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The Body as Fiction / Fiction as a Way of Thinking

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***CHAPTER 1–
WRITING ON, ABOUT, AND
THROUGH BREASTED BODIES***

Writing about breasts

In feminist writing, breasts have been a recurring site for exploring issues around gender and subjectivity, and interwoven issues regarding desire, authority, knowledge and power. Given the amount of writing about and on bodies over the past three decades, there has certainly not been as much writing about breasts or the experience of having breasts as one might expect. Iris Marion Young commented in 1990 on this ‘amazing absence of writing about women’s experience of breasts’ – amazing not only because of the ‘vast explosion’ of writing in the field of women’s studies but also because of the endless fascination of the topic for women when it is raised in conversation.¹

One of the rare sites where women’s feelings and ideas about this constantly changing part of their bodies (changing both in physical terms, and in terms of its function or meaning in their lives), has been canvassed is a 1979 collection called *Breasts: Women Speak About Their Breasts and Their Lives*, by Daphna Ayalah and Isaac J. Weinstock². This book features extensive edited interviews with North American women of different ages, classes, and cultural backgrounds, together with photographs of their breasts. The book is also interspersed with historical images and quotations on the subject of breasts or breast-feeding – ranging from quotations from figures such as Margaret Mead and snippets of newspaper items to an excerpt from a Lenny Bruce routine.

In contrast, most of the serious popular or mainstream books about breasts have tended to focus on medical or health concerns. These are usually a type of ‘owner’s manual’, written by doctors or health journalists, and while they often include a short chapter on some historical or social aspects of breasts, the focus is generally on issues such as puberty, bras and aesthetic or cosmetic concerns, breastfeeding, and diseases of the breast such as cancer.

An early example of this is the 1944 book *The Complete Guide to Bust Culture* written by A.F. Neimoeller, whose name is followed on the title page by his scientific qualifications ('A.B., M.A. B.S. '), with the foreword written by a doctor.³ The foreword and introduction both refer to wider cultural issues and the way 'the 'human female bosom has exercised a most powerful influence on human thought' in the areas of religion, literature, folklore, art and architecture (5) but the focus of the book is breast 'hygiene'. The long list of chapters include subjects such as 'Physiology and Anatomy', 'Development', 'Contour' and 'Glands' through to 'Creams and Lotions', 'Plastic Surgery', 'Brassieres', chapters on both small and large busts, one on 'The Sagging Breast', then on to chapters on pregnancy and lactation, and a final chapter on 'Diseases of the Breast'.

Dr Elizabeth Weiss's 1975 book, *The Female Breast*, has a similar trajectory, but differs by being one of the first of the owner's manuals written by a woman. It includes a chapter on 'A Woman's Feelings About Her Breasts', and also introduces a new topic, 'Sex Play and the Breast.'⁴ A 1982 book by Drs Andrew and Penny Stanway, called *The Breast: What Every Woman Needs to Know from Youth to Old Age*, was unusual in including a chapter on 'The Male Breast', mainly focussing on possible disorders such as gynacomastia (breast swelling in males), and breast cancer, which when it occurs in men makes up 1% of all breast cancer cases.⁵

British health journalist, Brigid McConville's 1994 book *Mixed Messages* was marketed as 'the first book to consider the well-being of our breasts in the wider context of our lives,'⁶ and covered a similar range of topics to the earlier manuals, but from a much more avowed politically feminist or 'woman centred' angle. For McConville, 'the real "experts" on breasts... [are] women' (xv) and her book draws on interviews with women and women's organisations, and has chapter subtitles such as 'Whose breasts are they: a male takeover?', "'Sexy" versus "Saggy"', and 'Sexist judgements'.

