The work of Sandra Rowe cannot be understood within the specific concerns of social/political discourse alone. Indeed, her subject matter suggests a deeper, more complex polemic. Rowe is interested in the postmodern controversy surrounding the nature of the subject, i.e., she is not only questioning the centralization and linear notion of subject as constructed by modernist discourse, but in fact positing an abstract notion of the subject, a theory of "lack" or "absence" that stands as the privileged object of her investigation. The issues raised by her work are not important because of their social commentary alone, but also because they constitute (as controversies) a polemical structure. The subject is not simply a character but instead a dialectical framework through which the subject is realized.

Contrary to some critical commentary assigning Rowe's work to feminist and/or ethnic concerns (1), Rowe attempts to transcend feminist and race specific discourse. In this way she seeks to unite opposites and contradictions. Here we find a specific contradiction in that this gesture can be interpreted equally as feminist and anti-feminist. This contradiction gives rise to the possibility that the object of Rowe's narrative is not only the affirmation of specific social positions and concerns, but contradiction itself, which, could, on a connotative level, stand as a commentary on issues of race-difference and sexuality. The difference, however, is that the meaning of the commentary is determined through interpretation (2) and not ruled by the artist herself (3). This means that since the representations are ambiguous in their signifying functions, there is no denotive reading of the text that could stand as its single focus. Margaret Lazzari missed the boat when she commented:

Rowe seeks to avoid a reactionary stance by presenting the genders not as opposites, but as synthesized to some extent in all individuals. She is not trying to create oppositional art, because such works still operate within existing cultural framework... A non-oppositional, non-reactionary course, however, is difficult to find and follow. Despite her intentions, Rowe has not yet discovered the visual and verbal vocabulary that will express her ideas fully, perhaps because both artist and her audience live in a gender-stereotyped culture (4).

Lazzari is stating that the notion of a synthesized representation, such as the one that signifies androgyny, is perhaps, at the very least difficult.

because representations of gender differences are so thoroughly structured in our culture. The androgynous figure is actually a deception. "As with all apparently equal binary oppositions one term is actually privileged over the other" (5). Thus the androgynous figure ultimately becomes male or female depending upon the context of the representation.

I agree that the androgynous figure is contradictory, but rather than judging Rowe's project as that of a commentary on stereotyped representations of male and female, (one that Lazzari feels is aborted by the artist's inability to construct true genderless representations), it is androgyny itself as a contradictory representation that perfere becomes the object and subject in her work. Thus I refer to androgyny as the "Janusian split." Janus, the god of doorways and gates, is a metaphor for the contradictory, the "double-voiced." It stands looking in two opposite directions signifying a dichotomy (including the masculine/feminine opposition), but one where there is movement "through the gate" from one position to the other, a commentary of process.

The Janusian split situates androgyny as a signifier that is multi-voiced. Androgyny, since it is implicitly contradictory and since it is also a comment on sexuality, is the representation that Jacques Lacan refers to in order to define his notion of the pre-Oedipal drive that helps the child construct a concept of self as other (6). Rowe's androgynous figure raises conflicting issues on sexuality. The rupture that underlies the conflict addresses the question, who or what is the subject in her work? We find ourselves involved in the disturbing elusiveness of the subject because we wish the narrative to "settle down." Jacques Lacan addresses androgyny in this story often cited in his seminars.

...In the beginning we were nothing like we are now. For one thing, the race was divided into three...besides the two sexes, male and female, which we have at present, there was a third which partook of the nature of both...and such (was) their arrogance, that they actually tried...to scale the heights of heaven and set upon the gods. (Zeus decided to) cut them all in half... Now, when the work of bisection was complete it left each half with a desperate yearning for the other, and they ran together and flung their arms around each other's neck, and asked...to be rolled into one. Zeus felt so sorry for them that (he) moved their private parts round to the front...and made them propagate among themselves...So you see...how far back we can trace our innate love for one another, and how this love is always trying to reintegrate our former nature, ...and bridge the gulf between the human being and other (7).

