



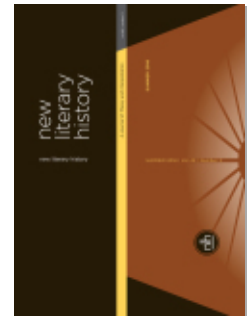
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Benjamin Mangrum

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Audre Lorde, Theodor Adorno, and the Administered Word

Benjamin Mangrum

IN FEBRUARY 1977, AFTER RETURNING from a trip to Nigeria, Audre Lorde began her work as the poetry editor of the feminist quarterly *Chrysalis*. She accepted this position in 1976, and she retained it for two years despite conflict with the quarterly's editors. *Chrysalis* was an alternative cultural institution founded to support women marginalized by mainstream publishing. Working with *Chrysalis* was thus both a political act and an important service to many who were excluded by the literary community. Quarterlies in the 1970s helped create what Agatha Beins, in a study of the decade's archive of feminist periodicals, describes as "a realm of cultural, mechanical, political, and literary practice to women who might never otherwise consider themselves able or skilled."¹ A large but informal network of feminist periodicals, conferences, and other publishing institutions gave women access to "the means of production" in print media.² And as one might expect, Lorde's work for the quarterly was exacting. Alexis de Veaux explains that Lorde "read thousands of submissions, literally, culling from them selections for twelve issues of the quarterly. It was a herculean task, but Lorde was an efficient, sagacious poetry editor and used her position with the magazine to publish emerging poets."³ Reading submissions mailed directly to her in New York, rather than the magazine's office in Los Angeles, Lorde's editorial selections helped give shape to one of the cultural institutions that supported feminist, black, and queer cultural expression during the late 1970s.

The third issue of *Chrysalis* included what has since become one of Lorde's most widely read essays, "Poems Are Not Luxuries" (1977). The essay was later reprinted in *Sister Outsider* (1984) under its more familiar title "Poetry Is Not a Luxury." When read in its first context as part of her work for *Chrysalis*, the essay not only affirms the value of poetry but also serves as a statement of editorial and literary judgment.⁴ The essay delimits the value of a certain type of poetry—one that breaks with the expectations of mainstream literary norms and promotes feminist innovation as a countervailing force. Indeed, Lorde had penned an informal

version of this very statement in a December 1976 letter to the editors of *Chrysalis*, explaining the type of poetry she planned to accept for the magazine: "Poetry of Crysalis [*sic*] must mirror sing warm scream the highest of our journeys the bloodiest of our failures the most bizarre and precious of our dreams the most difficult of our future uncharted arrivals and the agonizing elations of reconstructing the route & journeys so we may come again" (qtd. in *WP* 178). Lorde's plans for the magazine's poetry privilege the felt above the ideational, affect above theory. Much like her own poetry, Lorde looked for creative work that made the reader feel in new ways about seemingly familiar concepts and objects. The *form* of this informal editorial statement also signals Lorde's desire for work unfettered by syntactical and organizational norms.⁵ Lorde would even more directly express the creative force of her chosen literary form in "Poems Are Not Luxuries," where she proclaims that, when the right "language does not yet exist, it is our poetry which helps to fashion it."⁶ Poetry creates new forms of understanding in the midst of overweening strictures.

Yet Lorde's search for the right kind of poetry at *Chrysalis* was also, on a very pragmatic level, a contribution to the banal bureaucracies of literary production. She organized, culled, evaluated, and selected submissions in order to identify poems that fit her editorial vision. As part of that work, and as an expert poet with several published collections, she made administrative judgments of aesthetic taste: she received and organized submissions, conducted quality control, declined and accepted entries, corresponded with writers, and planned the types of appreciation and poetic voice that would be published. And, like most of its peer institutions in the world of small independent magazines, *Chrysalis* was organized around not just ideas but also the exigencies of self-perpetuation. In the language of the quarterly's front matter, *Chrysalis* was registered as "a California Corporation."⁷ The quarterly identified itself as a "feminist institution" within a system of marketing, business managers, page proofs, budgets, copyrights, subscriptions, divisions of publishing labor, judgments by literary experts, and the oversight of an editorial board.⁸ When read within this bureaucratic context, the content of *Chrysalis* embodies a countercultural form of what Theodor W. Adorno calls "administered culture," by which he means ideas and art produced under the auspices of "the administrative view, the task of which, looking down from on high, is to assemble, distribute, evaluate and organize."⁹ In contrast to the critical spontaneity that he believes is suppressed but latent within modern art, Adorno claims administrated culture turns into "a lubricant for the system, into something which exists for something else, into untruth, or into goods of the culture industry calculated for the consumer" (CA 117). This integration of a

bureaucratic ethos within the domains of literary and artistic production is so pervasive that Adorno claims it amounts to the “negation of the concept of the cultural” itself (CA 123).

As the poetry editor of an independent quarterly, Lorde was not positioned at the head of one of the large media corporations most often associated with the postwar culture industry. Yet the problem of culture and administration’s entanglement was, for Adorno, a pervasive social phenomenon—one that plagued modern art and threatened to subsume it for institutional ends. He felt this was a hazard regardless of the artist’s position within the class structure of society: “Even that which deviates,” he explains, “is by no means secure from standardization” (CA 124). This essay evaluates such a thesis by looking to the administrative logic of Lorde’s work in and for *Chrysalis*. More than instantiating Adorno’s critique, this essay argues that Lorde’s administration of aesthetic problems in *Chrysalis* was a reticent embrace of the institutions that facilitate cultural production. By reckoning with her work’s institutionality, Lorde’s poetry and editorial service presented a concerted and consistent criticism of patriarchal institutional models and the modern tradition of aesthetics that she felt supported such institutions. Lorde’s engagement with the institutional contexts for literary production thus led her to criticize aspects of European philosophical aesthetics, particularly the legacy established by Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (1790). Lorde’s criticisms of this legacy suggest the important affinities between hers and Adorno’s respective projects. Yet the means through which Lorde articulates her break with Kantian aesthetics also differentiates her from Adorno’s dialectical criticism. These related but mutually interrogating points on the philosophical and cultural map of the 1960s and 1970s help us reckon with the relationship between culture and administration—feminist poetry and its institutionality—and, as a result, they also suggest how we as critics might conceive of our own institutional practices and academic contexts.

