

IMAGE, TEXT AND THE FEMALE BODY:  
RENÉ MAGRITTE AND THE SURREALIST PUBLICATIONS

by

Robin Adèle Greeley

Bachelor of Arts  
Wellesley College  
Wellesley, Massachusetts  
1980

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE  
DEGREE  
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE STUDIES AT THE  
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

JUNE, 1988

© Robin Adèle Greeley 1988

The Author hereby grants to M.I.T.  
permission to reproduce and to distribute publicly copies  
of this thesis document in whole or in part.

Signature of the author

Robin Adèle Greeley  
Department of Architecture  
6 May, 1988

Certified by

Anne Middleton Wagner  
Associate Professor of Architecture  
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by

Julian Beinart  
Chairman  
Departmental Committee for Graduate Students

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY

JUN 3 1988

LIBRARIES

Image, Text and the Female Body:  
René Magritte and the Surrealist Publications

by  
Robin Adèle Greeley

Submitted to the Department of Architecture on 6 May, 1988  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science in Architecture Studies

# ABSTRACT

In 1935, André Breton published his speech *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?* with René Magritte's drawing, "Le Viol" (The Rape) on its cover. The image, a view of a woman's head in which her facial features have been replaced by her torso, was meant to shock the viewer out of complacent acceptance of present reality into "surreality," that liberated state of being which would foster revolutionary social change. Because "Le Viol" is such a violently charged image and because of the claims made for it by Magritte for its revolutionary potential, the drawing has been the subject of many arguments, both for and against its effectiveness. The feminist community has had a particular interest in this image (and in Magritte's work as a whole) not only because of the controversial treatment of the female subject in "Le Viol," but also because of the ways in which our culture has been so easily able to strip surrealist images of their political content and subsume them back into mainstream culture for use in those very categories of social practice which Surrealism wanted to eradicate. The reincorporation of surrealist works has been especially noticeable and damaging in the case of images of women, as feminists like Susan Gubar and Mary Ann Caws have pointed out.

Against those claims made against "Le Viol" as an image which affirms phallogentric language and discourse rather than disrupting them, I argue in this paper that the drawing in fact exposes the mechanisms by which female sexuality is formed and controlled within phallogentric language. In exposing these constructions, "Le Viol" forces the viewer to realize them as ideological positions which maintain women as Other, as unable to gain access to coherent meaning within that language. In performing this function, Magritte's picture undermines that process through which women are deprived of a coherent self-image and of the material power which comes with that image in the social realm.

To substantiate my arguments, I trace the relationship between several of Magritte's images and the surrealist texts in which they were published, in order to provide a complex understanding of the interrelationships between word and image to which the artist directed much of his work. My use of the theoretical positions of deconstruction, feminism and psychoanalysis allows me to take the observations made onto the terrain of sexuality. These positions provide an understanding of how language and representation operate with respect to each other, and how the human subject (particularly the female) is formed through language.

.....

Thesis Advisor: Anne Middleton Wagner  
Associate Professor of Architecture

-----

In 1934 André Breton spoke at a meeting in Brussels of a leftist organization which included members of the Belgian Surrealists and the Belgian Communist Party. After the speech his text was printed in the pamphlet *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?* with René Magritte's drawing "Le Viol" (the Rape) on the cover. [figure n°1] "Le Viol" is one of Magritte's most shocking images of the female body, an image which, as Susan Gubar points out, utilizes techniques of representing women to be found in Magritte's other works.<sup>1</sup> The fragmentation of women into parts, women being turned into other objects come together here to produce this bizarre image; in one significant shift Magritte has replaced the female face with her torso.<sup>2</sup> Instead of being transformed into some other object, here the woman is transformed into herself; her breasts replace her eyes, her navel takes the place of her nose, and her genitals replace her mouth. She "effaces" herself; what communicates is not her face (the "window to the soul"), but her sex. She no longer speaks with words; if indeed she speaks at all it is through her anatomy. Her access to speech has been deleted. She has become a caricature of herself, the brainless woman who "thinks" through her body. She has become literally a caricature in this drawing as well; the female form has not only been shifted, it has also been distorted to the point of ambiguity. The sensuous nature of her body has been adulterated until her genitals have become no more than a sealed indentation, her waist and hips look almost mannish, her neck is extremely elongated, suggestive more of a phallic symbol than of a neck.

"Le Viol" was designed to shock and repulse. It is an image which many people, women and men, still might find extremely offensive. And yet Breton's decision to collaborate with Magritte on this project was an aggressive move, in the fifteenth year

of the Surrealist movement, to recapitulate its history and to re-declare Surrealism's commitment to total social revolution. In this context, "Le Viol" takes on an importance which cannot be slighted. It remains a key image for Surrealism, the first major art movement to situate itself at the point where psychoanalysis, language and sexuality coincide as the motivation for social change through artistic exploration of this conjunction. This theoretical/political position produced a wide range of art projects of which the Breton-Magritte pamphlet is one of the most striking. The repercussions of Surrealism as an artistic, theoretical and political stance have moved outside the realm of art, continuing today to influence and raise questions about how we view the problem of social existence.

This is particularly evident in the recent feminist debate over surrealist images of women such as "Le Viol." This debate, carried out by writers such as Susan Gubar, Mary Ann Caws and Susan R. Suleiman, ties itself to Surrealism in stressing the importance of language in the formation of the sexualized human subject. This area of feminist discourse questions male-produced surrealist images of women in their: 1) construction of feminine experience and 2) ability to undermine dominant discourses on, and representations of, feminine sexuality. Magritte and Breton have come under particular attack as a result of their willingness to engage these issues on a deep level.

Gubar looks at "Le Viol" from its place within the art historical tradition of the male as voyeur and of the female as object of his gaze to see if it maintains this structure or challenges it. In refusing to believe an image of woman to be either non-involved with representations of sexuality or somehow neutral in the presentation of such sexuality, Gubar claims that there are hidden ideological structures which serve to keep women subject to, and only negatively represented within, determinant structures within the (relatively unchanging) symbolic order. She examines "Le Viol" in terms of



"pornography," defined as images of the humiliation and dehumanization of women produced for male sexual pleasure, to see if that "genre produced primarily by and for men necessarily demean[s] women and alienate[s] or exclude[s] the female spectator/reader."<sup>3</sup> In looking at the recent differing opinions on the use of pornography -- pornography as reinforcement of patriarchy versus pornography as subversive art form -- Gubar claims that if Magritte's image does not dehumanize it is because it unties "the major human knots of love and death, the mind and the body, and the relationship not only between mother and child but also between male and female."<sup>4</sup> She sets the picture up to "solve" these issues (something which Magritte never makes any claims to doing himself), giving a complex argument for both sides of the fence. In the end, however, she seems to find that "Le Viol" belongs to that class of images which do not sufficiently disrupt the tradition of representing female sexuality in order to satisfy male voyeurism:

That the experimental strategies of surrealism [including those of Magritte] are so enmeshed in violence against women means that formal (as well as content-oriented) elements may function as framing devices that simultaneously justify and perpetuate female degradation.<sup>5</sup>

Mary Ann Caws, in her essay "Ladies Shot and Painted: Female Embodiment in Surrealist Art" also claims that much of Surrealist imaging of women fails to break from traditional male perspectives.<sup>6</sup> She cites Breton as a particularly abhorrent example of the general trend in Surrealist art towards the degrading fragmentation and objectification of women. She also cites certain works by Magritte, but claims that other of his works offer a more positive reading (although she does not mention "Le Viol").<sup>7</sup> In raising the question of Surrealism's representation of women, she opens the field for detailed discussion. Her differentiation among Magritte's representations allows us to conceive of at least the possibility of avoiding representations of woman as "not there,"

as having access to herself through her representation. She demands that male representations of women offer some form of integrated picture:

When a fragmented image is said to represent us, as we are supposed to represent woman, we may either refuse such synecdochic enterprises of representation or demand, if not totalization of the model, then at least reintegration....<sup>8</sup>

Her arguments, however, fall short of an adequate understanding of the more complex relationships between language (the means of representing) and those representations themselves. Instead she refers to associations with "nature" outside the boundaries of humanly constructed language:

...the free exchange of the ideas of possible images, between sexes as between persons and nature, all these translations at once erotic and artistic, the translations of difference which we could freely enjoy under the light of the narrative fecundated by a couple or many.<sup>9</sup>

Caws' argument that, through a free-floating act of will, gender issues will cease to be based on division and antagonism and will instead become based on enjoyment, collapses upon close examination of its terms.

Phrases such as "the free exchange of the ideas of possible images" posit the source for such ideas and images outside language in a nebulous, biologically determined space, which is problematic at best. Caws' arguments, in both their strengths and their weaknesses, point, as do Gubar's, to the fertile intersection between our culture and Surrealist images of women. They recall what is by no means a dead issue: these images of the female continue to raise debate on the problems of language in relation to gendered subjectivity.

Feminism's interest (and mine) in the area of surrealist images of women comes as part of a wider attempt to build a new, non-phallogentric language, and subsequently, discourse. This involves two projects: dismantling existing discourse found detrimental to women; and determining which elements of past discourses could prove useful in work toward revolutionary change.

As we have seen, Magritte's images of women, particularly "Le Viol," have been under consideration as part of those "past discourses" and have been the focus of vehement feminist arguments. Those of Gubar and Caws explore the problematic nature of his imagery most thoroughly, but neither views his work in its full context: where it was most widely disseminated and in which it did its most effective theoretical work -- the surrealist publications. My project is thus to take up where Gubar leaves off, to examine the interaction between Magritte's images of women and the surrealist texts in order to provide closer readings of the images. The larger context of "Le Viol" extends beyond *Qu'est-ce que le surréalisme?* to *La Révolution surréaliste*, the first major surrealist magazine. Drawing in addition on the *Bulletin International du Surréalisme* n°3 (1934) and *Violette Nozières* (1933), which include useful images by Magritte, I will further extend the relevant context beyond the strict limits set by Gubar. I have chosen these texts, written between the Wars in what were Surrealism's formative years, because of their central importance to the definition and propagation of Surrealist theory and practice.

In addition to its central position during the most active years of Surrealism, I take "Le Viol" and its text *Qu'est-ce que le surréalisme?* as my starting point for the following reasons: "Le Viol" is an image consciously meant to jar in its violent representation of the fragmented female body. Its placement on the cover of the pamphlet ties it to Surrealism's goal of social revolution. More than any other image by Magritte, it

investigates and, I argue, undermines Western artistic traditions regarding the painting of the nude which are and have been a "flash point" in our culture. Gubar argues that the negativity of "Le Viol" outweighs any positive characteristics it provides for representations of women, yet she does not adequately account for all levels on which Magritte addresses language and discourse. Gubar address primarily woman's ability (or inability) to communicate through participation in discourse; she addresses only partially the linguistic interaction between the image and its title; and she essentially neglects the discursive interaction between the image and Breton's text. Through an investigation of the artistic strategies and tactics operating within each of these levels, I will argue that "Le Viol" reads as an image which is not entirely detrimental to women. Rather, it engages that discourse which *is* (almost entirely) detrimental to women, pornography, in order to undermine it by laying bare the mechanisms through which feminine sexuality is constructed within phallogentric discourse.

In this re-reading of "Le Viol," I will draw on three theoretical bases: psychoanalytic -- particularly Lacanian, with its emphasis on the sexualized subject along with the problems of self and Other; deconstructive -- which examines the devices which are simultaneously excluded from a discourse and which make it possible; and feminist -- which looks at the exclusion of women from traditional discourse. The rudiments of these bases are implicitly recognized by the Surrealists themselves as relevant. Breton, for example, points to the connections between expression, action and language, in ways not dissimilar to Jacques Lacan and Michel Foucault:

I insist, as I have already said, that the problem of social action is only one form of a more general problem with which surrealism is concerned, and this problem is *the problem of human expression in all its forms*. Whoever speaks of expression speaks, to begin with, of language.<sup>10</sup>

The use of these methodologies will allow me to distinguish Magritte's work as a whole from that of other Surrealists, Breton and Georges Bataille in particular. In addition, it will allow me to differentiate "Le Viol" from other of Magritte's images of women as I do not wish to claim that all of Magritte's images are useful in the exploration of constructed feminine sexuality.

### *Le Viol*

*Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?*, the 1934 reprint of Breton's speech for the Belgian Communist circle, displayed the first version of Magritte's drawing "Le Viol" (the Rape), although without its title.<sup>11</sup> The connections begun here between "Le Viol" and communism were reinforced later by Magritte himself when he included another version [figure n°5] in a 1947 exhibition supporting the Communist Party -- a gesture which suggests that the image continued to be relevant to communism, at least in its author's mind.<sup>12</sup> Magritte was to repeat the motif in other drawings and paintings as well throughout his career [see, for example, figure n°6]. Thus we see this image as central not only to Surrealist thought, but also to Magritte's concepts of his own work and his relationship to Surrealism. In 1935, Magritte openly stated his support for communism: "The Communist point of view is my own. My art is valid only insofar as it opposes the bourgeois ideal in whose name life is being extinguished."<sup>13</sup> Any analysis of "Le Viol" therefore must take into account its implications for this overtly political stance. The significance of Magritte's collaboration with Breton, both within and outside the surrealist movement, can be determined in large part through his previous contributions to the surrealist publications; his brand of Surrealism differed, I will argue, significantly from other artists whose work appeared along side his.

But before moving into this material, we need to recall first the image and then its text. Magritte described "Le Viol" in these terms:

The problem of woman yielded *The Rape*. In this painting, a woman's face is made up of the essential features of her body. Breasts have become eyes, the nose is represented by the navel, and the sexual organ replaces the mouth.<sup>14</sup>

Susan Gubar writes that "Le Viol" "shockingly fragments the female by turning her into a sexual body."<sup>15</sup> This fragmentation mutilates not only the body, but also the "spirit" of the woman: "when the female is simultaneously decapitated and recapitated by her sexual organs, the face that was supposed to be a window to the soul embodies a sexuality that is less related to pleasure and more to dominance over the woman who is 'nothing but' a body."<sup>16</sup> Described in terms like these in an act of criticism which dissociates it from Breton's text, "Le Viol" falls very easily into that category of images which denigrate women. At this level Magritte seems to be churning out a pointedly pornographic image, one which sees woman as nothing but a sexualized object. Following Gubar's lead, we would be compelled to characterize this work as "exploitative," "disturbing" or "incomplete."<sup>17</sup> To do so, however, would be to condemn Magritte almost without a trial. There are more issues to be taken into account here than Gubar has done. At this point we need to consider Breton's text.

In the first section of *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?* Breton traces a history of Surrealism as a response to European political and social conditions in the 1910's and 20's. While he stresses the importance of the 1917 "triumph of the Bolshevik revolution," Breton places stronger emphasis on what he terms a general "campaign of systematic refusal."<sup>18</sup> Breton includes within this campaign a refusal of war, of wartime nationalism, of "rationalism and chop logic," moral duties, and work.<sup>19</sup> Against these categories he places the notion of "l'amour la poésie" (the title of a book

by Paul Éluard) as the only thing "worth saving."<sup>20</sup> The shifting of the whole of Surrealism's program onto this phrase, onto the essential goodness of love and poetry, is to claim a set of requirements for the liberation of human kind radically different from European socialism (the political movement closest to Surrealism's own goals) and from other artistic movements, particularly Dada. Later in the tract Breton makes his point more clearly; while a commitment to "l'amour la poésie" might seem far removed from reality, Surrealism to the contrary is committed to "a desire to deepen the foundations of the real; to bring about an ever clearer and at the same time ever more passionate consciousness of the world perceived by the senses."<sup>21</sup> By this Breton means a forging of strong connections between the realm of the Other (the unconscious) and the realm of present reality. Breton felt, as I will show, that Magritte's work exemplified this connection.

Breton argues for a separation of reality into two categories in order to justify Surrealism's program -- the categories of internal versus external reality.<sup>22</sup> He indicates that Surrealism, in working for the freeing of human kind, focuses on the release of that interior reality into the exterior realm.<sup>23</sup> Surrealism's work, Breton indicates, should be seen as the complement of socialism, not as a contradiction or impediment:

*the liberation of the mind*, the express aim of surrealism, demands as a primary condition ... *the liberation of man*, which implies that we must struggle against our fetters with all the energy of despair; that today more than ever the surrealists rely entirely, for the bringing about of human liberation, on the proletarian revolution.<sup>24</sup>

Breton here is responding to the consistent criticism of Surrealism as idealist, as avoiding any real confrontation with issues of social change. These criticisms came not only from the French Communist Party (although the C.P. at this time presented only a travesty of revolutionary politics) but more significantly from Breton's own extended

circle: Louis Aragon, Tristan Tzara, and Georges Bataille, for example.<sup>25</sup> Both Aragon and Tzara became adamant Stalinists, heavily criticizing Breton for not wholeheartedly siding with the views of the Communist Party. Bataille, continuously critical of Breton, wrote his essay "La vieille taupe" (the old mole) of 1929/30 as a critique of what he felt to be Breton's passive, idealistic attitude towards transgression.<sup>26</sup> *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?* is a part of the conscious shift Breton and the Surrealists made around 1930 in response to such criticism towards a more overtly politicized stance. It included Magritte's images as part of the attempt to legitimize its position.<sup>27</sup> (This is not to say that the Surrealists did not espouse communism before 1930; for instance, in 1925 the Surrealists published *La Révolution d'abord et toujours* calling for an end to France's imperialist war in Morocco. Breton joined the Communist Party in 1927. Rather I wish to point out the marked shift towards systematic political writing in *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?* and *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* which turned away from the more "literary" concerns of their earlier work.)

Breton's own words need to be considered as substantiating the choice of "Le Viol" for the cover of *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?*. The choice of such a decidedly shocking image may have been meant to jolt all non-believers into realizing that Surrealism could produce the calculated and desired effect. It is an image which, on first contact, seems to have been created very much in tune with Breton's 1924 definition of Surrealism as being "the dictation of thought in the absence of all control exercised by reason and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations."<sup>28</sup> While the first period of Surrealism interpreted this definition to mean that the art itself had to obtain a denial of conscious control (automatic drawing and writing), Magritte seems to envision the denial of reasoned control as obtained through the response to the image, rather than as a part of the process of creating the image. Magritte wants to make certain we will not be preoccupied with "aesthetic" concerns -- i.e. be able to judge "Le Viol" by those



conventional standards of beauty and value which he and his fellow Surrealists found so stifling. His success at this level is not debated: the work has not been described as traditionally "beautiful," nor has it lost its potential for shock.

The jolt which "Le Viol" is designed to give us is not that of the more conventional surrealist piece which is meant to disrupt conventional meaning by placing dissimilar objects next to each other. Rather it is the extreme disquietude produced by the *affinities* of certain objects when placed near each other, a version of the surrealist practice which was Magritte's own.<sup>29</sup> Here, our reaction comes in part from the ease with which Magritte is able to make the visual slippage from face to genitals. We recoil not only from the image, but also from our initial willingness to understand it on its own terms, to see the genitals as a face. "Le Viol" shakes the viewer out of complacency into a more accute awareness of reality. For Breton, Magritte and the audience originally addressed by *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?*, this meant an attention to the "reality" of the growing threat of fascism to intellectual and artistic freedom in the 1930s:

Let us be careful, today, not to underestimate the peril: The shadow has greatly advanced over Europe recently. Hitler, Dolfuss and Mussolini have either drowned in blood or subjected to corporal humiliation everything that formed the effort of generations straining towards a more tolerable and more worthy form of existence. [...] I have noticed that already a certain doubt has crept into the intellectual circles of the left as to the possibility of successfully combating fascism....<sup>30</sup>

As a response to this threat, against which Breton and Leon Trotsky were to write again in their 1938 "Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art," Magritte's image calls up the issues of expression and communication in the figure's inability to do either.<sup>31</sup> "Le Viol" begins to resonate with political and social issues outside the more aesthetic realm to which art was traditionally assigned. To see further, however, why this drawing seemed to fit with Breton's text, we need to see how (and even if)

Magritte explored these issues in other publications, particularly that one in which the Surrealists developed and set out their program most clearly: *La Révolution surréaliste*.

*La Révolution surréaliste:*

In its first years, *La Révolution surréaliste*, Surrealism's first major publication, based itself on a program of presentation and theory which did not coincide with that of Magritte on several levels. The early surrealist efforts at automatic writing and drawing, at the recounting of dreams and engagement in wild adventures seems worlds away from Magritte's work. By comparison, the careful explorations of language and vision we find in much of Magritte's work during those years, 1924 to 1929, seem fetishistically controlled almost to the point of stifling dullness. His works were not reproduced in the magazine until its final year, 1929, but by this time Surrealism's program had shifted under the weight of continued argument and investigation to a platform from which Magritte's images could function with great effect. Tracing the path of these developments revives the complexities of the surrealist project in a way which will allow us to particularize its relation to themes in Magritte's work.

The Surrealists paid careful attention to the relationship between images and text in their publications. *La Révolution surréaliste*, published from 1924 to 1929, was a group effort to define the surrealist program within a format of public presentation and debate. The placement of images in relation text in this magazine demonstrates to a large degree both the program and the arguments within the movement. Over the years of the publication of *La Révolution surréaliste* we can see the boldness of Surrealism's goals as well as the shifts in how these goals were to be reached. As Dawn Ades points out, the magazine began with a very specific notion of the kinds of images which could

appropriately be called surrealist.<sup>32</sup> Automatic drawing and photography were privileged over painting; artists supposedly gained access to the unconscious realm of the mind through these spontaneous techniques which broke down traditionally established rules for creative activity.