Instead of a positive theory of (s)he, the story builds a notion of pure absence. (s)he is seen as a lack and thus a process, not a thing. Androgyny is the attempt in part to synthesize the masculine and feminine into one being. Also, it is inextricably tied to sexuality, it is connected to birth, death and rebirth. Androgyny represents the desire for wholeness. It is the process of a realization of wholeness fueled by "lack."
We find the representation of the androgynous form in Jonathan Borofsky's work, particularly *My Male Self and My Female Self*, 1977-79, and *Dancing Clown* at 2,845,325, 1982-83. We also find it in many of the "Dream" works such as, *I Dreamed I Climbed A White Mountain...* at 2,206,311, 1975. The male figure is represented as featureless (asexual) except for the autobiographical reference. However this makes it a parody of the male designation. (See pp 15-16). Returning to *My Male Self and My Female Self*, Borofsky said in describing the work:

There is a skull balanced on a rope that two figures are pulling that implies some sort of birth, death, rebirth... There are also the shoulders and neck of a new figure at the top, a blending of my male self and my female self into a new form... I want to... make a statement about us all (8).

The part male, part female image is used by Borofsky as an expressionist gesture (9). This concerns the expressionist interest in myth and autochthony. We can conflate Rowe's androgyne image and her painterliness in order to discover the conditions of expressionism. The androgynous image is rooted in mythology. This then encourages the expressionist underpinning. In South America (the Amazon) we find both the Anaconda (10) and the Cayman (both reptiles, the Cayman is an alligator; the Anaconda, a snake), each a mythic representation of the masculine and the feminine principles. Concerning the cultural mythology of the Amazon, specifically the Jaguar and the Dragon as reptilian representations of androgyny,(12) Peter Roe points out that the positive principle is considered masculine, while the negative principle is considered feminine:

The two key figures of the model, (the cosmological model of androgyny)...the Jaguar-Dragon opposition, a positive and negative manifestation of the Jaguar is created and opposed to positive and negative aspects of the Dragon... This produces a continual process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (creating a) dynamic scheme of endless ramifying transitive relations (13).

Peter Roe mentions that the life-death theme is connected with sexuality. This same theme shows up in Borofsky's work and in the work of Rowe (See Sticks And Stones). We find the use of the androgyne image and the (s) he designation in Rowe's work, (S) he Thought The Sky Was Falling, as well as other works such as, *Same Day Relative to the Same Day,* (S) he Remembering (S) he, *"(S) he With With (S) he, (S) he With Green Square, and (S) he With White (S) he.* In each case the subject (s) he is realized as having the characteristics of both genders. In the last case, the subject is both black and white. *(S) he Thought The Sky Was Falling* was originally an outdoor work that has been rebuilt as an interior installation. It consists of two constructed walls and a constructed ceiling that stands for the sky. A wooden cut-out figure that looks neither male nor female hovers above the two walls. On the floor is a mirror that reflects the image of this androgynous figure. The shadow of this figure is also reflected onto the walls.

The scission implicit in the idea of androgyny seems to find its representation in the existence of the androgyne cut-out (itself a gesture of displacement). The cut-out is featureless, there are no gender-specific or race-specific icons. The image's reflection in the mirror and its shadow construct a redundancy that reinforces the ambiguity of the cut-out. Everyone person is a schematic representation of a concept. The idea of person is transformed into the idea of everyperson (gender neutral), which is actually an impossibility because, as Lacan says, sexuality defines our notion of self (subject) (14). Thus we have through the shadow and the mirror reflection a splitting of an image that represents the gender split. (In the first case, the cut-out is a splitting because androgyny assumes having the characteristics of both genders as a synthesis, this defines the implicit scission, androgyny depends on a binarism. And second, a reflection of this already split representation splits it again dialectically). There are important similarities between the idea of subject in Rowe's work and the Lacanian subject. Lacan explains the development of the subject as the child's movement from a pre-Oedipal stage where there are no recognized boundaries between his self and the external world to a stage of differentiation.