Twentieth-Century Aesthetics and Administrated Culture

In a 1975 interview with Lorde, Margaret Kaminski asks the poet about her joint statement with Adrienne Rich and Alice Walker, after the three women published poetry collections that were nominated for the National Book Award. Referring to the collective sensibilities of the statement, Kaminski asks Lorde, “Was this—people talk about the feminist aesthetic—do you think that this is the main difference [between the women and men nominated]?”¹⁰ Lorde tentatively agrees, explaining, “The whole concept of art as business, art for art’s sake, art as the com-

petitive gesture, I connect with a very male-oriented concept of living, as opposed to, and we could call them alternate aesthetics, which include the black aesthetic, the feminist aesthetic, where art and poetry become part and parcel of one's daily living, one's daily expression, the need to communicate, the need to share one's feelings, to develop within oneself the best that is possible. And the definition of art as betterment, I think, is a mainstay of the alternative aesthetics."¹¹ Lorde's description of "alternate" or "alternative aesthetics" describes many of the period's philosophical and cultural invocations of the aesthetic. Indeed, there was a period of sustained and renewed interest in philosophical aesthetics in the United States after writings by Bertolt Brecht, Walter Benjamin, Martin Heidegger, and other modernist aestheticists were translated for American intellectuals in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but before the critique of aesthetics articulated by Paul de Man and readers of Pierre Bourdieu began to garner wider prestige in the 1990s.¹² On the one hand, such a renaissance included revolutionary critiques of the Enlightenment tradition—for example, the Black Arts movement and what GerShun Avilez calls the "radical aesthetics" of the 1960s and 1970s.¹³ On the other hand, many academic philosophers invoked the aesthetic with the less radical hope of revising the modern tradition established by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, Edmund Burke, and Kant.¹⁴

When American philosophers looked to distinguish themselves from Kant—as Lorde does in "Poems Are Not Luxuries"—these thinkers often adapted the categorical form but departed from the transcendental content of *Critique of Judgment*. Adorno, too, similarly engaged with Kant's view of aesthetics, from Adorno's early book *Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic* (1933) to *Aesthetic Theory* (1970), the work published the year after his death. His concept of art as negation often locates judgments of taste within the bureaucratic rationalization that characterizes modern capitalist societies. Adorno argues that Kant's account implicitly emphasizes "identity" and "sameness" in such a way that overestimates the autonomy of the work of art. He argues that Kantian aesthetics construes works of art after the fashion of "conceptual knowledge," which makes art significant only in terms of what various artistic objects share (that is, their universality) rather than in terms of their particularity.¹⁵

However, Adorno also repurposes important aspects of Kant's *Critique*. In particular, Kant famously depicts judgments of taste (i.e., the value of "beauty," appraisals of poetry, etc.) as instances of "exemplary" or "subjective necessity."¹⁶ This enigmatic categorization derives from Kant's claim that the value we attribute to art and beauty "cannot be derived from definite concepts" or "inferred from the universality of experience" (*CJ* 91). In other words, Kant insists there's no objective register for art, nor are there stable, rational concepts for explaining our judgments about

art. Adorno objects that Kant's construal divorces art from its place in the historical-material sediment of everyday life. If art were produced and understood in its proper place in society, Adorno believes the "modality" of art would be "objective." Yet as a result of Kant's construal of art as exemplary but not finally rational, Adorno believes that art is more easily appropriated within late modern capitalism as "goods," or as objects enshrouded with mystical properties that occlude their placement in the material processes of labor (CA 117).¹⁷

Adorno's revision to the Kantian formula for aesthetics becomes part and parcel of his dialectical view of art's "objective" place in modern society. In contrast to the universalizing tendencies in Kant's theory—which Adorno argues is homologous with the universalizing tendencies of contemporary capitalist society—he argues that modern art "corrects conceptual knowledge because, in complete isolation, it carries out what conceptual knowledge in vain awaits." That is to say, modern art becomes a "subjective act" that unveils "what is objective" (AT 155). Kant's subjective/objective problem persists for Adorno, yet the latter repurposes this ambiguity in Kant's account and makes it dialectical: art is objectively necessary but only seemingly autonomous. This ambiguity is irresolvable, but Adorno believes that modernist art and literature make some very modest headway by being resistant to appropriation within the capitalistic dominance of the universal. "The dialectic of modern art," he argues, "is largely that it wants to shake off its illusoriness like an animal trying to shake off its antlers" (AT 142). Modernist works of art insist on their status as monads ("in complete isolation") and thereby affirm the particular. This particularity is expressed through modernist art's difficulty and unintelligibility. These characteristics make modernist artworks resistant to conceptual knowledge while also affirming their separation from real life (that is, their "illusoriness").

The objective "necessity" of modern art, for Adorno, is that it illuminates the standardization and bureaucratization of modern society despite this art's struggle to assert its autonomy. This theory of the dialectic between autonomy and "illusoriness" responds to what Adorno perceives to be the inadequacies of continental philosophy's view of aesthetics. In particular, Kant, Hegel, and Marx leave out one or the other side of art's ambiguous predicament, and so their explanations are inadequate to addressing the triumph of universality over particularity. In contrast, Adorno attempts to free dialectics from the synthesizing impulse of his philosophical predecessors by arriving at some combination of Hegel's, Kant's, and Marx's approaches. Adorno's refusal to arrive at a final position of either a liberating or illusory aesthetic is what he calls "negative dialectics," or a dialectic that does not have a final moment of unification. For many, this abnegation of presenting a final or fully conceptualized

account of the aesthetic seems like a pyrrhic victory. For example, Andreas Huyssen worries that the “negativity of Adorno’s critique of society veers into an idealist aesthetic.”¹⁸ The problem with Adorno’s negative dialectics, according to this view, is that it becomes *mere* negativity, as if negation were an end in itself, divorced from historical-social change or material structures.

But there’s also more to Adorno’s theory of culture than this seemingly infinite loop of negation. In particular, Adorno’s essays after his work with Max Horkheimer on the culture industry turn toward the very practical matter of the entanglement of culture and administration. In 1960, for example, Adorno published an essay titled “Kultur und Verwaltung,” later collected in a volume of his sociological writings. Republished as “Culture and Administration” in 1978, the essay opens with common observations about the proximity of culture and administration through radio programs, national ministries of culture, and the departmentalized knowledge of higher education. After theorizing the consequences of “administered” or “administrated culture,” Adorno turns at the end of this essay to offering *administrative* solutions to the problems of administrated culture. “Whoever makes critically and unflinchingly conscious use of the means of administration and its institutions,” Adorno writes, “is still in a position to realize something which would be different from merely administrated culture” (CA 131). Adorno arrives at a somewhat surprising position: the diseased dialectic between culture and administration provides the basis for a more potent inoculation against the world of bureaucratic rationality.

The turn later in Adorno’s career toward “the institution” as a site for its own “correction” is based in this late essay on his extended analysis of Max Weber’s ideas about rationalization. According to Adorno, the paradox created by the rise of rationalized bureaucracies is that “culture suffers damage when it is planned and administrated,” but “when it is left to itself . . . everything cultural threatens not only to lose its possibility of effect, but its very existence as well” (CA 108). In the predicament created by the rationalized organization of modern societies, Adorno says art needs administration to have any “effect.” Nonetheless, Adorno cites Weber’s opposition to “specialized humanity”—experts, specialists, bureaucrats—who seize “control of all public and private relations through bureaucraticization [*sic*] and the steadily-increasing significance of specialized knowledge.”¹⁹ By following parts of this line of thought, Adorno argues the processes of administration represent the triumph of “the general” over “the particular” (CA 113). Rationalized social structures categorize and evaluate an object based on its usefulness—for example, the object’s ability to produce “cash,” or an object’s ability to fulfill a publishing outlet’s mission statement. The administrative view, in

other words, either depicts culture as “thoroughly useless” or as merely instrumental for an institution’s larger economic or political purposes (CA 114–15). Poetry, according to the second of these two possibilities, would matter within an institution only insofar as it advances the institution’s goals and meets a specialist’s criteria. The only place for poetry in administrated culture is within the metrics of institutional utility.