In the first issues of *La Révolution surréaliste*, no paintings were reproduced. Instead, the editors Pierre Naville and Benjamin Péret included photographs, drawings and photocollages. There were several interconnected reasons for this decision. First of all, painting was considered too conscious an activity, requiring too much training and deliberate thought to fulfill a function similar to that of automatic writing. In the first issue of *La Révolution surréaliste*, writer Max Morise delineated some of the crucial differences. He claimed that "the succession of images, the flight of ideas, are a fundamental condition of all manifestations of Surrealism. The course of thought cannot be considered as static" an assertion which immediately suggests that anything requiring sustained conscious effort in order to translate ideas into visual form will be unable to capture the ever-changing quality of thought.<sup>33</sup> Thus Morise continued: "this effort of the secondary intention which necessarily deforms images in making them almost touch the surface of consciousness shows us how much we need to get rid of the idea of finding here the key to surrealist painting."<sup>34</sup> In place of painting's deliberate nature, Morise argued for automatic drawing, "lines organize[d] themselves little by little as they appear[ed] and, so to speak, *haphazardly*."<sup>35</sup> Although Morise did not state it explicitly, the emphasis on chance includes not only those lines which appear in automatic drawing, but also photographs in which the direct relationship between the photographic image and an external reality is challenged.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, in the first issue of *La Révolution surréaliste*, Morise's own article includes an automatic drawing by André Masson. And elsewhere in the issue are drawings by

Ernst, Desnos and Naville, whose sketchy style corresponds to the fleeting quality stressed by Morise. [figures n°7,8] The photographs, also consistent with Morise's definition, include pictures by Man Ray as well as "found" photographs used for their documentary character, such as the photograph of anarchist Germaine Berton. [figures n°9,10] The images are not subordinated to the texts, but remain in a parallel status to them as independent "texts" themselves.

The issue of documentation runs throughout the publications. Surrealism claimed to discover and record existing realities rather than to create fantasies. While the Surrealists did this all in the name of art and revolution, they found it necessary to separate their magazine radically from the conventional art publication. Thus, *La Révolution surréaliste* was modelled after the scientific journal, *La Nature*, which often used photographs to illustrate and corroborate its articles. (The photograph of the Surrealists on the front cover of the first issue is directly reminiscent of the cover of *La Nature*).<sup>37</sup> [figure n°11] Péret and Naville used this tactic to suggest a link to a more "scientific" style of writing and investigation, thus distancing the new magazine from conventional art magazines of the period. The allusions to a scientific program were meant to suggest the qualities of collecting and interpreting data, although as Ades points out, this information was used to "subvert or question the 'scientific' certainties of a 'reign of logic.'" <sup>38</sup> Thus while the first issues of the magazine carry drawings and photographs meant to provide corroborative "evidence" for the different categories of investigation, these are all meant to subvert conventional notions of reality. Each illustration attempts, in Morise's words, to "...forget that which has been done, or better yet, ignore it." <sup>39</sup> While the argument here makes no direct claims for the illustrations' being automatic in the sense of being directly created through the workings of the unconscious, they are presented as part of the surrealist program of the

subversion of reality. Magritte's work, as I will show, is thus very much within this aspect of the fundamental tenets of early Surrealism.

In the third issue of *La Révolution surréaliste*, Naville takes Morise's arguments even further:

Everyone knows that there is no *surrealist painting*. Neither the traits of the pencil liberated by automatic gesture, nor the image which retraces the dream figurations, nor imaginative fantasies, it is well understood, can be qualified as such. But there are *spectacles*. Memory and the pleasure of looking: that is the whole aesthetic. <sup>40</sup>

He states that neither painting nor drawing contain the possibility for the chance discovery of the marvelous which photography and cinema do: "the cinema, not because it is life, but the marvelous, the arrangement of fortuitous elements."<sup>41</sup> The discussion of surrealist art at this point indicates that painting generally and Magritte's version of it in particular were not what the editors considered surrealist. The stiff, cool nature of Magritte's canvases, controlled almost to the point of obsession, seemed to maintain a conscious logic which was quite in opposition to surrealist concepts of chance and automatism.

In part to combat the increasing resistance to including painting within Surrealism (also in part because he felt the magazine's viewpoint was becoming too distanced from the political realities of the times), Breton assumed direction of *La Révolution surréaliste* in the fourth issue. With the first installment of "Le Surréalisme et la peinture," published in n°4 of *La Révolution surréaliste*, Breton shifted the argument concerning the nature of the surrealist image to another level. He reopened interest in painting, but attempted to steer this interest away from a return to a traditional aesthetic. In differentiating among the various media used in the publication -- painting, photography, drawing,

etc. -- he began to mark out distinctions which not only would affect perceptions of these media both in and outside of Surrealism, but also create the conditions for Magritte's entry into and influence on surrealist publications. Breton questioned conventional notions, for example in painting versus photography, of the claim of one medium to portray reality over that of another. In "Le Surréalisme et la peinture" Breton challenges the traditional concept of the "real" as that which can be visually documented or empirically proven:

...there is that which others have seen, say they have seen, and by suggestion will or will not be able to make me see; there is also that which I see differently from all the others, and even that which I begin to see *which is not visible*.<sup>42</sup>

He is willing to allow into the sphere of "real" experience those things which are simply hearsay, or even more extreme, those things which are invisible. In terms of the visual arts this concept poses an interesting problem, one which had not been addressed on any consistent theoretical basis in the modern era before Surrealism: how does one visualize the invisible, if indeed the invisible is to be considered part of "reality"? Breton himself goes on to suggest one possibility: "It is so that it is impossible for me to consider a canvas otherwise than as a window about which my first care is to know on what *it looks out*."<sup>43</sup> He indicates here that in painting the invisible is not only tied intrinsically to the visible, but that both are equally important in understanding the meaning of the work.

Breton also compares the creation of images to that of spoken or written discourse. He points out that both are linguistic forms of communication between individuals and are therefore constructions:

The need to fix visual images, those images pre-existing their fixation or not, exteriorized itself at all times and has achieved

the formation of a veritable language which does not appear to me any more artificial than the other, and on whose origin it would be useless for me to linger. In addition I must consider the actual state of this language, as well as the actual state of poetic language, and to recall it if necessary to its reason for being. It seems to me that I might make great use of a faculty which, over almost all the others, gives me a sense of direction [barre] with respect to the real, to that which one vulgarly understands by *the real*.<sup>44</sup>

In saying this (and in comparing visual images with poetry -- considered one of the highest surrealist art forms), Breton indicates that it is essential to understand the functioning of language, visual or otherwise, as it exists within the social context. He intimates that all languages have common bases, but that important differences can be discerned between visual imagery (painting in particular) and other forms of discourse regarding their ability to touch upon the "real." Thus, in the first article on Surrealism and painting, Breton shifts the arguments of the previous issues of *La Révolution surréaliste* and introduces the framework which will allow Magritte to publish his images and which will allow Breton to write of Magritte in the 1931 (?) edition of *Le Surréalisme et la peinture*:

At this point, Magritte's approach, which, far from being automatic was, on the contrary, perfectly deliberated, offered support to surrealism from an entirely different direction. Alone in adopting this particular method, Magritte approached painting as though it constituted a series of 'object-lessons', and from this point of departure he has proceeded to put the visual image systematically on trial, taking pleasure in stressing its lapses and in demonstrating the extent to which it depends upon figures of language and thought....<sup>45</sup>

In the third article of "Le Surréalisme et la peinture," Breton demonstrates how the supposedly unbiased medium of photography also can record the links between visible and invisible. He examines Man Ray's photographs, claiming that they challenge the conventional belief in photography's ability to fully document reality.<sup>46</sup> In making this claim, Breton suggests that it is necessary for visual imagery not merely to record that

which is precisely visible, but that pictures have a responsibility to "document" that which is not visible. Documentation of reality thus not being limited to direct imitation of the phenomenological world, painting can portray the reality of a given situation just as well as can photography. The cover of the next issue (n°11) takes up the idea of an invisible reality, carrying a photograph of two workers peering down a manhole. [figure n°12] The picture, entitled "La Prochaine chambre," links the ordinary "present" with another, unseen world. Looking at the two men who in turn look down a black hole, we become curious to know what it is they see. What they see could be anything; it could exist in the present in another space, it could exist in the past (or perhaps in the future); the past could be conceived in historical, psychological or anthropological terms. The picture functions around the relationship between the "known" documentable present with its counterpart, the Other (the next room), which can only be suggested and never fully documented. Conventionally set categories of time and history and their relationship to present experience are undermined and altered. These explorations suggest that images can "document" a more precise relationship between the phenomenal world and the Other.

In issue n°11 (1929), there is a deliberate shift away from the more haphazard "époque des sommeils" experiments with the evocative power of dream imagery towards a more systematic exploration of what such imagery can tell us about all possible realities. The shift in the surrealist concept of reality and of the uses for such knowledge came about in large part through the relationship between text and image as they were argued out in *La Révolution surréaliste*. The Surrealists move easily at this point from systematically recording links between visible and invisible manifestations to concepts of the "here" and the "beyond," "known" and "unknown."



This is also the first issue in which the Surrealists begin a systematic exploration of the "Other" in the guise of woman, a sexualizing of that category which continued to pave the way for Magritte's images of the female. Published in this issue are a fragment of Breton's *Nadja*, "Le cinquantenaire de l'hystérie," and "Recherches sur la sexualité," all three of which consciously take Woman (or a particular woman) as the focus of research. Her voice is either not heard (as in "Recherches" and "l'hystérie") or, if it is heard it is only through the medium of a more dominant male (e.g. Breton who speaks for Nadja), thus maintaining woman's status as the object of male scrutiny. "Recherches sur la sexualité," carried out in the form of "objective" questions about the nature of sexual relations between male and female, is notable for its lack of women participants. The photographs for "Le cinquantenaire de l'hystérie" show "la délicieuse X.L." incarcerated at Salpêtrière in various ecstatic poses.[figure n°13] In the accompanying article, hysteria is described in its various forms -- "mythic, erotic... social... knowing" and given heavily sexual overtones.<sup>47</sup> In *Nadja*, Breton describes a meeting with Nadja in which she tells him of his power over her.<sup>48</sup> In each of these articles, woman is made the object of a male investigation in which various aspects of her sexual and emotional life are detailed as if in a scientific report. No effort is made to separate the surrealist interest in scientificity from systems of male-dominated knowledge which constitute woman as their object.

The systematic exploration of the relationship between "here" and "Other" ("beyond") becomes distilled and concretized around the image of female sexuality. The female becomes set firmly in place as the image of the Other for the Surrealists during this period, through descriptive text (*Nadja*), through "scientific" investigations ("Recherches") and through text supported by images ("l'hystérie"). This is not to say, of course, that woman as Other had not been of interest to the Surrealists prior to this moment. From the start, the female had been an inspiration, a point of reference from

which flights of imagination could be launched.<sup>49</sup> Until this point, however, the Surrealists' theoretical position on the relationship between male and female had never been this precisely stated. Thus in issue n°11 we begin to see solid evidence of the surrealist attitude towards the female in both text and illustration. Male and female become polarized around their respective relationships to the "real" in line with Breton's personal theories on the topic of woman.

In this context, Breton's response, "je m'en fous" ("I don't give a damn"), when asked why he did not consult the woman when making love indicates his unwillingness to take her voice into account.<sup>50</sup> To do so would have been to believe at a fundamental level in her ability to speak, in her ability to communicate in a rational manner in the same language as men. This is not Breton's assumption. On the contrary, his project involves maintaining the female in the realm of madness and incoherency as an alternative to the supposed sanity of the male world. Thus in the end Breton chose to remain on the side of male discourse, of sanity and coherency. He chose to maintain his position as the observer of madness rather than to engage in madness himself. Susan Suleiman demonstrates this effectively in discussing Breton's relationship to Nadja. His (un)willingness to cross over and remain in the madness which is Nadja's world can be read alternatively as a continued interest in maintaining a presence *here* in order to link the present with the beyond, or as falling back into the safety of the controlling masculine role. Suleiman states, in reference to Nadja: "Breton's refusal to take on this role of 'phantom' is tantamount to refusing [...] the existence of the unconscious ..." <sup>51</sup> She also points out Breton's refusal of the enterprise of psychoanalysis in his unwillingness to discover 'differentiation' within himself. Breton's refusal here seems very far from Lacan's notion of psychoanalysis -- and the exploration of the unconscious -- as "not a discourse of mastery but a discourse of mutual entanglement."<sup>52</sup> At the same time as Breton insists on distancing woman from

himself, he needs her in order to be able to represent himself. His existence depends on her non-existence.

Magritte published for the first time in *La Révolution surréaliste* in its last issue (n°12, 1929). His two images, "Les mots et les images" and "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt," [figures n°14, 15] engage with and problematize Breton's position. The first of these images, "Les mots et les images," sets Surrealism firmly on the terrain of language and visual representation. It does not deal with the concept of Other in terms of sexuality, but examines more generally the relationship between object, image and text, insisting that these relationships occur in certain identifiable patterns. The Other in question here is not the image or the object or the word; it is the ambiguous relationship between the three which refuses to allow itself to be pinned down in any straightforward manner. Thus the (amusing) convolutions of Magritte's language. Once again, we are given a text which methodically "documents" a manifestation of reality which might not be readily apparent to the untrained observer. Observations such as "an object makes one suppose there are others behind it" makes connections between the brick wall depicted, the manhole discussed above, and a host of invisible realities. But in the very next image, Magritte presents us with two seemingly identical images while stating: "everything pushes one to think that there is little relation between an object and that which represents it." Or later, "undefined figures have a signification as necessary, as perfect as those precisely defined." Foucault describes how words can double back on themselves to undercut their own proclamations of logic. Although he writes here about another artist, his statement applies equally well to Magritte:

The monstrous quality ... consists ... in the fact that the common ground on which such meetings are possible has itself been destroyed. What is impossible is not the propinquity of the things listed, but the very site on which their propinquity would

be possible. [...] Where else could they be juxtaposed except in the non-place of language?<sup>53</sup>

Objects gain a heightened presence in Magritte's work, through our conscious apprehension of the *possibilities* they disclose in their relationship to language. Magritte takes these observations over into the realm of female sexuality in "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt," printed on the last (?) page of issue n°12. We begin to wonder if we are unable to see the woman because "...il y a peu de relation entre un objet et ce qui le représente"? Or is it that the image of the woman hides the real woman behind it? Or perhaps the image merely hides another image? Magritte, along with the other "blind" Surrealists, seems to question whether we can have access to the woman at all. The woman in the surrealist text is present no longer as an inspirational muse, but rather as a problem. Above all, she is a problem of representation. Thus, although Magritte by no means escapes a conventional treatment of the female image, and the word 'we' is gendered the traditional male, he places in question both the viewer's relationship to the image and what that image can be said finally to represent. Magritte's position, compared to that of Breton, begins to question the very possibility of representing sexuality without qualifying such a representation with the opposition of male voyeur versus female object. In this context, the writing of Georges Bataille in the magazine *Documents* takes on importance as an example of writing which attempts to grapple with this issue.

#### *Surrealism's "old enemy from within":*

In issue n°12, Breton also published his "Second manifeste" in which he criticizes Georges Bataille (among others). In the same year, 1929, Bataille started *Documents*, the magazine which contested the dominant position of *La Révolution surréaliste* and

later, of *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* (published 1930-1933 after the demise of *La Révolution surréaliste*). Bataille, Surrealism's "old enemy from within," argued with Breton here and in his article "La vieille taupe" regarding what he saw as the overtly utopian goals of orthodox Surrealism.<sup>54</sup> Bataille stood against the closure of discourse and against the reluctance to involve oneself "body and soul" in the transgressive process, both of which he felt to be the faults of Surrealism (and of society in general). Bataille's position defines an opposing pole to that of Breton; it is possible to see how Magritte's works fall between the two, problematizing the viewer-subject dynamic but at the same time not engaging in the same all-encompassing involvement which Bataille stresses. Furthermore, it can be argued that Bataille's position indicates the possibility of a male discourse which does not necessarily reinforce the more traditional view that a man's existence depends on a woman's non-existence to which Breton seems to subscribe.<sup>55</sup> In opening up the possibility for a transgressive language of sexuality which does not maintain women, separate from and subject to the dominant male order, as a necessary part of that language, Bataille's work points to the possibility of reading "Le Viol" as other than pornographic in the worst sense of the word. Art and the process of imaging, according to Bataille, are fundamentally motivated by transgression and desire:

Here we see that, in its essence and in its practice, art expresses the moment of religious transgression, that art alone expresses it with sufficient gravity and that this moment is its sole escape. It is the state of transgression which commands the desire, the demand for a world more profound, more rich and prodigious; the demands, in a word, of a sacred world.<sup>56</sup>

...art has constantly as its object: the creation of a sensuous reality modifying the world with respect to a response to the desire for the prodigious, a desire implicit in the essence of the human being.<sup>57</sup>

Denis Hollier demonstrates that the differences between Breton's and Bataille's concepts of a sexually transgressive language begin with the differences between their attitudes towards psychoanalysis. He notes that Breton and Bataille represent two different sides of the psychoanalytic response to madness which Surrealism takes up: that of the analyst and that of the patient.<sup>58</sup> These usages can be seen not only in their theoretical positions, but also in their biographical circumstances: Breton was a medical student of psychoanalysis, Bataille, a psychoanalytic patient. Not only is Breton's decision to side with the analyst apparent in issue n°11, it is also very clearly stated in *Nadja*: "the tone adopted for the narrative bases itself on that of medical observation, between all neuro-psychiatry, which tends to retain traces of all that which examination and interrogation can liberate."<sup>59</sup> Breton's narrative strategy in *Nadja* actually does not follow the example of the medical text, as Michel Beaujour has pointed out, but his intent to do so is important.<sup>60</sup>

In opposition to Breton, Bataille is concerned with a direct immersion in perversion and madness rather than a clinical observation of these states. According to him, the observer/analyst maintains the present social structure rather than disrupting it through the constant defining and recording of (someone else's) perversion. Bataille is more interested in taking perversion out of the realm of other and into the "real practice of disequilibrium, real risk of mental sanity"; he charges Breton and Éluard with "simulations of desire" in *L'Immaculée Conception* or in *Nadja*, for example.<sup>61</sup> The latter, Bataille claims, set their own parameters of meaning apart from any real conditions of existence and stop short of any true engagement. In two of his articles for *Documents*, "Informe" and "Le gros orteil," Bataille develops a concept of disruptive perversion which resides in writing, and through writing, in representations. Hollier writes of Bataille's method:

Transgression does not belong to the space of ideas, except as that which subverts them. This is why it arises, not from a theory, but from a practice. Writing is one form of that practice...<sup>62</sup>

In his dictionary article, "Informe," ("Formless") in the 1929 issue n°7, Bataille develops a usage of language based neither on any set meanings for words nor on the use of words to "organize" reality. Instead, it is based on a comprehension of a word's job.<sup>63</sup> The first sentence thus reads: "A dictionary begins from the moment where it no longer gives the meaning of words, but their tasks." <sup>64</sup> "Informe" therefore moves against the temptation of closure of discourse into a kind of writing which maintains the productivity of writing disruption within itself. The word becomes the place of an "event," that of a desire which cannot be directly named within language itself. The points of language's refusal to cohere into closed meaning allow us, not to "speak the unspeakable" about desire, rather, to let its existence appear, to let it make itself known through its absence. The word ceases to function as a method of communication or a representation. It instead functions as a *thing*, heavy, weighty. It is a thing torn from the symbolic code which acts as Antonin Artaud suggests:

Yes, here now is the only usage which language can serve from this point forward; [as] a means for madness, for the elimination of thought, for rupture, the labyrinth of unreason, and not [as] a *Dictionary* where such pseudo-intellectuals [cuistres] of the environs of the Seine canal their shrinking intellect.<sup>65</sup>

"Informe" guards against those "frock coated" academics (who are content only when "the universe takes form") by giving language the job of disrupting formal categories, of crumbling boundaries and invading sacred spaces. Bataille uses the notion of "informe" as a bridge between his writing and the "formless" universe in which words communicate through the wound of their disruption, through their inability or unwillingness to maintain closure of meaning. Writing is that place where best can be

described the formlessness of the universe by comparing it to things which, in their refusal to take shape, disgust: "crachat" (spit) or a squashed "araignée" (spider).

In "Informe" words have the status of transgressive objects. In "Le gros orteil" (the big toe) printed in *Documents* n°6 1929, the object itself becomes transgressive. The big toe achieves the disruptive, horrific state of "informe" through the mechanics of Jacques-André Boiffard's photographs. [figure n°16] His photographs, unlike his photographs for *Nadja* which emphasized an aura disassociated from the physical body, magnify the physical object -- the toe -- to monstrous proportions. Bataille describes this as the process of "bassesse" while Boiffard gives us a visualization of the terms by which the process can be realized. The vertical positioning of the toe links its qualities as that part of man which is always buried in the mud with his sexuality, reinforcing the ties between baseness, sexuality, and death which Bataille took from his childhood Catholic schooling. "Le gros orteil" offers us an example of the techniques of "informe" being put into practice; the viewer's horrified reaction is due more to the isolation and magnification of the toe than to any of its innate qualities. "Informe" is a machine for the calculated *production* of occurrences far from Breton's passively expectant attitude towards chance. <sup>66</sup> "Informe" and "le gros orteil" produce that shock which continually jolts us out of conventional patterns of thought.