In the electronic media, in Australia ABC Radio National's 'Coming Out Show' did a feature in 1975 called 'Boobs-A-Lot: An Obsession of Western Cultures?'⁷, and twenty years later in 1996 Elle McFeast produced her 'Breasts Special' for ABC television, which likewise combined light comedy with serious discussion of issues such as the contemporary western cultural obsession with breasts, women's body image, and breast cancer.⁸

It would seem however, that the 'western obsession' is not with breasts as such, but with a particular shape of breast, one usually achieved or maintained with the assistance of either

implants or a well-fitted bra. Women's naked breasts in all their variety, and at all stages of life, are still virtually absent from public life in western culture. Ayalah and Weinstock's 1979 book is still a rare photographic source of this rich variety. On the other hand, in recent years there has been a plethora of documentaries on lingerie.⁹

A 1966 book, written by Australian journalist James Holledge, called *The Cult of the Bosom* and subtitled *The ups and downs of the bosom over the ages* provides a good example of what is excluded in the making of the perfect breast of western obsession. Holledge's book is a mix of voyeurism, ribald comments, social history snippets, evolutionary theory (via Desmond Morris), fashion history (including the extraordinary and yet almost forgotten Rudi Gernreich topless bathing suits and dresses from 1964), statistics on bra sales and breast size, bits of pop psychology, (unsourced) quotes from a variety of experts, commentary on the new and fast growing cosmetic surgery industry and early use of silicone, anecdotes and speculation. Illustrations range from a portrait sketch of fourteenth century Queen Janna of Naples to photographs of more contemporary 'well-endowed' pin-up models. However, in a telling omission, breast-feeding and breastmilk don't rate a single mention.¹⁰

Feminists writing on breasted bodies

In her 1990 essay, 'Breasted Experience', Iris Young explores various aspects of both 'the cultural construction and fetishisation of breasts' in western 'male-dominated' society, and the experience of 'breastedness'. While drawing on work by continental feminist theorists such as Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva, and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Young primarily reflects on her own experiences and on writings about and by other women concerning their feelings about their breasts (193 -197). She raises several key issues, putting them on the agenda for further writing.

In this work, Young speaks of the often intimate connection between identity and breasts for women, given that 'if the chest is a centre of a person's sense of being in the world and identity' then a woman's breasts are 'entwined with her sense of herself', especially as they 'emerge for her at that time in her life when her sense of her own independent identity is finally formed.' (189)

She also comments on the role of bras in shaping, confining and giving rigid borders to breasts, enhancing their status as objects of visible consumption, and restricting their movement, fluidity, expressiveness and involvement in the world. 'The bra normalises the breast, lifting and curving the breasts to approximate the one and only breast ideal.' (195)

However the erotic pleasures for women of their breasts are, Young suggests, ‘for a phallic sexuality.. a scandal’, standing for ‘the irreducibility of sexual difference to a common measure’ (194) Likewise, ‘breasts are [also] a scandal for patriarchy because they disrupt the border between motherhood and sexuality.’ (190) ¹¹

Finally Young looks briefly at cosmetic surgery and breast augmentation, and – the other ‘knife at the breast’ – the experience of cancer and mastectomy. She ends by echoing Audre Lorde’s ¹² anger and sadness that even here the imperative to normalize leads to the one breasted ‘Amazon’ woman being asked to cover up her new body and her difference with a prosthesis.

Not mentioned by Young, but relevant to her concerns is the work of the late British photographic artist Jo Spence who, having been diagnosed with breast cancer, produced in the late 1980s in collaboration with Dr Tim Sheard a startling and provocative series called ‘Narratives of Dis-Ease’. In this Spence was literally writing on her diseased body. The series moves from photographs of herself naked just prior to her operation, with the dotted lines and markings in text inscribed on and around her breast for the surgical cuts, through to graphic and revealing photographs post-surgery of her (partial) mastectomy scars, with the word ‘Monster’ written across her chest. ¹³

Unlike the poetically beautiful self-portraits of her mastectomy scar by the North American photographic artist, Matushka (which appeared on the front page of the *New York Times Magazine* in 1993), Spence’s body was not that of a former model, but that of a middle-aged woman with all the folds and lines and surplus flesh that is usually well hidden behind clothing in public and rarely displayed as art, even when both breasts are intact.

Even Matushka’s photographs – beautifully constructed and staged as almost triumphant – were considered daring and brave, and to some, horrific (and thus not the subject for a glossy magazine). ¹⁴ Spence’s works – with their clinical and unflattering framing and lighting, deliberately portraying the “ugliness” of being seen as Other’ ¹⁵ – were deeply confronting.

