

NOSTALGIC IDENTITY

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Fine Arts

with a

Major in Art

in the

College of Graduate Studies

University of Idaho

by

Rachel Smith

May 2011

Major Professor: Gregory Turner-Rahman, Ph.D.

AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT THESIS

This thesis of Rachel Smith, submitted for the degree of Master of Fine Arts with a major in Art and titled "NOSTALGIC IDENTITY" has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates given below, is now granted to submit final copies to the College of Graduate Studies for approval.

Major Professor

Gregory Turner-Rahman

Date

Committee
Members

Sally Graves Machlis

Date

Jodie Nicotra

Date

Department
Administrator

Sally Graves Machlis

Date

Discipline's
College Dean

Mark Hoversten

Date

Final Approval and Acceptance by the College of Graduate Studies

Nilsa A. Bosque-Pérez

Date

Abstract

The work I create is based conceptually around ideas concerning time and memory and how they can be assessed and categorized in hierarchies of importance or legitimacy. Through this understanding of how time and memory function I make artwork that challenges the notions of the accepted status of certain memories. My art and installations aim to resituate marginalized memories as reliable and confront the current socio-cultural reconstructions of memory. On the basis of this hierarchical structure it can be determined that certain marginalized bodies are the vessels for nostalgic memories. This correlation of nostalgic memories specific to marginalized demographics in turn restricts and delegitimizes both the body and memories associated with it.

The materials I use as the foundation for my work consist of found paper ephemera that have obvious textual handwritten traces and wear from usage and time. By using materials and objects that have obvious previous ownership as the foundation for my work is important in conveying nostalgic memories. Strategic and intentional choices in the materials used in my artwork are representative of the process of remembering, causing our memories to be a constant piecing together of information from the past. Focusing the viewer's attention on the fact that not all the materials' use are directly linked to me as the artist and my own individual history helps to convey a more universal collective history: it links the collages and installation to those interacting with it on a more emotional and personal level, in order to establish the dual nature of private and collective histories and the complexity of memory.

Table of Contents

Title Page.....	i
Authorization to Submit Thesis.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Index of Figures.....	v
Introduction.....	1
Stickiness and Materiality.....	3
Nostalgia and Hierarchy.....	8
Mimesis.....	17
Nostalgia and the Archive.....	21
Conclusion.....	33
Figures.....	35
Bibliography.....	56

Index of Figures

Figure 1: Rachel Smith, <i>MFA Thesis Exhibit (6 Collage)</i> , 2011.....	35
Figure 2: Rachel Smith, <i>MFA Thesis Exhibit (6 Collage)</i> , 2011.....	36
Figure 3: Rachel Smith, <i>MFA Thesis Exhibit (Installation)</i> , 2011.....	37
Figure 4: Rachel Smith, <i>MFA Thesis Exhibit (Detail)</i> , 2011.....	38
Figure 5: Rachel Smith, <i>Ma and Pa</i> , 2010.....	39
Figure 6: Rachel Smith, <i>She was Always Down</i> , 2010.....	40
Figure 7: Rachel Smith, <i>Child's Play</i> , 2011.....	41
Figure 8: Rachel Smith, <i>Skinned</i> , 2011.....	42
Figure 9: Rachel Smith, <i>Once Important</i> , 2010.....	43
Figure 10: Rachel Smith, <i>414 S. Main St, Moscow, ID 83843</i> , 2011.....	44
Figure 11: Felix Gonzalez-Torres, <i>Untitled (Revenge)</i> , 1991.....	45
Figure 12: Felix Gonzalez-Torres, <i>Untitled (Death by Gun)</i> , 1990.....	46
Figure 13: Rachel Smith, <i>Identity Struggle</i> , 2011.....	47
Figure 14: Rachel Smith, <i>Rite of Passage</i> , 2010.....	48
Figure 15: Cindy Sherman, <i>Untitled Film Still #3</i> , 1979.....	49
Figure 16: Cindy Sherman, <i>Untitled Film Still #35</i> , 1979.....	50
Figure 17: Ellen Gallagher, <i>Afrylic, eXelento, POMP-Bang</i> , 2004-2005.....	51
Figure 18: Ellen Gallagher, <i>DeLuxe</i> , 2004-2005.....	52
Figure 19: Ellen Gallagher, <i>Wiglette (detail) from Deluxe</i> , 2004-2005.....	53
Figure 20: Ellen Gallagher, <i>Details from Deluxe</i> , 2004-2005.....	54
Figure 21: Rachel Smith, <i>What's a Home Without a Hoover?</i> , 2010.....	55

Introduction

The work I create is based conceptually around ideas about time and memory and how they can be assessed and categorized in hierarchies of importance or legitimacy. Through this understanding of how time and memory function, I make artwork that challenges the notions of the accepted status of certain memories and more specifically nostalgic memories. My art and installations aim to resituate marginalized memories as reliable and confront the current socio-cultural constructions of memory. On the basis of this hierarchical structure it can be determined that certain marginalized bodies are the vessels for nostalgic memories. This correlation of nostalgic memories specific to marginalized demographics in turn restricts and delegitimizes both the body and memories associated with it.

If concepts of time and memory can be assessed and categorized based on a hierarchy of importance or legitimacy, it can then be said that memories are socially and culturally constructed. By tracing the historical timeline of nostalgia as a cultural phenomenon I can use our current understanding of nostalgia to evaluate how time and objects play a significant role in memory. The origins and progression of nostalgia can aid in explaining stigmas associated with the concept of nostalgic memories as well as how these types of memories work on an individual and collective level simultaneously. Drawing connections between historical and theoretical frameworks of nostalgia will reveal the legitimization of memories based on the boundaries and limitations of constructed understandings and stereotypes created by mass culture. These hierarchical structures produce the way that bodies and objects act as legitimate historical vessels.

Concepts of memory, nostalgia and marginalized bodies are represented in my artwork through an exploration of cultural connotations of materials and the juxtaposition of disparate imagery. My work is a dialogue between three components using collage, installation and projection. The collages are produced using found imagery to re-contextualize perceptions of nostalgia, framed and displayed in a grid format [Figure 1, 2]. The installation and projection element combine a wall of book pages pushed away from the wall of varying depths with photographic images projected onto the pages [Figure 3, 4]. Each image in the projection is undulating slowly from 0 to 100% opacity in a loop as a visualization of how the process of memory actually works. All of the elements in my installation have inherently nostalgic looking qualities, but with closer investigation of the details of the collages and movement of the projection, a disruption of the typical assumptions surrounding how nostalgia and memory are visualized and function in society is revealed.

Stickiness and Materiality

Examining the historical roots of nostalgia will help in setting up a better understanding of the complexity of the condition across time. Following the historic path of nostalgia and its transitions will reveal social constructions and stigmas. Sara Ahmed in her book *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* refers to an object or ideas as having an emblematic quality of “stickiness”. She presents a discourse for the intentions of stickiness by stating that it “depends on histories of contact that have already impressed upon the surface of the object.”¹ In this sense objects, ideas and language are bound up in one another through historical associations that span time. All things have the ability to metaphorically stick to other things, and as certain objects move through time they begin to accumulate more connections and cultural connotations. It is this build up of information over time that causes nostalgic memory to be understood or read as an unreliable memory source.

Ahmed uses disgust to emphasize how stickiness metaphorically works on objects by contending that something is not “inherently disgusting; rather, an object becomes disgusting through its contact with other objects that have already...been designated as disgusting before the encounter has taken place.”² If objects are understood through this context then it is the histories associated with the object that create its status. The sticky qualities of objects and ideologies will reveal the significance that the historical framework has in creating the way in which nostalgia functions and is understood. Ahmed discusses hierarchies by referencing

¹ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 90.

² Ahmed, 87.

dissimilarity within one physical body that cause a, “spatial distinction of ‘above’ from ‘below’ function[ing] metaphorically to separate one body from another... to differentiate between higher and lower bodies, or more and less advanced bodies.”³ Creating hierarchies based on the body itself reveals a very basic chain of command that is internalized by individuals and then redirected outward and begins the complex task of associating or sticking other objects or ideas to these very basic concepts of higher and lower until those connections are so tightly meshed together that they become the social norm.

Black feminist Audre Lorde exposes these hierarchies at work when she recounts an experience she had as a child on a train sitting next to a fur-clad white woman. She describes being confused as the woman moved her coat away in disgust from the center of the seat where their two bodies touched. Lorde’s unawareness of what the woman was responding to causes her to mimic the woman’s actions, thinking that she was reacting to something in between them.⁴ The event is emotionally engrained in Lorde’s memory as she realized that the woman was reacting to her own black girl’s body and presence next to her; she recalls the woman’s expression, “her eyes. The flared nostrils. The hate.”⁵ This event is a profound interpretation of Ahmed’s stickiness as represented through disgust, because it shows how stigmas can both stick to and resist certain bodies according to “the redefinition of social as well as bodily integrity.”⁶ Lorde’s story is an example of

³ Ahmed, 89.

⁴ Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, (Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press, 1984), 147-8.

⁵ Lorde, 147-8.

⁶ Ahmed, 53.

how certain groups become “othered” and threaten to contaminate the integrity of the normalized body.

In my artwork, Ahmed’s stickiness concept works both figuratively and literally in association with my use of collage and mixed media. Not only is sticky adhesive or glue the main medium used to adhere paper components together, but my process is a strategic “sticking” together of disparate found imagery. In the piece *Ma and Pa* [Figure 5] I use a book page that says “In Memory of my Father and Mother” in the top left hand corner and then below those words have an image of a folded button down shirt and a 1950’s woman posing. Using the shirt and the woman under the words causes the viewer to see the father represented as an object, the shirt, and the mother as a stereotyped 1950s vision of a woman. Associating disparate objects within language begins the process of questioning predetermined knowledge in the viewer. The surface quality and preexisting histories of the materials I decide to use in my collages are essential in conveying certain feelings and concepts that I want to establish in the audience. Masking political or cultural issues of hierarchies in the guise of visual nostalgia makes my work appear docile and approachable, but with further investigation the viewer can begin to realize that the imagery is more controversial and commenting on a larger set of cultural issues.

The material I use as the foundation for most of my work consists of found paper ephemera that have obvious textual handwritten traces and wear from usage and time. My collages are made on pages from books that have personal handwritten names, dates, and note of affection [Figure 6, 7, 8]. Others are scraps of paper or notes that reference even more personal information such as addresses and phone

numbers as seen in the piece *Once Important* [Figure 9]. Using materials and objects that have obvious previous ownership, as the foundation for my art before I rework them is important in conveying nostalgic memories and the impact that individual and collective memories have in forming what is recognized as nostalgic memory.