The process in which Bataille engages is one of the continual destruction of any strictly defined categories of meaning. His emphasis on calculatedly disruptive language and imagery is very similar to Magritte's practice in "Le Viol." Magritte, like Bataille, takes a familiar object and on it performs an operation which calls up in us a previously hidden horror. And as Bataille wrote in "Abattoir," his description of the Parisian slaughteryards, the horror is not inherent in the object (here the woman's body) -- it is in our own inability to stare straight in the face of that terrifying thing we



have created.<sup>67</sup> Magritte's replacement of the face with genitals strips away the thin veneer of respectability which allows us to view the nakedness of a woman with impunity by calling it art. The refusal on his part to "beautify" the female even in the least by smoothing out the cartoon-like inconsistencies of her figure act exactly like Bataille's concept of "informe." In "Le Viol" there is no question that this overtly sexualized, traumatized body collapses any viewer pretensions of aesthetic distance. Magritte thrusts us right against the question of what it means to look at the body of a woman, demanding that we recognize what that gaze is *really* about.

One notes, however, that Magritte's more general attitude towards the representation of women did not consistently coincide with Bataille's program of "informe," placing in doubt our ability to read all of his images of the female in the same light as we do "Le Viol." Although he disagreed often with Breton, Magritte never followed the example of the outlaw Surrealists Artaud, Boiffard or Robert Desnos, for instance, in publishing his work in Bataille's *Documents*. More telling, however, is a comparison of the techniques used in "Le Viol" with those in an image previously discussed briefly, "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt," and in "L'impromptu de Versailles," a drawing done in 1933 for the Surrealist booklet *Violette Nozières*. [figure n°17] In "la femme cachée," the quirk lies not so much in the image of the woman as in the primary act of vision which the viewer carries out in relation to the painting (as I will demonstrate later). Communication through viewing is placed in opposition to communication through writing, but the woman's body itself remains relatively unproblematic. She remains the classic image of the nude, head turned away and body exposed, which opens itself to our gaze. Thus, although Magritte is here concerned with the opposition of representation and language, his interest scarcely extends onto the territory of sexuality and desire for which Bataille claims such great

importance. This work is therefore in a slightly different category than that of "Le Viol."

In contrast, Magritte's image, "L'impromptu de Versailles," concerns itself directly with the issues of desire and the social discourses which regulate (and maintain) it. It appeared in 1933 in a book, *Violette Nozières*, collectively produced by Magritte and other Surrealists. The title of the book refers to the case of Violette Nozières, a young girl brought to trial for the poisoning of her father after he had molested her. The Surrealists were intrigued by several aspects of the case: by the incest; by the extremely public nature of the trial; and above all, by the confusion as to whether Violette did or did not enjoy being "violée." The fact that she was female was a key element; according to the Surrealists, only a woman would have sufficient access to the unconscious to sustain incestuous desire against social mores. They saw Violette as the living personification of the desires of the unconscious which, having come to the surface, break through civilization's moral codes. Magritte uses the incident as the starting point of an attempt to undermine the discursive formations of bourgeois sexual codes. He poses the narrative logic of the public press' condemnation of Violette against the sexually transgressive "non-logic" of the Oedipal scenario. For Magritte, the fact that no one could precisely determine whether Violette consented to her father's advances or not indicated a confusion which broke through the narrative that was being constructed for (and against) her.

Here Magritte leaves the relationship of the female body to the role of sexual transgression in society deliberately open to multiple interpretations. Ultimately, however, these interpretations are still constructed within a narrative logic which forecloses on their potential for the "informe" disruption of meaning. Magritte's drawing shows a top-hatted man, almost undoubtedly meant to be Freud, standing with

his back to the viewer, case of notes in hand. He faces a young girl sitting on the lap of an older man we assume to be her father. The man moves his hand under the girl's skirt and she leans towards him as if for protection. In this image, Magritte describes the classic Freudian Oedipal scenario of a daughter's incestuous desire for her father (the big question in the Nozières case never seems to have been whether or not the father's incestuous desires were damaging, but rather, whether or not the daughter desired her father). In this instance the transgressive possibilities of the situation have almost broken through the sexual codes of bourgeois society, but not quite. In the end, Violette, a working class girl, remains effectively regulated by the disciplinary techniques of observation and punishment developed with the moral system of the middle class. E.L.T. Mesens' poem on the opposing page places Violette squarely within her lower class background as the daughter of a train conductor, using the metaphor of the train's movement to indicate the "action" of the drama. According to Magritte and Mesens, Violette is not only the daughter of a simple train conductor, she is in addition the daughter of the whole bourgeois moral system which forms her, and then makes her the object of its condemnation.

Magritte's image, unlike the other illustrations for the publication, rides the line between fantasy and the "reality" of physical actions. "L'impromptu de Versailles" ultimately seems to choose the "reality" of narrative logic and traditional representation over the "fantasy" world of dreams and incestuous desire. The figures retain proportions and positions similar to those we attribute to natural human bodies quite differently from Dali's figures with (phallic) pinocchio-like noses so extended they need a crutch for support, or Giacometti's dream-like line drawings. Yet neither do Magritte's figures participate fully in a "realistic" representation -- there is a stiffness to them, a lack of motion which breaks down any sense of continuous, linear time. The event pictured here occurs in a confused time-frame: these particular figures can be

dated by their costume and appearances, and these particular events had a definite historical place, but the event is transhistorical, as is the unconscious. Magritte's image *refers*, as he himself explains in "Les mots et les images," both to factual events and to that to which those events themselves refer, namely, the sexual drives of the unconscious towards a prohibited incest. It refers to things and events outside itself, making that referencing process part of the central tension of the image.

In "L'impromptu de Versailles," Magritte seems to suggest that an artist might show the "facts" of the situation, but he or she can never do more than hint at the deeper motivations behind those facts. The *intimation* in this drawing is full of tensions and suggestions, but the depiction of Violette's molestation does not function as does Bataille's "informe" in tearing the event loose from its moral moorings. In the image, her violation continues to carry with it a history, a narrative, giving the scenario a closure which allows the viewer to relegate the entire episode, images included, to an historical past: in 1933 Violette poisoned her father. In addition, the image of the top-hatted Freud reminds us that Freud's own position as a late nineteenth century bourgeois man forces narrative closure to the endlessness of the incest story by securing it to the ideological frameworks of our modern era. Although it raises the socially taboo desire of incest, Magritte's drawing stays within the realm of traditional representation and signification; the refusal-to-closure which the incestuous desires of the unconscious seem to offer, in the person of the female Violette, never sufficiently breaks down the closure of narrative meaning. It is possible, however, to find other works by Magritte which radically place narrative logic in question by undermining the base on which such logic rests. In particular, the investigations Magritte carries out in this area can be seen to have influenced his concerns in "Le Viol."

*Burrowing Words:*

My contention for "Le Viol" is that it effectively counters traditional images of women because it brings all of Magritte's investigations into language and representation to bear upon that body which most potently exemplifies their problematic nature: the female body. I have thus far examined a few of the levels on which this image and others function in order to show Magritte's general interest in these issues. To point to them, however, is not enough, as one can easily say that an interest in language, representation and their relation to sexuality characterizes the whole of Surrealism; Magritte's project demands a more detailed exploration, the beginnings of which are found in Michel Foucault's book on Magritte, *This Is Not a pipe*. His analysis can then be extended onto the terrain of sexuality through the agency of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory.

Michel Foucault defines a split between representation and language. He characterizes images or "plastic representations" as implying resemblance and words or "linguistic references" as excluding it.<sup>68</sup> He explores the play that Magritte achieves between the two by looking at the relationship between title and image made problematic by his paintings. Representation as an "affirmative bond" between viewer and image is deliberately ruptured in ways about which Magritte himself speaks: "The titles are chosen in such a way as to keep anyone from assigning my paintings to the familiar region that habitual thought appeals to in order to escape perplexity."<sup>69</sup> Foucault looks here at Magritte's painting, "Ceci n'est pas une pipe." (1926) [figure n° 18] He makes no attempt to take this rupture of the affirmative bond onto the extremely tense sexual ground of either "Le Viol" or Magritte's other images of women, but it is in images such as these that the implications of Magritte's word plays come into closer contact with our own functioning as gendered subjects. The problematic side of desire, of the

madness, suicide, violence that are necessarily linked to the positive aspects of love, are arranged and dealt with in images like "Le Viol" in a much more concrete way than in Magritte's images without women.

Foucault begins by remarking on Magritte's overt use of realism; in contrast to other Surrealists such as Dali or Miro, Magritte chose to paint images which correspond very closely to conventional images of world-objects. Magritte became disinterested in painting as an end in itself (i.e. in formal issues) very early on, due to a revelatory view of a de Chirico painting from which he deduced the "ascendancy of poetry over painting."<sup>70</sup> After this he turned away from the aesthetic problems of painting towards an interest in relationships between words and images.<sup>71</sup> Foucault, in another context, discusses the relationship between image and language in a way which clarifies the problem of Magritte's work:

... the relation of language to painting is an infinite relation. It is not that words are imperfect, or that when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to the other's terms: it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. And it is in vain that we attempt to show, by the use of images, metaphors, or similes, what we are saying; the space where they achieve their splendour is not that deployed by our eyes but that defined by the sequential elements of syntax.<sup>72</sup>

In Foucault's view, language and image are never congruent, and the space between them can never be smoothly bridged. Magritte's work makes explicit this gap rather than attempting to efface it. Foucault demonstrates that in the painting, "Ceci n'est pas une pipe," Magritte does not attempt to place language and image in opposition to each other, in a situation in which the viewer would be forced (or even be able) to choose one over the other. Instead he places the viewer in an impossible situation -- we are forced to connect the image with its linguistic counterpart, and yet we are denied any

concrete position from which we might judge the value of each. Magritte therefore breaks the "affirmative bond" between viewer and image which presumes a stable base for such a connection to be made by placing the proper name in question. According to Foucault, when used conventionally, proper names allow us to obscure the differences between words and images. He continues:

...the proper name, in this particular context, is merely an artifice: it gives us a finger to point with, in other words, to pass surreptitiously from the space where one speaks to the space where one looks; in other words, to fold one over the other as though they were equivalents. But if one wishes to keep the relation of language to vision open, if one wishes to treat their incompatibility as a starting-point for speech instead of as an obstacle to be avoided, so as to stay as close as possible to both, then one must erase those proper names and preserve the infinity of the task.<sup>73</sup>

The proper name is that word which carries a highly ambiguous relationship to a certain mental image; it is Saussure's "tree": that signifier which relates only tenuously to the signified. In "Les mots et les images," Magritte makes no move to erase the proper name. Instead, his project makes explicit the ambiguous and convoluted relationship between image and word. He refuses to allow the viewer to "pass surreptitiously" from one to the next. But at the same time, Magritte also disallows the complete separation of the two. Thus in "Les mots et les images," we find statements such as: "An object is not so possessed of its name that one cannot find for it another which suits it better" or "Sometimes the name of an object takes the place of an image. A word can take the place of an object in reality. An image can take the place of a word in a proposition." Or "In a painting, words are of the same cloth as images. Rather one sees images and words differently in a painting." <sup>74</sup> Magritte insists on the confusion caused by phrases such as these precisely because they indicate, as Foucault states: "the inextricable tangle of words and images and [...] the absence of a common ground to sustain them..." <sup>75</sup>

For Foucault, the success of Magritte's painting rests on a distinction between "resemblance" and "similitude" which serves to disrupt the "common ground." Resemblance orders and classifies according to a primary referent whereas similitude does away with the primary referent, constructing instead multiple images along a lateral chain of signification. Things become "like" each other without maintaining the hierarchical status which allows one to be determined the "original" within a dominant order. Magritte breaks the affirmative bond between viewer and painted object through a denial of resemblance, thus throwing open to doubt our ability to firmly grasp any essential meaning in the thing viewed. His objects are at the same time familiar and non-representational.<sup>76</sup>

Magritte points up the lack of congruency between language and image in order to continue on a route paralleled by Foucault's program: a use of the "infinite relation" of language and painting as a starting point for new uses of language. In "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt" (published in *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°12) the oscillations between word and image perform this function both within the image and within the *La Révolution surréaliste* as a whole. In addition, these reverberations have consequences which move outside the close context of the magazine into the world, particularly around the image of the female.

The effectiveness of the image rests on the obvious ill-fit between the statement "I do not see the woman hidden in the forest" and the fact that to the viewer the image of the woman is perfectly visible. Surrounding the image are portrait photographs of the Surrealists with their eyes (voluntarily) closed. Immediately we are confronted with a set of relationships which serve to undermine the conventional: if we are not able to "see" the woman in the forest, is this because this is merely an *image* of a woman? is it because she is not really in a forest? (or is she somehow the opposite of the metaphoric



"trees" which prevent us from seeing the forest?) is the speaking of the words "je ne vois pas" really equivalent to the fact of vision? is Magritte demonstrating that when we speak we are unable to see the image (or the woman) and visa versa (when we see the image/woman, we are unable to speak words which will be the equivalent of her, we are unable to inscribe words surreptitiously across her body)?

Magritte also suggests the ambiguity of the word "je." When we read the sentence, we constitute ourselves as subject, as "je." At the same time we realize that it must also refer to the Surrealists who surround the image. If this is so, then we understand ourselves to be included in the surrealist camp. However, we can only read the sentence and make its associations because we have our eyes open; we have the power of vision which the Surrealists do not. Thus we cannot be included in their group. Furthermore, we cannot smoothly relate what we read to what we see, since we *do* see the woman. Therefore our ability to constitute ourselves as the subject "je" is contradicted through the very process of becoming that subject. At the same time Magritte problematizes our position as viewer, he also problematizes the position of woman as the object of our vision. She cannot be "seen" at the same moment she is "read," indicating a distinction between language and vision (image) which has consequences for how the female is constituted within social structures. Woman is unable to be constituted as a complete subject within the space of human communication; there are always moments at which some part of her is unable to be communicated. This applies not only to those who scrutinize her body, but to the woman herself; it is impossible for her to read *herself* as whole.

Within the publication of *La Révolution surréaliste*, we must read Magritte's questions not only forward through the other texts in this magazine and those to follow (*Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* and *Minotaure*, among others), but backward

through the preceding publications. The Surrealists themselves make this explicit; the format of "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt" consciously recapitulates the image of the anarchist assassin, Germaine Berton, in the first issue of *La Révolution surréaliste*. [figure n°10] In the latter image, the relationship between the central figure of Berton and the surrounding Surrealists was much more straightforwardly political; the central issue of the image is not the dissection of the viewer's relationship to the female image, but rather the political act committed by a woman. The dynamic between the viewer and the photograph of Berton remains within conventional boundaries. Magritte's image thus marks a major shift in emphasis away from the female as a political/sexual heroine towards a view of her as a medium for the exploration of structures of communication. This shift also appears in a comparison of "la femme cachée" to the texts in issue n°11 of *La Révolution surréaliste* which deal with the female as an object of study. Although this is the first issue of the magazine to focus so directly on the study of woman herself, no women were present at the discussion on female sexuality, and the article on hysteria continues in the tradition of clinical (male) observation of a "female" neurosis. Breton's text (*Nadja*) is the only one which contains the slightest hint of any real engagement between male and female which might challenge the man's social status. Magritte picks up, one might say, where Breton leaves off, making central the relationship between viewer and viewed.

Magritte thus seems intent on destroying the conventional relationship between viewer and image, particularly here the image of the female. We need to remember, however, that he engages in this challenge through the Western tradition of the painting of the nude. Thus while Magritte deconstructs the reading of this image as a straightforward objectification of the female body, he depends upon that very reading as the basic inspiration for his art. This can be seen very clearly in the assumption that the viewer is

male and that to explore the topics of sexuality and communication, the object must (according to the Surrealists) be female.<sup>77</sup>

In opposition to "la femme cachée" there are many Magritte images of women in which the complex intertwinings of word and image do not accomplish their task of undermining conventional discourse. One such is "La gâcheuse," [figure n°19] Magritte's image for the *Bulletin international du Surréalisme* of August, 1935 (published in Brussels approximately a year after *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?*). In "La gâcheuse" ("She who spoils") we see a portrait of a female figure from the waist up. Her face, however, has been replaced by a skull, effectively deflecting whatever temptations we may have had to objectify and "enjoy" the woman's beauty. The title of the painting indicates a number of interpretations having to do with "she who spoils"; the 'she' might refer to death (la mort) gendered female in the French language, suggesting in the most straightforward reading that death spoils a woman's sexuality (as it spoils the male viewer's pleasure in that sexuality). On another level, however, "la mort," so similar in sound to "l'amour," provides another connection between female sexuality and the death's head. This link would suggest a reading of woman's sexuality *as* death. The image carries remarkable similarities to the nineteenth century French representations of the deadly woman which were found in such disparate cultural areas as the popular press and Baudelaire's poetry. As Sander Gilman has shown, newspapers often represented the dangers of syphilis to the male viewer in the form of a beautiful woman with a skull's head.<sup>78</sup> Syphilis, at epidemic levels in nineteenth century France, continued to be a danger well into the twentieth century, making it one of the major health concerns of the period. "La gâcheuse" makes little attempt to break with these images which blame women (particularly prostitutes and sexualized women) for sexually-induced trauma and disease. The connections implied between the image and the political text protesting the Franco-Soviet pact of 1935

which follows, signed by Magritte and other Surrealists, are not able to shift the anti-female content onto a less misogynist level nearly as effectively (if at all) as do those between "Le Viol" and its text.<sup>79</sup>

From these examples we see that the force of Magritte's argument concerning subjectivity can be turned back against him in its need, once again, for the woman to be there as the object of male attention. These images tread a dangerously thin line between subverting traditional values and falling back into them. This danger is very real, as writers such as Susan Gubar have pointed out, as Surrealist images (particularly those of Magritte) have been absorbed back into dominant social patterns while being stripped of their subversive ideological content.<sup>80</sup> While "la femme cachée" and "La gâcheuse" problematize this relationship much more openly than the photograph of Berton, for example, the issues are much more overtly stated in "Le Viol."

In "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt," the image of the woman remains whole and the challenges to the viewer are built up outside her body in the floating realm between image and word. In "Le Viol," however, the woman herself becomes the terrain on which the fracturing of communication is made visible. Ambiguities of representation are not evoked through the obscuring of the woman by some external object (e.g. the word "montagne" written across her face in "Le paysage fantôme" [figure n°20] or the closed eyes of the Surrealists which deny her existence in "la femme cachée"). The woman's own genitals delete and replace her facial features. Foucault's statement in *Ceci n'est pas une pipe* that the title painting "...exemplifies the penetration of discourse into the form of things; it reveals discourse's ambiguous power to deny and redouble"<sup>81</sup> can be extended to (and seems more appropriate for) "Le Viol," but it is not simply the relationship between title and image which problematizes a straightforward reading; we find the same ambiguities within the image

itself. The replacement of the woman's face in "Le Viol" by her genitals performs a much more sexually charged version of Foucault's dynamic. Because her face has been "eradicated" she is forcibly set adrift in the space of non-expression/non-language. She becomes, as Foucault terms it, one of "those whose language has been destroyed."<sup>82</sup> Her loss of the power to communicate through "normal" channels (i.e. language which, as we shall see, is dominated by the phallic signifier) makes her unable to systematically speak to the world whose base is that language, as well as unable to communicate herself *to herself*. Her coherency has been shattered, both in body and in speech.

If she is constituted as Other by male discourse she can only be maintained as such through the *denial* of any "resemblance" between her and the male viewer which might put them on common ground. The bond between viewer and image which posits a universal model to which all meanings can be related must not be the bond of "sameness" or comradery; it must relegate masculine to one side (dominant) and feminine to the opposing side (submissive). And yet this denial must at the same moment be hidden from view. It must be made to seem the natural state of affairs. Denial functions here as an ideological construct which must hide its workings in order to maintain itself.<sup>83</sup> The female must continue to fit smoothly into conventional patterns of Otherness, of subject for the male gaze. That this has been the premise of virtually all of Western painting of the nude has been demonstrated by numerous writers.<sup>84</sup> It is precisely the surreptitiousness of this move from the male gaze to the female body -- this move which is (re)presented as coherent while actually being based on rupture -- which Magritte so violently denies in "Le Viol." Our ability to recognize the image as representing a woman and to easily assign a whole range of meanings to that face (what "woman" means to us) are disrupted. And yet at the same time we cannot escape the notion of "face" (more specifically "female face"). In this manner the image, like "Ceci

n'est pas une pipe," disrupts the "affirmative bond" of representation by using an image almost as if it were a word.