When I saw this series at the Tin Sheds gallery at Sydney University in 1990, I was surprised to find in the Guestbook, in amongst the comments of admiration and gratitude for Spence’s courage and honesty, and her ability to work with her experience in such a telling way, a large number of comments expressing anger, disgust and outrage that such images of such a body would be shown in a public gallery. Even at a university art gallery, for many people the

association of breasts with beauty and nurture were the only ones allowed and anything else was regarded as obscene.

Even now (fifteen years later), when so many fashion designers, cosmetic companies and department stores carry 'pink-ribbon' merchandise¹⁶ and breast cancer awareness is heavily promoted, Spence's images stand almost alone. Women literally showing their scars in public is not considered polite. Indeed, any image or glimpse of a woman's naked breasts other than the ideal of the youthful pert breast is still generally felt to be in very bad taste.

A different concept of the 'good' or acceptable breast is explored in an essay by Jane Gallop, called 'The Teacher's Breasts'.¹⁷ In this essay Gallop points to the distinction between 'breasts' and 'the breast'. To touch (touch on, refer to) one – 'the breast' – is maternal, evoking the symbol of nurture; whereas to touch or speak of both (the plural – 'breasts') is a sexual gesture. As such, she suggests, the distinction between 'the breast' and 'breasts' could be thought of as similar to that between the Lacanian 'phallus' and 'a penis' – the difference, that is, between a symbolic structure and a personal one, with a complex relationship existing between the two.

In teasing out questions to do with teaching, nurture, discipline, sexuality and erotics (including a kind of 'desexualised' erotic often associated with maternity and 'good-girl' feminism or 'sisterhood'), Gallop explores a host of under-recognised gendered and family relations and dynamics within pedagogical theory, and within feminist pedagogical theory in particular. As such 'the teacher's breasts' becomes a loaded site for exploring issues to do with gender, desire, authority, knowledge and power.

Another highly exploratory and evocative essay was one published in 1997 by theologian and philosopher Catherine Keller, called 'The Breast, the Apocalypse, and the Colonial Journey', in a collection of writings about the millennium.¹⁸

In a performance that is hard to summarise, Keller weaves a wrenching account of Cristobal Colon's (or Christopher Columbus as we know him in English) destructive encounter with the Tainos people of the Carriibbean. She describes how this encounter instituted the end of the Tainos people's world as they knew it, as forces elsewhere were heralding the dawn of the modern era. In particular she traces Colon's use of metaphors of apocalypse (unveiling or discovery) and the breast (maternal fantasies) in his journal – metaphors which map themselves over the experience. In doing so she deconstructs the way both the land and the people are represented or imagined by the colonisers as feminisable Other: 'mysterious and

fertile' (45), 'a paradise of gratifiable desire' (44), as the colonists' plans moved from 'conversion and exploitation.. swiftly on to enslavement, wanton mayhem, and genocide' (44).

Once they plan to enslave the Tainois people, the conquerors immediately begin to perceive them as childlike, in a kind of semiotic state, as they (the conquerors) 'gather themselves back into the "symbolic", the realm of language and the law of the Father' (46).

In this narrative of eroticised commodification of the Other, Keller draws on Kristeva's notion of the abject maternal body that is both fascinating and terrifying, provoking a desire to flee –to keep one's boundaries clear – at the same time as a desire to transgress them (50).

This period of colonisation is also the dawn of the epoch of rationalism, the 'enlightenment' and modernity. Colon (like Descartes, Bacon and Newton) refers to God as his basis and justification, even though such references have been expunged from the dominant story of modernity. But as modernity becomes in effect 'a redirection of the spiritual energies of the culture' (52), the maternal fantasies take over as a more acceptable cultural mapping.

Keller presents this cycle of desire and loathing, this 'collective abjection of the female', stoked by the explosive charge of apocalyptic visions of an imperial future, as that which becomes 'the very horsepower of modernity' (55).

While in this schema (and continued for instance through the workings of the International Monetary Fund) the dependence of the colonised on the colonisers is conscious and thus resisted, the dependency of the coloniser – 'mixed of endless oral gratifications (of coffee, sugar, fruit, meat)' – is repressed, and therefore lethal (55).

It is this corrosive dualism of coloniser/colonised (son/mother, male/female, culture/nature) that Keller's essay seeks to deconstruct. Her aim is to collapse it instead into a hope for the future, a hope for a 'a force-field of connecting differences, differences between, among, and within ourselves' (56).