Despite the subjective designation that Kant attributes to art, he nonetheless maintains that our judgments about “beauty” are a response to the “purposiveness” we identify in the “work of art” (*CJ*90). Kant maintains, in other words, that we get satisfaction from contemplating art because “its shape has reference to some design and definite purpose,” some type of necessity that rings true to our cognitive processes, even if it’s impossible to identify the transcendental concepts that explain beauty or justify our satisfaction in it (*CJ* 90n1). Adorno similarly maintains that art has a type of purposiveness. While Adorno argues that art attests to the objective conditions of standardization in modern society, he also maintains that art “gives voice to the seemingly individual and coincidental,” which replicates Kant’s characterization of the aesthetic as a form of “subjective necessity” (CA 122). Indeed, much like Kant’s notion of art’s purposiveness, Adorno argues that modern art and culture are sources of “autonomy, spontaneity, and criticism,” even though these very possibilities are negated through the “pre-ordained” judgments of value and “total planning” that characterize cultural production in the administrated world (CA 123). It’s as if the artifacts of culture ought to enable independent thought. Therefore, not unlike Kant, Adorno suggests that the aesthetic can ring true to our critical faculties.

Adorno’s affirmation of the possibilities of art is actually a mirror of his unexpected turn back toward the institution as a site for its own dialectical “correction.” As Adorno puts it, the critique of even the most insidious manifestations of the administrated world “conceals the potential of something better” (CA 130). Instead of throwing the institutional baby out with the bathwater, Adorno says that art needs the “support” of “official institutions” in order to “be produced at all and find its way to an audience” (CA 117). But more important than such a pragmatic concession, he also argues in “Culture and Administration” that institutions are the only practical fortification against market economies. Adorno’s dialectical justification for institutional administration thus circles back to an endorsement of a familiar form of social democracy, in which “critical independence” and a “state of consciousness on the part of administrators” can protect “cultural matters from the realm of control by the market, which today unhesitatingly mutilates culture” (CA 130, 29). A form of critical institutionality is the dialectical answer to the ills created by a society structured according to bureaucratic administration.

Adorno's argument relies on the conviction that individuals who participate in social democratic institutions can, at least to some degree, challenge and withstand the alienating structures of the institutions that employ them. Adorno calls this capacity the "spontaneous consciousness" of individual administrators, and he hopes these individuals can negate the culture-negating work of the administered world, thus "alter[ing] the function of the institution within which this consciousness expresses itself" (CA 131). But this view of the dialectical correction of administration is not without its flaws. In particular, while culture is based on the illusion of autonomy in Adorno's schema, he believes that independent thought can save culture from the institutions that undermine its independence. Yet how does thought's capacity for independence endure while artworks are "predicated on the illusory" (AT 140)? Adorno acknowledges the autonomy of individuals is also threatened, so why isn't the notion of the spontaneous administrator—the bureaucrat who uses the institution as a means for expressing conscious independence—just as much an illusion as the autonomous work of art within administered culture?

Adorno only gestures toward this problem, but he offers a partial answer when he analyzes a fallacious temptation that arises when considering culture and administration: "One adjusts all too readily to the prevailing conviction that the categories of culture and administration must simply be accepted as that into which they actually have developed to a large degree in historical terms: as static blocks which discretely oppose each other—as mere actualities. In so doing, one remains under the spell of that reification" (CA 130). This mistaken view creates the illusion that art and bureaucracy are "static blocks," as if they were discrete from one another—a view that Adorno's analysis refutes. However, Adorno also explains that the inverse of this notion of discreteness is equally confused. He implies that, because the boundaries of culture "cannot be clearly fixed," administration cannot absolutely subsume or rationalize cultural production (CA 108). As a result of the variability and interpenetration of culture and administration, "even art could not possibly oppose [administration] *en bloc*" (CA 121). Neither concept—culture or administration—nor their more specific subsets of art and bureaucracy are "totally reified," for "both refer back to living subjects" (CA 130). Adorno thus implicitly invokes but then denies the conditions of possibility for Antonio Gramsci's earlier notion of cultural hegemony.²⁰ Indeed this issue is the proving ground for Adorno's legacy: if a dominant ideology creates regimes of cultural hegemony—which, he implies, they would need to be if they were hegemonic—then Adorno's late turn toward a critical-institutional solution is a self-defeating and contradictory hope. But if culture and administration cannot be fixed or wholly reified concepts, then Adorno's administrative turn is a pragmatic

solution to the realities of an administrated world.

Adorno's dialectical break with the "suspicion of the imprint of administrated thought" in Weber's sociology nevertheless refuses to be rose-colored about the difficulties facing independent administrators and progressive institutions (CA 110). Countercultural communities that purportedly remain independent—Adorno cites Greenwich Village as an example—rely on the "jargon of authenticity," when in fact these putatively independent cultural arenas "are institutionally absorbed and then, to a certain extent, returned to the private sphere" (CA 125).²¹ The individual ("private sphere") often believes he or she enjoys spontaneity and critical freedom. Adorno, however, argues that so often these freedoms are merely the sanctioned allowances of an institutional context. The impediments to autonomy thus often include its easy veneer. The consequence of such a nefarious integration of rationalized structures with cultural production is the persistent hazard of reinstating a system that independence purports to thwart. Adorno explains this threat in the following way:

Whatever raises from within itself a claim to being autonomous, critical and antithetical—while at the same time never being able to reassert this claim with total legitimacy—must necessarily come to naught; this is particularly true when its impulses are integrated into something heteronomous to them, which has been worked out previously from above, that is to say, when it is granted the space in which to draw breath immediately by that power against which it rebels. (CA 118)

The rationalized routes for cultural production are very often "integrated" within the industries and systems of sociocultural control that they purport to oppose. Without self-reflexive critique of the work of art's position within such institutions, Adorno argues that "every particular rationalization" comes to strengthen "the pressures of a blind and unreconciled generality upon the particular" (CA 127). The particularity of art can thus become subordinate to the rationalizing tendencies of institutions and their programmatic aims.

Chrysalis, Independent Publishing, and the Administration of the Printed Word

Adorno's line of thought raises several interrelated questions for analyzing the literary production of the independent magazines and countercultural institutions that proliferated during the 1960s and 1970s. For example, does poetry that advances a quarterly's programmatic aims

create administrated culture in Adorno's sense? If the "medium" helps generate the value of the "message," how does the institutional history of print media inflect the aesthetic and cultural meaning of countercultural and avant-garde poetry? Does the administration of literary culture produce texts under the aegis of what Adorno calls "conceptual knowledge," such that the circulation of these texts replicates the "sameness" of the institution's administrated terms (*AT* 141, 210)? And what's the place of poetry as a division within a compartmentalized publishing institution? What's the relationship between the institutional processes of countercultural publishing and the Weberian rationalization of the American culture industry? Does even countercultural institutionality suppress what Adorno would call literary art's spontaneity and autonomy?