*The 'Problem of Woman':*

Foucault approaches the debate around images of women which Magritte takes up so pointedly, but never fully engages. The central issue of this debate locates the general issue of representation within the body of woman as *the* site which exposes most fully the problematic nature of representation and signification. As Foucault has taken up the issue of signification in terms of image and word, so psychoanalysis and feminism have taken up these issues specifically around the topic of feminine sexuality. Jacques Lacan and those feminist theorists (e.g. Luce Irigaray, Michèle Montrelay, Jacqueline Rose) influenced by his work have focused on the determination of sexuality through discourse. Lacan ties a Saussurian analysis of the arbitrary nature of signification to psychoanalytic studies of sexuality in a move which situates the topic overtly with the field of social constructs. As a construct, the ideological underpinnings of sexuality may be discerned and possibly shifted; we can therefore see these underpinnings as single positions within a relative field rather than as "truths," an important realization for a feminist examination of discourses on women and representation. Furthermore, the extension of Foucault's argument through Lacanian psychoanalysis and feminism is substantiated, Lacan in particular, by the history of Surrealism itself; Lacan moved within the Surrealist circle, and he cited Roger Callois' article on mimicry as a major influence on his development of the mirror stage theory.<sup>85</sup> Lacan's own theories of the immanent ties between language, sexuality and the mind were developed to a large extent from the connections marked out by Surrealists like Magritte.<sup>86</sup> Breton and Magritte make this link clear in their collaboration on the pamphlet *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?* where we can once again read Breton's words: "...the problem of human

*expression in all its forms.* Whoever speaks of expression speaks, to begin with, of language." <sup>87</sup>

In *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?*, Breton lays out the Surrealist program explicitly around issues of language and the ability of the individual to "express" him or herself without restraint. He ties freedom of expression directly to a political context, defining the Surrealist cause as one interested in "social action" (here, the political fight against Fascism), a concept which differs greatly from the purely investigative or normalizing goals of (typical) psychoanalysis. But the psychoanalytic interest in problems of the Self and Other, and their relationship to sexuality and the social order coincide directly with the stated program of Surrealism. Psychoanalysis professes an interest in exploring that realm of the mind, the unconscious, as a phenomenon which can only be understood through the filter of another realm -- the conscious. As such, the unconscious can be designated that state of being which is as essential in its Otherness as reality is in its presence, as Louis Aragon describes in *Une Vague de rêves* (1924):

It should be understood that the real is a relation like any other; the essence of things is by no means linked to their reality, there are other relations besides reality, which the mind is capable of grasping and which also are primary, like chance, illusion, the fantastic, the dream. <sup>88</sup>

The division between the Otherness of the unconscious and the presence of the conscious is, in Lacanian psychoanalysis, intimately tied to reigning concepts of the differentiation between female and male sexuality, both of these splits occurring within the body of the infant as it enters into social discourse. The infant's status within the social realm is ultimately determined by that side on which it falls as its subjectivity is fixed feminine or masculine, with the feminine constituted as radically Other. The cover of *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?* in classifying the female body as so completely

repulsive, so inaccessible to any form of dialogue, makes that same link between femininity and Otherness. Although in n°11 of *La Révolution surréaliste* Breton discounts any female voice in the matter, "Le Viol" indicates that Surrealism is very much concerned with issues of the formation of subjectivity through gendered sexuality. Lacanian theory enables us to address two crucial questions: how is the subject's sexuality constructed and differentiated into masculine and feminine, and how may that sexuality be represented? We must approach these questions from the perspective of differentiating between male and female subjects, particularly around the issue of representation.

Lacan's theory of sexual determination gives us a cohesive framework from which to view the Surrealist project and Magritte's attitudes in relation to it. Through Lacan the following propositions are raised in relation to the Breton/Magritte collaboration:

1. that human sexuality is defined by/constructed within language.
2. that the phallus is the primary signifier within language.
3. beyond this, that feminine sexuality (and thus the female) is constructed as radically Other within a determinedly phallogentric language.
4. that any question of the feminine must revolve around its *representation in* that language.

Lacan, following in the footsteps of Freud, stresses that not only the subject's sexuality, but its whole identity are structured through its entrance into the social order. Freud insists that this occurs around through the infant's passage through the Oedipal stage by means of the castration complex. Juliet Mitchell gives a concise explanation of this process:

In Freud's eventual schema, the little boy and the little girl initially share the same sexual history which he terms 'masculine'. They start by desiring their first object: the mother. In fantasy this means having the phallus which is the object of the mother's desire (the phallic phase). This position is



forbidden (the castration complex) and the differentiation of the sexes occurs. The castration complex ends the boy's Oedipus complex (his love for his mother) and inaugurates for the girl the one that is specifically hers: she will transfer her object love to her father who seems to have the phallus and identify with her mother who, to the girl's fury, has not. Henceforth the girl will desire to have the phallus and the boy will struggle to represent it. For this reason, for both sexes, this is the insoluble desire of their lives ...<sup>89</sup>

Lacan clarifies and extends Freud's concept of the Oedipal and castration stages by insisting that male and female identities are defined around the phallus not primarily as a biological element, but, significantly, around the phallus as a signifier for social relations.<sup>90</sup> According to Lacan, both family order and the larger social order gain their coherency through recourse to the phallus as paternal signifier.<sup>91</sup> By situating the subject from the very start within the terrain of linguistic signs, Lacan immediately indicates that the subject is constructed through its access (or non-access) to representation within language. Here it should be made clear that while the subject is understood in the Lacanian model to be socially "constructed," such a construction remains highly problematic. The subject, whether male or female, exists in a radically split, inharmonious state (although these states differ greatly from masculine to feminine). Lacanian psychoanalysis focuses on the disjunctions in the subject's conscious psychic state. An understanding of the ontological development of the Lacanian subject will offer several points for the furthering of Foucault's argument onto the terrain of female sexuality and the male gaze in relation to Magritte's work.

In the Lacanian model, the subject moves through several stages in its development, each defined by a certain "lack." Lacan demonstrates that, in traversing these stages, the subject's sexual desire is formed. Paraphrasing Lacan, Mitchell states:

...desire itself, and with it, sexual desire, can only exist by virtue of its alienation. [...] This account of sexual desire led Lacan, as it led Freud, to his adamant rejection of any theory of

the difference between the sexes in terms of pre-given male or female entities which complete and satisfy each other. Sexual difference can only be the consequence of a division; without this division it would cease to exist. But it must exist because no human being can become a subject outside the division into two sexes.<sup>92</sup>

After the infant's birth this split first manifests itself in the "imaginary," that term Lacan uses to designate that order of the subject's experience which is dominated by identification and duality. The imaginary can best be seen/demonstrated by the "mirror stage." The infant, discovering its reflection in a mirror for the first time, apprehends itself as complete, as enjoying coherence through its ideal image. This coherence is illusory, a reflection of a coherence the infant itself lacks. The mirror stage indicates the point in the subject's infancy in which recognition of self becomes forever after based on self-alienation, since this view of the self comes from outside it. It loves and is fascinated by the coherency of the mirrored identity, and yet it hates the mirror image because that image remains external to it. Lacan indicates that the mirror stage is at least to some degree culturally determined, since it is only realized in retrospect from within the symbolic order of language.<sup>93</sup> Mitchell explains the mirrored subject as "a being that can only conceptualise itself when it is mirrored back to itself from the position of another's desire."<sup>94</sup> Her statement points to the major ramifications the mirror stage holds for representation of male and female identity and makes clear that subjectivity is formed and retained only in relation to some Other.

Magritte's work often concerns itself with problems of self-recognition and self-alienation similar to those described in the Lacanian mirror stage. Magritte's literal use of the mirror prop in certain of his paintings places these concerns within the realm of visual representation, but his interest in the seeming impossibility of finding a coherent position from which to scrutinize the self extends outside these particular images into pictures like "la femme cachée" and "Le Viol." In a number of his works, Magritte

anchors questions of self-identification to gender differentiation, but his male subjects maintain at least the possibility for a vision of a coherent self whereas his female subjects are, as one says, always already blind. This becomes clear in a comparison between "La reproduction interdite" [figure n°21] and "Les liaisons dangereuses," [figure n°22]. In the former, we see the back of a man standing before a mirror. In the mirror is reflected, not his face as we would expect, but again the back of his head. We read the pair of images -- the man and his reflection -- as two separate entities which refer to each other but which can never be read as unified. We assume that the man also is unable to recognize a unified version of himself in the Lacanian sense since he cannot recognize his own gaze returned from his mirrored image. However, in comparison to another image, it becomes clear that this subject still maintains the possibility for such a unification (however illusory) in that he retains the power and privilege of sight, of the gaze. In "Les liaisons dangereuses," however, the woman not only is unable to see her own face in the mirror (in similar fashion to the man), but is not able to see anything at all. She must passively accept her status without a word and literally without a second glance. We look at her and her reflection but she stands behind the mirror, remaining on the other side of the viewer-subject dynamic, apart from us. The man in "La reproduction interdite," although perhaps unable to construct a coherent identity for himself, does not allow the viewer the same one-sided access we find in "Les liaisons dangereuses." He is able to stand on both sides of that same viewer-subject dynamic at once, being both the viewer of his own image (and thus in our position) and the subject of our gaze.

The "affirmative bond," that illusion of communication between viewer and subject, comes under a stress in these pictures which serves to emphasize the fact of the viewer's gaze. Not only do we become conscious of our own gaze through its forced interruption, but we also realize that it is gendered male. Magritte problematizes the

gaze, but he does not take it out of the realm of the male. In Magritte's paintings, women remain objects to be viewed and men remain subjects with which to identify.

The crucial next stage, termed the symbolic, is that of the subject's entrance into language. For Lacan, the acquisition of language means the entrance of the subject into the cultural order defined by a linguistic structure which is already and always in place and therefore pre-exists all subjects. An individual subject becomes male or female at this moment: "Men and women are signifiers bound to the common usage of language."<sup>95</sup> Here it is necessary to note that Lacan brings into psychoanalysis the Saussurian argument that the signifier possesses value only in relation to other signifiers. He extends the argument and claims not only that signification occurs within a closed system without ties to any exterior absolute, but that the only existing "Real" is that which lies outside of signification, or within the cracks of the signifying order. Because meaning is constructed within the historically specific chain of signifiers and signifieds, it can never be isolated within one element alone, and it necessarily is not "real." Thus the Lacanian subject relates essentially only to signifiers with pre-constructed meaning and value -- signifiers such as "father," or "mother," which themselves relate only to other signifiers.<sup>96</sup> The subject itself becomes defined through a linguistic system which does not address its being, but which entirely determines its social existence:

Symbols ... envelop the life of man in a network so total that they join together, before he comes into the world, those who are going to engender him "by flesh and blood"; so total that they bring to his birth ... the share of his destiny; so total that they give the words that will make him faithful or renegade, the law of the acts that will follow him right to the very place where he *is* not yet and even beyond his death; and so total that through them his end finds its meaning in the last judgement, where the Word absolves his being or condemns it....<sup>97</sup>

The structuring of the subject occurs on all levels of the mind: the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious. Indeed, it is through entrance into the signifying order that the mind becomes split into these realms. Additionally, although neither can adequately (i.e. transparently) represent real needs and drives within the endless signifying chains of language, male and female subjects become defined in radically different ways according to their differing access to language, or, more specifically, to the symbolic order. Sexuality, along with the categories male and female, are defined through language around the primary signifier, the phallus. The female is defined as lacking the phallus, or as lacking access to signifying structures, and the male is defined as struggling to represent the phallus, or as within signification but unable to control its networks.

Lacan sees woman as being defined and constituted within language, but only as Other, as perpetually de-centered with respect to a male Self. Jacqueline Rose explains: "Woman as *the* object, as the fantasy of her definition" is unable to conceive of herself in any terms other than those of phallogentric language, and thus must describe herself even to *herself* as Other.<sup>98</sup> Woman becomes "*the* object" in that what we now see is "a carrying over onto the woman of the difficulty inherent in sexuality" itself." <sup>99</sup> For Lacan, anatomical distinctions are no longer necessarily those aspects which mark the crucial differences between male and female. In his seminar *Encore* (n°XX), Lacan states that women are entirely determined through a phallogentric language in which they cannot speak their name, with the following results:

There is no woman who is not excluded by the nature of things, which is the nature of words, and it must be said that if there is something they themselves are complaining about enough at the moment, it is well and truly that --only they don't know what they are saying, which is the all the difference between them and me.<sup>100</sup>

Nonetheless, because she remains outside the realm of the symbolic the female retains a privileged relationship to the real, namely to her needs and drives (as opposed to her desires, which are constructs) which the male does not have. The male, although he can never fully represent the phallus and thus is constituted only tenuously within the realm of the symbolic, nevertheless retains an access to it which is denied the female.

In her exclusion from the symbolic and her privileged access to the real, the Lacanian female resembles that of the Surrealists and of many feminists who see woman as being closer to a natural, unrepressed sexuality. However, Lacan goes to great lengths to insist that this distinction is only made within and through language. In Juliet Mitchell's words: "[Lacan's] subject is not an entity with an identity, but a being created in the fissure of a radical split." <sup>101</sup> It is at this point that we begin to see the differences between Lacan's position and that of orthodox Surrealism; far from seeing this split as an essential element in the formation of the subject, the Surrealists saw it as the one obstacle which, when overcome, would lead to the realm of "surreality" and to revolutionary social change. For Breton and his fellow Surrealists, woman stood for that being closest to having broken through that barrier which separates this "reality" from the alternative worlds of madness, the unconscious and unrepressed sexuality. In Lacan's view, the Surrealists indulged in a utopianism which completely misunderstood the sources of all that they valued: "...human knowledge is determined in that 'little reality' ('ce peu de réalité'), which the Surrealists, in their restless way, saw as its limitation." <sup>102</sup>

"Le Viol," in its direct correlation of female genitalia with the woman's inability to speak, illustrates Lacan's theories of gender differentiation through language more closely than most surrealist images. The two are inextricably linked in a way which implies not only the feminine predicament, but also the opposing masculine access to

language, discourse, and meaning; to be gendered female in "Le Viol" means not to be able to communicate (or able at best to speak with one's sex, not with one's mind, to paraphrase Artaud). Not to be gendered female (i.e. gendered male) means to have access to the process of building language and discourse and to the ability to represent oneself within them. Magritte also extends the inability to communicate into the realm of sight, an important aspect of the subject's capacity to control its own formation through visual representation, as we have seen in Lacan's mirror stage. Blinded by her own anatomy, the sightless female body in "Le Viol" is forced even more violently than the figure in "Les liaisons dangereuses" to accept the construction of her body through the male-gendered gaze of the viewer. She is the visible construct of our desires. The title, the Rape, forces us to recognize the extreme violence done to the female body in this situation. In no way does Magritte view the process of gender differentiation as smooth or "natural."

Instead of functioning as a bridge to a world beyond the present, the Lacanian woman functions rather to "free" the Lacanian man by allowing him to remain entrenched in the symbolic realm. For herself, she functions not at all, an idea against which many feminist theorists influenced by Lacan have argued, claiming that both Lacan and Freud made little attempt to break the patterns of exclusion of women from discourse. If one takes this position in relation to "Le Viol," as has Susan Gubar, one is forced to conclude that such an image serves to reinforce the existing constraints on Woman which continue to exclude her from traditional discourse. "Le Viol," along with much of surrealist imagery, then falls into the category of pornography -- that class of images which ultimately humiliates and denigrates women.

In order to trace feminist arguments and position ourselves in relation to them, however, we must return to Lacan, and along with Lacan we must "return to Freud";

one of Lacan's major contributions to psychoanalysis has been to rescue Freud's notion of the fundamental rupture in the human subject as the site for psychoanalytic study. Lacan, in opposition to other major Freudian schools, sees the psychoanalyst's goal not as one of "normalizing" the subject -- smoothing over rupture that the subject might function effectively within society, but rather as one of privileging that rupture. The exploration of that fundamental split in which the human subject is formed is essential to Lacanian practice. One can say that in this regard Lacan is effectively more interested in disrupting the apparent coherency of dominant male discourse by emphasizing the violent rupture of coherence and continuity. Male discourse, according to Lacan, gains its coherency only by recruiting subjects, and subjects come into being only through that disruption.

Against this, feminist theorists like Luce Irigaray and Michèle Montrelay argue that even within the Lacanian framework language is determinedly constituted as masculine. They maintain that the ruptures of the human subject are given treatment without a consistent analysis of the framework on which they rest. They claim that such a refusal to analyze the framework amounts to an active reinforcement of the current symbolic order which keeps the female as Other, excluded from any ability to coherently represent herself. Lacan himself noted Freud's discovery of his own investment in the coherency of his patient's story, a coherency which falls on the side of phallogentric language:

to his great astonishment, he noticed that he could not avoid participating in what the hysteric was telling him, and that he felt affected by it. Naturally, everything in the resulting rules through which he established the practice of psychoanalysis is designed to counteract this consequence, to conduct things in such a way as to avoid being affected.<sup>103</sup>



He nonetheless states that "naturally" the analyst could and would effectively counteract such an investment (i.e. perform the impossible task of taking himself out of the dominant structure of language). Here Shoshana Felman points out Lacan's seemingly deliberate obscuring of the analyst's inability to stand outside the transference process, his investment in narration. Susan R. Suleiman suggests, however, that Lacan was precisely *not* interested in maintaining the analyst's interest in transference is an interest in narrative coherence: "For it is not at all clear, reading Lacan, that the aim of analysis, or of analytic discourse, is to construct a coherent -- that is to say, plausible, finished -- story. I would go so far as to say that this is precisely *not* the aim of analytic discourse, according to Lacan." <sup>104</sup>

Irigaray deconstructs both Freud and Lacan, demonstrating how their discourse denies even those slim possibilities for another, feminine discourse to be registered. In her essay "Così Fan Tutti," she argues that psychoanalysis itself follows the traditional patterns of male discourse in its disregard of the very thing it claims to investigate about the feminine, that is female sexuality:

The being that is sexualized female in and through discourse is also a place for the deposit of the remainders produced by the operation of language. For this to be the case, woman has to remain a body without organs.

This being so, nothing that has to do with women's erogenous zones is of the slightest interest to the psychoanalyst.<sup>105</sup>

Of Lacan, she states:

The question whether, in his logic, they [women] can articulate anything at all, whether they can be heard, is not even raised. For raising it would mean granting that there may be some other logic, and one that upsets his own. That is, a logic that challenges mastery. <sup>106</sup>

Discourse structures the Lacanian woman so completely that even her libido and her unconscious exist only within parameters determined by the phallus.<sup>107</sup> Irigaray in turn argues that if a woman only possesses the unconscious that discourse gives her, then psychoanalysis amounts to another form of mastery, to a "reappropriating" of the unconscious that has been lent her. More to the point, she can have no desires except those the psychoanalyst attributes to her.<sup>108</sup> The construction of feminine pleasure within male discourse is never to the advantage of the woman:

If there is such a thing -- still -- as feminine pleasure, then, it is because men need it in order to maintain themselves in their own existence. It is *useful* to them: it helps them bear what is intolerable in their world as speaking beings, to have a soul foreign to that world: a fantasmatic one.<sup>109</sup>

Here Irigaray's observations sound remarkably like a direct analysis of Breton's surrealist program. The image of woman as Other is useful to men, but not to women. From this point of view, Breton's position continues to appear outrageous, but we begin to see the unfolding of a more complex internal logic. While Breton might be an extreme case, neither can Magritte escape to positive or even neutral ground. Irigaray defines any representation of the female within male discourse as necessarily describing an absence which upholds the male presence. Her whole body becomes a realm to which she has no access:

She functions as a *hole* ... in the elaboration of imaginary and symbolic processes. But this fault, this deficiency, this "hole," inevitably affords woman too few figurations, images or representations by which to represent herself. It is not that she lacks some "master signifier" or that none is imposed upon her, but rather that access to a signifying economy, to the coining of signifiers, is difficult or even impossible for her because she remains an outsider, herself (a) subject to their norms. She borrows signifiers but cannot make her mark, or re-mark upon them.<sup>110</sup>

If we agree with Irigaray, then images such as Magritte's "Le Viol" offer at best a representation from a male point of view of the impossibility of women to ever be fully represented or to fully participate in such a representation. At worst they offer an image which continues to undermine any possibility for such a complete representation. For Irigaray (as for many feminists), the possibility for developing a feminine language exists only within the circular space of relations between women from which men are excluded.<sup>111</sup> While we may or may not agree with it, this argument suggests a concept of audience for writing and imagery which is radically different from that of Breton and Magritte; a concept which not only insists on gender issues being of primary concern, but which also suggests that no radical shifting of present social relations will occur without the development of new non-phallogentric modes of representation.

From Irigaray's point of view, as from that of many feminists, Breton's appropriation of the female "voice," so similar to the phenomenon of analysis, typifies the almost frantic male attempt to control and obscure the limits of representation. Michèle Montrelay claims women to be the "ruin of representation":<sup>112</sup> their presence exposes the limits of representation which Western art has traditionally tried to hide. Montrelay, extending Lacan's argument that women's sexuality is formed in and through discourse, finds that the climactic instant of that sexuality, the female orgasm, "marks the moment when the discourse, in exploding under the effect of *its own force*, comes to the point of breaking, of coming apart."<sup>113</sup> In its disintegration, discourse "is no longer anything,"<sup>114</sup> a revelation which this phallogentric society cannot abide. Both Irigaray and Montrelay seek some way to subvert the monumentality of the Freudian/Lacanian anti-historical debate, to move past the avowed disbelief in progress which turns criticism of evolutionist/biological history into a "truth." <sup>115</sup>

Irigaray argues for a feminine "reality" in opposition to what she sees as the masculine "reality" Lacan's discourse continues to support. Her position rests on the possibility of (re)discovering something which already exists -- feminine sexuality -- buried and repressed in the present social order. The strength in her argument lies in its call for the recognition of another voice which would necessitate new theoretical and political positions with regard to discourse and representation. The female body, for Irigaray, becomes the site for this voice, located in the ambiguous position of witness to history but excluded from that history.<sup>116</sup> That is, the female body outside its representation within phallogentric language.