Strategic and intentional choices in the imagery used in my collages are representative of how memories and the process of remembering is a constant piecing together of information from our own past and the pasts of others. Focusing the viewers attention on the fact that the objects used may not be directly linked to me as the artist and my own individual history helps to convey a more universal collective history linking the collages and installation to those interacting with it on a more emotional and personal level in order to display the dual nature of private and public histories.

Stickiness and the materiality of the imagery I use work on two levels. First, I use yellowed paper, recipe cards and other iconic 1950s imagery that are artifacts representing the hegemonic cultural understandings of nostalgia, which causes the viewer to approach my artwork with an elevated sense of familiarity. After luring the viewer in through affectionate familiarity with the materiality of my artwork I embed humorous, ironic and contradicting imagery and titles to cause the viewer to re-evaluate their initial understanding of what nostalgia is and how it functions. The piece *414 S. Main St., Moscow, ID 83843* [FIGURE 10] is an example of how histories stick and leave traces on objects. This collage is a book page with names and addresses written on the right hand side. The original owner crossed off her own last name and changed it to a different name, presumably her married name. A

subsequent owner of the book crossed off the original name and address and added a new name and address below the crossed out name. I took various colors of thread and sewed lines through the uncrossed entry and continued to sew lines across the empty part of the page as a representation of information and histories that may be added and crossed out in the future. The title of the piece is the address of the Prichard Art Gallery, the current location of the piece, and each time the piece is shown, the title will represent the address of its new location. Embedding and physically altering the piece over time represents literal and conceptual ideas of transition and stickiness that physical places, spaces and people have on an object. Acknowledging an environment by adding names and locations into the piece begins to create a new history for the collage through memories associated with its physical surroundings.

Nostalgia and Hierarchy

Nostalgia was first diagnosable as an illness that could be remedied. The word nostalgia stems from the Greek words *nóstos*, meaning return home, and *álgos*, meaning suffering or pain.⁷ In 1688, Doctor Johannes Hofer felt that the condition was induced by the separation from a person's native land. In his *Dissertation on Nostalgia* he coined the medical term nostalgia as "the sad mood originating from the desire for the return to one's native land,"⁸ specifically inflicting Swiss mercenaries. While nostalgia was diagnosable as a disease it was not curable by any medicinal remedies, but rather could only be cured if the inflicted returned to their homeland, according to Hofer.⁹

Taking into consideration the historical basis of nostalgia as a disorder or disease causes ideas to stick and links nostalgia as a trait associated with specific demographics. Understanding nostalgia's origins as a medical affliction affects how nostalgia is represented today. The development of the nostalgic condition immediately represents something that is undesirable because it symbolizes abnormality, causing people to resist being associated with the condition for fear of being othered or marginalized. The foundation of nostalgia as an illness instantly positions the body or psyche of those inflicted as being weak. The implication of Ahmed's stickiness concept motivates my artwork and practice as it relates to theories about nostalgic memory being tied to hierarchies. The overarching goal of my work

⁷ Johannes Hofer, "Medical Dissertation on Nostalgia." (Edited by Carolyn Kiser Anspach. Bulletin of the Institute of the History of Medicine (The Johns Hopkins Press), August 1934), 381.

⁸ Hofer, 381.

⁹ Ibid.

is to upset and critique these hegemonic, transparent cultural systems of knowledge and memory as understood through hierarchies by manipulating the very visual culture that represents it. Understanding how ideas and relationships stick to certain bodies over history plays a significant role in the way memory constructs cultural meaning.

Centuries later during the 1800s in the United States the implications of nostalgia changed because of observations made by a military doctor, Theodore Calhoun.¹⁰ He attributed nostalgia to soldiers with weak constitutions and believed that soldiers from rural areas were more susceptible than those from urban areas. In her book *The Future of Nostalgia*, Svetlana Boym, notes that Calhoun thought nostalgia to be a “shameful disease that revealed a lack of manliness and unprogressive attitudes.”¹¹ What I find most interesting and a critical point in the discussion of bodies as historical vessels is that men are at the origins of the nostalgic condition, but they were quick to deny and remove or distance nostalgic feelings from being viewed as a characteristic of a “real” or progressive man.

In order to accomplish this distancing, nostalgic symptoms were pushed towards those who were viewed as weaker. The reallocation of nostalgic associations to weaker bodies in turn further removed the legitimacy of nostalgic memories by continually associating it with less powerful bodies until the connotations “stuck” as Ahmed would refer to it. The rejection of maleness and nostalgia as being linked to one another and the high measures taken to counteract the association of nostalgia to

¹⁰ Boym, Svetlana, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001), 6.

¹¹ Boym, 6.

men or at least military men seems to be a result of the long standing historical association with the male body being carriers of legitimate memories relating to politics, war and violence.

The use of illness to marginalize groups is the prominent theme in Felix Gonzalez-Torres's artwork and installations. Gonzalez-Torres's work deals with the AIDS epidemic amongst homosexual men on individual and collective levels. Through the use of personally engaged installations that are representative of his partner who was an AIDS victim he conducts critiques of socio-political policy and practices in relationship to how they affect physical bodies. Many of his installations include individually wrapped candies carpeting the gallery floor and stacks of large pieces of paper [Figure 11, 12]. These installations were made with very specific word choices, dimension and imagery to metaphorically enact feelings of loss, consumption and issues surrounding the private/public dichotomy. In his piece *Untitled (Revenge)* [FIGURE 11] consists of individually wrapped candies spread across the gallery floor, the weight of the candies totaling 355 lbs. to represent the ideal combined weight of him and his partner.¹² Each time his candy installations are displayed the public is allowed to take the work until the entire piece is depleted, to represent the participation and effect that the public has in changing something. Viewers' involvement puts them in a place of responsibility by giving them "an implicit obligation to respond to it in an appropriate way."¹³ With the knowledge that all of Gonzalez-Torres's work represents his lover, who in turn represents victims of a

¹² Robert Storr, "When This You See Remember Me," in *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, ed. Julie Ault, 5-39 (NY: Steidl, 2006), 6.

¹³ Russell Ferguson, "Authority Figure," in *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, ed. Julie Ault, 81-104 (NY: Steidl, 2006), 83.

disease or violence, paired with the viewer's ability to take and consume the candy or paper from stacks is a profound statement showing how the masses are participating in the metaphoric depletion of an individual who is dying of AIDS.

Looking towards Gonzalez-Torres as a marginalized person in American society i.e., a homosexual paired with the HIV-AIDS epidemic promotes further alienation and correlations towards sticking the disease to homosexual men, causing them to be viewed as lesser or weaker. Gonzalez-Torres's work aims to confront and discuss issues of how the illness affects the male body privately and publicly. Instead of trying to distance the connotations of AIDS from the homosexual male body he seeks to embrace and cope with the realities that the disease has on the physical and cultural connotations directed towards the body. Gonzales-Torres uses his work as a platform to promote discussion and change the mentality towards infected persons rather than disassociating from HIV-AIDS illness in the way that nostalgia has been historically pushed away from the male body and onto marginalized groups.

Gonzalez-Torres begins to legitimize and humanize the marginalized homosexual population in his pieces by creating work that represents a deep, personal human connection to his partner that in turn establishes the realizations of loss and grief and the necessity for change in the viewer.

Another one of his more politically charged participatory works is *Untitled (Death by Gun)* [Figure 12], which is a continually replenished stack of prints with images and names of gunshot victims. He formatted the sheets to mimic the proportion of a tombstone further alluding to death and loss.¹⁴ Elevating and

¹⁴ Susan Tallman, "The Ethos of the Editions: The Stacks of Felix Gonzalez-Torres," *Arts Magazine* 66, no. 1 (September 1991): 12-13.

remembering the lives of common people who were killed by gun violence in his work he creates a contrast to military hero's whose lives are honored and remember through death. By doing this, he begins to reveal how hierarchies play a role in legitimizing some bodies over others, as even in death military bodies are elevated while the lives of casualties of violence are often forgotten. Through his work he begins the process of leveling the playing field so that all lives are represented equally and relevantly. Gaining a realization through participation with Gonzales-Torres's work shows how everyone plays a role in the loss and grief and the hierarchies that establish and observe some lives and diminish others. The depletion and distribution of his artwork as it leaves the gallery with the visitors both instills the idea that bodies can become marginalized by the masses and also that the bodies he represents those who are victims of AIDS or gun violence can become re-legitimized and re-humanized bodies as his work spreads beyond the gallery or museum.

Historically, hierarchies are established to enable political means of orienting power to certain ideas central to specific groups of people. They are used as a device to delegitimize and legitimize certain groups of people based on their hierarchical ranking. In his article "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History" Douglas Baynton discusses hierarchy and disability by stating that marginalized groups or groups at risk of becoming marginalized tend to avoid "challenging the basic assumptions behind the hierarchy, [and] instead work to remove themselves from the negatively marked categories."¹⁵ Baynton's connection

¹⁵ Douglas C. Baynton, "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History" in *The New Disability History: American Perspectives* edited by Paul Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2001), 51.

between hierarchies and bodies associated with disabilities reveals an interesting association to the way that cultural categories are formed and used to marginalize groups.

Race, sexual orientation and gender are two predominant features used to categorize people; through categorization they are setup in social hierarchies. By revealing differences between individuals, social hierarchies form grouping individuals together based on certain characteristics and then those categories are placed on the scale of hierarchical legitimacy. Baynton proposes that these hierarchies function to “justify the denial of legitimacy and certain rights to individuals and groups.”¹⁶ It is this type of thinking that privileges some and oppresses others. Rejecting the assumed functions of hierarchies and calling attention to the detrimental effects they have on groups of people will aid in the shift to change how society chooses to remember and will eventually alter the way in which memory functions in relationship to producing marginalized groups.

Ultimately because of this historical position, feelings of nostalgia or longing do not coincide well in the motivations of the military and political roles. Men historically have been the carriers of important and relevant national histories, which causes the mass population to look to them as being legitimate vessels of national memories and further perpetuates the association of military ideals with strong male bodies allowing that group to remain dominant. It can then be indicated, perhaps boldly, that this historical male obsession with war, violence and power is a method to distance itself from nostalgia, but in all actuality these types of thoughts and

¹⁶ Baynton, 35.

memories can be grouped in the same category as nostalgia. The difference is that military exploits are masked with a veil of aggressive progressivism to make it appear that they are not participating in the apparent regression typically associated with nostalgia, but in all actuality war and violence are ideals that have an ancient foundation. War being something that is rooted in the past also has the ability to function as nostalgia, because anything from the past, including war or power is and can be idealized and longed for in a nostalgic sense. Nostalgia traditionally represents a longing for home and wars usually occur to protect the homeland and the ideals it represents. Since men are the predominate protectors of this concept of home then that places them on a different level to those who do not. Historically men have used war and military exploits as a way to provide power and protection to the masses, which can then in turn cause the population they protect to view them in a glorified manner putting them at the top of the hierarchical scale.

