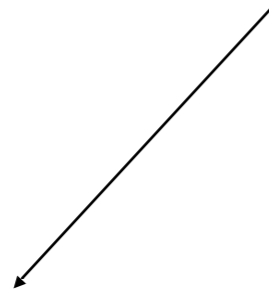
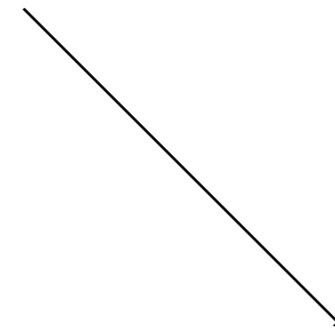


what do
~~you want?~~

PICTURES



**expression of the
artist's desire**



**mechanism for eliciting
the desires of the
beholder**

subjectivizing of images -

- as primitive or childish in their traditional forms (the worship of material objects; the treating of inanimate objects like dolls as if they were alive)
- as pathological symptoms in their modern manifestations (fetishism, either of commodities or of neurotic perversion).



investigation into the desire of the abject or downcast other

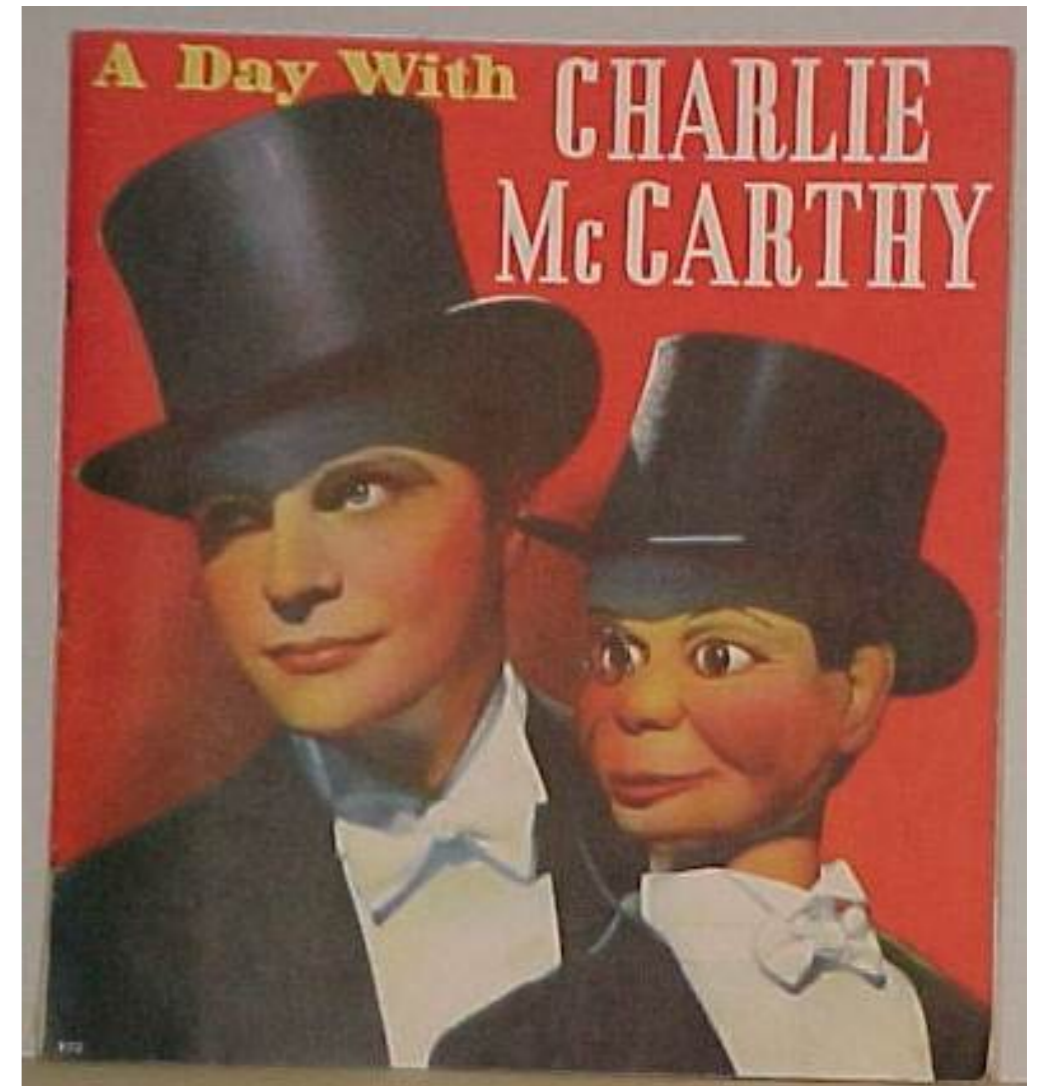
- "What does the
black man want?"