Lorde engaged with these very questions during her time with *Chrysalis*. In a statement on feminist publishing, founding editor Kirsten Grimstad describes feminist publications as a new sort of "institution," one that has become "a determined effort to reach out beyond, to bring feminist ideas, values, consciousness to a broad, general audience."²² Yet Lorde very regularly conflicted with the editorial board over the sort of pedagogical work that *Chrysalis* was capable of doing. By April 1978, after the sixth issue had been published, Lorde wrote the editors to express her concerns about the place of poetry in the quarterly:

At some point, the Board must make up its collective mind about the function of poetry in *Chrysalis*. You must decide to exclude poetry from the magazine, although I think that would be a very unwise decision. But in a *Journal of Women's Culture*, to include poetry as less functional than breaks between articles, partakes of the same western european mind-fuck that masquerades as serious scholarship in the patriarchal academic media. (qtd. in *WP* 212)

Lorde's evocative objections about the "function of poetry" in the magazine were worries she had expressed since the publication of *Chrysalis*'s first issue. In private letters to Grimstad and the other editors, as well as intermediaries like Adrienne Rich, Lorde wrote that poetry had been consigned to a merely "functional" place in the magazine. She felt this functionality mirrored the marginalization of poetry within the broader feminist movement. As signs of this marginalization in *Chrysalis*, Lorde pointed to the quantity of poetry published, the editors' slow response to her correspondence, and the spatial arrangement and aesthetic treatment of the poems themselves. Lorde had been building an archive of texts for an issue devoted exclusively to poetry, as the editors had promised. But the editors never published such an issue, perhaps because they assumed the sales of a poetry-only volume would exacerbate the magazine's financial insecurity (*WP* 238).

Lorde therefore had ample grounds for worrying that *Chrysalis* committed a type of pedagogical error by teaching women that poetry was secondary to the feminist movement's social causes. The token treatment of poetry in *Chrysalis* thus replicated "the patriarchal academic media" that the magazine was meant to oppose, for it implicitly valorized reason and prose above intuition and poetry. Indeed, Lorde wanted more poetry, but she also wanted "the needs of the poem" to be considered aesthetically, rather than in a token or functional way. That is, she wanted it to be treated "as a work of art" (*WP* 212). As part of these objections, Lorde lamented the text's placement in seemingly incidental relation to the rest of *Chrysalis*'s content. For example, the fourth issue includes Pat Parker's "there is a woman in this town," which was printed between an interview-dialogue about lesbian artistic sensibilities and an essay by Jane E. Caputi on "The Glamour of Grammar."²³ The refrain of Parker's poem, "Is she our sister?" refers to the experiences of several very different women, including one who "lives with her husband" and "says she is happy."²⁴ This town woman in Parker's poem becomes an object for critical inquiry as the poem imagines the likely feminist critiques of such a conventional figure: "some say she has no consciousness," as one line suspiciously reads.²⁵ Yet rather than turning toward critique and analytical categories, Parker's poem disperses empathy across the spectrum of women's experience. The refrain asks for feeling and empathy prior to analysis.

But at the material level, how does the poetic empathy of Parker's poem relate to the other writing in the issue of *Chrysalis*? It's not very clear: the poem doesn't have a referential connection or through line between the surrounding content. One might claim that this partitioning of the poem tokenizes the text, or one might say that it evinces the poor administration of a cultural object. (After all, fully rationalized administration would standardize the content and keep the "message" focused.) Lorde's mounting criticisms of *Chrysalis* are in keeping with the former view. Yet, rather than simply valuing her own genre of cultural work in a self-interested way, Lorde's complaints reflected what she and other writers felt was a very constricted, institutional view of feminism itself. For example, the poet Patricia (Spears) Jones wrote to the editors on behalf of Lorde, contending that despite the publication of black poets in *Chrysalis*, there remained a "continuing refusal to allow black and other women of color a complete and integral participation in the philosophical, psychological and public elements of the women's movement." According to Jones, "Chrysalis reflects not only the limitations of the current movement, but also a limited vision of a 'women's culture'" (qtd. in *WP* 258).

It's within the context of these mounting tensions that Lorde published "Poems Are Not Luxuries," which appeared in the issue of *Chrysalis* immediately preceding Parker's poem. The short history of Lorde's tenure with the magazine up to that point suggests that the essay was like an advisory or advance notice of her concerns. Lorde's affirmation of poetry was, in other words, published in the midst of an interpersonal and institutional context that spoke not just to readers but also to its place of publication. This self-reflexive context for "Poems Are Not Luxuries" is what I mean by "critical institutionality," or the text's dialectical engagement with the institution that facilitates its printing and circulation. This critical institutionality also sheds light on the sort of poetry that Lorde found valuable when making her own editorial decisions. For example, she writes in "Poems Are Not Luxuries" that "our feelings, and the honest exploration of them, become sanctuaries and fortresses and spawning grounds for the most radical and daring of ideas, the house of difference so necessary to change and the conceptualization of any meaningful action" (P 8). Poetry ought to precede and inform "conceptualization" while "feelings" ought to become sanctuaries for ideas.

Parker's staging of empathy performs this type of work, presenting the necessity of poetry as a type of preparation for feminist thought and activism. After its representation of several women who don't fit easily into the categories of the feminist movement, the poem concludes, "once upon a time, there was a dream / a dream of women, a dream of women / coming together and turning the world / around, turning the world around and making it over."²⁶ The poem suggests this dream is in peril by a lack of understanding or empathetic feeling toward the variety of women's experiences. Parker's poem thus exhibits the reason that poems cannot be mere "luxuries," as Lorde had put it in the previous issue, for they remind readers of the "dream" that may be lost in a world of mere prose.

Yet the relation between Parker's poem and Lorde's essay also represents the complexities of administrating a type of critical institutionality. The poem affirms what the poetry editor both calls for and valorizes; this type of poetry is what Lorde felt the *Chrysalis* editorial board was missing through its limited, programmatic view of women's experience. One editorial vision resists another, and poetry becomes the object of these institutional contests. On the one hand, this relationship between Lorde and *Chrysalis* attests to the fact that institutions—and thus the institutionality of literary production—are anything but monolithic entities with consolidated regimes of content production. On the other hand, much like Adorno's turn toward institutionality, Lorde's work in and for *Chrysalis* also points to an institutional process of selecting, managing, and administrating cultural objects as a correction to the ills of admin-

istered culture. There were very obvious limitations to this antidote: as poetry editor Lorde was only able to select the texts to be published, not their quantity or arrangement in relation to the magazine's articles and interviews. The stylization and images accompanying the prose content seemingly elevated this prose material above the handful of published poems. As a result, poetry became a mere accoutrement rather than the "spawning grounds" for ideas and activism (P 8). It was as though the poems occupied the lowest and most threadbare compartment in the magazine's system for producing content.