Australian academic Alison Bartlett also builds on the work of Kristeva in a series of complex and thoughtful articles about breasted experience. At the start of her essay, 'Thinking through Breasts', published in 2000¹⁹, Bartlett cites Kristeva's project of looking for ways to create meanings of mothering based on experiences, rather than on the inherited religious iconography that structures much contemporary western symbolism about motherhood.

Finding that her breasts became ‘central to the ways in which [she] had to reinvent [her]self as a mother in coming to terms with a new body/subjectivity,’ Bartlett explores her own experiences while breastfeeding her daughter and searches out pairings of motherhood and thinking, and breasts and thinking, in the work of other contemporary writers. ‘Must mothering and theorising remain contradictory impulses?’ she asks, adding, ‘(Were they ever?)’

Bartlett is ‘interested in thinking breasts’ in both senses of the word: the way breasts are thought about, and what it might be like to think with breasts / think breastedly / think through breasts. She explores both how they are spoken of, and ‘how they might speak, as sites of representation and knowledge.’ She writes:

[T]here is a curious reference in my Penguin *Macquarie Dictionary* to ‘the bosom’ which ‘is regarded as the seat of thoughts and feelings’ (66). Imagine that! The seat of thoughts. Breasts as generators of ideas, as producers of knowledge. What difference would it make, then, if you have a manly breast that’s smooth and flat and rippling with muscle and maybe even hair; or an adolescent girl’s breast that’s changing shape, weight, form daily; or a maternal breast that’s heavily drooping and full, actively producing milk and nourishing an infant, leaking everywhere at the thought of the baby and constantly replenishing and being replenished? (183)

In performing the ‘matter’ of breasts, Bartlett is concerned with issues to do with ‘performance, space, language and knowledge’. However, much as I have found through my own research, reflection and writing process for this project, Bartlett also finds that working with this topic in the context of post-structuralist theories of bodies and embodiment (‘bringing theoretical reflections to the matter of my lived experiences’) suggests both possibilities and limitations in this theory. Referring to the work of Vicki Kirby (see below), Bartlett writes: ‘Kirby’s suggestions for a complex, informed, and knowledgeable body are tantalisingly appealing to someone like myself whose body has grown and birthed and nourished a child, whose capacity to perform miracles of such magnitude is awesome and is rarely acknowledged in a medical system that claims authority and control over women’s bodies.’ (185)

An edited version of Bartlett’s essay also appears in Fiona Giles’ 2003 book, *Fresh Milk*²⁰. Subtitled *the secret life of breasts*, Giles’s text is full of flesh and fluids, the multiple ways breastmilk and lactating breasts figure in history, biology, pornography, sexual practices, recipes – every room in the house, every part of our lives, in public and in private.

Published as a mainstream paperback and written in a thoroughly accessible style, Giles' research around lactation is nevertheless deeply informed by post-structuralist feminism and the more recent critique of heteronormativity. Indeed, her book successfully queers the subject of breastfeeding, bringing it out of the closet and into public space in a way that resists it ever again being reduced or contained by neat categories and religious iconography.

Iris Young observed that 'breasts are a scandal for patriarchy because they disrupt the border between motherhood and sexuality'.²¹ Giles (via her informants) shatters that border, as well as the antiseptic border between medical and cultural discourse on breasts.

Using a methodology influenced by Shere Hite of collecting and collating stories, Giles has created 'a galaxy of voices, a narrative Milky Way...an oral history in the fullest sense of the word' (xvi). Her book captures a sense of the abundance and excess of this very 'natural' and very 'cultural' activity, and of the multiplicity of meanings, images and desires around lactation that co-exist, contradict, contaminate and encourage each other within and across the cultural imaginary.

If Giles's book provides a model of one way of approaching the subject of breasts in a way that allowed for excess and contradiction, I found Marilyn Yalom's 1997 book, *A History of the Breast*²², in contrast a kind of 'how not to.' For while Yalom's book contains an impressive amount of historical and contemporary material about breasts, her use of a simplistic form of ideology critique within a liberal-humanist framework creates serious contradictions and problems for her project. The result is an extremely frustrating and slippery text as she struggles to tame her subject, packaging it to fit a view of progress in which late twentieth century North America represents the high end point of liberation for women. Indeed her history illustrates the pitfalls of trying to construct an empowering narrative of the body without questioning any of the basic cultural categories out of, through and around which it is constructed.