The collage and installations I make indulges our current idea of what nostalgia usually looks like by using imagery relating to feminine domesticity. Nostalgia's meaning changes as it becomes represented by a consumer vision of what it should look like. For us today the 1950s is a visually idealized time period representing the perfect home, the perfect past. The installation and collage materials include handwritten and typewritten recipe cards, imagery concerning domestic objects and worn materials revealing age and passage of time. My work comments on the common association of nostalgia to a 1950s motif of feminine domesticity. The collages I create put men into nostalgically aesthetic representations to reveal and parallel the idea that the male body can be equally delegitimized by the visual

connection to what nostalgia looks like the same way that it has delegitimized women's roles and bodies. I remove figures from their original context and let them stand on their own to produce new feelings in the viewer that may not have been produced in its original format. Specifically in the piece *Identity Struggle* [Figure 13] I have removed three men in wrestling attire from a larger group photo of a wrestling team from the early 20th century. The viewer is confronted with ideas about hyper-masculinity present in sports and by removing them from the original context the figures tend to have a more feminine or homoerotic quality, because of the posture and positioning of the three bodies to one another [Figure 13]. Similar to the way Gonzalez-Torres's art works to conceptualize notions of participation and change, I try to reveal issues concerning marginalized groups and more specifically women by disrupting and rearranging the pre-existing visual culture and the ideas embedded in them that have become commonplace.

In my piece *Rite of Passage* [Figure 14] I have positioned two identical men holding guns on a book page titled *The Memory Book*. One man is oriented with his feet at the bottom of the page with the titled of the book and the other slightly faded figure positioned upside down. The title, *Rite of Passage*, as well as the title of the book page, *The Memory Book*, are critical uses of language as elements to links ideas about status, power and memory to the figure holding the gun. They speak to how and what we are allowed to remember can be viewed as guarded by those who use violence and force to maintain certain ideals through memory. Creating an understanding or at least a realization for my viewers that certain bodies are in power

and that challenging their validity is necessary to counteract hierarchies and validate marginalized bodies is an overarching theme in all of my pieces.

Mimesis

Working mimetically is a method that has been used by feminist philosophers and artists for decades. Luce Irigaray bases her feminist psychoanalytic theories on a strategic essentialist outlook. She views the use of essentialism as a form of mimesis and addresses it in her book, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, as a way to protect woman through a form of camouflage, while simultaneously unmasking the patriarchal system through a conscious assimilation into it as a way to fragment and expose its inadequate representation of women.¹⁷ Mimesis allows for the potential breakdown of stereotypes. A conscious assimilation into female roles developed through a patriarchal framework is the source of mimetic power because it can discredit and fragment those stereotypes from within.¹⁸ Using this approach, the validity of the nostalgic structure and its female associations can be called into question. The mimetic system deliberately mimics the faulty representations of women set up by patriarchy in order to understand and expose it. Applying this system in the analysis of artwork is a critical tool in edifying and dismantling patriarchy.

By using imagery and objects directly from, or those that reference a specific time period I am able to work mimetically to reveal the complexity behind the potentially benign compositions and subject matter. The process of making my collage and installation also work mimetically in the way that I gather, collect,

¹⁷ Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman* (New York, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 269.

¹⁸ Margaret Whitford, *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (London, UK: Routledge, 1991) 71-72.

reorganize and appropriate preexisting imagery used. This process of using found objects and materials begins to mimic the way that memory is constructed. In his article “In Purgatory: The Work of Felix Gonzalez-Torres” Simon Watley discusses memory as being “culturally organized in the preferred likeness of those who possess the power to define the past.”¹⁹ Events from our own pasts cannot be fully accessed or recalled clearly without being tainted by “the tug of institutionally sanctioned “official” memories.”²⁰ This causes memories to be understood as traces and fragments of the past that can never be fully recognized as individual or collective because of the number of external encounters and information that impresses upon each individual. This individual and collective construction of memory act in much the same way as my collages, because each piece of art I make functions as a individual piece made by me, an individual artist, but they cannot exist without the collective efforts of the histories of the previously owned and discarded objects used. Creating collages and installation work that represents myself, as well as everyone else helps to create the mimetic vision of nostalgia and then make my work feel both familiar and unfamiliar all at once, because of the way that I alter and juxtapose imagery.

The artist Cindy Sherman employs the concept of mimesis in her photographic work. In the series *Untitled Film Stills (1977 – 1980)* she photographs herself in various scenes that mimic typical female roles from 1950s Hollywood B movies.²¹ In *Untitled Film Still #3* and *Untitled Film Still #35* [Figure 15, 16] she

¹⁹ Simon Watley, "In Purgatory: The Work of Felix Gonzalez-Torres," *Parkett*, March 1994: 39.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Vera Dika, *Recycled Culture in Contemporary Art and Film: The Uses of Nostalgia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 43.

takes on the role and pose of the typical housewife or mother, donning aprons and places herself in domestic spaces. In *Untitled Film Still #3* [Figure 15] she is cooking in the kitchen, an archetypal position of the mother.²² These images reference the gazes of the viewer, the viewed, and the camera, all of which are Sherman's. Controlling all aspects of the image "threatens the image itself and begins to dismantle its artifice. For while we are confronted with our own act of looking...it's very stillness soon dislodges the status of the nostalgic disguises."²³ The nostalgic cinematic appearance of Sherman's work when translated using Irigaray's strategic essentialism reveals how she uses mimicry. The key element her imagery contains is the photographs ability to feel both familiar and unfamiliar simultaneously.²⁴ The viewer is, "metaphorically confronted with a past that is also present, and with a movie memory that is manifestly embodied by a contemporary female artist."²⁵ Her work combines nostalgic imagery in relationship to women and the stereotypes they are cast into that attempt to exploit them.

Mimesis acts as one of the main strategies of my work. Similar to Sherman, I try to assimilate into certain roles and visualizations of nostalgic memory as a means to dissect and disrupt it from within. Using materials that have direct associations to women, such as recipe cards, sewing thread and specific domestic imagery, I engage with the complex ideas that have become so embedded in the materials overtime that

²² Miriam Schapiro, "Project Womanhouse," *Art Journal* (College Art Association) 31, no. 3 (1972): 269.

²³ Dika, 44.

²⁴ Dika, 46.

²⁵ Ibid.

the connections between certain bodies and objects seems inseparable. Substituting images for ideas and juxtaposing conflicting or ironic words, texts, and titles with the domestic imagery acts as a way to open an avenue for discussion surrounding issues of hierarchies and how they act to marginalize certain groups, and more specifically women. Causing viewers to simply recognize that these are actual, current issues and that objects and materials play a very specific role in how something or someone is remembered and legitimized is an important initiation to how I want my artwork approached and referenced.

Nostalgia and The Archive

To understand how these formulaic images and ideas of stereotyped female and other marginalized bodies come into existence, it is important to note a significant change in nostalgia. As the condition moved throughout history it became a social norm that was less about being sick and more about a social condition. This transition was very murky during the 18th and 19th century as information and understanding of nostalgia began to spread to larger populations. During the eighteenth century, Friedrich Schiller continued the study of nostalgia, and began associating it with aesthetics such as poetry, art, and music. He viewed nostalgia as a form of grief and related to memory rather than a physical, medical illness. Consequently, nostalgia became an all-encompassing phenomenon that was no longer limited to those displaced from their homeland.

The switch from the pathological view of nostalgia to a psychological connection between the mind and body transformed nostalgia from a medical condition to a common affliction that could be experienced by everyone.²⁶ The diagnosis of nostalgia as an illness started to fade, and nostalgia continued to evolve. During this period, according to Linda Austin in her book, *Nostalgia in Transition 1780 – 1917*, nostalgia became a social phenomenon of “personal and communal remembering.”²⁷ This transformation created the notions of nostalgia that we associate with today. Not only did nostalgia become a condition or feeling that every individual could experience, it also became a public experience.

²⁶ Linda Austin, *Nostalgia in Transition 1780 – 1917* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 14.

Part of the collective experience can be attributed to the modern compulsion to categorize that can be found as a side effect of the obsession to control and maintain information and time. This necessity was also applied to nostalgia as it moved from curable disease to social condition that permeated popular culture in Europe and America around the turn of the 20th century. What was considered nostalgic and how it looked, acted and appeared could be referenced like an encyclopedia entry. Boym describes the compulsion to retain history as having forced the “elusive temporality of longing [to be] encased and classified in a multitude of archival drawers, display cases and curio cabinets.”²⁸ In a sense, nostalgia became a consumable categorical product and essentially a new fashion that could be owned and organized. Nostalgia then is not only a feeling or an experience, but begins to morph into a consumable product that can function in a capitalistic manner.

By nature, indexical or categorical systems hold their status in the fact that they retain traces of something that no longer has presence but that wants to be recalled after the event takes place. Retrieval is an element key to the function of indices, which act as placeholders or reminders. Indices are our memories outside of the body. For example a photograph is evidence of an event that has been removed from its original context and acts as a vehicle for narratives that may have otherwise been forgotten; because of this, a photograph itself acts as an index. The topic of nostalgia naturally leads to such external symbols as antiques or souvenirs. In my installation the primary materials are recipe cards and book pages [Figure 3, 4].

²⁷ Austin, 23.

These types of objects have an inherent association and means of organization that my installation work disrupts by removing them from their original strict systems and putting the materials into a new more chaotic one. Breaking apart the system of the recipe box and books reveal a new experience and perception of these objects and how they should or can function. On the other hand my collages are neatly framed and organized and displayed in a grid system [Figure 1, 2]. The way that my body of work is displayed begins a dialogue about contemporary and traditional notions of how objects and art are perceived. Both my gridded collages and my paper book and recipe installation have the ability to change, shrink, or grow each time I display them. The way that the gridded collages and the installation are set up allows them to be expanded or reduced based on the environment and space. Each time the group of work is exhibited it will be dictated by the location allowing the body of work to be different with each installation. In the process of fragmenting organizational systems I have also regrouped them so that they constitute a new collection of things that are simultaneously a representation of me, all the past histories embedded in the materials and everyone who views the work.

Ellen Gallagher is a contemporary collage artist who deals with the traditional methods of displaying art in a grid format with topics of race, gender and class.²⁹ Many of her collages are made on top of vintage 20th century African American culture magazines that largely advertised how to help black women, “conform to socially acceptable norms of beauty”³⁰ for the time period. Using drawing, paper

²⁸ Boym, 15.