The partitioning of the subject begins... The child's body goes through a process of differentiation, whereby erogenetic zones are inscribed and libido is canalized (i.e., encouraged to follow certain established routes). Specific somatic areas are designated as the appropriate site of pleasure... the mouth, the anus, the penis and the vagina... By indicating the channel through which that libido can move, the mother... assists in the conversion of incoherent energy into coherent drives which can later be culturally regulated (15).

When the child is able to differentiate its body from the external world it has entered the "mirror stage." At this point it constructs a concept of self as other. The psychological drives that find their representations through the mother is done by the use of rhetorical structures and tropes, (condensation, displacement, metaphor, metonymy). These drives find their representation in what Lacan calls the Symbolic Order through structural and tropic redundancies (16). Julia Kristeva discusses the idea of subject in a similar way when she mentions that the body orifices that control pleasure experiences (mouth, anus, penis, vagina), (17) establish through rhetorical structures, symbols of the other. These symbols constitute our language system. The discovery of the other forces the child to loose, what Freud calls our "oceanic-self," the non-ego Self. This loss causes the child to suddenly see itself in a place in space and in a moment in time. It thus becomes the fragmented self. The subject is defined as a process, the process of splitting from the whole to the fragmented, creating the desire to be whole again.

Through her narrative, Rowe's androgyne image becomes a symbol of the self described by Lacan and Kristeva. It is a split representation (male/female); thus it is implicitly contradictory. It denies sexuality and
confirms it simultaneously. It denies narration and at the same time participates in constructing the very narrative it denies. It introduces ambiguity to any text of which it is a part.

Rowe’s narrative splits apart. One part, the part that produces conflict and ambiguity (referents are obscure), is metonymically related to the “oceanic-self.” The other part, the linear narrative, has the same type of relationship to the fragmented self (the self realized through alienation). These two parts fecundate each other producing the subject. Androgyny claims to mediate the masculine/feminine split, but this claim is duplicitous and subversive because it can never deliver what it promises. In Rowe’s Relationships, Lies, and Truths, the subject is a function of the ambiguities of the text. It is not the subject of the Cartesian ego. Kristeva comments,

We shall see that when the speaking subject is no longer considered a phenomenological transcendent ego nor the Cartesian ego but rather a ‘subject in process/on trial,’ (18)...deep structure...(is) disturbed and with (it), the possibility of semantic and/or grammatical categorical interpretation” (19).

The subject in Relationships, Lies, and Truths cannot distinguish between fact and fiction. We find that the subject is defined by the statements and visual imagery and since the imagery is ambiguous and vague, so is the subject. This work is a second version. The installation consists of three large walls framing three sides of a cubed space. At the site of the open end stands a eight foot androgynous figure. Rowe says that the figure is actually a large book consisting of visual and textual images narrating the subject of relationships. On the left wall is another eight foot figure. This figure is repeated for a third time on the back wall. Two small panels with the words “lies” and “truths” are located on the remaining wall.

Some of the small painterly sketches located on the front figure contain statements such as, “I will love you forever,” and, “Late at night everything is clear.” “I know you,” is said by a blindfolded figure. Rowe regards these as statements that people in relationships say to each other. As the blindfolded figure suggests, however, these statements may be lies or truths. When statements cannot be empirically connected to proofs, there can be no difference between a lie and a truth. Rowe said in an interview that a truth is a belief and not a fact. Death is a fact; a truth can be changed. In this way she feels the statements function as codes (20).

Returning to Rowe’s idea of subject, she constructs a narrative in Relationships, Lies and Truths (21) by suggesting that the androgynous images are voicing these statements. Even though this possibility does not alter the ambiguity of the message, it appears that the work is about lies and truths in relationships rather than my claim that the work is about the postmodern psychoanalytical subject. Besides, Rowe has said often that her work “goes beyond race, sex, etc.” which brings us right back to the problem Lazzari pointed out (22). Rowe said in an interview,

I am interested in general psychological conditions that threaten the sense of self, psychological well being, survival. The early work was autobiographical, things were not going well and I used art to address these conditions. But in the last several years I learned to let those things go but remained interested in the psychological condition. I am interested and fascinated by things that are psychologically stressful because I think they equalize everyone. It goes beyond race, sex, etc” (23).