Yalom's method of reading paintings and cultural traces as if they had a single fixed meaning posits power as top-down and monolithic (outside or above most of us), and existing in a public realm which is distinct from women's private, subjective (and largely unrecorded) feelings about their bodies. By assuming a kind of hostility between nature and culture, with individual women (the rightful 'owners' of these body parts) required to wrest back their breasts from all the uses that men and culture want to put them to (to uncover the natural 'truth' about breasts), her text inadvertently reproduces the classic dualities of western

philosophy that have been so integral to feminist critique: public/private, active/passive, culture/nature, mind/body, male/female.

For instance, regarding Yalom's recourse to the notion of women's rightful 'ownership' of breasts – how can a woman 'own' a part of her body unless she is regarded as having some kind of existence over and above, or apart, from it – that is, except within the framework of the Cartesian mind/body split?

A History of the Breast is a text full of gaps and slippages and recuperative 'buts' as Yalom tries to patch in conflicting evidence and ideas (such as a few snippets of post-structuralism) without upsetting her overall paradigm and the seamlessness of her narrative. But despite the consistently amused tone and wry asides, there seemed at times a rage, a pain and vulnerability or defensiveness which her theoretical underpinnings (or lack of them) leave her unable to express or to deal with. Leaving her, for instance, caught in the contradictions between her faith in American market liberalism (in which implants become finally just another choice now available to women as a result of medical progress) and the despair she feels at the constant 'assault' on women of commercial images of 'perfect' breasts.

In seeking to discipline such an excessive, contradictory, ever-changing subject within a traditional historiography (lifting and separating each historical period, as it were, to better identify and enhance the cleavages) Yalom's history, while abundant, became for me fixed, artificial, and far less stimulating, pleasurable, provocative and nourishing than it could have been.²³

In many ways Yalom's book has become a reference point for why my project needs to be enacted within a deep and ongoing questioning of notions of the body, of subjectivity and of cultural history; and also why it might be best enacted through fiction.

Performativity in writing the body

Texts are 'bodies speaking to other bodies'²⁴ and a more tactile, poetic, subjective and performative approach to writing, which involves the reader in a relationship of desire, is a feature of several of the writers mentioned who have looked at the subject of breasts. It is evident in the work, for instance, of Alison Bartlett, Catherine Keller and in parts of Fiona Giles' book, as well as in the photographic texts of Jo Spence.

Alison Bartlett writes, 'In my effort towards embodied theory, I want to entwine personal and public discourses, maternal and academic writing, theorising and cultural practices.'²⁵

In the 1970s and 80s *l'écriture féminine* was posited as a particular way of writing that could be said to mimic or be analogous to a concept of female sexuality that is neither simply the same, the opposite, or the complement to 'masculine' sexuality as it is normatively described. A form of writing that is more fluid, non linear and non hierarchical, with the subject-object less clearly defined, multivocal and polysemic, shifting and playful.

These characteristics are not of course confined to writing by women and can be seen in much writing that could be described as 'experimental'²⁶, as well as in writing nominated in Australia as 'fictocriticism' – a kind of hybrid between essay and fiction that Anna Gibbs describes as 'never a genre that was One' but more a 'hit and run guerilla action'.²⁷

For Gibbs 'fictocriticism' is a part of the post-modern collapse of the 'absolute distinction between discourse and meta-discourse', the recognition that philosophy (like literature) is a 'tropological discourse... reliant on metaphor.'²⁸ Fictocriticism in this rendering is a way of saying something 'which can't be said any other way: because it is not reducible to propositional content', and it is, 'in essence, performative, a meta-discourse in which the strategies of the telling are part of the point of the tale.'²⁹

Everyone has 'a breast', and has had a relationship to 'the breast' (as receiver; or as giver *and* receiver), but only some of us have 'breasts', and these breasts come in such a variety of shapes, sizes and colours – and change so much throughout a person's lifetime – that generalisations (meta-statements) are always fraught. Every statement has to be tentative; there is no solid stable place of enunciation, no unitary fixed subjectivity or identity conferred by these very fluid, leaky and multiple organs that have such a plethora of material and symbolic functions and attributes.