Lorde's inclusion of poems like Parker's "there is a woman in this town" suggests one way in which she pushed back against the function of poetry as a type of incidental cultural capital. But both Lorde's sentiments about the place of poetry and the tensions within *Chrysalis* as a cultural institution repeat many aspects of an earlier period of independent publishing in the United States: the "print cultural boom" that enabled the rise of modernist "little magazines."²⁷ The little magazines were the first to publish many modernist and avant-garde poets, artists, and writers.²⁸ As a result, these print media were essential to the literary production of their day: "No little magazines, no modernism," as Eric Bulson says in an abridgment of scholarly consensus.²⁹ And the feminist, queer, and countercultural movements of later decades likewise relied heavily on independent print media to circulate essays, ideas, and art (WP 177). The period after World War II featured "a plethora of short-lived publications" and thus continued in the fugitive "modernist grain" of publishing, as Peter Brooker puts it.³⁰ While not the sine qua non of feminism and queer culture in the same way as the little magazines were to modernism, independent print media like *Chrysalis* were leading features in the media ecology of 1960s and 1970s counterculture. As a result of the continuities of this literary and media history, understanding the institutionality of the earlier little magazines helps us better understand the stakes of Lorde's later engagement.

The proliferation of countercultural media after World War II followed the precedent of independent publishing in magazines such as *The Little Review*, *Poetry*, *Criterion*, the *Egoist*, *Crisis*, and other print sources that criticized the modern cultural landscape.³¹ Yet the precedent set by these earlier magazines was not an unambiguous one: while showcasing new voices and poetic forms, the little magazines also consolidated avant-garde literary tastes. The little magazines were arbiters of taste, bolstering the reputation of writers through the cultural capital of publication in vanguard media.³² More importantly, during the 1940s, these magazines were also the mechanisms that facilitated the "institutionalization of modernist poetry in the academy."³³ Magazines like *The Dial* and *Criterion* helped establish the parameters for what scholars identified

as modernism proper.³⁴ But the seeds of institutionalization weren't planted only in the later stages of modernism. They'd been there from the beginning. As Lawrence Rainey argues, the print media responsible for what has since become the modernist canon were "institutions" and "contrived corridors" that very often elided the institutionality of literary production.³⁵ Modernist and avant-garde print media thus illustrate the difficulties of cultural opposition to a mass media industry, for there were important intersections between mainstream print media and their countercultural antitheses in the independent print media.

These intersections weren't just confined to the use of rationalized institutions to produce literary content. The overlap between types of print media also had effects on the aesthetics of the printed word. For instance, Donal Harris argues there were substantive exchanges between popular magazines and modernist authorship in work by Willa Cather, W. E. B. Du Bois, James Agee, and many "poet-reporters" in the early twentieth century.³⁶ Similarly, Bartholomew Brinkman shows that the bibliographical framing of text in *Poetry*—its artistic arrangement on the page—was part of the rationalization of the *form* of the modernist poem.³⁷ The editing practices of many little magazines, in other words, used administrative procedures to determine literary form. The codification of the aesthetic shape of modern poetry, through the bibliographical processes of layout and editing, was an administrative task. These processes required the organization of textual material into a coherent and unavoidably bureaucratic category. Every independent magazine had its own "house style," as Harris puts it, and thus its own modes of rationalizing cultural production.³⁸ The history of *Poetry* and *Life*—rather than marking the antithesis and embodiment of the culture industry, respectively—attests to the broad sweep of the processes of standardization and administered aesthetics.³⁹

Lorde's objection to the aesthetic treatment of poetry on the printed pages of *Chrysalis* is heir to the modernist magazine's production of the poem as an independent "work of art" (qtd. in *WP* 258). As an editor, Lorde called on the magazine to assemble and more coherently organize its published poems as aesthetic objects. She wanted the form of the poem to have aesthetic integrity and an artistic arrangement on the page. Yet in keeping with the vision of the *Chrysalis* editorial board, Lorde also envisioned the magazine's poetry as having a clear relation to the wider feminist movement, and thus she rejected the idea of "autonomy" in the sense of "art for art's sake." Instead, Lorde's vision of artistic independence meant a break from what she called "living in the european mode," which was based on the terms established by "the white fathers" (P 8). Lorde knew that women's efforts to be independent were threatening to patriarchal institutions, and indeed vandalism at Diana

Press on October 25, 1977 joined a long history of “violence against feminists and feminist institutions” that heightened the urgency of her work.⁴⁰ While Lorde fought attempts to thwart the feminist movement’s independence from patriarchal and mainstream institutions, she also felt it was important to resist the creep of the “european mode” into the administration of the movement itself. Indeed, I show in the next section that this second layer—the “mode” of philosophy in “Poems Are Not Luxuries”—attest to important affinities between Lorde’s and Adorno’s respective approaches to administrated culture.

Lorde and the “European Mode” of Philosophy

Lorde suggested in many interviews and essays that self-defeating modes of feminist activism infiltrated the movement at both institutional and intellectual levels.⁴¹ She worried that many feminists were “caught between ghosts of whiteness / and the real water,” as she put it in the poem “A Song for Many Movements.”⁴² Significantly, this poem was published in *The Black Unicorn* (1978), which Lorde tried repeatedly but unsuccessfully to have reviewed in *Chrysalis*. Writing to Grimstad on November 25, 1978, Lorde explains, “I feel it is really important that the feminist media not ignore *The Black Unicorn* the way, for the most part, it ignored my last book, *Between Ourselves*” (qtd. in *WP* 227). Lorde’s desire for a review in *Chrysalis* went unrealized, thus confirming her suspicion that the “ghosts of whiteness” still haunted feminists in their search for “the real water.” However, while the politics of publishing was one meeting point for the intellectual and institutional struggle of independence from administrated patriarchy, Lorde also pursued the possibilities of criticism through more direct philosophical engagement in her essays. Indeed, Lorde’s “Poems Are Not Luxuries” assumes the mantle of philosophy more than most of her other prose writing. Given Lorde’s history with *Chrysalis*, the essay’s use of philosophical authority is very likely a reflexive gesture, one that reads the institution that facilitated its publication.

An image of the philosopher Hypatia printed below the essay’s title (Fig. 1) makes the editorial designation of Lorde’s “Poems Are Not Luxuries” as a philosophical essay conspicuous. Hypatia was the head of the neoplatonist school in Alexandria, and she was killed by a mob incited by the Catholic bishop of the city. Yet the process for identifying the essay with Hypatia is unclear. Later issues of *Chrysalis* also included essays under the section header of “Hypatia’s Column,” so it’s more likely that Lorde’s essay was subject to the editors’ efforts to divide, compartmentalize, and categorize the magazine’s content. Although

there's no extant evidence, it's most likely that Grimstad, the issue's managing editor, the designer Sheila Levrant de Bretteville, or one of the production editors was responsible for the image. On the one hand, defending poetry under the aegis of a woman philosopher signals that Lorde offers an alternative to the "european mode" of living that her essay criticizes. On the other hand, the image may also be read as a form of what Charles Mills calls "whitewashing," in which "philosophers of color are absent not just from the halls of academe but from the texts also."⁴³ Under the aegis of Hypatia, the racial dimension of the essay's philosophy disappears, along with its underlying institutional conflicts. The editorial framing of Lorde's text may erase racial difference under a white philosophical image, thus signaling a universal form of feminist thought—a universalism that Lorde's experience with the editors suggests was regularly being asserted to the detriment of women of color.