²⁹ Eleanor Heartney, *After the Revolution: Women Who Transformed Contemporary Art*, (New York, NY: Prestel Publishing, 2007) 252.

³⁰ Heartney, 256.

collage and other materials Gallagher responds to both the imagery and the text that presents itself on the pages of the magazine. In three of her series *Pomp-Bang*, *eXelento*, and *DeLuxe* [Figure 17, 18, 19, 20] she grids out an entire magazine page by page and then alters the pages by adding blonde wigs and other physical alterations to the bodies in the magazine. Her work is a visualization of how African Americans have been othered by mainstream white culture, but also been pressured to alter their physical nature to appear less like the other. Gallagher responds to past imagery and reoccurring themes such as wigs as a means to “access otherwise inaccessible histories”³¹ and through this meditation and investigation with magazines as cultural archives from the past she undoes, “rigid categories...used to define identity and to look beyond them to the hybrid reality of contemporary American society.”³²

The installation portion of my work involves book pages mounted at varying depths on the wall and recipe cards that have been glued together into strips of varying lengths and are undulating between the empty space of the gallery and the wall or being dangled from the ceiling [Figure 3, 4]. The use of both the wall and the empty space of the gallery forces the viewers to interact with the art on a much more intimate level because they must approach and navigate through the work. Five images are being projected onto the surfaces of the book pages of recipe cards. The images include an old negative of a farm family, a triple exposed image of a cemetery statue, a black and white photo of birds in a tree, a black and white photo of a girl and a class photo from an elementary school. The projected images are slowly undulating

³¹ Heartney, 266.

³² Heartney, 372.

at different rates from 0 to 100% opacity in a continuous loop [Figure 3]. The light and images coming from the projector act as another experiential element of the installation, because the viewer's body will interrupt the projection as they walk through the space. The material choices in both my collages and installation harkens back to a different time, place and mentality. I try to overwhelm the viewer with initial feelings of nostalgia by inundating them with specific materials. My work acts in a similar way to Gallagher's in the way that she reconstitutes the magazine over a much larger space to give the piece more of an impact based on scale. I use obviously aged materials spread over a large area to produce a nostalgic ambience as a means to seduce viewers into thinking that they are being confronted with an idealized vision of the past but in all actuality the details of the artwork challenge preconceived cultural representations of nostalgia.

Spreading out such commonplace item as recipe cards, book pages and projections throughout a room in an installation format gives a contemporary art approach to old objects and ideas. The purpose of invading the viewer's space is to create a sense of participation rather than mere observation of the art. The recipe cards are obviously used, handwritten, typewritten, stained and because of the variety of handwriting reveal that they are also displaced relics from potentially unrelated persons. Recipe cards are decidedly indexical objects, because of the standardized 3x5 inch format and categorical nature of organizing them in tin boxes by food type or alphabet. The recipe card installation rejects the format of index drawers and boxes as a means to organize, display and use the recipe cards. Books follow a similar strict linear format; removing the pages and spreading them out along a wall

causes them to read differently. The installation reaffirms the object in a new system that does not follow the strict categorization or time line common to recipe box and book organization.

I am not denying or being naïve to the fact that I have very methodically organized the installation and surrounding collages to read in a specific way. Intentionally creating the work to appear non-linear and unorganized or at least organized differently from its typical format allows for alternative readings of what an objects function and connotations are and what it means to organize. Creating art that is participatory helps to produce a realization for the audience that they are a part of the nostalgic process presently, historically, individually and collectively. Just as Gonzalez-Torres creates work that is temporary and the candy and stacks installations do not function properly if there is not group participation to enact ideas of loss and consumption. A more experiential attitude for the audience ideally causes the participator to take away greater insight about their role individually as well as collectively in relation to nostalgia and identity.

In *The System of Objects*, Jean Baudrillard states that antiques are “always, in the strongest sense of the term, a ‘family portrait’: the immemorialization, in the concrete form of an object, of a former being.”³³ He later goes onto say that “the antique object thus presents itself as a myth of origins.”³⁴ The antique in this instance is being used as an example of nostalgic objects where the collector or owner sees the object as representative of their origins or at least their past. Baudrillard’s concepts establish that the antique no longer serves its original useful function; rather, its

³³ Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects* (London, UK: Verso, 1996), 75.

³⁴ Ibid.

function resides in what it symbolizes. It is not useless, even though its original purpose has moved on. In both my work and that of Gallagher old domestic imagery and books are used as vehicles to represent how objects hold traces of the past and when removed from their original source or owners have the ability to function as a universal, collective memory.

In the piece *What's a Home Without a Hoover?* [FIGURE 21] I use the image of a vacuum to represent domesticity and in turn women and the library book due date page as a representation of knowledge and time. Joining the vacuum, with the iconic stamped dates on the library page reveal that they are universally configured and understood symbols that while they appear harmless actually hold great influence on the bodies they are associated with. This correspondence between the two objects promote specific notions surrounding how time effects objects and unearths a reality that while time has passed and knowledge has been gained certain objects, such as the vacuum, are irresistibly coupled with the female body. This connection between gender and objects continues the mentality that women are always linked to the home and objects associated with menial tasks.

The historical nature of an antiques ability to imply time, becomes its purpose it is a medium to the past. While objects allow for access to the past, they can never be pure experiences of the past, because the original condition can never be authentically reproduced. Gallagher's collage work deals specifically with archived magazine imagery from the past and she uses the pages as her foundation to enable alteration and investigation of the past [Figure 19, 20]. The inability to truly re-experience the past is the vicious circle that maintains feelings of nostalgia. Objects

embody the past from which a person may feel disconnected, and are attempts to recreate, relive and hopefully return to that place, time or event that the object represents.³⁵ By categorizing and labeling things that seem to reference nostalgia it opens the doorway for a universal partaking of the nostalgic condition. It is through this social construction of categories that allow for visual understanding to occur and become part of a collective cultural memory. Using domestic objects and images that directly link to a collective realization of the past will force viewers of the installation to recreate and interpret memories of their own past instigated by the content and materiality of my work.

While the definition of nostalgia has evolved and continues to evolve over time, most of the definitions maintained the aspect of a desire to return to a specific place, usually a home from which they have been displaced from. There is a critical fundamental shift that is specific to contemporary society from a fixation with a precise location to a specific time. This transition of nostalgia's development is furthered highlighted by Kimberly Smith in her article "Mere Nostalgia: Notes on a Progressive Paratheory" where she discusses the shift in nostalgia as being, "once defined simply as a desire to return home, to a specific place, nostalgia was gradually being conceptualized as a longing to return to a former time."³⁶

It is through this term or interpretation of nostalgia that Bergsonian theories of duration, perception and memory can apply. Pairing Bergsonian theories with Smith's explanation of the shift from a former space to a former time displays an

³⁵ Madelon Sprengnether, *The Spectral Mother* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 121.

³⁶ Kimberly Smith, "Mere Nostalgia: Notes on a progressive Paratheory" (Rhetoric and Public Affair) 2000, 512.

essential shift in how nostalgia is perceived and incorporated into memory. Henri Bergson in his book *The Creative Mind* discusses an idea similar to how nostalgia is understood with the statement, “suppression thus means substitution...in this way we indicate a desire to turn our attention to the object which is gone, and away from the one replacing it.”³⁷ Looking at nostalgia as a process of substitution rather than simply a longing or loss shows that nostalgic memory has the capacity for action rather than simply a way of avoiding the present by retreating to the memories of the past. My work aims to reconfigure preexisting nostalgic artifacts to imply new systems of memory, by reacting to and through the nostalgic medium itself. Substitution is key factor in how I arrange my images and texts. I play with using commonplace objects and images of people to act as a substitution for a larger overall discussion of nostalgia. The imagery in my collages acts as visual substitutions for ideas. Examples of substitution can be recognized throughout two of my collages in that specifically use the vacuum as a representation of domesticity and women [Figure 21] and the use of a man with a gun as a substitution for hierarchies and power [Figure 14].

Bergson’s concept of duration is based on the idea that time is not juxtaposed and that everything is occurring all at once, which negates determinism because there is no true sequence in time. In *Time and Free Will* Bergson sets up the idea that there are two types of determinism -- physical and psychological -- and that they are in reality absorbed in one another.³⁸ This entanglement of the two types of determinism

³⁷ Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, (Mineola, NY: Dover Publication, Inc., 1946), 78-79.

³⁸ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2001), 143.

is based “on an inaccurate conception of multiplicity of conscious state, or rather of duration.”³⁹ Through this interpretation of determinism it can be understood that material objects cannot physically preserve the past, but rather the past is only perceivable through psychological recollections.⁴⁰ If physical and psychological states are understood in this way then time would be understood as a “flow [which] is continuous and in which we pass insensibly from one state to another: a continuity that is really lived,”⁴¹ which then negates determinism. The problem is that time is misunderstood because, as Bergson puts it, this fluid experience of time is “artificially decomposed for the greater convenience of customary knowledge.”⁴² My artwork sets out to blend the entire timeline of nostalgia from its origins as an illness to our current formation of nostalgia as tangible objects with the purpose of changing the future course of the nostalgic identity. By connecting and integrating how nostalgia has developed over time my artwork adopts culturally acceptable visualization of nostalgia. I use this familiar nostalgic representation of the past as a means to expose and revise the system and approach used by mass visual culture to shape nostalgia and subsequently its ability to marginalize certain groups of people.

If duration is the way in which time is experienced, and everything is occurring all at once, then indexing, organizing and categorizing holds a powerful basis in customary knowledge. There is a social structure that creates the idea that by categorizing things we can then understand them based on where they fall in varying

³⁹ Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 143.

⁴⁰ Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, 153.

⁴¹ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, (London, UK: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1908), 243.

levels of importance or hierarchies. Bergson's account of how determinism functions when perceived through duration is how we can experience free will, because time can be experienced without empirical involvement of space through math and science a culturally understood reliable source of measuring something's validity. Through this understanding of time and duration the transition of nostalgia from specific places or spaces to a time period, displays a shift in the way that time is constructed through memories. While our construction of time is still very much dictated by a three dimensional understanding, Bergson's theories about memories aid in the developmental changes from spatial measurements to a fluid movement distinct to time and felt through duration.

The projection element of my installation is a visualized representation of duration. As the photographs fade in and out of clarity it shows how time impacts memory. All the images are always there; they simply define themselves at different rates. The fluid movement of the projection paired with the static realities of the framed work allows for the viewer to access my work both through time and space. The various found elements and materials I use have evidence of physical decay and historical traces that represent effects of a combination of time and the environment. The ephemeral nature of my work will force it to change and react over time and in response to the environment that it is in.