The title of my novel *A Short (Personal) History of the Bra and its Contents* is a response to this fluidity and porousness that aims to work on a number of levels. For instance, it acts to signal the situatedness of my position as cultural historian (writing a 'personal' history), as well as to acknowledge the philosophical impossibility of a clear outline to the subject 'breasts' or 'the breast', which can only be temporarily contained or given 'definition' by its cultural accoutrement, the bra.

Writing a combination of experimental fiction and criticism allows me to play with these ideas, and to perform the body in a range of ways, including writing from within a very specific culturally and sexually located body. It thus enables me to engage readers, likewise,

as embodied, desiring (and ever-changing) subjects. It allows me, therefore, to both write about the body (and rewrite the body) while also involving it in relationship.

Fiction also enables me to create a discursive space in which it is possible for a very wide and range of topics and issues (everything from fashion history to the corporatisation of medicine, to the increasing ability to modify bodies) to co-exist, rub up against each other and to cross-fertilise. In this sense, fiction is a kind of laboratory – a technology for generating ideas, feelings, metaphors, links and new research interests and trails.

My aim is to set it up in such a way that it is not just a generator for myself as writer, but that it can fulfil this function for others, continuing to be an active text – accumulating and losing and changing meaning – over time and for multiple and different readers.³⁰

The other advantage to writing fiction in this way, is that very little is off limits. While certain topics or approaches might be considered out of place in academic writing, or politically inappropriate (repressed) within a particular philosophical framework, with fiction it is possible to create a cast of characters or set up a situation in which a much greater range of approaches, topics and ideas can be explored in relative safety.

The following chapters provide a kind of theoretical backstory to what happened when I approached the topic of a short history of ‘the bra and its contents’ in this way. The issues raised within my novel kept leading me back to various debates within science, and between the sciences and the humanities, and to issues about the ‘nature’ of dualities, which form a deep undercurrent in post-structuralist theories of the body.

Endnotes for Chapter One:

Writing On, About, and Through Breasted Bodies

¹ Iris Marion Young, *Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990) 205. See below for a discussion of Young's essay 'Breasted Experience' from this volume.

² Daphna Ayalah and Isaac Weinstock, *Breasts: Women Speak About Their Breasts and Their Lives* (New York: Summit Books, 1979).

³ A. F. Neimoeller, *The Complete Guide to Bust Culture* (NY: Harvest House, 1944). Neimoeller is further described on the title page as 'Author of SUPERFLUOUS HAIR AND ITS REMOVAL, etc'.

⁴ Elizabeth Weiss (Dr), *The Female Breast* (USA: Bantam, 1975).

⁵ Drs Andrew and Penny Stanway, *The Breast: What Every Woman Needs to Know – From Youth to Old Age* (London: Granada, 1982).

⁶ Back cover blurb, Brigid McConville, *Mixed Messages: Our Breasts in Our Lives* (London: Penguin, 1994).

⁷ 'Boobs-a-lot: An Obsession of Western Cultures?' Prod. Ros Bowden. *Coming Out Show*, ABC Radio National, 22 Sept. 1975. A transcript of the program is also published in Julie Rigg and Julie Copeland (Eds.) *Coming Out! Women's Voices, Women's Lives: A selection from ABC radio's Coming Out Show* (Melbourne: Nelson/ABC, 1985) 96-107.

⁸ *Elle McFeast's Breasts Special*, ABC-TV, Sydney, 16 Oct. 1996.

⁹ For instance, see the ironically named *Nothing to Hide*, Dir. Judy Rymer (Australia: Mushroom Pictures, 1996); and *Lingerie*, Dir. Sophie Paul, Prod. Nick Lord (Sunset+Vine Productions, 1999).

¹⁰ James Holledge, *The Cult of the Bosom: the ups and downs of the bosom over the ages* (London/Melb/Syd: Horwitz Publications, 1966). Gernreich's topless dress fashion is discussed on pages 44ff, and cosmetic surgery for breasts on pages 85ff. Holledge also mentions in an 'odd spot' type of aside a woman who was suing her plastic-surgeon for health problems that arose after she was implanted with plastic foam in 1959, and who had symptoms similar to those recounted by much-later silicone-survivors (103). This is the earliest mention of any law suit concerning breast implants that I have come across. Silicone implants were suspected to cause health side-effects for many years, but Connie Chung's 1990 television program on the issue is generally considered to have broken the story in the media. See Connie Chung, '1990 Breast Implants Interview Transcript', *Web Star Magic*, 9 Mar. 2003 <<http://www.webstarmagic.com/wisletter.htm>>.