Jacqueline Rose offers a feminist critique from a Lacanian position in opposition to Irigaray and Montrelay, concerning possibilities for positive representations of the feminine. Her argument is the one I wish to take up for the purposes of this paper, although I have only enough space here to sketch it briefly. Rose claims that Irigaray's and Montrelay's conflicts with Lacan tend to obscure his own efforts at critiquing forms of representation and identification, those which in the end led him to dissolve his school in Paris in 1980.<sup>117</sup> The force of his argument remains, however, in that recent essays on female sexuality have continued to see this sexuality as intimately bound with woman's relationship to language. Rose demonstrates that the debate now centers on "the question of the woman's body as language (what, of that body, can achieve symbolisation)." Irigaray and Montrelay, she asserts, see their goal as the retrieval of woman from subjection to the phallic signifier and to language at the same time. This, she argues, indicates a point of origin for the feminine outside of the symbolic order.<sup>118</sup> While an exterior point of origin for the female is a powerful argument on many levels, particularly in its resistance to the inscription of women within Freud's and Lacan's account of the feminine, it sidesteps Lacan's main argument, which is that there can be no concept of the feminine outside language. Rose

quotes Lacan: "How return, other than by means of a special discourse, to a pre-discursive reality?" maintaining once again that there is no reality outside language.<sup>119</sup> She continues, writing: "If woman is defined as other it is because the definition [within language] produces her as other, and not because she has another essence."<sup>120</sup> Rose has no wish for either Lacan or herself to be seen as disrupting feminist goals. For her and for Lacan, however, the program within which any challenge to the dominant order can be made must be based on a "different symbolic term (in which case the relation to the body is immediately thrown into crisis), or else by an entirely different logic altogether (in which case one is no longer in the order of symbolisation at all)." <sup>121</sup> In other words, undermining the existing symbolic order cannot be done from the body of the female (by the female, outside language), but must be done within language itself. Consistent interrogation of the symbolic order serves to undermine any inflexible (absolute) definitions of "feminine."

This last sentence returns us to "Le Viol" via Foucault's concept of the "infinite relation" of language and painting. Foucault proposes that the gaps in language (the gaps between image and word, between resemblance and similitude) be maintained as productive, in much the same way as Rose and Lacan propose that the gaps in discourse be examined as that place where the dominant order may be shaken through study of the disjunctions in the formation of the subject. Foucault, in reading Borges, cites the following conclusions:

*Heterotopias* are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this *and* that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy syntax in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to but also opposite one another) to "hang together." <sup>122</sup>

Visual explorations of heterotopias are what Foucault claims Magritte's paintings to be. They investigate the arbitrariness of the Saussurean sign -- the signifier which relates to the signified only within the boundaries of language, never outside in some universal space of "true" relations. Foucault finds that this kind of investigation more disturbing than the disorder produced by the "incongruous," that juxtaposition of inappropriate objects which many Surrealists felt to be so effective. Foucault's choice of words such as "infinite" connote, however, a certain ability to control and play with language with which Lacan and Rose might argue. Furthermore, we must remember that while Foucault discusses the overall relationship between image and word, he never demonstrates how this functions with regard to representations of sexual difference, something which Lacan and Rose make central to their arguments. Both programs, however, emphasize the process of undermining definitive meaning from within language by undermining that representation which hides its own disjunctions.

We have already seen how Magritte implements this idea in "Les mots et les images" and in the realm of female sexuality with "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt." In "Le Viol" the disturbing quality comes from the displacement Magritte performs from the woman's face to her genitals which equates language and communication with rules of sexual representation.<sup>123</sup> The explicit violence of this displacement exposes the Lacanian paradox of a desire which exists only in its unfulfilment both in language and in sexuality. "Le Viol" proposes the disruption of language as it is tied to feminine sexuality and the male gaze *without* necessarily proposing an alternative to this order.

The question at this point becomes: does exposing the parameters of the dynamic of female body/male gaze as it is defined in the existing symbolic order amount to a significant undermining of that definition? Or can anything further be done, as Bataille

and Irigaray would claim? Irigaray's criticism of Freud and Lacan would seem to indicate that the existing social order is more fragile, more open to attack than Lacan would have us believe. I have argued, following the claims of Foucault, Rose and Lacan, that laying bare existing linguistic parameters does result in a step forward. However, even if we agree with Irigaray, a consideration of "Le Viol" is still in order. He exposes the mechanism by which signification and representation in this symbolic order occur and therefore exposes, structurally, one of the mechanisms to be avoided in a new, non-phallogentric language. Without a thorough understanding of our current situation, we cannot avoid its pitfalls. It is obvious that we do not want *what* Magritte delineates in "Le Viol": that fragmented, mute body which is the female. We may, however, want his method for portraying it, or *how* he says it.

"Le Viol" is a difficult image. Its difficulty is one which is unavoidable in any serious attempt to analyze a situation from within the available discourses: in examining the existing structures of language and sexuality, "Le Viol" finds itself in the seemingly paradoxical position of exposing critical issues from within a discourse which characteristically tries to hide those issues. In its engagement with the issues of sexual gendering and language, the image attempts to delineate differences of objective and practice between itself and conventional pornographic images of women while utilizing the same discursive formations as pornography. In performing this task (and in the arguments the image has raised), "Le Viol" makes clear that as yet we have no existing discourse which will allow us to consider sexuality, particularly as it pertains to the female body, without becoming entangled in the extremely problematic status of the construction of that sexuality. As conventional pornography and the controversy surrounding it demonstrate, the dangers of phallogentric discourse manifest themselves when that discourse involves the human subject. "Le Viol" is an unsettling image because it marks the extreme violence of that point of intersection between existing

discursive formations and the living subject. It also forces us to realize that any efforts we make towards building a new, non-phallogentric discourse must be done from the point of a close analysis of present discourses, and that such analyses must maintain these fissures and disjunctions as productive. "Le Viol" is difficult for precisely this reason; it refuses to step back from the terrain of sexuality and at the same time refuses to hide the dangers inherent in that category.



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Susan Gubar, "Representing Pornography: Feminism, Criticism, and Depictions of Female Violation." *Critical Inquiry* v 13 n°4 (Summer 1987) p.722

<sup>2</sup>This process can be seen, for example, in figures 2-4. In "L'evidence éternelle" Magritte deliberately fragments the female body in a way which allows her no access to a coherent self-image. In "La bouteille," her body is contained, deformed, and put on show seemingly in response to the (male) gaze of the viewer. In "Le sens propre, IV," Magritte explores how much of the female can be gotten into the linguistic symbol "femme triste" which replaces her body. Here, the woman's body has become merely one more element in a set of objects which seem to have little relationship to either each other or to the external lived reality of the female.

<sup>3</sup>Gubar, p.715

<sup>4</sup>Gubar, p.724

<sup>5</sup>Gubar, p.739

<sup>6</sup>Mary Ann Caws, "Ladies Shot and Painted: Female Embodiment in Surrealist Art," in *The Female Body in Western Culture*, ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge, Mass., 1986)

<sup>7</sup>Caws, pp.262/274

<sup>8</sup>Caws, p.272

<sup>9</sup>Caws, p.274

<sup>10</sup>André Breton, *What Is Surrealism?* ed. Franklin Rosemont (New York: Monad, 1978) p.131

<sup>11</sup>This was the first time Magritte showed a version of "Le Viol" publicly as far as I can determine.

<sup>12</sup>Harry Torczyner, *Magritte, Ideas and Images* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1977) p.77 The image was shown in a show organized by communist intellectuals and supporters as Le Drapeau rouge, rue des Casernes, Brussels.

<sup>13</sup>Torczyner, p.76

<sup>14</sup>Suzi Gablik, *Magritte*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985) p.185

<sup>15</sup>Gubar, p.717

<sup>16</sup>Gubar, p.722

<sup>17</sup>Gubar, p.717

<sup>18</sup>Breton, André. *What is Surrealism?*, selected writings, ed.& trans. Franklin Rosemont. (New York: Monad, 1978) p.113

<sup>19</sup>Breton, p.113

<sup>20</sup>Breton, p.113

<sup>21</sup>Breton, p.115

<sup>22</sup>Breton, p.116

<sup>23</sup>Breton, p.116

<sup>24</sup>Breton, p.115

<sup>25</sup>Franklin Rosemont, introduction to André Breton, *What is Surrealism?* p.41

<sup>26</sup>Alan Stoekl in the introduction to Georges Bataille, *Visions of Excess*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985) p.vx

<sup>27</sup>see, for example, Breton's discussion of Magritte in the 1931 publication of *Le Surréalisme et la peinture*, quoted below, p.

<sup>28</sup>Breton, *What is Surrealism?* p.122

<sup>29</sup>Magritte himself says that this revelation came to him in 1936. However, I would argue that it is already in effect with "Le Viol." See Haim Finkelstein *Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979) p.107 for a further exploration of this concept.

<sup>30</sup>Breton, *What is Surrealism?* pp.114-115

<sup>31</sup>André Breton & Leon Trotsky, "Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art," trans. Dwight MacDonald. *Partisan Review* (New York), IV, n°1 (Fall 1938), pp.49-53. Also found in Breton, *What Is Surrealism* ed. Franklin Rosemont.

<sup>32</sup>Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text" in *L'Amour fou: Photography and Surrealism*. ed. Rosalind Krauss and J. Livingston (Washington and New York, 1985) p.159

<sup>33</sup>"la succession des images, la fuite des idées sont une condition fondamentale de toute manifestation surréaliste. Le cours de la pensée ne peut être considéré sous un aspect statique." (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°1 p.26) All translations unless otherwise noted are done by myself and Réjean Legault.

<sup>34</sup>"cet effort de seconde intention qui déforme nécessairement les images en les faisant affleurer à la surface de la conscience nous montre bien qu'il faut renoncer à trouver ici la clef de la peinture surréaliste." (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°1, p.26)

<sup>35</sup>"les lignes s'organisaient au fur et à mesure qu'elles apparaissaient et pour ainsi dire *au hasard*" (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°1, p.27)

<sup>36</sup>see for example the analysis of Man Ray's photographs by Rosalind Krauss and Dawn Ades in *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*. ed. Rosalind Krauss and J. Livingston (Washington and New York, 1985)

<sup>37</sup>Ades, *L'Amour fou*: ed. Krauss, p.159

<sup>38</sup>Ades, p.159

<sup>39</sup>"...oublier ce qui vient d'être fait, ou mieux de l'ignorer. ... Il ne s'agit pas de mutiler une technique mais de la rendre, autant qu'il est possible, inefficace." (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°3, p.27)

<sup>40</sup>"Plus personne n'ignore qu'il n'y a pas de *peinture surréaliste*. Ni les traits du crayon livré au hasard des gestes, ni l'image retraçant les figures de rêve, ni les fantaisies imaginatives, c'est bien entendu, ne peuvent être ainsi qualifiées. Mais il y a des *spectacles*. La mémoire et le plaisir des yeux: voilà toute l'esthétique." (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°3 p.27) trans. D. Ades, in *L'Amour fou*: ed. Krauss, p.160

<sup>41</sup>"le cinéma, non parce qu'il est la vie, mais le merveilleux, l'agencement d'éléments fortuits." (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°3, p.27)

<sup>42</sup>... il y a ce que d'autres ont vu, disent avoir vu, et que par suggestion ils parviennent ou ne parviennent pas à me faire voir; il y a aussi ce que je vois différemment de ce que le voient tous les autres, et même ce que je commence à voir *qui n'est pas visible*. (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°4, p.26)

<sup>43</sup>"C'est ainsi qu'il m'est impossible de considérer un tableau autrement que comme une fenêtre dont mon premier souci est de savoir sur quoi *elle donne*, ..." (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°4, p.27)

<sup>44</sup>"Le besoin de fixer les images visuelles, ces images préexistant ou non à leur fixation, s'est extériorisé de tout temps et a abouti à la formation d'un véritable langage qui ne me paraît pas plus artificiel que l'autre, et sur l'origine duquel il serait vain de m'attarder. Tout au plus me dois-je de considérer l'état actuel de ce langage, de même que l'état actuel du langage poétique, et de le rappeler s'il est nécessaire à sa raison d'être. Il me semble que je puis beaucoup exiger d'une faculté qui, par-dessus presque toutes les autres, me donne barre sur le réel, sur ce qu'on entend vulgairement par *le réel*. (*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°4 p.26)

<sup>45</sup>André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting* trans. Simon Watson Taylor. (New York: Icon, 1972) p.72

<sup>46</sup>see Breton's discussion of Man Ray's work, *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°s 9-10, (octobre, 1927)p.41

<sup>47</sup>"mythiques, érotiques, ... sociales...savantes" *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°11, p.20 Also, "Freud, qui doit tant à Charcot, se souvient-il du temps où, au témoignage de survivants, les internes de la Salpêtrière confondaient leur devoir professionnel et leur goût de l'amour, où, à la nuit tombante, les malades les rejoignaient au dehors ou les recevaient dans leur lit?" *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°11, p.20

<sup>48</sup>*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°11, p.10

<sup>49</sup>see images by Masson, Man Ray, texts by J. Baron and Michel Leiris etc. in *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°3.

<sup>50</sup>*La Révolution surréaliste*, n°11, p.34

<sup>51</sup>Susan R. Suleiman, "Nadja, Dora, Lol V. Stein: women, madness and narrative: in *Discourse in Psychoanalysis and Literature* ed. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan. (New York: Methuen, 1987) p.134

<sup>52</sup>Suleiman, p.147

<sup>53</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (trans. of *Les Mots et les choses*) (New York: Random House, 1970) pp. xvi/vv

<sup>54</sup> Ades, in *L'Amour fou*: ed. Krauss, p.165

<sup>55</sup> for a detailed discussion of this argument, see Susan R. Suleiman's article, "Pornography, Transgression, and the Avant-Garde: Bataille's *Story of the Eye*." in *The Poetics of Gender*, ed. Nancy K. Miller (New York, 1986) pp.117-36.

<sup>56</sup> Georges Bataille, *Lascaux* (Genève: Skira, 1955) p.38: Il nous importe ici que, dans son essence, et dans la pratique, l'art exprime ce moment de transgression religieuse, qu'il l'exprime seul assez gravement et qu'il en soit la seule issue. C'est l'état de transgression qui commande le désir, l'exigence d'un monde plus profond, plus riche et prodigieux, l'exigence, en un mot, d'un monde sacré.

<sup>57</sup> Bataille, *Lascaux*, p.34: Partout elles impliquent ce que l'art eut constamment pour objet: La création d'une réalité sensible, modifiant le monde dans le sens d'une réponse au désir de prodige, impliqué dans l'essence de l'être humain.

<sup>58</sup> Denis Hollier, *La Prise de la Concorde*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1974) p.204

<sup>59</sup> "le ton adopté pour le récit se calque sur celui de l'observation médicale, entre toutes neuropsychiatrique, qui tend à garder trace de tout ce qu'examen et interrogatoire peuvent livrer..." Michel Beaujour "Qu'est-ce que 'Nadja'?" *N.R.F.* p.787

<sup>60</sup> Michel Beaujour, p.787

<sup>61</sup> Hollier, p.204: "pratique réel de déséquilibre, risque réel pour la santé mental" Hollier, p.204: "simulations de délire"

<sup>62</sup> Hollier, p.56: "La transgression n'appartient pas à l'espace de l'idée, sinon comme ce qui le subvertit. C'est pourquoi elle relève, non pas d'une théorie, mais d'une pratique. L'écriture est l'une des formes de cette pratiques,..."

<sup>63</sup> I take my argument here from Denis Hollier. See pp.59-65 for a detailed discussion of these ideas.

<sup>64</sup> Bataille, *Oeuvres Complètes*, t.1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1976) p217 *Informe*: Un dictionnaire commencerait à partir du moment où il ne donnerait plus le sens mais les besoins des mots. Ainsi *informe* n'est pas seulement un adjectif ayant tel sens mais un terme servant à déclasser, exigeant généralement que chaque chose ait sa forme. Ce qu'il désigne n'a ses droits dans aucun sens et se fait écraser partout comme un araignée ou un ver de terre. Il faudrait en effet, pour que les hommes académiques soient contents, que l'univers prenne forme La philosophie entière n'a pas d'autre but: il s'agit de donner une redingote à ce qui est, une redingote mathématique. Par contre affirmer que l'univers ne ressemble à rien et n'est qu'*informe* revient à dire que l'univers est quelque chose comme une araignée ou un crachat.

Translated by Allan Stoekl in Georges Bataille's *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985) p.31 as: *Formless*: A dictionary begins when it no longer gives the meaning of words, but their tasks, Thus *formless* is not only an adjective having a given meaning, but a term that serves to bring things down in the world, generally requiring that each thing have its form. What it designates has no rights in any sense and gets itself squashed everywhere, like a spider or an earhtworm. In fact, for academinc men to be happy, the universe would have to take shape. All of philosophy has no other goal: it is a matter of giving a frock coat to what is, a mathematical frock coat. On the other hand, affirming hat the universe resembles nothing and is only *formless* amounts to saying that the universe is something like a spider or spit.

<sup>65</sup> Antonin Artaud, *Oeuvres Complètes*, t.1 (Paris: Gallimard, 1970) p.330: "Oui, voici maintenant le seul usage auquel puisse servir désormais le langage, un moyen de folie, d'élimination de la pensée, de rupture, le dédale des déraisons, et non pas un *dictionnaire* où tels cuistres des environs de la Seine canalisent leurs rétrécissements intellectuels."

<sup>66</sup> see Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delecti" in *L'Amour fou* ed. Krauss and Livingstone, for a further explanation of this idea.

<sup>67</sup> Georges Bataille, "Abattoir" in *Documents* n°6, 1929, p.329

<sup>68</sup> Michel Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe* trans. James Harkness. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) p.33

<sup>69</sup> Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe*, p.36

<sup>70</sup>Gablik, p.23

<sup>71</sup>Foucault, *This is Not a Pipe*, p.2. His choice to refer so specifically to the world in his imagery brings up the issues of the relationship between signifier and signified much more clearly than works by other surrealist artists. We can compare his process of image-making with automatic drawing, the favored medium in the early years of Surrealism. Automatic drawing (theoretically) occurs outside the conscious attempt to control the relationship between signifier and signified. Thus it evades the slippage between signifier and signified and the hidden buildup of ideology which occurs within that space.

<sup>72</sup>Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p.9

<sup>73</sup>Foucault, *The Order of Things*, pp.9/10

<sup>74</sup>Foucault, *This is Not a Pipe*, p.38/9 and Gablik, p.133

<sup>75</sup>Foucault, *This is Not a Pipe*, p.39

<sup>76</sup>James Harkness in the introduction to Foucault's *This Is Not a Pipe*, p.9

<sup>77</sup>It would be interesting to see what portion of their readership was male and what portion was female.

<sup>78</sup>Sander Gilman, "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Towards an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine and Literature," in *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn, 1985) pp.236-7

<sup>79</sup>"Le Couteau dans la plait," *Bulletin international du surréalisme*, III (August, 1935). The article takes an anti-Franco-Soviet stance, but affirms the commitment of its writers to the communist cause. It is accompanied by an essay written by Breton.

<sup>80</sup>Gubar discusses snuff films and soft pornography. See also Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form*. (Princeton: 1971) for marxist reading of this phenomenon.

<sup>81</sup>Foucault, *This Is Not a Pipe* p.37

<sup>82</sup>Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. xviii)

<sup>83</sup>see Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in *Lenin and Philosophy*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971)

<sup>84</sup>T.J. Clark's chapter on Manet's "Olympia" in his book *The Painter of Modern Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) demonstrates this, for example, with regard to the beginnings of Modernism in the nineteenth century.

<sup>85</sup>Roger Callois, "Mimétisme et psychasthénie légendaire," *Minotaure*, n°7 (1935) p.5; Jacques Lacan, "Le Stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je," *Écrits* (Paris:Seuil, 1966) p.96 or in English as "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I," *Écrits*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1982) p.3. see also Krauss, *L'Amour fou*, pp. 70/74.