If the present is based on past memories then I believe that nostalgic memories are just as capable of influencing the present as any other memory. If residues of the past linger in the present, then all memories have the potential to be or

⁴² Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 243.

become nostalgic memories. This nostalgic potentiality means that all memories and experiences should be able to move back and forth between nostalgic memories and other types of remembering without being delegitimized by the popular mnemonic hierarchies controlled by a patriarchal system, and instead function like the Bergsonian experiences felt through duration. The only way that this can change can be accomplished is if societies understand that memory is culturally constructed to represent and define the memories that are important and valid to a specific power and that all memories both collective and individual retain traces of the agenda of those at the top of the hierarchy.⁴³

⁴³ Watley, 334.

Conclusion

Through a mimetic approach of linking concepts surrounding stickiness, archives, hierarchies and memories, I am able to create work that is both approachable, while still allowing for a social critique of nostalgia. Using iconic nostalgic-looking materials that are loaded with cultural connotations has allowed me to review how history affects, changes, and defines objects and ideas over time and the impact that these transitions have on the way that society remembers. This body of work is only one aspect revolving around nostalgic identity, which will allow me to excavate other culture's material understanding of nostalgia and create more work surrounding different representations of nostalgia. The ability to expand conceptually and literally was an intentional goal in the way that I set up my artwork so that it can continually morph and change as time passes.

If all perceptions are memories and thus part of the past, then our present is based on a blurred assessment of the past which then allows the privileging of some memories over others based on how certain memories can influence a collective whole to a certain way of thinking. Those in power, usually political power, are the deciders of the hierarchical nature of memories. Not all memories are created equal thus, there is a privileging of certain bodies to decide what memories ones are dependable and who is a reliable container or filter for those memories. If memories are realized as privileged then it becomes clear as to why nostalgia is a lesser form of memory. Nostalgic memories retain traces of a medical stigma at its origins, as well as an association with criminals, children, women, and immigrants, and other such marginalized demographics even in modern society. This denotes memories that are

catalogued as nostalgic as unreliable, because of bodies and histories that have adhered to it. Memories are political and constructed in a certain way that affect people in a certain culture, and not only affect them, but enable them to remember. Smith points out that the past can serve as a “valuable basis for social critique”⁴⁴ as it relates to the “present [and] its relationship (or lack of relationship) to the past”⁴⁵. All memories have traces or residues of nostalgia because of our current perceptions and reactions are shaped by the past. My work operates by using nostalgia as a means to disrupt and critique hierarchical systems and to reposition marginalized bodies subjugated by the system.

⁴⁴ Smith, 523.

⁴⁵ Smith, 523.



[Figure 1]

MFA Thesis Exhibit Prichard Gallery (6 Collages)

Rachel Smith, Framed Collages, April 15-May 15, 2011



[Figure 2]

MFA Thesis Exhibit Prichard Gallery (6 Collages)

Rachel Smith, Framed Collages, April 15-May 15, 2011



[Figure 3]

MFA Thesis Exhibit Prichard Gallery (Installation/Projection View)

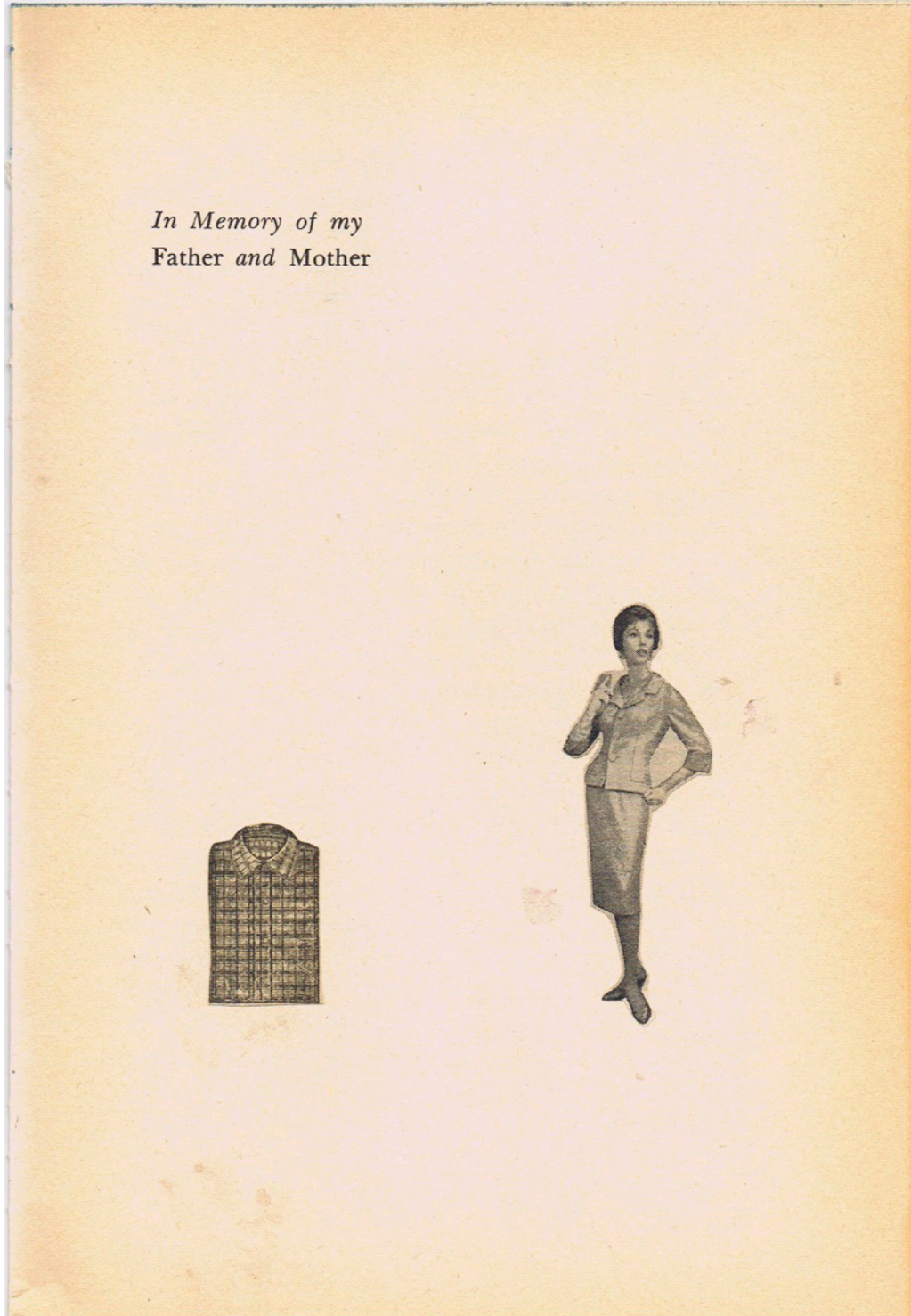
Rachel Smith, Installation Shot, April 15-May 15, 2011



[Figure 4]

MFA Thesis Exhibit Prichard Gallery (Installation/Projection View)

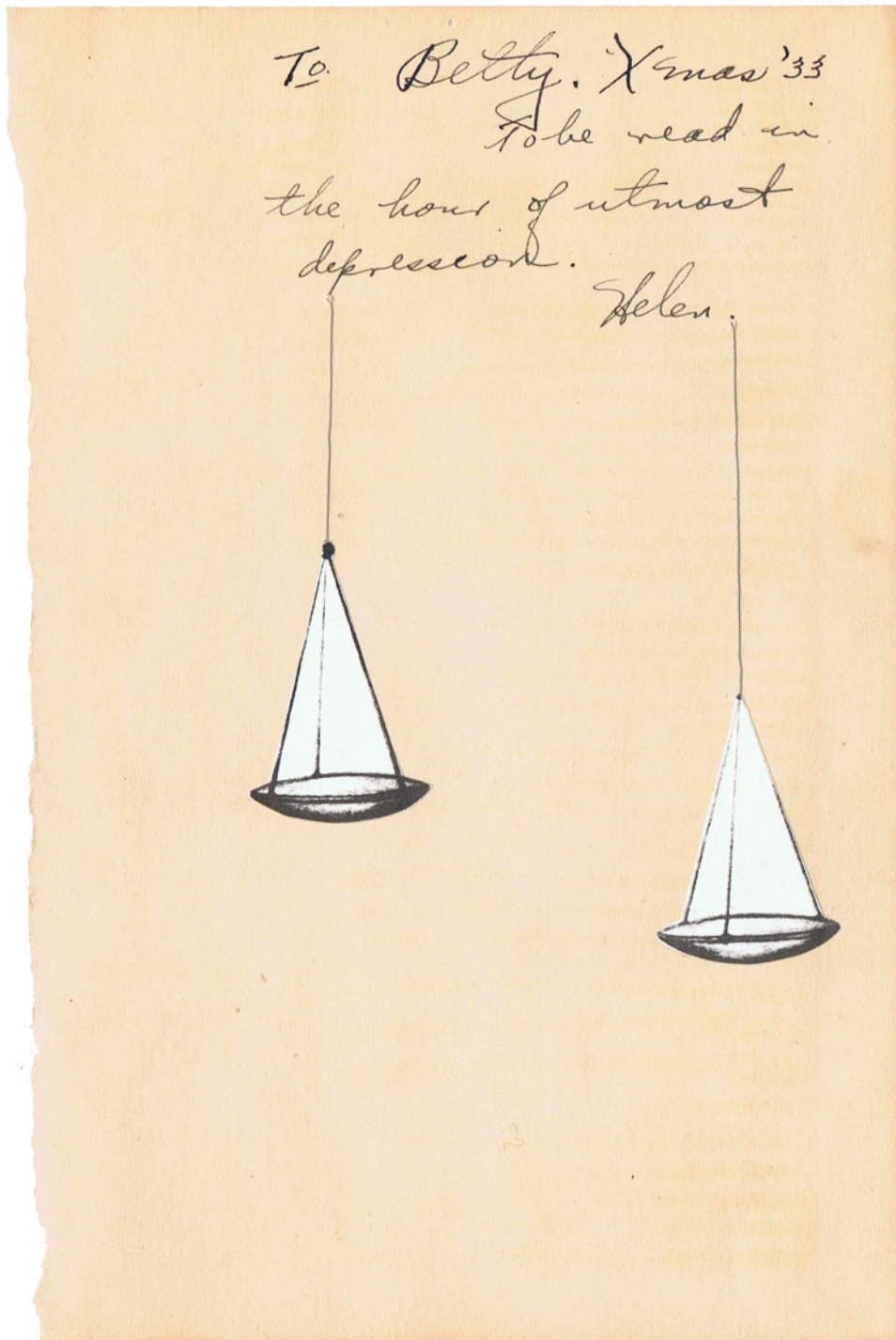
Rachel Smith, Installation Detail, April 15-May 15, 2011