How are we to interpret this statement? Is Rowe actually involved in a narrative that claims that psychological conditions are fundamentally universal and are not race and sex specific? If so, then we have replaced one social/political narrative with another. This substitution does not satisfy the problems raised by Lazzari. Although Rowe states that her concerns go beyond race and sex, how do we reconcile this claim with her obvious use of both as the subject matter of her narrative? In what way does she transcend race and sex? Before answering this question, we should spend time examining the issues of race-difference and feminism, specifically those parts of the theories that pertain to our investigation.

The claim that one can go beyond political and social content suggests the affirmation of the modernist notion of absolute knowledge and pure aesthetics. However, many postmodern theorists argue this point. What does it mean to go beyond social/political content? Victor Burgin said,

...during the time of conceptualism and of political art in my work I was quite convinced that the form of painting was inherently reactionary; I’m not sure anymore. In fact, I’m quite sure that you can’t claim that a form has any inherent political inscription in it. Those things are always conjecture” (24).

Burgin’s quote seems to suggest a return to the modernist values of universal aesthetic. Since criticism and theory have traditionally operated within a binary framework, that is, either meaning is universal or relativist (the dichotomy of the synchronic and the diachronic), we are hard pressed to interpret Burgin’s statement in any other way. One way out of this is through the postmodern theory of interpretation; the image’s interpretation is not rooted in any specific discourse that goes beyond the influences of history. In this way meaning is determined within a paradigmatic and syntagmatic framework. Burgin may be suggesting that a painting form is subject to the same conditions of interpretation that Barthes says about text, that it is open to “free play.” Other theorists believe that this “free play” is simply another way of naming the modernist universal aesthetic.

A critical debate was established among Black critics and writers as early as 1861 that challenged the idea that work can move beyond political and social meaning. This challenge actually established the earliest attack on what was later known as modernism. (Some of the earliest postmodern
arguments were made by Black artists and writers principally because they were traditionally not included in the mainstream of modernism. Frances E. W. Harper and at a later date Heywood Broun (1925) argued against an art that claimed to transcend social and political issues (25). Other critics of Black literature, like Stephen Henderson, believed that the art of Blacks should express Blackness, images that communicate the "Black truth" (26). Representations of the "White" culture had to be rejected, and the key to this was the embracing of social/political and historical ideas that reflected Black culture.

The theories of modernism and postmodernism, according to Cornel West, (27) are actually social and political theories that are unrelated to the issues of being Black in western culture. The modernist notion of universality, Kant's theory of pure reason, the Cartesian ego, are attacked as social and political doctrines representing the values of western culture (28). In Kant's aesthetics of the sublime, it is argued that Blacks are self-evidently stupid. He believed the sublime is a type of understanding that is not expressible or accessible through material manifestations. It is the key to his theory of Pure Knowledge which exists at the core of modernist thought (29). But what a fallacy it is when a limited social and political orthodoxy such as the superiority of white intelligence can be claimed to be self-evident. It raises questions about the legitimacy of the thesis. Not even Kant is omniscient enough to comprehend the political limits of his thoughts. The modernist notion of universality is ultimately a political positioning reflective of the relative concerns of a particular culture.

A similar debate goes on in feminist theory. Patricia Waugh refers to the psychoanalytical theory of D. W. Winnicott and the aesthetic theory of Adrian Stokes to suggest a feminist aesthetic. Also, drawing from the psychological theories of Melanie Klein, Waugh states that women writers have developed an aesthetic based upon merging and connections rather than separation and fragmentation, the aesthetic doctrine of modernism. She explains that this aesthetic is a response to the economic and cultural situation. We find that women more than men are subject to "dependency, insecurity, vulnerability to criticism or attacks on the 'self'" (30). Although Waugh explains that these representations develop from the pressures of a patriarchal society, Michele Montleray makes the case that female sexuality is unrepresented in our culture. Silverman states about Montlerey's theory,

...repression involves the setting in place within the unconscious a representation which structures sexuality in a particular way. Censorship, however, excludes without representation, and consequently has no structuring effect upon sexuality... Female sexuality is censored rather than repressed by the phallus... For that reason it remains a 'dark continent'...which threatens to submerge not only the female subject but the entire order of signification (31).