<sup>86</sup>Jacqueline Rose, *Sexuality in the Field of Vision*, (London: Verso, 1986) p.17

<sup>87</sup>Breton, *What is Surrealism?* p.131

<sup>88</sup>Aragon quoted by Breton in *What is Surrealism?*, p.126

<sup>89</sup>Juliet Mitchell in the introduction to Jacques Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality*, ed. Jacqueline Rose, (New York: Norton, 1982) p.7

<sup>90</sup>Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality*, p.79

<sup>91</sup>Kaja Silverman, *The Subject of Semiotics*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) p.131. See also Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits* p.126

<sup>92</sup>Juliet Mitchell, introduction to Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality* pp.5/6

<sup>93</sup>Lacan, *Écrits*, pp.1-7, also 'Cure psychanalytique à l'aide de la poupée fleur', Comptes rendus, réunion 18 octobre, *Revue française de la psychanalyse*, 4, Oct-Dec, 1949, p.567, *Feminine Sexuality* p.30 As Silverman writes: "... we cannot interpret the reflection [in the mirror stage] within which the child finds its identity too literally; it must be undertood at least to some degree as a cultural construct." Silverman, p.160

<sup>94</sup>Mitchell, *Feminine Sexuality*, p.5

<sup>95</sup>Lacan, *Séminaire XX: Encore*. (Paris: Seuil, 1975) p.36 trans. in *Feminine Sexuality*, p.49]

<sup>96</sup>Silverman, p.163, Lacan, *Ecrits*, p.126

<sup>97</sup>Lacan, "Function and field of speech and language" p.68 quoted in Silverman, p.165.

<sup>98</sup>Rose, in Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality*, p.47

- 
- 99Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality*, p.118  
 100Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality*, p.145  
 101Mitchell, in Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality*, p.5  
 102Lacan, *Écrits*, pp.3/4.  
 103Shoshona Felman, "Turning the screw of interpretation" *Yale French Studies* 55/6 (1977) p.118  
 104Suleiman, "Nadja..." p.128  
 105Irigaray, "Così Fan Tutti" in *This Sex Which is not One* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985) p.90  
 106Irigaray, p.90  
 107Irigaray, p.94  
 108Irigaray, p.94  
 109Irigaray, p.96  
 110Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985) p.71  
 111Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One* pp.123/4; Stephan Heath "Difference" in *Screen* v19, #3 (1978) p.74  
 112Michèle Montrelay, "Inquiry into Femininity" trans. Parveen Adams in *m/f* v1, #1 (1978) p.91  
 113Montrelay, p.99  
 114Montrelay, p.99  
 115Lacan, 'Entretien avec des étudiants' Yale University 24 November, 1975, *Scilicet* n°6/7, p.37  
 Heath, p.71  
 116Beverly Brown and Parveen Adams, *m/f* #3 (1979) p.37  
 117Jacqueline Rose, introduction to Lacan, *Feminine Sexuality* p.53  
 118Rose, p.54  
 119Rose, p.55 Lacan, *Encore* p.33  
 120Rose, p.56  
 121Rose, p.56  
 122Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p.xviii  
 123Suleiman makes a similar argument for Bataille's description of Simone in *L'Histoire de l'oeil*. Her claim for Bataille's ability to transgress conventional codes is not one I wish to make for Magritte, however. In comparison to Simone's behavior, I do not feel "Le Viol" actively transgresses codes as much as it simply puts them up for question. See Suleiman, "Pornography, Transgression,..."

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary Sources:

*Bulletin international du surréalisme* n°3 (20 août, 1935) cover by Magritte

*Documents 34* "Intervention surréaliste" (numéro spécial, n°1, juin 1934) (Bruxelles: 6, rue Gabrielle, 1934.)

*Documents surréalistes* (Paris: Seuil, 1948)

*Documents*. éd. Georges Bataille (Paris: 1929-1930)

*Du temps que les surréalistes avaient raison* (signed by Breton, Dali, O. Dominguez, P. Éluard, M. Fourries, etc.) (Paris: Éditions surréalistes, 1935)

*La Révolution surréaliste: collection complet*. (Paris: Éditions Jean Michel Place, 1975.)

*Le Garde-fou*. (signed by Paul Colinet, René Magritte, Marcel Mariën, Paul Nougé, Louis Scutenaire, etc.) (Bruxelles: Les Lèvres nues, 1972)

*Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution: éditions complètes*. (Paris: Éditions Jean Michel Place, 1976).

*Minotaure* (Paris: 1933-1939)

*Paillasse! fin de l'Affaire Aragon*. Mars, 1932 (signed by René Char, René Crevel, Salvador Dali, Paul Éluard, etc.) (Paris: Éditions surréalistes, 1932)

*Tractes surréalistes et déclarations collectives*. t.1 (1922-1939) (Paris: Eric Losfeld, éd. 1980?)

### General:

Ades, Dawn. *Dada and Surrealism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* (London: Arts Council of Britain, 1978)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Freud and Surrealist Painting" in *Freud: the Man, His World, His Influence* ed. J. Miller.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Photography and the Surrealist Text." in Rosalind Krauss and J. Livingston, ed. *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*. (Washington and New York, 1985)

Alquié, Ferdinand. *Philosophe du surréalisme* (Paris: Flammarion, 1955)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Le Surréalisme et la psychanalyse" in *La Table ronde* n°108 (décembre, 1956) pp.145-149.

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in *Lenin and Philosophy*. trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971)

Aragon, Louis. éd. *La Peinture au défi*. (Paris: Librairie J. Corti, 1930)

- Artaud, Antonin. *Oeuvres complètes*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1970)
- Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida*. trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Critical Essays* trans. Richard Howard. (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1972)
- Batchelor, David and Charles Harrison. *Modern Art and Modernism: Surrealism*. (Milton Keynes, G.B.: The Open University, 1983)
- Benayoun, Robert. *Érotique du surréalisme*. (Paris: J.-J. Pauvert, 1964)
- Benjamin, Walter. "Surrealism: the Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia" in *Reflections* trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1986)
- Béhar, H. et M. Carassou *Le Surréalisme* (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1984)
- Bounoure, Vincent et. al. *La Civilisation surréaliste*. (Paris: Payot, 1976)
- Brown, Beverly, and Parveen Adams. *m/f* #3 (1979) pp.35-50
- Bürger, Peter. *Der französische Surrealismus*. (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1971)
- Callois, Roger. *Approches de l'imaginaire*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1974)
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Mimétisme et psychasthénie légendaire" *Minotaure*, n°7 (1935) p.5
- Cause: le surréalisme*. (Paris: Éditions surréalistes, 1947)
- Caws, Mary Ann, éd. *Le Manifeste et le caché: langages surréalistes et autres*. (Paris: Lettres modernes, 1974)
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ladies Shot and Painted: Female Embodiment in Surrealist Art," in *The Female Body in Western Culture*, ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986)
- Dali, Salvador. *La Femme visible* (Paris: Éditions surréalistes, 1930)
- Dardigna, Anne-Marie. *Les châteaux d'eros ou l'infortune du sexe des femmes* (Paris: Maspéro, 1981.)
- Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen Lane. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983)
- Derrida, Jacques. *Of Grammatology* trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Writing and Difference* trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978)
- Dumont, Fernand. *Dialectique du hasard au service du désir*. (Bruxelles: Brassa, 1979)
- Duplessis, Yves. *Le Surréalisme*. (Paris: 1958)

- Felman, Shoshana. "Women and Madness: The Critical Phallacy" *Diacritics*, (Winter, 1975)  
 \_\_\_\_\_. "Turning the Screw of Interpretation" *Yale French Studies* 55/6 pp.94-207
- Ferrua, Pietro. *Surréalisme et anarchisme*. (Paris: Le Monde libertaire, 1982)
- Finkelstein, Haim N. *Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979)
- First Papers of Surrealism*. exhibition (Museum of Modern Art: 14 October - 7 November, 1942)
- Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Vintage, 1985)  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *The Order of Things*. (trans. of *Les Mots et les choses*) (New York: Random House, 1970)
- Freud, Sigmund. *Complete Works*. (Standard Edition, trans. James Strachey)
- Gateau, Jean-Charles. *Paul Éluard et la peinture surréaliste 1910-1939*. (Genève: Droz, 1982)
- Gauthier, Xavière *Surréalisme et sexualité*. (Paris, Gallimard, 1971)
- Gavillet, André. *Aragon, surréaliste*. (Neuchâtel: La Baconnière, 1957)
- Geoghegan, C.G. "Surrealism and Communism: The Hesitations of Aragon from Kharkov to the Affaire Front rouge" *Journal European Studies* 8: 12-33 (March 1978)
- Gilman, Sander. "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Towards an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine and Literature." in *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn, 1985) pp.204-242.
- Heath, Stephen. "Difference." *Screen*. v.19 #3 (1978) pp.51-112.
- Irigaray, Luce. *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985)  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *This Sex Which is Not One* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985)
- Jaguer, Edouard. *Les mystères de la chambre noire: Le Surréalisme et la photographie*. (Paris, 1982).
- Jameson, Fredric. *Marxism and Form*. (Princeton: 1971)
- Jardine, Alice. *Gynesis: Configurations of Women and Modernity*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985)
- Journal mural: mai, 1968* éd. J. Besançon (Paris: 1968)
- Krauss, Rosalind. "Corpus Delecti" in *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*. ed. Rosalind Krauss and J. Livingston (Washington and New York, 1985)  
 \_\_\_\_\_. "Nightwalkers" *Art Journal* 45 (Spring 1981) pp.33-38.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1985)



- Lacan, Jacques. "Entretien avec des étudiants" Yale University 24 November, 1975  
*Scilicet* n° 6/7
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Feminine Sexuality* trans. Jacqueline Rose, ed. J. Rose and Juliet Mitchell (New York: Norton, 1982)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (New York: Norton, 1981)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Écrits* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Séminaire XX: Encore.* (Paris: Seuil, 1975)
- Le Surréalisme en 1929.* (Bruxelles: Éditions "Variétés," 1929)
- Lewis, Helena. *The Politics of Surrealism.* (New York: Paragon House, 1988)
- Marks, Elaine and Isabelle de Courtivron, eds. *New French Feminisms.* (Amherst: Univeristy of Massachusetts Press, 1980.)
- Matthews, J.H.. *Surrealism, Insanity and Poetry.* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1982)
- Mitchell, Juliet. *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (New York: Vintage, 1975)
- Montrelay, Michèle. "Inquiry into Femininity" trans. Parveen Adams *m/f* #1 (1978) pp.83-101.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *L'Ombre et le nom: Sur la féminité.* (Paris: Éditons de Minuit, 1977)
- Nadeau, Maurice. *Histoire du surréalisme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1964)
- Naville, Pierre. *Le Temps du surréal* (Paris: Galilée, 1977)
- Peyre, Henri. "The Significance of Surrealism: *Yale French Studies* v.1 #2 (Fall/Winter, 1948)
- Pierre, José. *Surréalisme et anarchie: les "billets surréalistes" du "Libertaire": 12 octobre 1951-8 janvier 1953.* (Paris: Plasma, 1983)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Position politique de la peinture surréaliste.* (Paris: Musée de poche, 1975)
- Rose, Jacqueline. *Sexuality in the Field of Vison.* (London: Verso, 1986)
- Short, Robert. "Surrealism and the Popular Front" *The Politics of Modernism* (University of Essex Conference, 1979.) pp.89-104.
- Silverman, Kaja. *The Subject of Semiotics.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983)
- Sollers, Philippe. *L'écriture et l'expérience des limites.* (Paris: Seuil, 1985). pp.105-138
- Spector, Jack J. *The Aesthetics of Freud: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York, 1972)
- Spitz, Ellen Handler. *Art and Psyche: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Aesthetics* (New Haven: 1985)
- Thirion, André. *Révolutionnaires sans révolution.* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1972)

Vailland, Roger. *Le Surréalisme contre la révolution*. (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1948)

Waldberg, Patrick. *Chemins du surréalisme*. (Paris: Weber, s.d.)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Surrealism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965.)

*XXe siècle* Surrealist issue n°42 (June, 1974)

*Yale French Studies* Surrealist issue #31, (Spring 1964)

## Breton:

Audouin, Philippe. *André Breton* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970)

Balakian, A. *André Breton: Magus of Surrealism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Breton and Drugs" in *Yale French Studies* #50 ((1974) pp.96-107

Beaujour, Michel "Qu'est-ce que 'Nadja'?" *La Nouvelle Revue Française* #172 (April 1, 1967) pp.780-99.

Breton, André. *Cycle systématique de conférences sur les plus récentes positions du surréalisme*. (Paris: juin, 1935) programme.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Entretiens*. (Paris: Nouvelle Revue Française, 1952)

\_\_\_\_\_. *L'Amour fou* (Paris: Gallimard)

\_\_\_\_\_. *La Clé des champs*. (Paris: Éditions du Sagittaire, 1953)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Légitime défense" *La Révolution surréaliste*. n°8

\_\_\_\_\_. *Manifestes du surréalisme*. édition complète (Paris: Éditions Pauvert, 1979)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Manifestos of Surrealism* trans. Helen Lane & Richard Seaver. (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1969)

\_\_\_\_\_ and Leon Trotsky. "Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art," trans. Dwight MacDonald *Partisan Review* IV, n°1 (Fall 1938)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Nadja* (Paris: Gallimard, 1928)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Point du jour*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1934)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Position politique du surréalisme*. (Paris: J.-J. Pauvert, 1971) réunit des textes 1935 (coll. in *Manifestes* also)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Qu'est-ce que le surréalisme?* (Bruxelles, 1934)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Surrealism and Painting* trans. Simon Watson Taylor. (New York: Icon, 1972)

\_\_\_\_\_. *What is Surrealism?*, selected writings, ed.& trans. Franklin Rosemont. (New York: Monad, 1978)

Browder, Clifford. *André Breton: Arbiter of Surrealism* (Geneva: 1967)

Carrouges, Michel. *André Breton et les données fondamentales du surréalisme*. (Paris: Gallimard, 1967)

Caws, Mary Ann. *Surrealism and the Literary Imagination: Gaston Bachelard and André Breton*. (The Hague: Mouton, 1966)

Gaudin, C. "Tours et détours négatif de la confession dédaigneuse de Breton" *Romanic Review* 71: 394-412 (November 1980)

Gracq, Julien. *André Breton*. (Paris: J. Corti, 1947)

- Halpern, J. "Describing the Surreal" *Yale French Studies* #61: 89-106 (1981)
- Kuspit, D.B. "Dispensable Friends, Indispensable Ideologies: André Breton's Surrealism" *Artforum* 22: 56-63 (December 1983)
- Matthews, J.H. "Une contrée où le désir est roi -- L'Amour fou d'André Breton" *Symposium* 33: 25-40 (Spring 1979)
- Suleiman, Susan Rubin. "Nadja, Dora, Lol V. Stein: women, madness and narrative" in *Discourse in Psychoanalysis and Literature* ed. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan. ((New York: Methuen, 1987) pp.124-151.

### **Bataille:**

- Barthes, Roland. "La métaphore de l'œil" *Critique* 195-96 (1963)
- Bataille, Georges. *Documents* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1968)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Erotism: Death and Sensuality* trans. Mary Dalwood. (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1986)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lascaux* (Genève: Skira, 1955)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*. trans. Allan Stoekl, Carl R. Lovitt and Donald M. Leslie, Jr. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985)
- Corn, T. "La négativité sans emploi (Derrida, Bataille, Hegel)" *Romanic Review* 76:65-75 (January 1985)
- Foucault, Michel. "Préface à la transgression" *Critique* (1963)
- Hollier, Denis. "Mimesis and Castration, 1937" *October* 31 (Winter, 1984)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *La Prise de la Concorde* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *October* 33:73-102 (1985)
- Klossowski, Pierre. "La mess de Georges Bataille" *Un si funeste désir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963.)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sade mon prochain* (Paris: Seuil, 1947)
- Mehlman, Jeffrey. "Ruse de Rivoli: politics and deconstruction" *MLN* 91:1061-72 (October, 1976)
- October* "Bataille" #36 (Spring, 1986)
- Smock, A. and Zuckerman, P. "Politics and Eroticism in *Le Bleu du ciel*" *Semiotext(e)* v2 #2 (1976) pp.57-86
- Sollers, Philippe, ed. *Bataille* (Paris: 10/18, 1973.)
- Sontag, Susan "The Pornographic Imagination" in *Styles of Radical Will* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1969) pp. 35-73.

Suleiman, Susan. "Pornography, Transgression, and the Avant-Garde: Bataille's *Story of the Eye*," in *The Poetics of Gender*, ed. Nancy K. Miller (New York, 1986) pp.117-36.

### Magritte:

Berger, John. "Magritte and the Impossible" in *About Looking* (New York: 1980.) pp.155-61

Bounouri, V. *l'Oeil* n° 206-7:4-11 (February/March 1972)

Craven, David. "This is Not a Review: Magritte according to Foucault" *Art History* v.7 p.477 (1984)

Foucault, Michel. *This is not a Pipe* trans. James Harkness. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983)

Gablik, Suzi. *Magritte*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985)

Gubar, Susan. "Representing Pornography: Feminism, Criticism, and Depictions of Female Violation" *Critical Inquiry* v13 4:712-741 (Summer, 1987).

Hammacher, Abraham Marie. *René Magritte*. (Paris: Éditions Cercle d'art, 1974)

Kozloff, Max. *Studio* 179:9+ (January, 1970)

Lebel, R. "Avant et après Magritte" *l'Oeil* n° 159:28-35 (March 1968)

Magritte, René and others. *Violette Nozières* (Bruxelles: 1933)  
\_\_\_\_\_. *Écrits complets* (Paris: Flammarion)

*Magritte*. catalogue d'exposition 1978-1979 (Paris: Centre Pompidou)

Mariën, Marcel. *Démêloir*. (Bruxelles: Les Lèvres nues, 1978)  
\_\_\_\_\_. *L'Activité surréaliste en Belgique (1924-1950)* (Bruxelles: Éditions Leber Hossman, 1979)

Masheck, J. "The Imagism of Magritte" *Artforum* 12:54-8 (May 1974)

Morstein, Petra von. "Magritte: Artistic and Conceptual Representation" *Journal of Aesthetics* 41, #4:369-74 (Summer 1983)

Noël, Bernard. *Magritte* (Paris: Flammarion, 1976)

Nougé, Paul. *Histoire de ne pas rire*. (Bruxelles: 1956)  
\_\_\_\_\_. "Les Images défendues" in *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*. n°5

O'Donnell, Thomas. "Robbe-Grillet's Ghost Town" *Yale French Studies* #57 (1979) pp.195-207 (on Magritte, pp.204-207)

Paquet, Marcel. *Magritte ou l'éclipse de l'être* (Paris: Éditions de la différence, 1982.)

*René Magritte et le surréalisme en Belgique.* exposition, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique (Bruxelles: 24 septembre-5 décembre, 1982)

Roberts-Jones, Philippe. *Magritte: poète visible* (Bruxelles: Laconti, 1972) not very interesting.

Rosey, Gui. *Magritte: les images en soi.* (Paris: Damien, 1967)

Scutenaire, Louis. *Avec Magritte.* (Bruxelles: Lebeer Hossmann, 1977)

Siegal, J. "The Image of the Eye in Surrealist Art and its Psychoanalytic Sources, Part II: René Magritte" *Arts Magazine* 56:116-19 (March 1982)

Torczyner, Harry. *Magritte, Ideas and Images* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1977.)