¹¹ Later in the article (page 199) Young repeats this but writes that they 'shatter' the border.

¹² Audre Lorde, *The Cancer Journals* (San Francisco: Spinsters Ink, 1980). See pages 16, 41ff and passim.

¹³ Jo Spence, 'Narratives of Dis-Ease: Ritualised Procedures', part of the *Collaborative Works Tour* initiated by the *Tin Sheds Gallery*, Sydney University, 17 Oct. – 11 Nov. 1990. (This exhibition also toured to Melbourne and Adelaide.) For more of Jo Spence's work, see *Putting Myself in the Picture: A Political, Personal and Photographic Autobiography* (London: Camden Press, 1986).

¹⁴ Matushka's photographic self-portrait was published on the cover of *The New York Times* colour magazine in August 1993 with the headline 'You Can't Look Away Anymore'. See Fiona Brook's 'Beauty and the Breast' and photographs by Matushka in *HQ Magazine* (March/April 1995).

¹⁵ Spence, 'Narratives of Dis-Ease' artist's statement in the *Collaborative Works Catalogue* (Sydney: Tin Sheds, 1990) 9.

¹⁶ Everything from pins and scarves to bubble bath and Estee Lauder Pink Ribbon Lipstick Traveller and compact, with a small percentage of the price going to breast cancer charities. See for instance the pink ribbon products showcased in the October 2003 issue of *Oprah* magazine, pages 145-6, 148 and 244.

¹⁷ Jane Gallop, 'The Teacher's Breasts', with responses by Moira Gatens, Meaghan Morris and Vicky Kirby in Jill Julius Matthews (Ed.) *Jane Gallop Seminar Papers: Proceedings of the Jane Gallop Seminar and Public Lecture 'The Teacher's Breasts'* (Canberra: Humanities Research Centre, 1993).

¹⁸ Catherine Keller, 'The Breast, the Apocalypse and the Colonial Journey' in Charles B. Strozier and Michael Flynn (Eds.) *The Year 2000: Essays on the End* (NY: New York University Press, 1997) 42-58.

¹⁹ Alison Bartlett, 'Thinking Through Breasts: Writing Maternity' *Feminist Theory*, 1.2 (2000) 173-88. Bartlett's title is also a play on the evocative title of Jane Gallop's book, *Thinking Through the Body* (Ohio: Columbia University Press, 1988). Bartlett's book *Breast Work* (Sydney: University of NSW Press, 2005), which includes a reworking of this article, has also been recently released but unfortunately came to my attention too late to be included in this review.

²⁰ Fiona Giles, *Fresh Milk: The Secret Life of Breasts* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2003).

²¹ Young, 'Breasted Experience', 190.

²² Marilyn Yalom, *A History of the Breast* (NY/London: Knopf/HarperCollins, 1997).

²³ For a more detailed critique of Yalom's book, see my review-essay 'D-Cups, Groin Guards and Supermodels: Writing the Body into History' in *Australian Humanities Review*, May 1998, archived at <<http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/AHR>>.

²⁴ Elizabeth Wright, *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice* (NY: Methuen, 1984) xi.

²⁵ Bartlett, 'Thinking Through Breasts'.

²⁶ See for instance, Hazel Smith, *The Writing Experiment: Strategies for Innovative Creative Writing* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2005).

²⁷ Anna Gibbs, 'Bodies of Words: Feminism and Fictocriticism' *TEXT* 1.2 (October 1997) 21 Mar. 2004 <<http://www.gu.edu.au/school/art/text/>>.

²⁸ Anna Gibbs, 'Fictocriticism, Affect, Mimesis: Engendering Differences' *TEXT* 1. 9 (April 2005) 19 Apr. 2005 <<http://www.griffith.edu.au/school/art/text/>>.

²⁹ Anna Gibbs, 'Bodies of Words'.

³⁰ I will be taking up and discussing further the benefits and challenges of writing history and cultural criticism as fiction in Chapter five.