Let us return to the question mentioned earlier, how does Rowe's work address the questions of race-difference and feminism? Although Rowe states that her concerns go beyond race and sex, how do we reconcile this statement with her obvious use of both as the subject matter of her narrative? Let us say that race difference and sexuality are either unrepresented in culture or represented as an "other." Either or both themes are represented by the androgynous figure in Rowe's work. Thus she introduces these conflicts within the fabric of her narrative. The androgynous figure, as the voice and body of the narrative, conflates the different issues making it the site of sexual identity and race difference. The complex issues of the Lacanian subject is merged with the feminist subject. It also collapses into the racial subject adumbrating the schisms of universality versus relativism, race (Whites versus Blacks), gender (female versus male), and politics (feminist versus black).

Rowe's work, She With White She, bifurcates the alliance of feminism and race difference. The subject in this work is "racially androgynous." This idea is an oxymoron because a racially mixed person is always defined as non-white, but the sexually mixed (androgyou's) person is never considered non-male or non-female exclusively, but a synthesis of both. This shows that race difference and sexual difference are not perfectly homologous notions. Rowe's subject cannot identify with the issues of feminism without subverting its social identity as Black. (Although her status as a female is never in question, except in the manner that this identity is complicated by the androgynous image, I refer here to Montleray's theory of the difference between sexual structuration and gender roles.)

Similarly, it (Rowe's subject) cannot raise issues of race difference without raising questions about the political feminist discourse even though there is similarity between the politics of race and the politics of feminism. The social agenda of feminism still leaves intact the agenda of "white," (feminism still deals with Blacks within the framework of cultural/social institutions as "black," not as "just another person"). Feminism would like to see race as neutral (the issues of feminism are the same as the issues of race difference). But this is a hopeless wish. As long as there is race difference, the dominant culture will always perceive the minority as the "other." The cultural experiences of Blacks are different than those of white women, and indeed the experiences of black women are not the same as those of white women. The liberal political agenda that black and white women share is not enough to neutralize race-difference, for the black feminist will always see the white feminist as white, and vice-versa. Can anyone conceive of a race neutral person? No. Adrian Piper addresses these issues of race difference by showing us in a very confrontational way that we cannot get beyond the need to make racial "others" out of difference (32).

Race difference is always defined by the dominant race and the minority race is always in reaction. The dominant race constructs a notion of the minority as "other" and although this "other" is not defined by the libidinal pre-Oedipal drives, it is a symbol whose syntactical structure has a homologous relationship with the "other" of Lacanian psychoanalysis. In this view, a one race world can never really exist. Race difference is rhetorically tied to sexual difference, it is another manifestation of the construction of the "other." It happens in a patriarchal society that female representations are mostly negative, but they don't have to be. If these representations were positive, sexual difference would still remain. It is a matter of the particular structure of the Symbolic Order. Similarly there does not have to be a political schism between races, but the lack of one
doesn't obviate race difference since it is so intrinsically tied to the realization of the "other" through sexuality. Miscegenation still remains one of society's greatest taboos. The sexual split that causes the forming of the "self" establishes the structure and pre-exists racial difference. Sexual difference, therefore, establishes the construction of other differences in culture such as race difference (I am not speaking of biological difference alone, but also the culturally defined representations of difference).

The representations in Rowe's work can be defined as tropes. These tropes elevate the rhetorical level of her text, and consequently undermine any consistent and truthful relationship between the signifiers and their referents. Thus Rowe views her representations as the "site of an ambivalent and problematical relationship between referential and figural meaning" (33).