Vovelle, José. *Le Surréalisme en Belgique.* (Bruxelles: 1972)

Waldberg, P. "René Magritte: l'inspiration et le mystère" *XXe siècle* 25:10-18 (December, 1963)

\_\_\_\_\_. *Magritte.* trans. Austryn Wainhouse (Brussels: André de Rache, 1965)

ANDRÉ BRETON

QU'EST-CE QUE LE  
**SURRÉALISME?**



RENÉ HENRIQUEZ, Éditeur  
Rue d'Edimbourg, 13, BRUXELLES

Figure n°1:  
René Magritte, "Le Viol" (The Rape), on the cover of André Breton's *Qu'est-ce que le Surréalisme?*

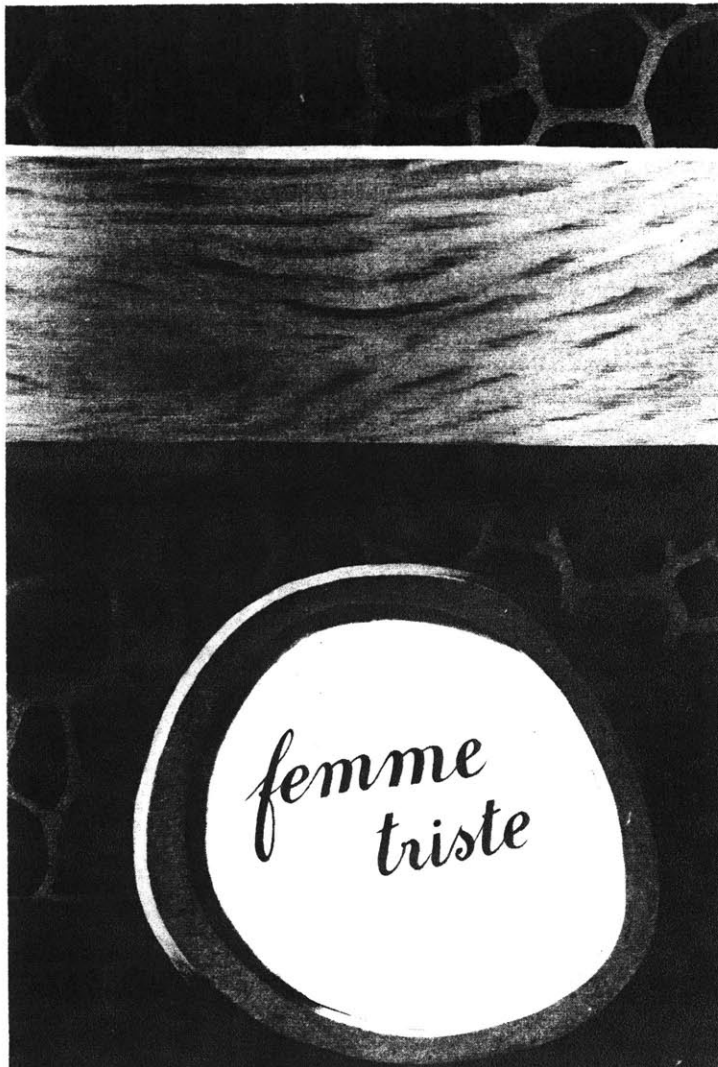


Figure n°3:  
René Magritte, "Le sens propre, IV"  
(The Proper Sense, IV) 1928-29

Figure n°2:  
René Magritte, "L'evidence éternelle" (Eternal Evidence), 1930

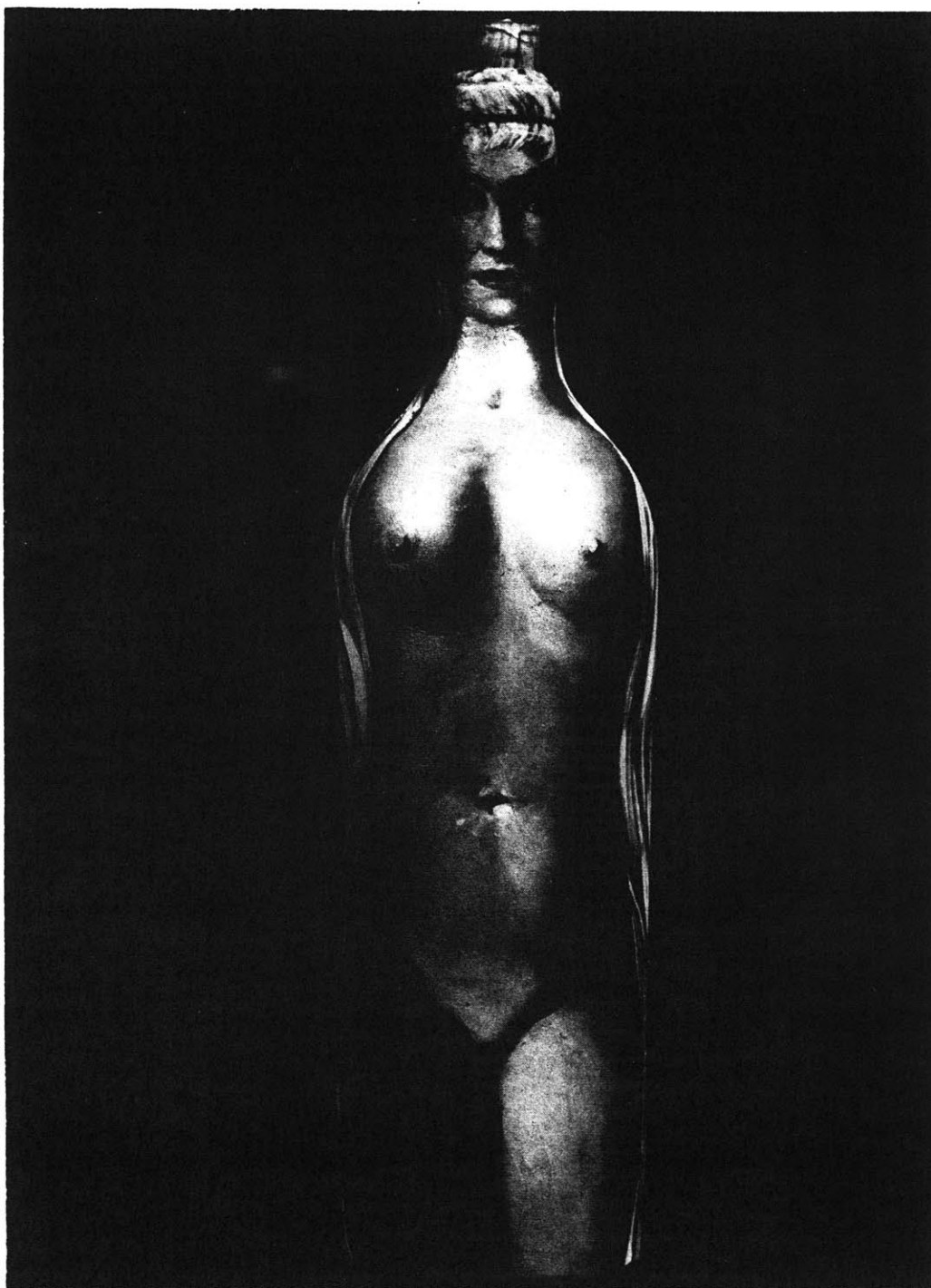


Figure n°4:  
René Magritte, "La bouteille" (The Bottle), 1941/2



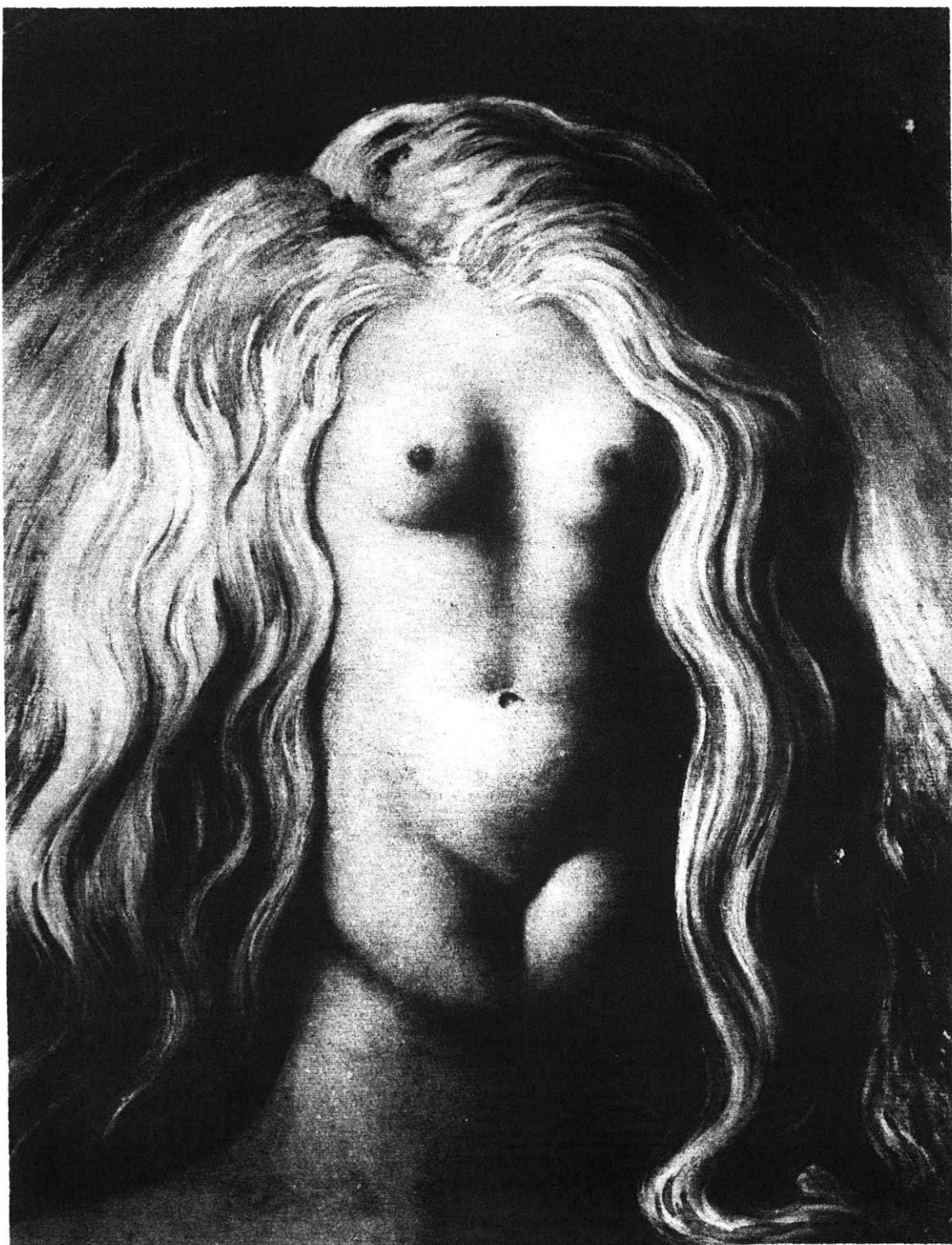


Figure n°5:  
René Magritte, "Le Viol" (The Rape) 1945



Figure n°6:  
René Magritte, "Le Viol" (The Rape) 1935

Figure n°7:  
André Masson, Untitled drawing from  
*La Révolution surréaliste*,  
n° 1 (December, 1924)

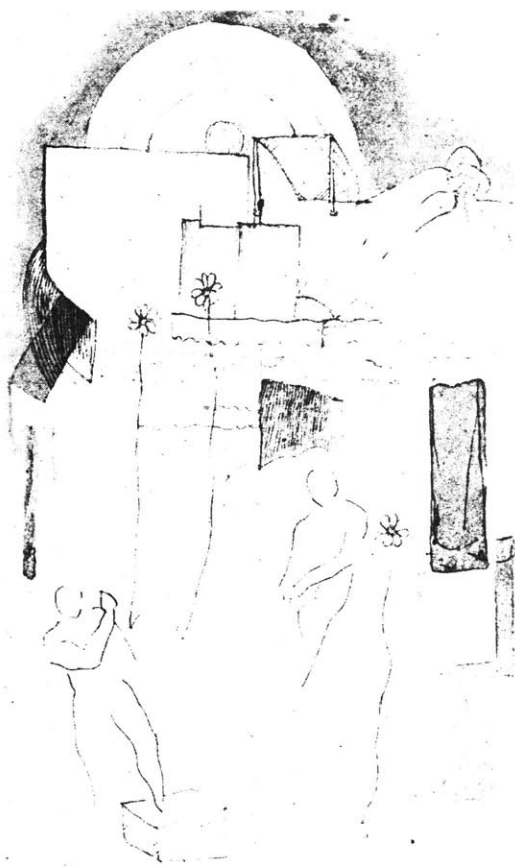
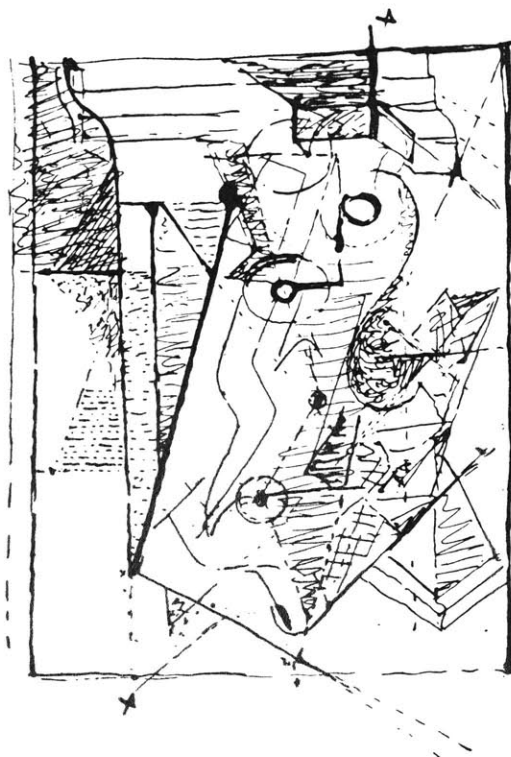


Figure n°8:  
Pierre Naville, Untitled drawing from  
*La Révolution surréaliste*,  
n°1 (December, 1924)

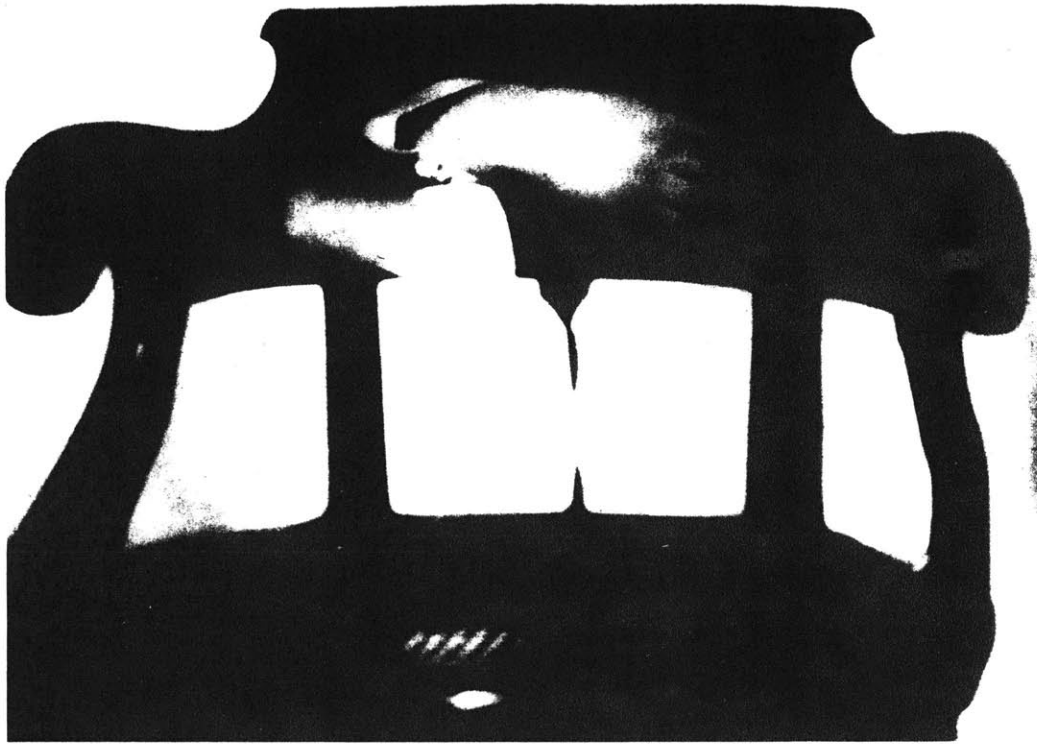


Figure n°9:  
Man Ray, Untitled photograph from *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°1 (December, 1924)

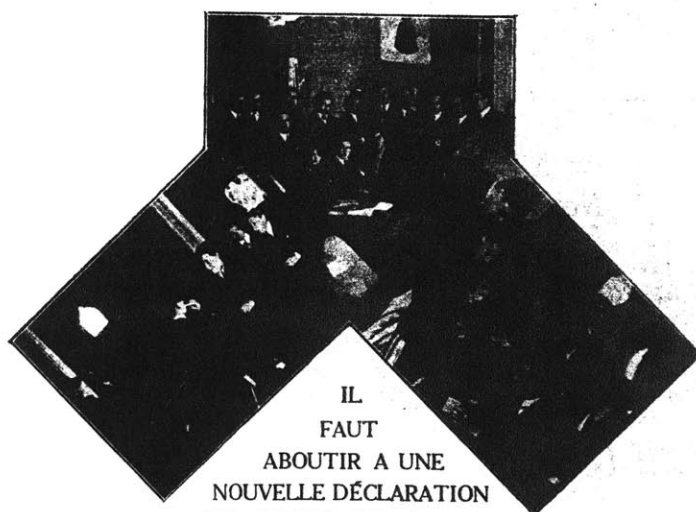


Figure n°10:  
 photomontage of Germaine Berton and the Surrealists from *La Révolution surréaliste*,  
 n°1 (1 December, 1924)

N° 1 — Première année

1<sup>er</sup> Décembre 1924

# LA RÉVOLUTION SURREALISTE



IL  
FAUT  
ABOUTIR A UNE  
NOUVELLE DÉCLARATION  
DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

## SOMMAIRE

Préface : J.-A. Boiffard, P. Eluard, R. Vitrac.

Rêves : Georgio de Chirico, André Breton,  
Renée Gauthier.

Textes surréalistes :

Marcel Noll, Robert Desnos, Benjamin Péret,

Georges Molikine, Paul Eluard,

J.-A. Boiffard, S. B., Max Morise,

Louis Aragon, Francis Gérard.

Le rêveur parmi les murailles : Pierre Reverdy.

Chroniques :

Louis Aragon, Philippe Soupault,

Max Morise, Joseph Delteil,

Francis Gérard, etc.

Notes.

Illustrations : Photos Man Ray.

Max Morise, G. de Chirico, Max Ernst,

André Masson, Pablo Picasso, Pierre Naville,

Robert Desnos.

ABONNEMENT,  
les 12 Numéros :  
France : 45 francs  
Etranger : 55 francs

Dépositaire général : Librairie GALLIMARD  
15, Boulevard Raspail, 15  
PARIS (VII<sup>e</sup>)

LE NUMÉRO :  
France : 4 francs  
Etranger : 5 francs

Figure n°11:  
cover of *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°1 (1 December, 1924)

N° 11 — Quatrième année

15 Mars 1928

# LA RÉVOLUTION SURREALISTE



LA PROCHAINE CHAMBRE

## SOMMAIRE

Itinéraire du Temps : Max Morise.

Traité du Style : Aragon.

LE DIALOGUE en 1928

Nadja : André Breton.

L'Osselet toxique : Antonin Artaud.

TEXTES SURREALISTES

Raymond Queneau.

REVES

Max Morise.

Consuella : Roger Vitrac.

Sans titre : Xavier Forneret.

Le Cinquantenaire de l'Hystérie: Aragon. Breton.

Programme : Jacques Baron.

La Maladie n° 9 : Benjamin Péret.

POEMES

Robert Desnos, Aragon.

Correspondance: Antonin Artaud, Jean Genbach.

RECHERCHES SUR LA SEXUALITE

ILLUSTRATIONS :

Arp, Chirico, Max Ernst, Georges Malkine,

André Masson, Francis Picabia, Picasso,

Man Ray, Yves Tanguy, etc.

ADMINISTRATION : 16, Rue Jacques-Callot, PARIS (VI<sup>e</sup>)

ABONNEMENT,  
les 12 Numéros :  
France : 55 francs  
Etranger : 100 francs

Dépositaire général : Librairie GALLIMARD  
15, Boulevard Raspail, 15  
PARIS (VII<sup>e</sup>)

LE NUMERO :  
France : 5 francs  
Etranger : 7 francs

Figure n°12:

cover of *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°11 (15 March, 1928)



# LE CINQUANTENAIRE DE L'HYSTÉRIE

(1878-1928)

NOUS, SURREALISTES, TENONS A CÉLÉBRER ICI LE CINQUANTENAIRE DE L'HYSTÉRIE, LA PLUS GRANDE DÉCOUVERTE POÉTIQUE DE LA FIN DU XIX<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE, ET CELA AU MOMENT MÊME OU LE DÉMEMBREMENT DU CONCEPT DE L'HYSTÉRIE PARAÎT CHOSE CONSOMMÉE. NOUS QUI N'AIMONS RIEN TANT QUE CES JEUNES HYSTÉRIQUES, DONT LE TYPE PARFAIT NOUS EST FOURNI PAR L'OBSERVATION RELATIVE A LA DÉLICIEUSE X. L. (AUGUSTINE) ENTRÉE A LA SALPÊTRIÈRE DANS LE SERVICE DU D<sup>r</sup> CHARCOT LE 21 OCTOBRE 1875, A L'ÂGE DE 15 ANS 1/2, COMMENT SERIONS-NOUS TOUCHÉS PAR LA LABORIEUSE RÉPUTATION DE TROUBLES ORGANIQUES, DONT LE PROCÈS NE SERA JAMAIS QU'AUX YEUX DES SEULS MÉDECINS CELUI DE L'HYSTÉRIE ? QUELLE PITIÉ ! M. BABINSKI, L'HOMME LE PLUS INTELLIGENT QUI SE SOIT ATTACQUÉ A CETTE QUESTION, OSAIT PUBLIER EN 1913 : « QUAND UNE ÉMOTION EST SINCÈRE, PROFONDE, SECOUR L'ÂME HUMAINE, IL N'Y A PLUS DE PLACE POUR L'HYSTÉRIE ». ET VOILA ENCORE CE QU'ON NOUS A DONNÉ A APPRENDRE DE MEUX. FREUD, QUI DOIT TANT A CHARCOT, SE SOUVIENT-IL DU TEMPS OÙ, AU TÉMOIGNAGE DES SURVIVANTS LES INTERNES DE LA SALPÊTRIÈRE CONFOUDAIENT LEUR DEVOIR PROFESSIONNEL ET LEUR GOUT DE L'AMOUR, OÙ, A LA NUIT TOMBANTE, LES MALADES LES REJOIGNAIENT AU DEHORS OU LES RECEVAIENT DANS LEUR LIT ? ILS ÉNUMÉRAIENT ENSUITE PATIEMMENT, POUR LES BESOINS DE LA CAUSE MÉDICALE QUI NE SE DÉFEND PAS, LES ATTITUDES

PASSIONNELLES SOI-DISANT PATHOLOGIQUES QUI LEUR ÉTAIENT, ET NOUS SONT ENCORE HUMAINEMENT, SI PRÉCIEUSES. APRÈS CINQUANTE ANS, L'ÉCOLE DE NANCY EST-ELLE MORTE ? S'IL VIT TOUJOURS, LE DOCTEUR LUYA A-T-IL OUBLIÉ ? MAIS OÙ SONT LES OBSERVATIONS DE NÉRI SUR LE TREMBLEMENT DE TERRE DE MESSINE ? OÙ SONT LES ZOUAVES TORPILLÉS PAR LE RAYMOND ROUSSEL DE LA SCIENCE, CLOVIS VINCENT ?

