

tance and refusal to accord authority to female vision.

Yet, beyond the institutional rejection of woman's vision, what the narrative works on in its posing of enigmas, in its tracing of the convoluted pattern of intrigue, is a problem — the status of the photographic image in relation to truth and evidence. What sets Judith's investigation of the arms smuggling intrigue and the murder in motion is her discovery of half a photograph on which is imprinted the image of the young man who had been killed in the subway. The resolution of the enigma is thus figured as a tracing of the circulation and exchange of the photographic image — a search which results in the discovery of the missing fragment (which features Alfons, the ex-lover). Or is it? What can we say of the status of the image in an era in which digital reproduction and computers can construct a seamless photograph of flying saucers on the streets of San Francisco?

III

Textual Excess

Beyond the deconstruction effected at the level of narrative, the problematization of the relation between truth and the image occurs, as well, on the level of the formal strategies of the film. As I have suggested, this implies the possibility of female subjectivity and the affirmation of identity. On the formal level, the narrative is reworked, bracketed and suspended by the forceable random? abrupt? disjunctive? insertion of video, stock footage of military build-up in Austria, memory, fantasy and dreams. Here, in contrast to the operations of classical cinema — which function to contain heterogeneity and excess by harnessing each image to narrative meaning — the image asserts its autonomy. It testifies to the persistence of social and psychic forces in the construction of subjectivity and identity.

This disjunctiveness of the film, this heterogeneity, suggests the ineluctable interpenetration of the unconscious and the conscious, the impossibility of separating subject from object, aggressive fantasies from social violence, individual identity from its historical determinants. It eliminates, as well, the possibility of securing any singular level as a site of meaning or identity. In the fragmented universe of the film, meaning and identity are dispersed across its own boundaries.

Notes

1. *Korpersplitter*, Bandi, 1980.
2. These memory fragments are from *Invisible Adversaries*.
3. Export's second feature, *Menschen Frauen*, is a feminist melodrama about three women in love with the same man. I haven't seen it.

Brenda Longfellow
is a Toronto filmmaker and
writer

INVITATION

border/lines
is planning a series of
articles on feminism and
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much of the concern of the
first wave of feminism in the
1960s had to do with the
struggle for equality,
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being raised in feminist
cultural politics in the 80s
have to do with difference
— the specificity of female
experience, psychology and
desire, and the manner in
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Mr Ramp's "Image and Remembrance" (No.3, Fall 1985, pp.7-8) misses an important aspect of Barbara Ehrenreich's argument in its haste to show sympathy and common cause with contemporary feminism and the women's movement.

In *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight From Commitment*, she states that men began to develop the so-called "Playboy" philosophy alongside concerns about health and negative views of work and commitment in the mid to late 1950s, and that this development occurred before the emergence of contemporary feminism in the early 1960s.

Indeed, Ehrenreich believes that much of the contemporary women's movement is a *reaction and response* to this earlier "flight from commitment" by men. Of course this is not to ignore the fact that the long-term result of this flight has been what she calls the "feminization of poverty".

H.T. Wilson
Toronto

Filmmakers, video artists and others: If you feel that you have been unjustly rejected by the Canada Council or excluded from its political process, please contact: Julian Samuel, filmmaker video artist, 360 Terrasse St Denis, Montreal, PQ H2X 1E8. I am trying to set up a coalition of critical artists who will politicize against the Council's jury favoritism and exclusion of blacks, women and minorities. Democratize the Council now.

Julian Samuel
Montreal

LETTERS