However, unlike the deconstructionist, Rowe is not interested in the loss of the referential text in the free play of hermeneutics. She is actually interested in constructing a narrative commentary. Tropes and codes do not have as their single purpose the responsibility to deconstruct the text, but instead to signify ambiguity as a way to engage the viewer in a hermeneutic enterprise. One might say that Rowe uses rhetorical structures to signify a meaning for the subject that is based upon the Lacanian notion of desire. In this way she proposes a justification for her idea that her work goes beyond race and sex, ultimately reaching for a synthesized and universal subject, but not getting there. It is a process, a desire, an activity of moving beyond race difference and sexuality. Desire instructs the active subject. Androgyny signifies the desire for unity. But, as in the Lacanian "other," the more one reaches for this unity, the greater the chasm becomes (the Janusian split).

Now, if the subject of Rowe's work is not a commentary on race difference and sexuality, then she is using that commentary in order to realize a series of tropes that frame the postmodern theory of the subject. The Androgynous figure is the privileged object in the work, and to the degree that it is used to posit notions in the work, it is its subject. It is this figure who is acting and being acted upon. It is this figure who turns every referent into a heteroglossia (34). The Androgynous figure is the postmodern subject, and as such (s)he becomes the agent of the obscure, the ineffable. (s)he releases the sign from any specific referent but does not release it from signification (35). The contradictions that I have said lie at the bottom of sexual difference, race difference, and the differences between Black and feminist political discourse define Rowe's subject as a continuous process of "ramifying transition relations" (36).

The final issue I wish to raise regarding the work of Sandra Rowe is parody. Parody is the rhetorical gesture of copying or imitating. It is an act of doubling that has the consequence of privileging the rhetorical text through redundancy and repetition. In so doing it introduces a "double-voiced" text that integrates the rhetorical structure of the text and its meaning in such a way that they influence each other. An example is pastiche. Parody is one manner of dwelling on the margins of discourse. It is a trope of repetition and revision. The postmodern theory of appropriation is a form of parody exemplified in the work of Sherri Levine. Linda Hutcheon discusses the issue of parody influenced by Bakhtin's theory of Dialogism (37).

It is Bakhtin theory... that allows for looking at parody as a form of "double-directed" discourse... (38) Parody is one of the techniques of self-referentiality by which art reveals its awareness of the context-dependent nature of meaning, of the importance to signification of the circumstances surrounding any utterance" (39).

Sticks And Stones uses 36, eight foot posts, each a different color. Each color represents a social pathology: red = sexism, purple = misoneism, yellow = racialism, blue = exclusivism, silver = racism, turquoise = terrorism. These posts are laid out and stacked on the gallery floor. There are six cement slabs hanging on the wall. Drawn into the cement while it was still wet is an androgynous figure standing on the neck of another reclining androgynous figure. This drawing is repeated exactly on each slab.

Although parody points to rhetorical structures and semantic ambiguities, it does not disconnect its dependency on the pragmatics of the text. In order for the parody to exist it must be a comment upon meaning. This fact makes a parody not only the custodian and preserver of meaning (by analogizing it) but it becomes a generator of new meaning by creating the intertext (40). We find the use of parody in Sticks And Stones through the repetition (41) of the representations on the slab and in the use of the androgynous figure. Sexuality, sexual roles and beliefs find themselves floating within the confines of the work because androgyny is an attack on sexuality, making it a double-voiced representation of both the masculine and feminine principles. Sticks And Stones began as a performance. In a wooded site, Rowe had six people each carry a different color post to a pit. The posts were stacked in the pit and burned. The ashes were collected and included as part of the gallery installation. Rowe's face was painted in stripes following the established color code (42). Even though each post represented one of the social pathologies, the participants were never informed of the symbolic meaning. This made their participation purely formal, but within the context of the installation the participants became metaphors for androgyny.