[Figure 5]

Ma and Pa

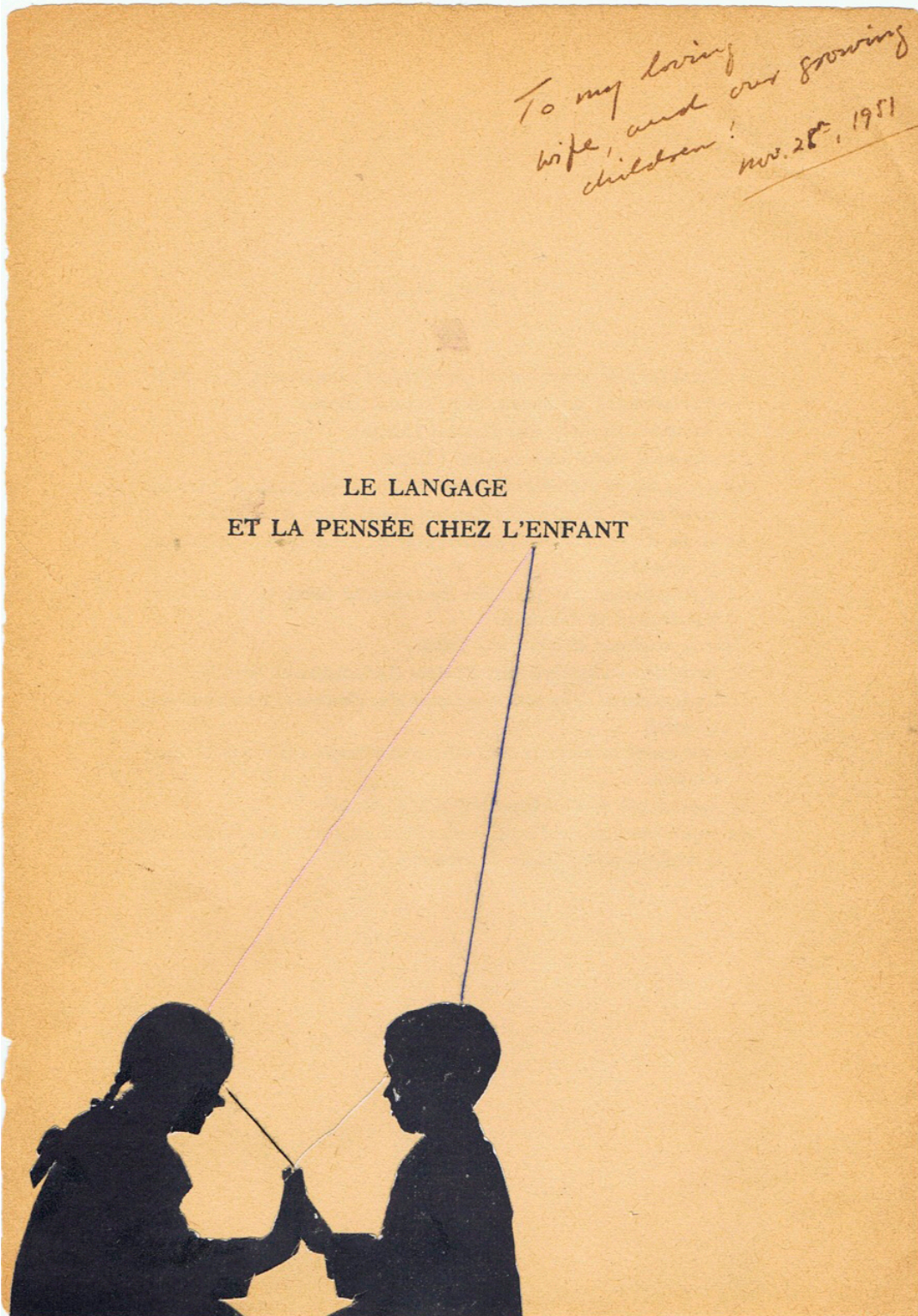
Rachel Smith, Collage, Book Page, 8" x 11", 2011



[Figure 6]

She was Always Down

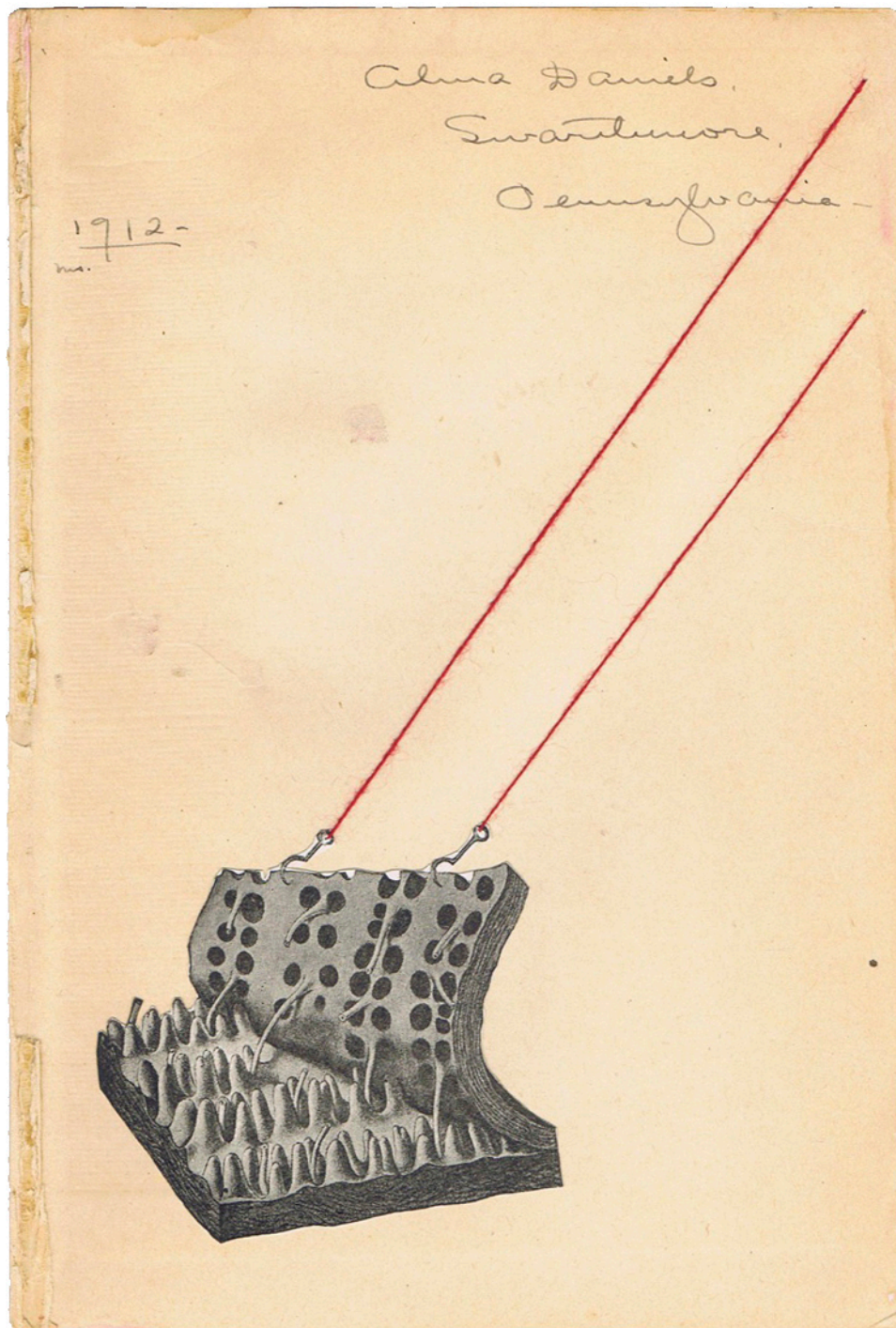
Rachel Smith, Collage, Book Pages, String, 5" x 7 1/2", 2011



[Figure 7]

Child's Play

Rachel Smith, Collage, Book Pages, String, 6" x 8 1/2", 2011



[Figure 8]

Skinned

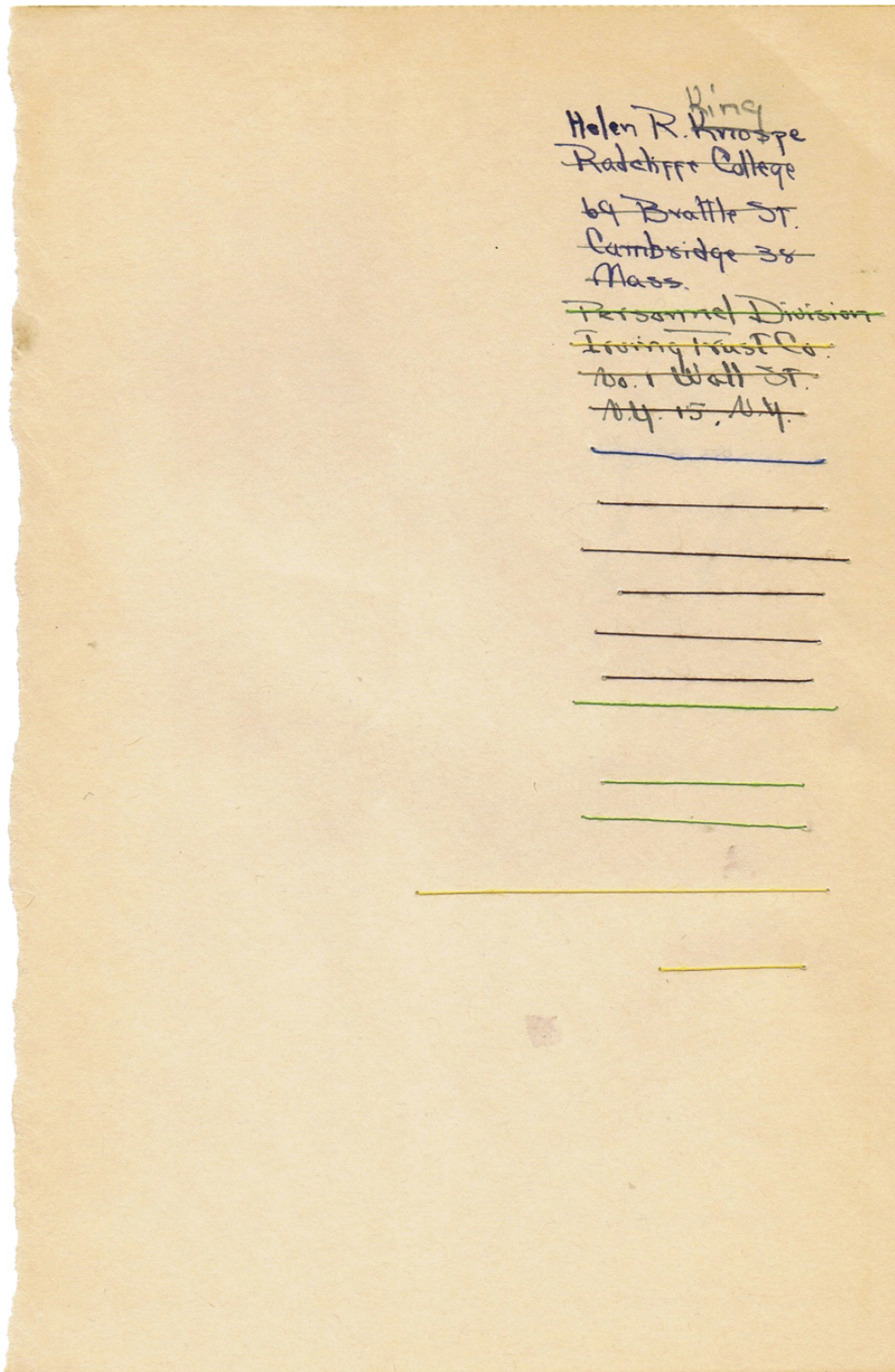
Rachel Smith, Collage, String, Book Page, 5" x 7", 2010