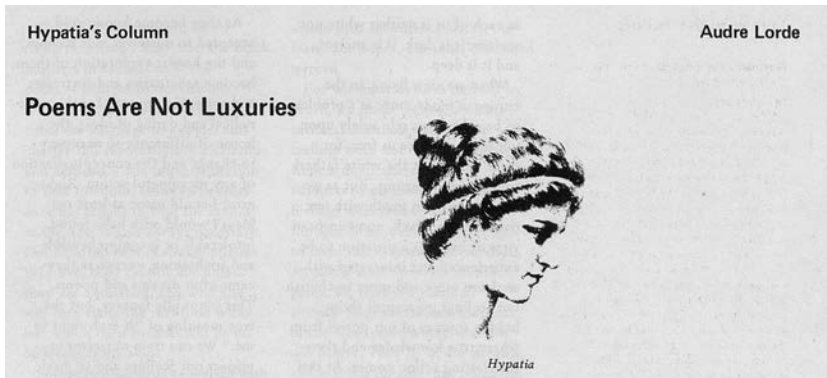


Fig. 1. Audre Lorde, "Poems Are Not Luxuries," *Chrysalis* 3 (1978): 7. Women's and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Movements (LGBT) Periodicals Collection, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University. Digitally reproduced by Independent Voices: An Open Access Collection of an Alternative Press.

In the midst of the essay's uncertain terms of production, Lorde's essay takes an oppositional stance toward a European philosophical tradition that posits a very specific form of transcendental reason as the standard for human knowledge. As Robert Bernasconi argues, Kant was a seminal figure not only in formulating the concept of transcendental reason as the foundation for continental idealism but also in establishing the modern conceptualization of racial difference.⁴⁴ Bernasconi shows that, in an attempt to construct an "archaeology of nature," Kant provides an account of the diversity of the human species that explains "race"

as “nature [being] organized purposively.”⁴⁵ Yet Kant’s “archaeology” presents racial difference as a “purposive” expression of nature, which in turn justifies European dominance. In Kant’s infamous “witticism” in “Of National Characteristics,” for instance, he denigrates Africans’s capacity for reason and instead presents reason as predominately a European possession.⁴⁶ In this way, as Lewis R. Gordon puts it, “Europe sought to become *ontological*,” as if European whiteness were the standard for the “being” of the human species.⁴⁷

Lorde’s essay opposes this whitewashing of reason through the argument that poetry is itself a type of knowledge, which is “not idle fantasy, but the true meaning of ‘It feels right to me’” (P 8). An idealist in the European tradition might object to the squishiness of “it feels right to me,” for surely sentiment or mere opinion is an inadequate alternative to the idea of reason that transcends individual experience. How can subjective feeling connect humans or resolve disagreements? But mere arbitrary sentiment isn’t what Lorde means by “It feels right to me.” Instead, as she writes in the version of the essay revised for inclusion in *Sister Outsider*, “This is not idle fantasy, but *a disciplined attention* to the true meaning of ‘it feels right to me.’”⁴⁸ Lorde clarifies in the later version that “feeling” isn’t immediate or arbitrary. Rather, in order to discover what “feels right to me,” one must devote “disciplined attention” to the intuitive life of the self. This view of “feeling” is one part transcendentalism, one part repudiation of Kantian idealism, and one part rejection of the racial blindness of the progressive movement in the United States.

Regarding the first two parts, Lorde’s vision of poetry recalls but breaks with certain aspects of the legacy of Kant’s philosophy. In *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) Kant argues that the “unity” of an intuition “may in a general way be called the pure concept of the understanding,” which in turn “introduces a transcendental content into its representations, by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general.”⁴⁹ The obscurity of this formula notwithstanding, Kant’s assertion amounted to a philosophical revolution. He turns against dogmatism and toward shared human capacities for knowing. Despite Kant’s iconoclasm, Lorde still rejects many of the fundamental terms of Kantian intuitive reason—namely, “pure,” “understanding,” and “synthetic unity.” At the same time, she identifies feeling—itself a type of intuition—as a site of solidarity and unity. Poetry in particular “forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change, first made into language, then into idea, then into more tangible action” (P 8). Poetry, for Lorde, is the sediment of shared experiences, the “skeleton architecture” that transmutes the “intolerable or incomprehensible” into intelligibility (P 8).

Lorde thus replaces Kant's notion of intuitive reason with an account of intuitive feeling. Much like the US reception of transcendental idealism during the nineteenth century, Lorde elevates intuitive feeling above reason as a shared way of knowing.⁵⁰ The "true meaning" of these feelings are not chemical or psychological sensations but "places of possibility within ourselves" (P 7). They derive from an intuitive source that nineteenth-century transcendentalists would have called the "Over-Soul" but that Lorde calls by the name of "Afrekete" or another one of the names of the African goddesses she found to be wellsprings of feeling.⁵¹ As she frames this intuitive wellspring in the *Chrysalis* essay, "The woman's place of power within each of us is neither white nor surface; it is dark, it is ancient, and it is deep" (P 7–8). This "dark" source of intuition inverts the gendered universalism that afflicts Emerson's essays, which are in this way not dissimilar to Kant's racial blindness. For Lorde, methodical attention to the intuitions of the inner life of the self provides a basis for understanding others and truths about the surrounding world. This is transcendentalism without the continental valorization of reason and ideas, and without the denigration of personal experience that allows for the whitewashing of the pursuit of understanding.

Lorde's recourse toward poetry and attention to inner feeling therefore represent a break with the Kantian tradition's blindness toward racial difference. As work by Mills and Bernasconi suggests, the erasure of blackness from continental philosophy has a good deal to do with the denigration of the subjective for the sake of instituting a falsely universal form of transcendental consciousness. By affirming the possessive "me" of feeling, Lorde's essay rolls back the separation of the transcendental and the subjective in Kant's pursuit of pure reason. Kant's third *Critique* famously seeks justification for aesthetic claims—for "feelings" of beauty—by reference to cognition. Kant admits that if "a man . . . does not find a building, a prospect, or a poem beautiful," there is "no empirical *ground of proof*" to convince him otherwise (*CJ* 157). For this reason, Kant views judgments about the beauty of poetry as categorically different from the modality of pure reason. While Kant elevates aesthetics to a prominent place in the processes of human judgment, he nonetheless measures aesthetics according to the yardstick of cognition. It's in this sense that Kant falls under what Lorde criticizes as the marginalization of "feeling." As she puts it, the knowledge afforded by poetic feeling contrasts with the "european mode" that depicts living "only as a problem to be solved" (P 8). This European mode implies that "our ideas [will] make us free, for these were what the white fathers told us were precious" (P 8). Yet Lorde counters with intuitions as a source of freedom, which preempts the philosophical erasure of gendered

and racial difference and also fends off a whitewashed universalism. By making the particularity of racial experience “precious,” poetry “give[s] name to the nameless so it can be thought.” It gives a name to particular experiences that might otherwise be abstracted or “distorted” for the ends of those in power (P 8).