AUX DIVERSES DÉFINITIONS DE L'HYSTÉRIE QUI ONT ÉTÉ DONNÉES JUSQU'A CE JOUR, DE L'HYSTÉRIE, DIVINE DANS L'ANTIQUITÉ, INFERNALE AU MOYEN-ÂGE, DES POSSÉDÉS DE LOUDUN AUX FLAGELLANTS DE N.-D. DES PLEURS (VIVE MADAME CHANTELOUVE!), DÉFINITIONS MYTHIQUES, ÉROTIQUES OU SIMPLEMENT LYRIQUES, DÉFINITIONS SOCIALES, DÉFINITIONS SAVANTES, IL EST TROP FACILE D'OPPOSER CETTE « MALADIE COMPLEXE ET PROTÉIFORME APPELÉE HYSTÉRIE QUI ÉCHAPPE A TOUTE DÉFINITION » (Bernheim). LES SPECTATEURS DU TRÈS BEAU FILM « LA SORCELLERIE A TRAVERS LES ÂGES » SE RAPPELLENT CERTAINEMENT AVOIR TROUVÉ SUR L'ÉCRAN OU DANS LA SALLE DES ENSEIGNEMENTS PLUS VIFS QUE CEUX DES LIVRES D'HIPPOCRATE, DE PLATON OÙ L'UTÉRUS BONDIT COMME UNE PETITE CHÈVRE, DE GALIEN QUI IMMOBILISE LA CHÈVRE, DE FERNEL QUI LA REMET EN MARCHÉ AU XVI<sup>e</sup> SIÈCLE ET LA SENT SOUS SA MAIN REMONTER JUSQU'A L'ESTOMAC ; ILS ONT VU GRANDIR, GRANDIR LES CORNES DE LA



LES ATTITUDES PASSIONNELLES EN 1878

Figure n°13:  
article from *La Révolution surréaliste*, n°11 (15 March, 1929)



## LES MOTS ET LES IMAGES

Un objet ne tient pas tellement à son nom qu'on ne puisse lui en trouver un autre qui lui convienne mieux



Il y a des objets qui se passent de nom :



Un mot ne sert parfois qu'à se désigner soi-même :



Un objet rencontre son image, un objet rencontre son nom. Il arrive que l'image et le nom de cet objet se rencontrent :



Parfois le nom d'un objet tient lieu d'une image :



Un mot peut prendre la place d'un objet dans la réalité :



Une image peut prendre la place d'un mot dans une proposition :



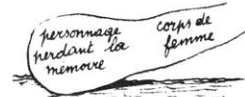
Un objet fait supposer qu'il y en a d'autres derrière lui :



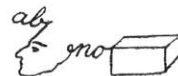
Tout tend à faire penser qu'il y a peu de relation entre un objet et ce qui le représente :



Les mots qui servent à désigner deux objets différents ne montrent pas ce qui peut séparer ces objets l'un de l'autre :



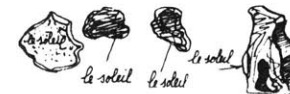
Dans un tableau, les mots sont de la même substance que les images :



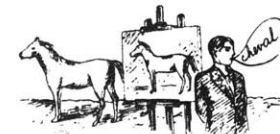
On voit autrement les images et les mots dans un tableau :



Une forme quelconque peut remplacer l'image d'un objet :



Un objet ne fait jamais le même office que son nom ou que son image :



Or, les contours visibles des objets, dans la réalité, se touchent comme s'ils formaient une mosaïque :



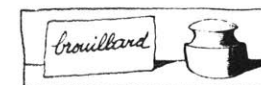
Les figures vagues ont une signification aussi nécessaire aussi parfaite que les précises :



Parfois, les noms écrits dans un tableau désignent des choses précises, et les images des choses vagues :



Ou bien le contraire :



René MAGRITTE.



Figure n°15:  
René Magritte, "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans le forêt" (I don't see the woman hidden in the forest) 1929

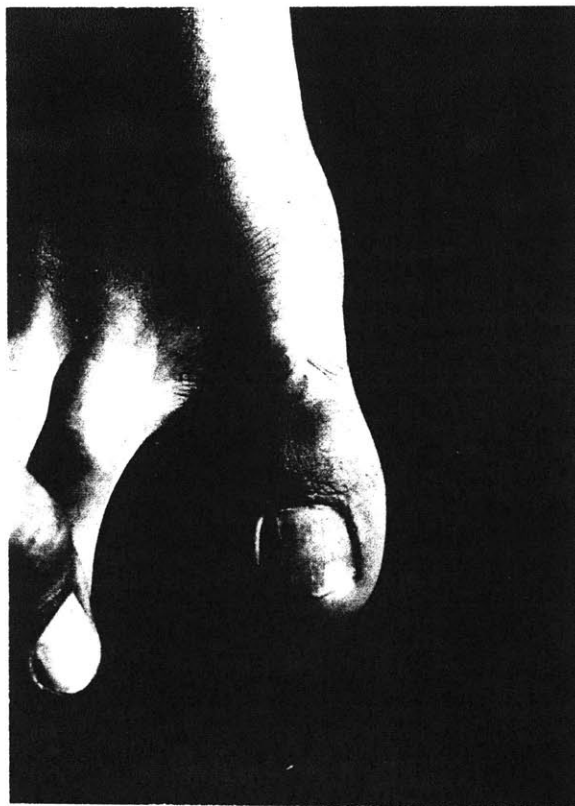


Figure n°16:  
Jacques-André Boiffard, Untitled photograph, 1929

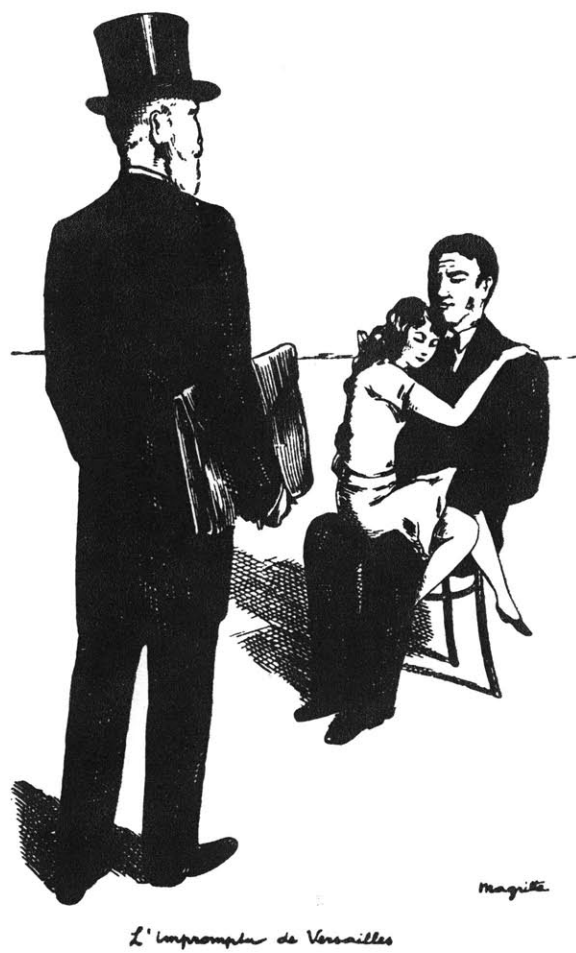
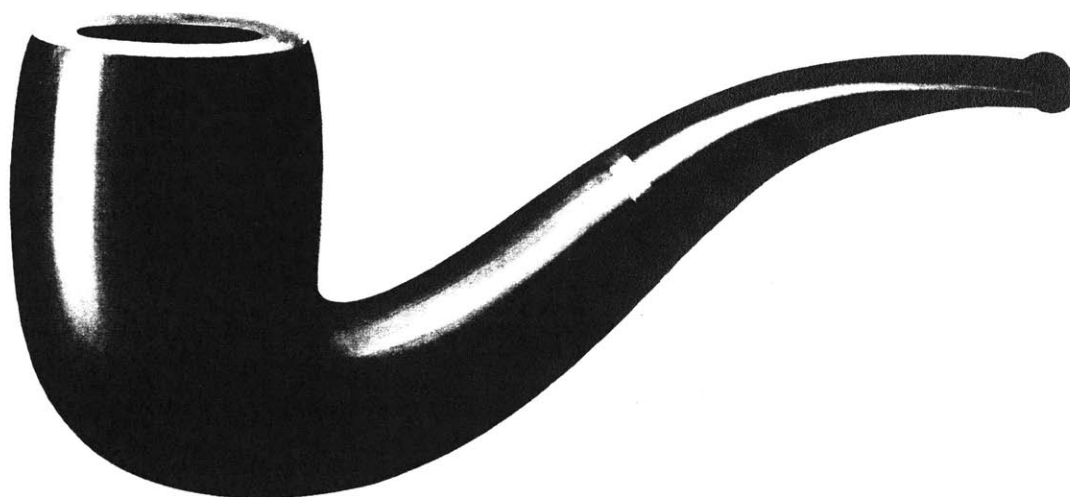


Figure n°17:  
René Magritte, "L'impromptu de Versailles" (Versailles Impromptu) 1933



*Ceci n'est pas une pipe.*

*Magritte*

Figure n°18:  
René Magritte, "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" (This is Not a Pipe) 1926

# SURRÉALISME

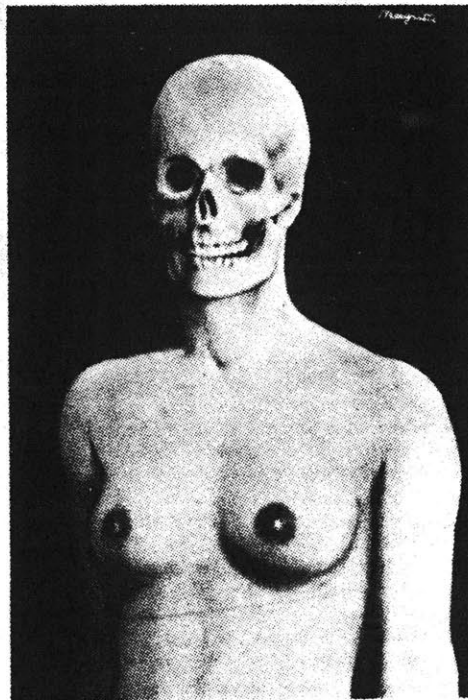
N° 3

Publié à Bruxelles

par le Groupe surréaliste en Belgique

20 AOUT 1935

PRIX : 1,50 Fr.



LA GACHEUSE

## SOMMAIRE

1) LE COUTEAU DANS LA PLAIE.

2) André BRETON : Discours au Congrès des Ecrivains pour la défense de la Culture

Illustrations de René MAGRITTE et Max SERVAIS

Figure n°19:

René Magritte, "La gacheuse" (She Who Spoils) on the cover of the *Bulletin International du surréalisme*, 1935

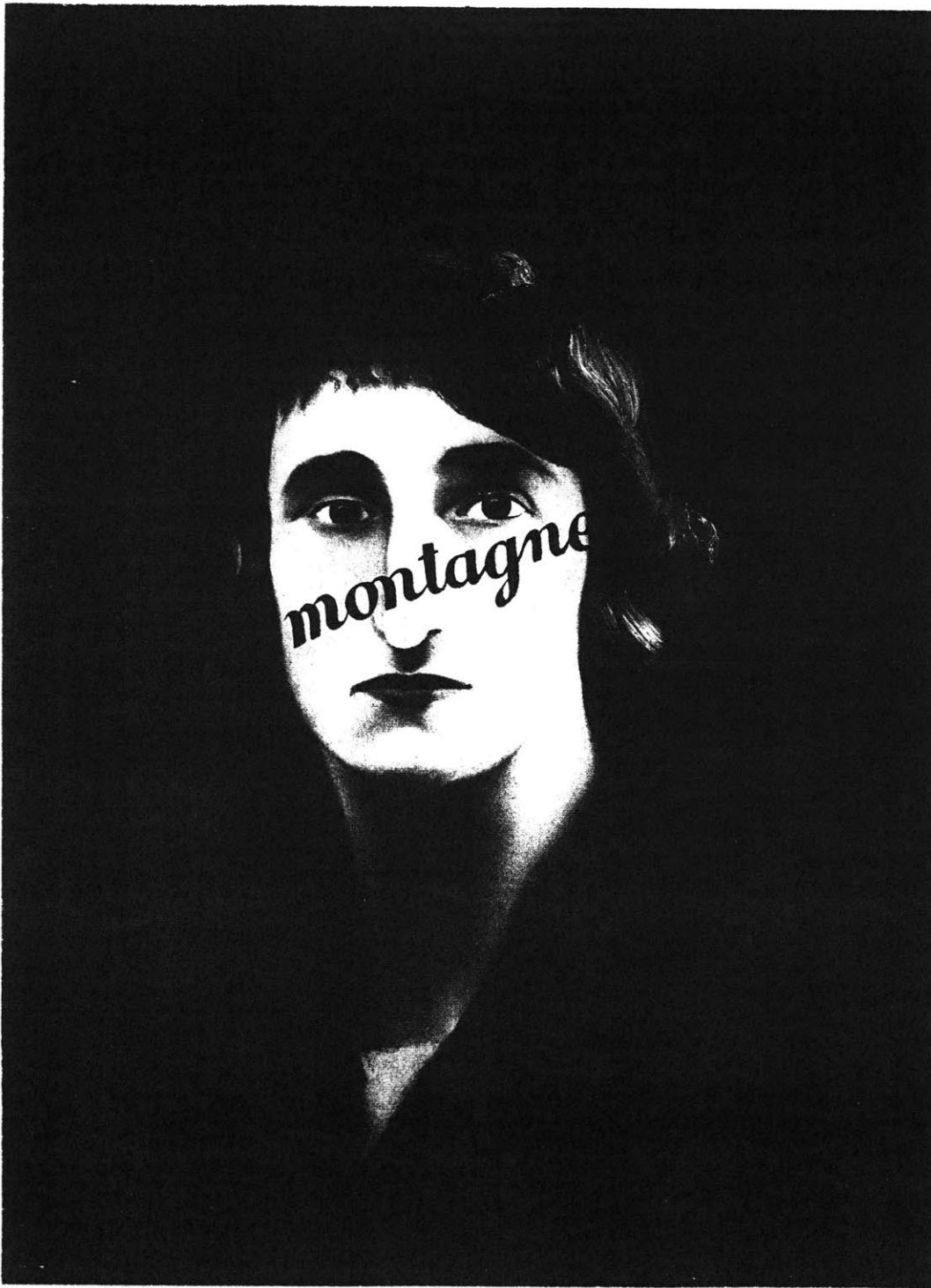


Figure n°20:  
René Magritte, "Le paysage fantôme" (The Phantom Landscape) 1928-29

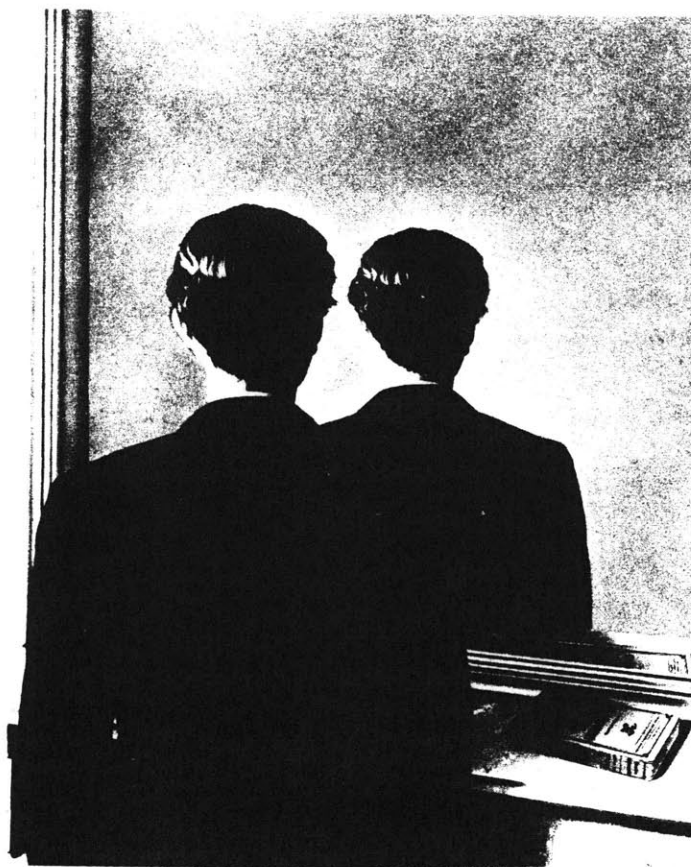


Figure n°21:  
René Magritte, "La reproduction interdite" (Not To Be Reproduced) 1937-39



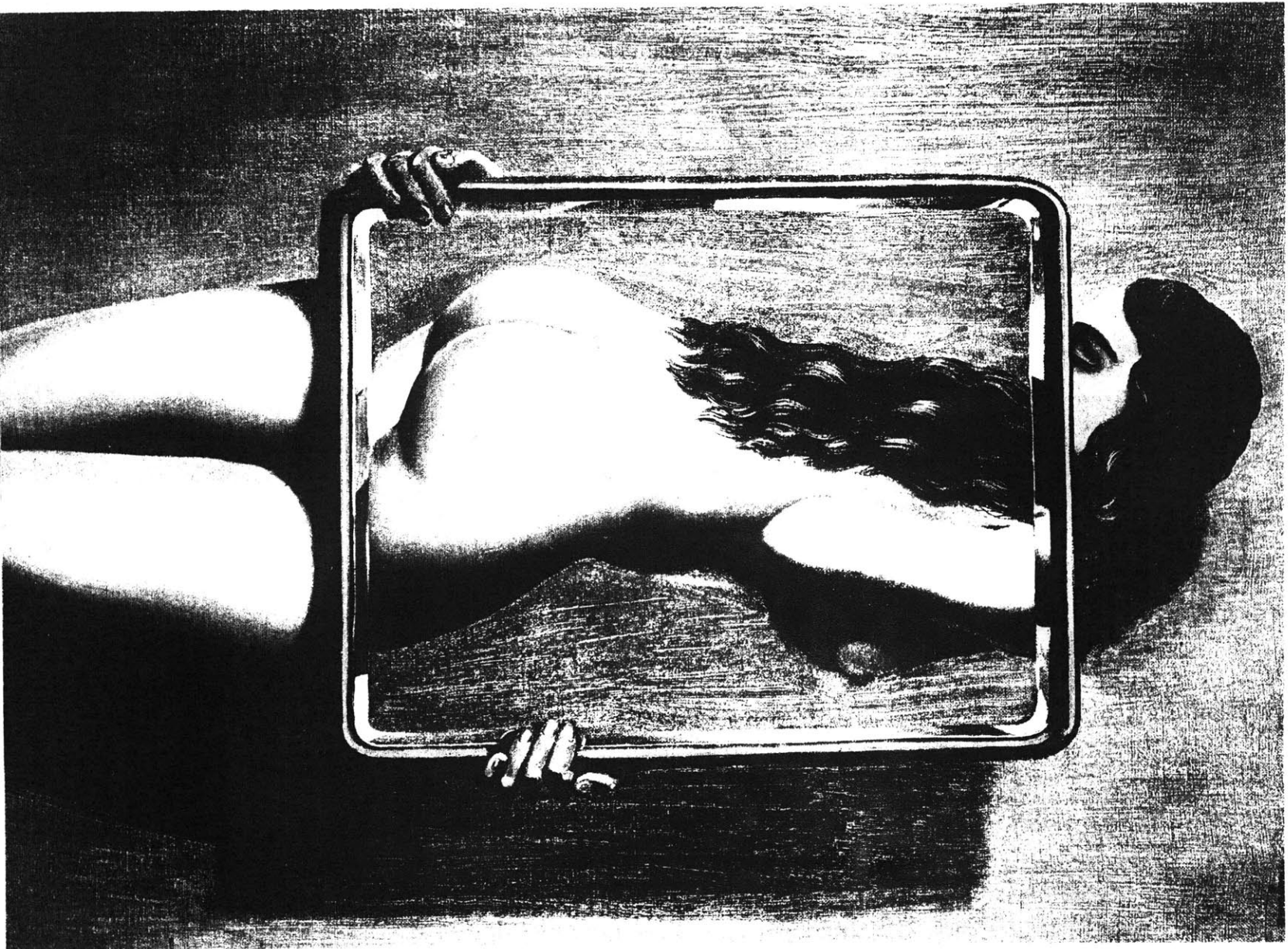


Figure n°22:  
René Magritte, "Les liaisons dangereuses" (Dangerous Relationships) 1936