[Figure 9]

Once Important

Rachel Smith, Collage, 3 ½ x 3 ½, 2010



^{ding}
Helen R. Krospe
Radcliffe College
64 Brattle St.
Cambridge 38
Mass.

~~Personnel Division~~
~~Troring Trust Co.~~
~~No. 1 Wall St.~~
~~N.Y. 15, N.Y.~~

[Figure 10]

414 S. Main St, Moscow, ID 83843

Rachel Smith, Collage, String, Book Page, 6" x 9", 2011

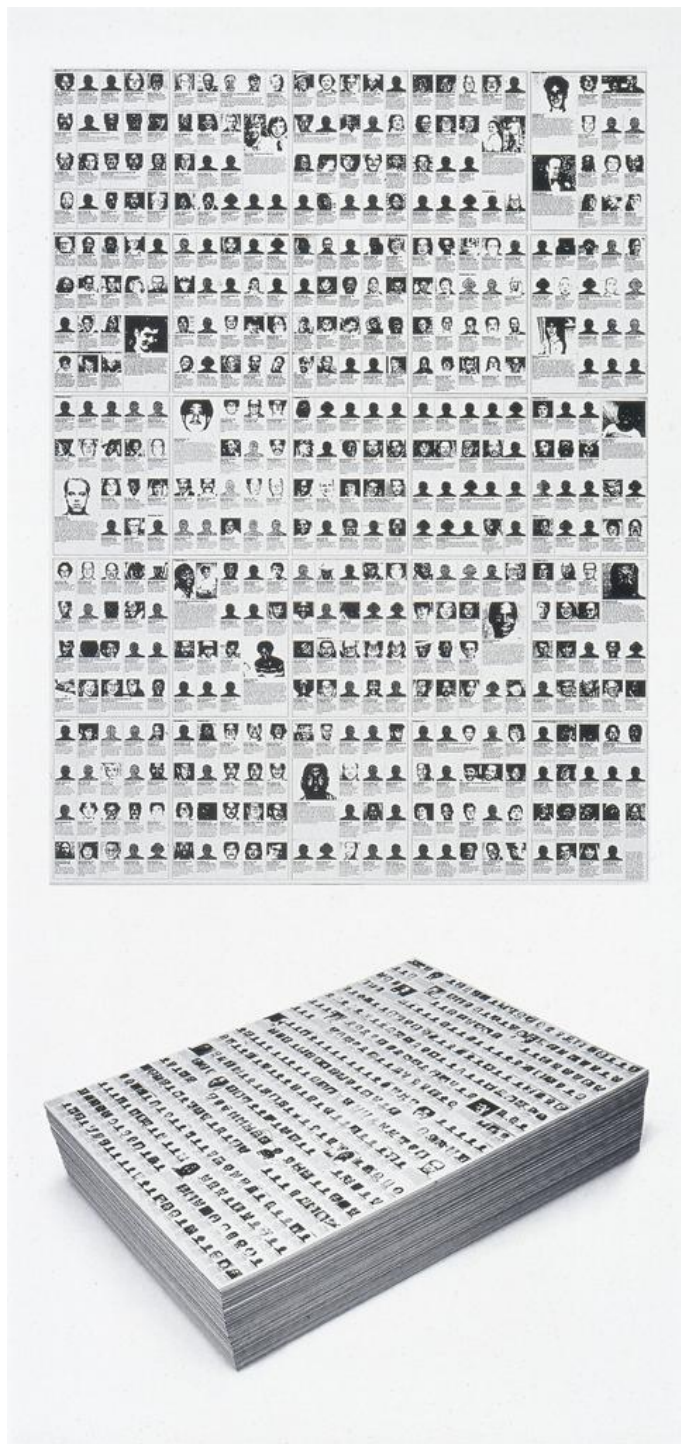


[Figure 11]

Untitled (Revenge)

Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Light-blue candies individually wrapped in cellophane

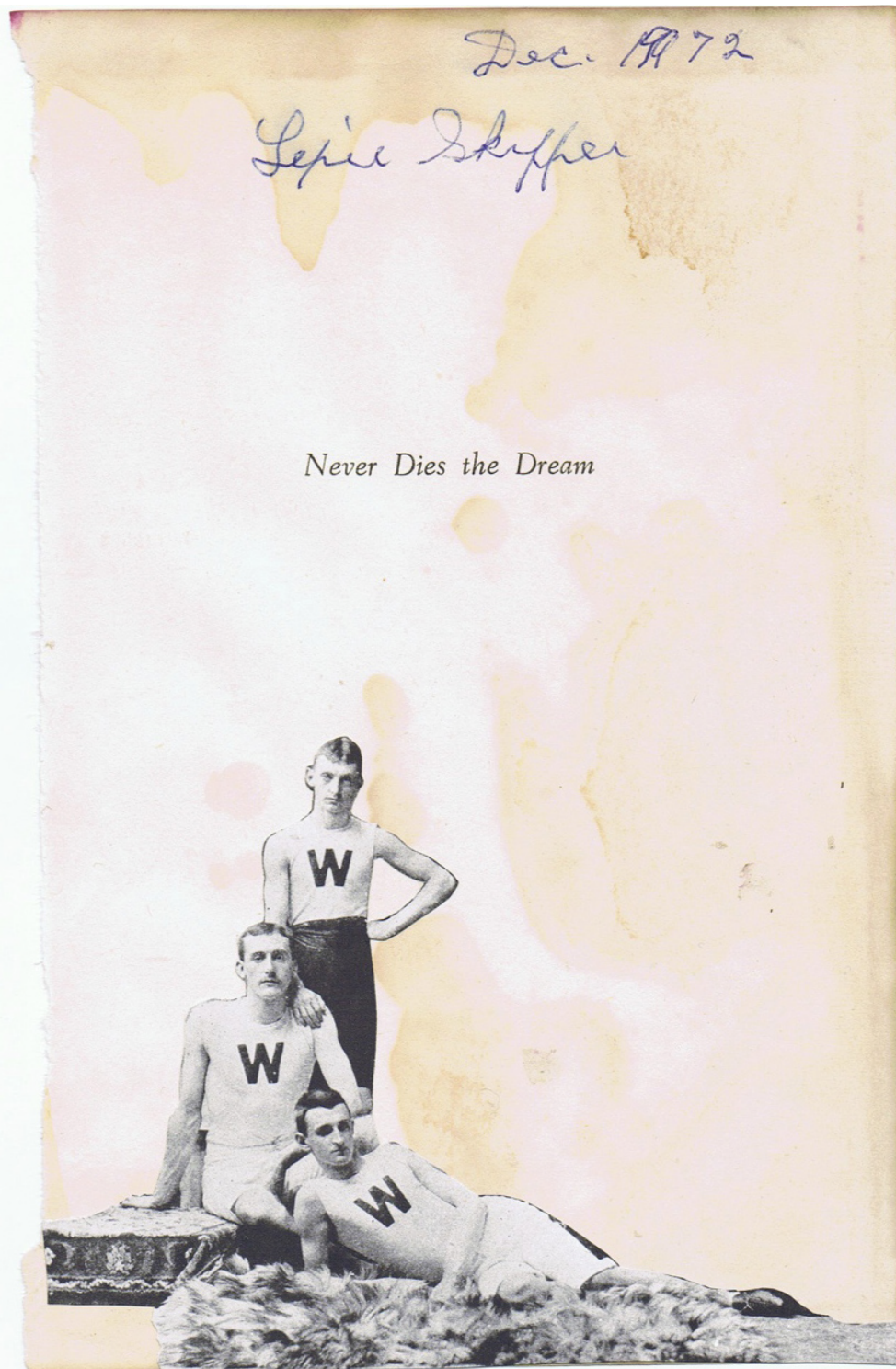
Overall Dimension Varies with Installation, 1991
(Gonzalez-Torres, *Untitled (Revenge)* 1991)



[Figure 12]

Untitled (Death by Gun)