Rather than presenting a vision for single readers, however, Lorde’s use of the aesthetic as an alternative to a patriarchal “mode” of living makes demands on feminist institutional structures. She reminds the readers of *Chrysalis* that “within structures defined by profit, by linear power, by institutional dehumanization, our feelings were not meant to survive” (P 9). Lorde’s essay thus reads as a demand for the feminist movement’s institutions to resist patriarchy by elevating poetry. She presents this demand as an opposition between two synecdochical authorities: “The white fathers told us, ‘I think therefore I am,’ and the black mothers in each of us—the poets—whisper in our dreams, ‘I feel therefore I can be free’” (P 9). To elevate thinking above feeling—prose above poetry—is to listen to the pernicious susurrations of patriarchy. In contrast, Lorde claims that living and being are not problems of cognition but aesthetic experiences. Resisting patriarchy thus requires opposition to the deprecation of poetry, as Lorde argues is the penchant of patriarchal forms of management. Whereas the feelings of poems “were meant to kneel to thought as we were meant to kneel to men,” feminist institutions can resist this dehumanization by an affirmation of the necessity of the poetic arts (P 9).

One of the understated implications of “Poems Are Not Luxuries” is that Lorde equates the exploitation of women with the dominance of prose. When presented in a magazine that Lorde felt had substantially limited the quantity of poetry it would publish, the essay’s opposition vies for an alternative type of institutional mission statement. Indeed, referring to the legacy of the “dehumanizing” institutionality of patriarchy, Lorde argues that women have been tempted toward the “drug” of an illusion: “The head will save us. The brain alone will set us free” (P 9). In contrast to this false hope, Lorde insists that the “forefront of our move toward change”—that is, the vanguard of the feminist movement itself—is “our poetry” (P 9). The essay’s ennobling of “poetry” and “feeling” as modes of opposition to patriarchy refuses to pick up the “master’s tools,” as Lorde puts it in another famous essay.⁵² By implication, the poetry editor of *Chrysalis* argues that giving poetry its full treatment is an oppositional or activist gesture by the very nature of the type of poetry that would be published. It’s as if Lorde were delineating in a lyric essay what she would argue a year later in her letters to the editors of *Chrysalis*: women who “dehumanize” others through their institutions, and who

create “structures defined by profit” rather than the necessary work of poetic feeling, replicate the very “kneeling” gesture that patriarchy has long demanded (P 9). The troubling fact about *Chrysalis* is that Lorde’s often-expressed concerns were never met with substantive recognition.

Lorde’s work in and for *Chrysalis* attests to the difficulties of practicing cultural work in an institutional context. Part of my concern has been to situate Lorde’s difficulties within the closely related problems that also plagued the earlier twentieth-century, avant-garde print media. The point of tracing the logic of rationalized administration in the history of both modernist print media and the later feminist magazines isn’t to uncover something shocking or nefarious. Instead, Adorno’s work suggests that the processes of rationalization are all but inevitable in the oppositional print culture of an administrated age. As a result, the independent print media of the 1960s and 1970s were not immune to the troubles of the multifaceted precedent of modernism: the processes of rationalization likewise inflected the administration of aesthetic problems with this second “boom” period in twentieth-century print media.⁵³ But again, the creep of an administrated culture industry into oppositional literary production isn’t a contradictory or self-defeating flaw. Rather, as Lorde’s work with *Chrysalis* exemplifies, some of the period’s writers and thinkers recognized and negotiated this institutionality. They saw the administration of progressive institutions as opportunities for nurturing a more independent and critical culture.

Lorde’s work with *Chrysalis* and Adorno’s turn toward institutionality were both situated in something like a phase transition, during which modernism became institutionalized in the academy. Phase transitions are, by definition, fluid and ambiguous. Indeed, Lorde’s work from this period recognizes the multifaceted contexts for the publication of black women’s poetry. She hoped to ward off the “ghosts of whiteness” that continued to haunt the feminist institutions that opposed other, more domineering forms of patriarchal administration. Adorno likewise looked to institutional solutions for the ills of an administrated age, although he failed to think substantively about the gendering of the processes of rationalization or the racial coding that can infiltrate oppositional culture. But in order “not to be at home in one’s home,” as he writes in *Minima Moralia* (1951), Adorno also looked to art to qualify its administrated context.⁵⁴ Lorde similarly saw poetry as a necessity for human thriving, even if she reframed this necessity as predicated on intuitive feeling

rather than reasoned cognition. She labored to maintain the critical and spontaneous possibilities of poetry in the face of the resistance that her work met from the very institutions she viewed as her “first audience” (WP238). Her readers now face the difficulty of affirming such possibilities under the shadow of our current administrations.

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NOTES

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1 Agatha Beins, “A Revolution in Ephemera: Feminist Newsletters and Newspapers of the 1970s,” in *This Book Is an Action: Feminist Print Culture and Activist Aesthetics*, ed. Jaime Harker and Cecilia Konchar Farr (Urbana, IL: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2015), 61.

2 Beins, “A Revolution in Ephemera,” 61.

3 Alexis de Veaux, *Warrior Poet: A Biography of Audre Lorde* (New York: Norton, 2004), 178 (hereafter cited as WP).

4 This was a common practice in postwar literary magazines. For example, Alan Golding glosses “essays by Arnold Stein on Donne, Empson on Wordsworth, and Blackmur on Eliot’s criticism” in a 1951 *Kenyon Review* as a representation of the review’s “critical position” on poetry itself. See Golding, “Little Magazines and Alternative Canons: The Example of *Origin*,” *American Literary History* 2, no. 4 (1990): 695.

5 See Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (New York: Crossing Press, 1984), 95. See also Lexi Rudnitsky, “The ‘Power’ and ‘Sequelae’ of Audre Lorde’s Syntactical Strategies,” *Callaloo* 26, no. 2 (2003): 473–85.

6 Lorde, “Poems Are Not Luxuries,” *Chrysalis* 3 (1977): 8 (hereafter cited as P).

7 Front Matter, *Chrysalis: A Magazine of Women’s Culture* 1, no. 1 (1977): 3.

8 Front Matter, *Chrysalis*, 4.

9 Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture and Administration,” in *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 107 (hereafter cited as CA).

10 Margaret Kaminski, “Interview with Audre Lorde,” *Chomo-Uri: a women’s multi-arts magazine* 3, no. 3 (1977): 14–21; reprinted in *Conversations with Audre Lorde*, ed. Joan Wylie Hall (Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2004), 3.

