, énervée par la froide incandescence lunaire, se frottait
contre les galets sur la plage, Marie ouvrit grande la fenêtre, car un désespoir l'habitait.
Le monde secret de la haine, l'amour des femmes jalouses, la lumière minérale de la
cérébralité : tout cela faisait partie de son être, et le désir d'une autre façon de vivre

Rhodésie. Document communiqué
par le professeur Jacques Michot.

était devenu intolérable. Les journées sortaient en ligne droite du marécage et l'assas-
sin se déplaçait dans le fumier de son existence avec la lourde et foudroyante rapidité
d'un racoof. « Il faut en finir », se disait-elle, mais l'assassin ne la rulait gubre et Jérémie,
le vieux, la surveillait jour et nuit.
— Pour t'empêcher de faire une bêtise, disait-il.
Le perroquet jouait au taille-crayon avec Jérémie pendant les longs silences. Ils
s'offraient des colts interminables devant le miroir, prenant plaisir à sa répandre
ensuite généreusement dans un pot fêlé. Seul l'assassin dormait, fatigué de sa journée
à l’abattoir, il dormait, taillé dans le granit de sa supériorité sociale. Il était le roi, l'arist-
ocrate de la force, et ses sujets sans ressources s'abandonnaient au silence pendant son
sommeil.

Fig 100    Illustration for Mansour, J. ‘Le Perroquet’, *Le Surréalisme Même*,
           no. 1.
Fig 102  Portrait of Picasso and friends, *Le Surréalisme Même*, no. 2.
Fig 103 Advertisement for Bendix washing machines, 1950’s.
Fig 104  Frigidaire advertisement, 1950’s.
Fig 105  Frigéco promotional photograph, republished in Medium, no. 4.
Giroud, F. ‘Je n’ai le temps de rien faire’, *Elle*, 9 April 1946.
Fig 107 Duchamp, Cover for Le Surréalisme Même, no. 1.
Heisler, J. Frontispiece for Sade’s *La Philosophie dand le*
boudoir,
*Le Surréalisme Même*, no. 1.

Mais peut-être saura-t-elle, vingt ans après, simplement les deux rôles ?
(Alors, les catégories masculines se vendraient plus cher, et les hommes courtiser pour.)
L'ambiguïté de la femme-femme se communique à l'amour dont elle est l'objet ou la complice.

NORA MITRANI.

des chat et des magnolias

Les fumées au fond du verre et de la table l'ondulent, et le parfum des deux s'entrelace. Le soir est mouvant, il y a du poivre et du sel et le poisson de la mer en est délicieux. Je vous raconte l'histoire de saint Étienne, dans laquelle les héroïnes sont les princesses et les rois sont des hommes. La princesse est la reine et le roi est le pape. Les princesses sont les princesses et les rois sont les rois. Les princesses sont toutes aussi belles que vous le croyez, et les rois sont aussi puissants que vous le croyez. Le poisson de la mer est délicieux, mais il y a aussi des fruits, des légumes, du pain et du vin. La princesse aime les rois et les rois aiment la princesse. Ils se marient et vivent heureux à jamais.

 texte
Fig 110  Portrait of Munroe, illustration for Mitrani, N. ‘Des chats et des magnolias’
Le Surréaliste

Fig 111 Photographs of women contributors, contents page of *Le Surréalisme Même*, no. 2.
Fig 112  Cover of L'Age du Cinema, no. 4/5, August-November 1951.
LA SALLE D'ABEILLES
(Discours communiqué par Marc Dippelóz.)
Fig 113  Oppenheim, M. and Laforet, illustrations for Mitrani, ‘Diptyque de l’amour et du sang-froid’, *Medium*, no. 3.

Fig 114  Cover of *L’Age du Cinema*, no. 4/5, August–November 1951.
Fig 114    Molinier, P. Cover for *Le Surréalisme Même*, no. 2.
Fig 115  Molinier, P. Photographic collage documentation, n.d.
Fig 116  
Fig 117  Bellmer, H. *Tenir au frais*, (1958) Cover for *Le Surréalisme Même*, no. 4.
Fig 118  Bellmer, H. *Unica*, 1958.
Fig 119  Maria Wimmer as Penthesilea, *Le Surréalisme Même*, no. 4.
Fig 120  Photograph of Lilly Christine, burlesque star, 1950’s
Photography of 'Melody Bubbles', 'Un enquete sur le strip tease', Le Surréalisme Même, no. 5.
Molinier, P. Illustrations for Un enquête sur le strip tease. Le Surréalisme Même, nos. 4 and 5.
Fig 123  
Bardot on the cover of *Elle*, 27 July 1953.
Fig 124        Principe de l’occultation, *Medium*, no. 4.
Fig 125  Advertisements for Hartog shirts, published in *La Brèche*, June 1964.
Fig 126 Film stills from *Les Abysses* (1963), *La Brèche*, no. 5.
Fig 127    Joans, T. (1963) *X: Extrait d’Alphabet Surreal*, *La Brèche*, no. 5.
Oppenheim, M. *Banquet* and film still from Léon, J. *Aimez-vous les femmes?*, *La Brèche*, no. 6.
Fig 129  Heisler, J. *Objet* (1943), *La Brèche*, no. 8.
Fig 130 Štyrský, J. L’annonciation (1941), Cardinal américain (1941), Le petit Jésus (1941), La Brèche, no. 4.
Fig 131  Parent, M. André Breton: Duc... la Montagne Noire, La Brèche, no. 1.
Pour avoir parfois rencontré André Malraux, je sais qu'il se méfie plus encore de l'imagination errante que des machines.
Fig 133  Huette and Jean Schuster, collage dedicated to Marianne and Radovan Ivsic, *La Brèche*, no. 8
Fig 134  Illustrations for Selz, G. ‘Les Doigts de la Mémoire’, *La Brèche*, no. 2.
Fig 135  Cover of *La Brèche*, no. 7.
Fig 136 Illustrations for Thévenin, P, ‘Raimondo de Sangro, Prince de San
Severo, Savant Impénitent’, *La Brèche*, no. 7.