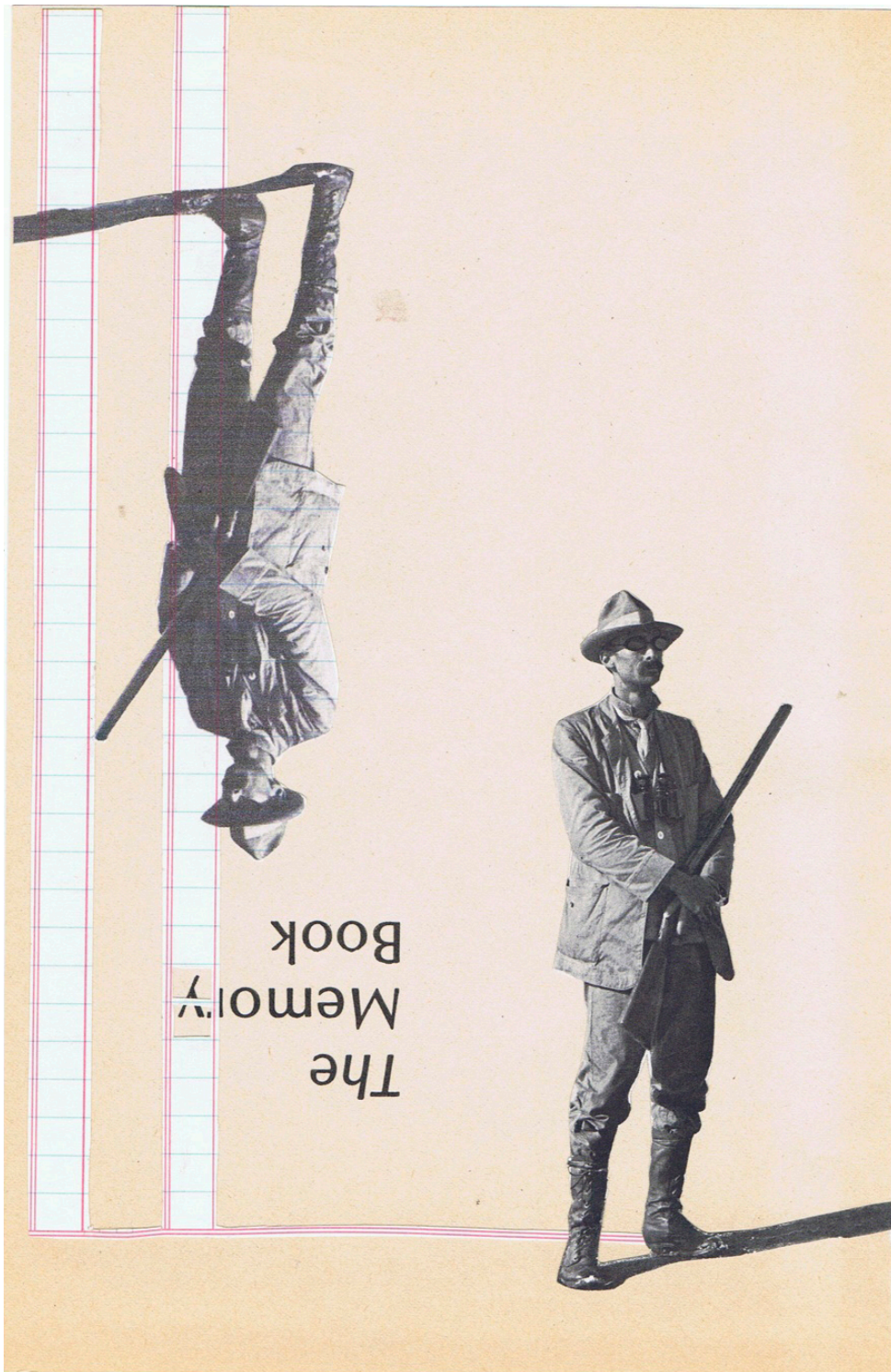
Felix Gonzalez-Torres, *Nine-Inch Stack of Photolithographs*, 1990



[Figure 13]

Identity Struggle

Rachel Smith, Collage, Book Page, 5" x 8 1/2", 2011



[Figure 14]

Rite of Passage

Rachel Smith, Collage, Book Pages, 6" x 9", 2011



[Figure 15]

Untitled Film Still #3

Cindy Sherman, Black and White Photograph, 8"x10", 1979



[Figure 16]

Untitled Film Still #35

Cindy Sherman, Black and White Photograph, 10"x8", 1979



[Figure 17]

Afrylic (Left), eXelento (Center), POMP-BANG (Right)

Ellen Gallagher, Installation Shot, 2003-2004



[Figure 18]

DeLuxe

Ellen Gallagher, Installation View, Each print: 13"x10", 2004-2005



[Figure 19]

Wiglette (detail) from DeLuxe

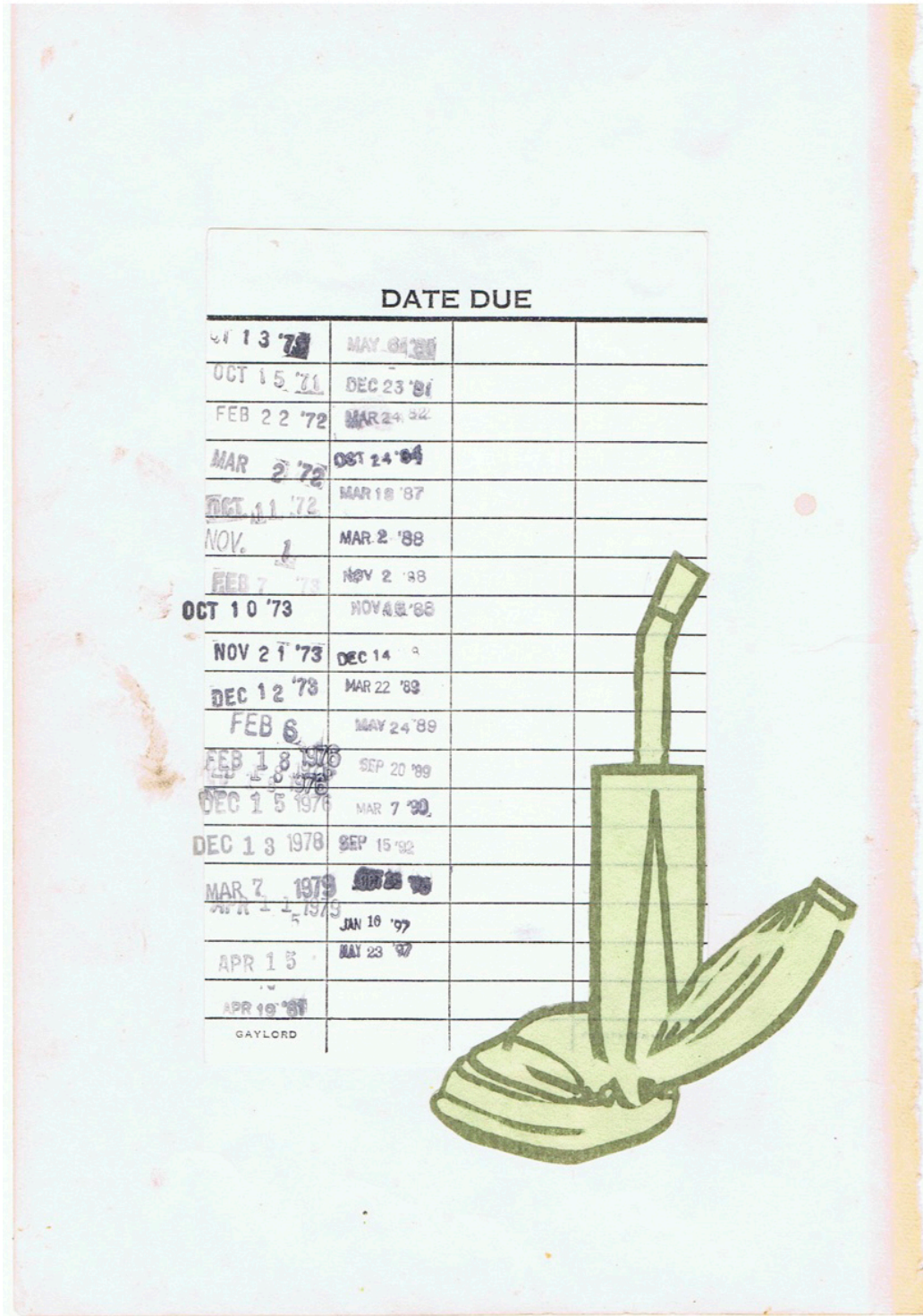
Ellen Gallagher, 13" x 11", 2004-2005



[Figure 20]

Detail from DeLuxe

Ellen Gallagher, Installation View, 2004-2005



[Figure 21]

What's a Home Without a Hoover?

Rachel Smith, Collage, Book Pages, 5 1/2" x 8", 2010

Bibliography

- Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2004.
- Austin, Linda M. *Nostalgia in Transition 1780-1917*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007.
- Baudrillard, Jean. *The System of Objects*. Translated by James Benedict. London, UK: Verso, 1996.
- Baynton, Douglas C. "Disability and the Justification of Inequality in American History." In *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, edited by Paul Longmore and Lauri Umansky. New York, New York: New York University Press, 2001.
- Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. London, UK: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- . *The Creative Mind*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1946.
- . *Time and Free Will*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publication, Inc, 2001.
- Boym, Svetlana. *The Future of Nostalgia*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 2001.
- Dika, Vera. *Recycled Culture in Contemporary Art and Film: The Uses of Nostalgia*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Ferguson, Russell. "Authority Figure." In *Feliz Gonzalez-Torres*, edited by Julie Ault, 81-104. NY: Steidl/gandgin, 2006.
- Gallagher, Ellen. "Afrylic, eXelento, POMP-BANG." Gagosian Gallery. PBS. New York, NY, 2003-2004.
- Gallagher, Ellen. *DeLuxe*. Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, 2004-2005.
- Gallagher, Ellen. *Detail from DeLuxe*. Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, 2004-2005.
- Gallagher, Ellen. *Wiglette (detail) from DeLuxe*. Whitney Museum of American Art, NY, 2004-2005.
- Gonzalez-Torres, Felix. "Untitled (Death by Gun)." Museum of Modern Art . *ARTstor*. New York , NY, 1990.
- Gonzalez-Torres, Felix. *Untitled (Revenge)*. Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York, NY, 1991.
- Heartney, Eleanor, Helaine Posner, Nancy Princenthal, and Sue Scott. *After the Revolution: Women Who Transformed Contemporary Art*. New York, NY: Prestel Publishing Ltd., 2007.

- Hofer, Johannes. "Mideical Dissertation on Nostalgia." Edited by Carolyn Kisser Anspach. *Bulletin of the Institute of the History of Medicine* (The Johns Hopkins Press), August 1934: 376-391.
- Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press, 1984.
- Schapiro, Miriam. "Project Womanhouse." *Art Journal* (College Art Association) 31, no. 3 (1972): 268-270.
- Sherman, Cindy. "Untitled Film Still #3." University of California. *ARTstor*. San Diego, CA, 1979.
- Sherman, Cindy. "Untitled Film Still #35." University of California. *ARTstor*. San Diego, CA, 1979.
- Smith, Kimberly K. "Mere Nostalgia: Notes on a progressive Paratheory." *Rhetoric and Public Affair* 3, no. 4 (2000): 505-537.
- Sprengnether, Madelon. *The Spectral Mother*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Storr, Robert. "When This You See Remember Me." In *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*, edited by Julie Ault, 5-39. NY: Steidl, 2006.
- Tallman, Susan. "The Ethos of the Editions: The Stacks of Felix Gonzalez-Torres." *Arts Magazine* 66, no. 1 (September 1991): 12-13.
- Watley, Simon. "In Purgatory: The Work of Felix Gonzalez-Torres." *Parkett*, 1994 March: 38-57.
- Whitford, Margaret. *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine*. London, England: Routledge, 1991.