11 Kaminski, “Interview with Audre Lorde,” 3.

12 Tyrus Miller, “All Along the Watchtower: Aesthetic Revolution in the United States during the 1960s,” in *Aesthetic Revolutions and Twentieth-Century Avant-Garde Movements*, ed. Aleš Erjavec (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2015), 145–77. See also Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (New York: Blackwell, 2000), 316–39.

13 GerShun Avilez, *Radical Aesthetics and Modern Black Nationalism* (Champaign: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2016).

14 For instance, in the essay “Aesthetic Problems of Modern Philosophy,” first published in 1965 and then republished in *Must We Mean What We Say?* (1969), Stanley Cavell alludes to Kant’s formulation of aesthetic judgments in order to explain the types of epistemological claims that are made in ordinary language philosophy. Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say?* (1969; New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), 86–96.

- 15 Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (New York: Continuum, 2004), 141, 210 (hereafter cited as *AT*).
- 16 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. H. Bernard (1790; Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 2000), 91–92 (hereafter cited as *CJ*).
- 17 As part of this neutralization, Adorno extends Karl Marx's analysis of the "fetishism of the commodity" to the realm of art. See Marx, *Capital*, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1990), 1:163–177.
- 18 Andreas Huyssen, "Introduction to Adorno," *New German Critique* 6 (Autumn 1975): 6.
- 19 Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen, 1922), 677. Qtd. in CA 112.
- 20 As another example of Adorno's implicit rejection of the idea of hegemony, see the description of the "the form of the system" in Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (1966; New York: Continuum, 2007), 24–26.
- 21 Regarding Greenwich Village, Adorno says, "licence continues to exist as an officially tolerated institution" (CA 127).
- 22 Kirsten Grimstad, Introduction to "Feminist Publishing," *Chrysalis* 2 (1977): 150. Other documents from *Chrysalis* documents are available through the digital collection of *Independent Voices: An Open Access Collection of an Alternative Press*, at <https://voices.revealdigital.com/cgi-bin/independentvoices?a=cl&cl=CL1&ai=1&sp=DBCIDBB>.
- 23 Pat Parker, "there is a woman in this town," *Chrysalis* 4 (1977): 32–33.
- 24 Parker, "there is a woman in this town," 32.
- 25 Parker, "there is a woman in this town," 32.
- 26 Parker, "there is a woman in this town," 33.
- 27 Suzanne W. Churchill, "Little Magazines," in *A Companion to Modernist Poetry*, ed. David E. Chinitz and Gail McDonald (New York: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 173.
- 28 Melinda Knight, "Little Magazines and the Emergence of Modernism in the *Fin de Siècle*," *American Periodicals* 6 (1996): 29–45; Ann Ardis, "Modernist Print Culture," *American Literary History* 27, no. 4 (2015): 813–19.
- 29 Eric Bulson, *Little Magazine, World Form* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2017), 1.
- 30 Peter Brooker, "In the Modernist Grain," in *The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines*, ed. Brooker and Andrew Thacker (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012), 2:965.
- 31 It's important to distinguish between *Crisis* and the modernist magazines as separate publishing models. See Ardis, "Making Middlebrow Culture, Making Middlebrow Literary Texts Matter: *The Crisis*, Easter 1912," *Modernist Cultures* 6, no. 1 (2011): 18–40. Yet Churchill also argues that magazines like *Fire!!* "[issued] a youthful challenge to the more established journals, *Crisis* and *Opportunity*" in the 1920s, such that even *Crisis* had gained a clear enough institutional identity to warrant critique. See Churchill, "Little Magazines," 179–80.
- 32 John Timberman Newcomb, "Others, Poetry, and Wallace Stevens: Little Magazines as Agents of Reputation," *Essays in Literature* 16, no. 2 (1989): 256–70.
- 33 Churchill, "Little Magazines," 182. See also Joyce Wexler, "Epilogue: How Poetic Authority Became Authoritarian," in *Little Magazines and Modernism: New Approaches*, ed. Churchill and Adam McKible (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 133–47.
- 34 See the founding scholarly study by Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich, *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1946).
- 35 Lawrence S. Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1998), 77–106.
- 36 Donal Harris, *On Company Time: American Modernism in the Big Magazines* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2016).

37 According to Bartholomew Brinkman, the use of white space typifies the modernist magazine's "selection of similar textual objects—all of which need to be generically defined as poems despite their formal differences—so that they can be brought together into a coherent system based on that similarity." Brinkman, *Poetic Modernism in the Culture of Mass Print* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2016), 73.

38 These aesthetic practices at *Poetry* are akin to what Harris calls the "house style" of the big magazines, in which "a notion of aesthetic uniformity . . . develops over the first half of the twentieth century alongside the transformation of magazines into professional endeavors." See Harris, *On Company Time*, 7.

39 See also Karen Leick, "Popular Modernism: Little Magazines and the American Daily Press," *PMLA* 123, no. 1 (2008): 125–39; Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines: An Introduction* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2010), 119–142.

40 Susan Griffin, Adrienne Rich, Lorde, Mary Daly, Catharine Stimpson, and Susan Sherman, "Feminist Publishing: Questions Raised by the Attack on Diana Press," *Chrysalis* 4 (1978): 83. See also Junko R. Onosaka, *Feminist Revolution in Literacy: Women's Bookstores in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 102–103.

41 Marion Kraft, "The Creative Use of Difference," in *Conversations with Audre Lorde*, ed. Joan Wylie Hall (Jackson: Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2004), 151–52. See also Lorde's most famous essay, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," in *Sister Outsider* (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984), 110–113.

42 Lorde, *The Collected Poems of Audre Lorde* (New York: Norton, 1997), 274.

43 Charles W. Mills, "Racial Liberalism," *PMLA* 123, no. 5 (2008): 1384.

44 Robert Bernasconi, "Who Invented the Concept of Race?: Kant's Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race," in *Race*, ed. Bernasconi (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2001), 11–36.

45 Bernasconi, "Who Invented the Concept of Race," 23.

46 Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, trans. John T. Goldthwait (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1960), 113; Kant, "On the Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy," in *Race*, ed. Bernasconi, 110–11.

47 Lewis R. Gordon, *Existential Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 31.

48 Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 37.

49 Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Max Müller and Marcus Weigelt (New York: Penguin, 2007), 104, 105.

50 Patrick J. Keane, *Emerson, Romanticism, and Intuitive Reason: The Transatlantic "Light of All Our Day"* (Columbia: Univ. of Missouri Press, 2005).

51 See the "Open Letter to Mary Daly," in Lorde, *Sister Outsider*, 67.

52 Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," 110–13.

53 Louis Goddard describes this boom in media history as being enabled through "the broader 'mimeo revolution' of the 1960s and 1970s," which *Migrant* magazine (1959–1960) and its successors *Mica* and *Satis* (both 1960–1962) helped establish. See Goddard, "Migration Patterns: Two Little Magazines of 1960–1962," *Textual Practice* 31, no. 2 (2017): 366.

54 Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*, trans. by E. F. N. Jephcott (New York: Verso, 2005), 39. For the implications of this aphorism, see Nico Israel, "Damage Control: Adorno, Los Angeles, and the Dislocation of Culture," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 10, no. 1 (1997): 90.