Rowe's use of parody not only reinforces her interest in tropes thus establishing a hermeneutics, but it also supports her interest in the social aspects of the narrative suggesting an integration of structure and meaning. The parody achieves this because, as I mentioned earlier, in order for it to exist (parody) it must be a comment on meaning. Parody preserves this through analogy. V.N. Volosinov supports this idea when he says,

Not only is consciousness a distinctively social product, but, as social, it is a distinctively semiotic product...individual consciousness is...only a tenant lodging in the social edifice of ideological signs. Once again the science of signs and the science of subjectivity intersect (43).

In Lies And Truths the installation not only exists as a rhetorical edifice, a semiotic structure constituted of tropes and figures, which produce a kind of meta-narrative, but the tropes fold back on themselves, as the meta-narrative is absorbed into the social framework by virtue of the technique of parody.
The installation consists of a six foot egg shape form with a television monitor in a hole and a peephole that allows the viewer to see a fabricated tree about ten feet away. Behind the tree there is an 8 ft. by 12 ft. wall. Live trees are placed around the wall. The work is aggressively painted with intense colors. Also, it is lighted to enhance the intensity of the color. The video is a looped tape of a tree. Rowe said about this work,

I am playing lies against truths, real things against fake things (real tree/fake trees). The distance between the (big) tree and the peephole is a metaphor for the mind. The space between distorts the reality (44).

The fake to real as a parody reinforces the social commentary of the work causing fake versus real (which is a binary opposition, thus a trope) to become "re"-realized as a narrative commentary. This is what a modern poetic text usually does. But in this special case, the text is absorbed into the idea of the installation, textualizing the visual representations within the framework of the object of art (with its own unique formal concerns) thus escaping the limiting lexical concerns of the poetic text.

We see in the work of Sandra Rowe a narrative art whose semiotized text produces a subject that signifies both the issues of race difference and feminism and transcends those issues resulting in a second voice that is commenting on the mythic "everyperson" (this term is used for its archetypal implications). The subject (androgyny) exists as a trope, on the one hand, and the psychoanalytical subject, on the other. This ambiguity signifies its transcendence over race difference and feminism; however it is a double-voiced message whose second voice firmly states its social/political commentary. Thus we have the postmodern subject situated in the theatrical environment of the installation. This reflects Rowe's belief that the human conditions in her narrative are not specific to any particular person or group, but are simply human; conditions that I believe pre-exist the individual and are found in culture as the "grand text" that we as characters live out.

Footnotes

1 Lazzari, Margaret. Artweek, Vol. 19, No. 28, Aug. 30, 1988. "Rowe's work is feminist in the social agenda it proposes and the forms it takes... The modifying adjectives of feminist and Afro-American define the work as splinters from art, as minority planks." Lazzari goes on to explain that this stereotyping of race and gender roles raises questions about the motivation of the (male) art world that finds it necessary to isolate the art of women and Afro Americans. I agree with her, but I also wish to point out that although Rowe is deeply involved in those issues, she has a further interest. She is also raising contradictory issues for the purpose of putting a postmodern subject, which is feminist but also goes beyond issues of feminism and race difference.


3 I am suggesting that in view of Bakhtin's double-voiced sign, and Kristeva's intertext, a sign can produce connotations beyond the intention of the artist. However, when the artist specifically produces an ambiguous signifier one can claim that the ambiguity is the intended referent. I suggest here that both operations are functioning in Rowe's work. I was told that there was a student in a studio course who appeared to be schizophrenic. Everyone someone asked her if a certain image meant this or that she responded, "I don't know?" Finally, after about an hour of this, someone asked if she was using her evasiveness as a strategy in her work, she responded, "I don't know?"

4 Lazzari, Margaret. Artweek, Aug. 30, 1988. "Rowe's work is feminist in the social agenda it proposes and the forms it takes... The modifying adjectives of feminist and Afro-American define the work as splinters from art, as minority planks." Lazzari goes on to explain that this stereotyping of race and gender roles raises questions about the motivation of the (male) art world that finds it necessary to isolate the art of women and Afro Americans. I agree with her, but I also wish to point out that although Rowe is deeply involved in those issues, she has a further interest. She is also raising contradictory issues for the purpose of putting a postmodern subject, which is feminist but also goes beyond issues of feminism and race difference.


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8 Lazzari, Margaret. Artweek, Vol. 19, No. 28, Aug. 30, 1988. "Rowe's work is feminist in the social agenda it proposes and the forms it takes... The modifying adjectives of feminist and Afro-American define the work as splinters from art, as minority planks." Lazzari goes on to explain that this stereotyping of race and gender roles raises questions about the motivation of the (male) art world that finds it necessary to isolate the art of women and Afro Americans. I agree with her, but I also wish to point out that although Rowe is deeply involved in those issues, she has a further interest. She is also raising contradictory issues for the purpose of putting a postmodern subject, which is feminist but also goes beyond issues of feminism and race difference.

9 Ibid. p. 37.

10 Eco, Umberto (1979), A theory of semiotics, p. 38-59. Eco suggests that in a theory of codes, which constitute the referent for the signifiers, they don't have to be true in any empirical sense. The semiotic process requires that a sign has a referent. I do not require that the referent has to be true. Eco says, "Everytime there is a possibility of lying, there is a sign-function. A theory of codes must study everything that can be used in order to lie."

11 My interview with the artist. Rowe said, "I want the viewer to sense the peripheral tension created by the distance between the two eight foot figures."


13 My interview with the artist.

14 Magnani, Gregorio. Interview: Victor Burgin, Flash Art, p. 120.


16 Ibid., p. 32.

17 West, Cornel (1989). Black culture and postmodernism. West finds that the postmodern discourse, like the modern, leaves out the true voice of ethnic minority cultures. Blacks still exist as an other in postmodernism.
28 Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. (1987). *Figures in black: Words, signs, and the “racial” self*. p. 18-19. A cogent example is reflected here in this comment by Immanuel Kant. Henry Louis Gates says, “Kant, moreover, is one of the earliest major European philosophers to confess color with intelligence.” (He said), Father L’Abat reports that a Negro carpenter, whom he reproached for haughty treatment toward his wife, answered: “you whites are indeed fools. First you make great concessions to your wives, and afterward you complain when they drive you mad!” And it might be that there was something in this which perhaps deserved to be considered; but in short, this fellow was quite black from head to foot, a clear proof that what he said was stupid [emphasis added].” Quoted from Immanuel Kant from *Observations on the feeling of the beautiful and sublime*, pp. 111-13. Not only are the remarks racist but also sexist.

29 Lyotard, Jean Francois (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*, p. 78. Lyotard defines the sublime as follows: “(Kant’s sublime)…takes place…when the imagination fails to present an object which might, if only in principle, come to match a concept. We have the idea of the world (the totality of what it is) but we do not have the capacity to show an example of it.”


31 Silverman, Kaja (1983). *The subject of semiotics*, p. 187. Silverman is in disagreement with Montlerey. She says that the female does not escape structuralism even though her representation is negatively defined. As Lacan suggested, the female signifies nature (unconscious, pre-Oedipal), the male, culture (consciousness, intellect, rupture from nature, alienation and isolation). The structuring of the female is based upon desire. I believe Montlerey agrees with the woman is structured in society (gender roles and stereotypes), but the feminine is not.


37 Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination*, p. 436. “Dialogicism is the characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia. Everything means, is understood, as part of a greater whole—there is constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential for conditioning others, which will affect the other and how it will do so and in which degree is actually settled at the moment of utterance. The dialogic imperative…insures that there can be no actual monologue.”


39 Ibid., p. 85.


42 The interesting thing about this code is that racism-racialism (two words I have put together in this case) and sexism are mutually incomparable. What I mean is that although one may say exclusivism is a behavior of racism, and sexism is a behavior of sexism, one cannot say that racism is a behavior of sexism. Exclusivism, exclusivism and terrorism refer to behaviors and can describe each other in any order of permutation. Racism-racialism and sexism refer to people and cannot describe each other. One can be a racist and a sexist, but a racist is not acting in a sexist way.


44 My interview with the artist.

References