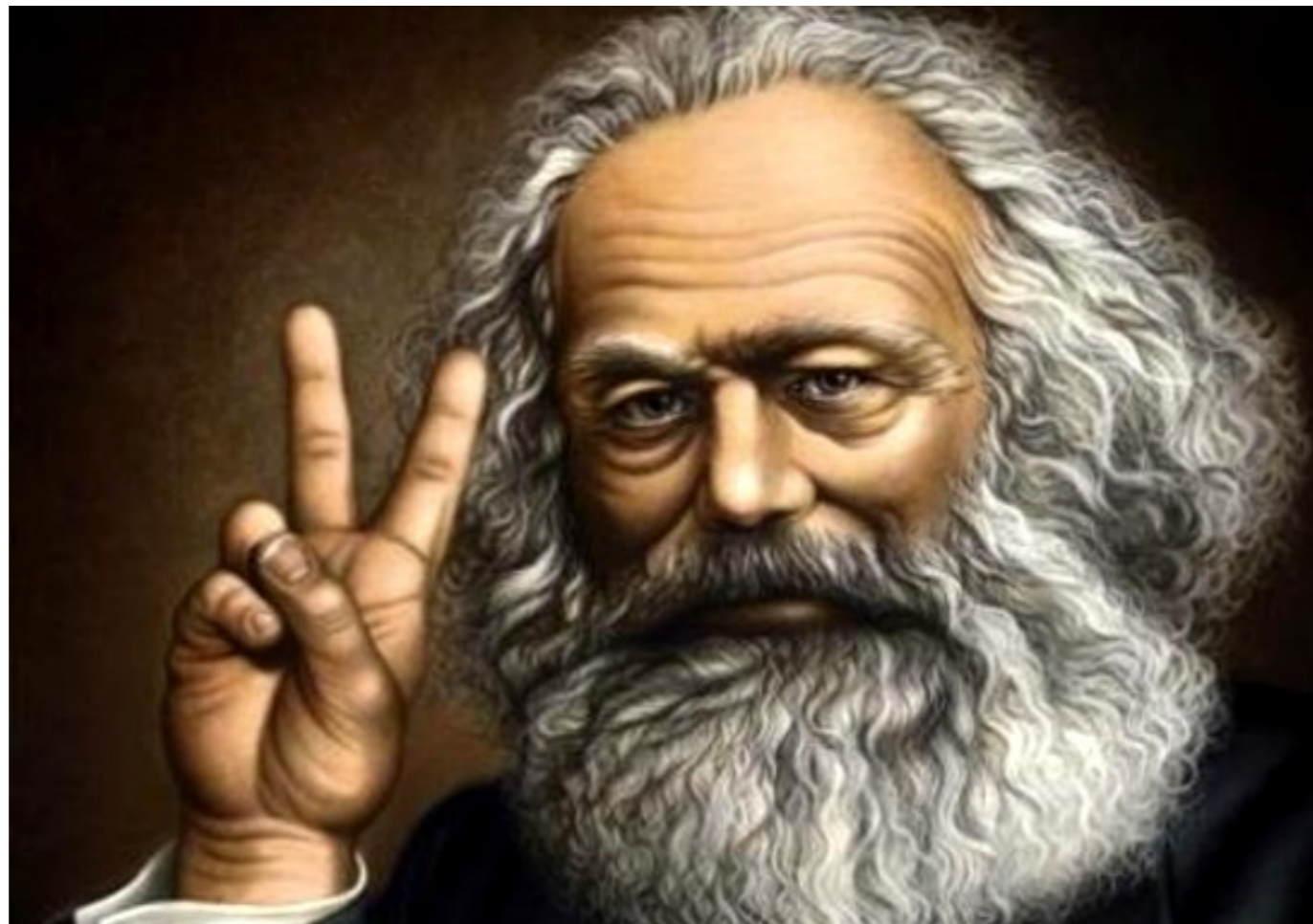
- "What do women
want?"



It is hard to imagine how pictures might do the same, or how any inquiry of this sort could be more than a kind of disingenuous or (at best) unconscious ventriloquism, as if Edgar Bergen were to ask Charlie McCarthy, "What do puppets want?"



I'm encouraged in this by the precedents of Marx and Freud, who both felt a modern science of the social and the psychological had to deal with the issue of fetishism and animism, the subjectivity of objects, the personhood of things....
...Marx and Freud are better treated as guides to the understanding of this symptom, and perhaps to some transformation of it into less pathological, damaging forms.



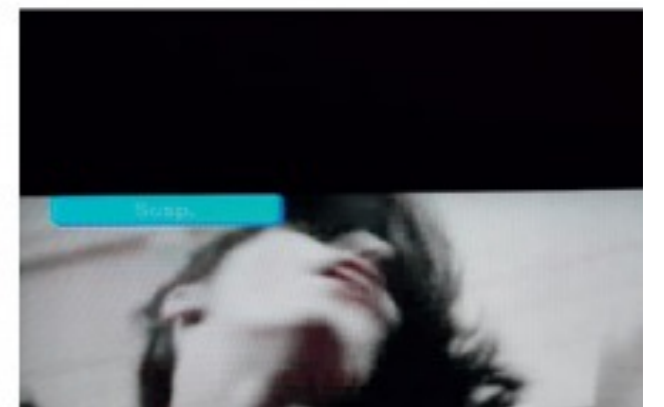
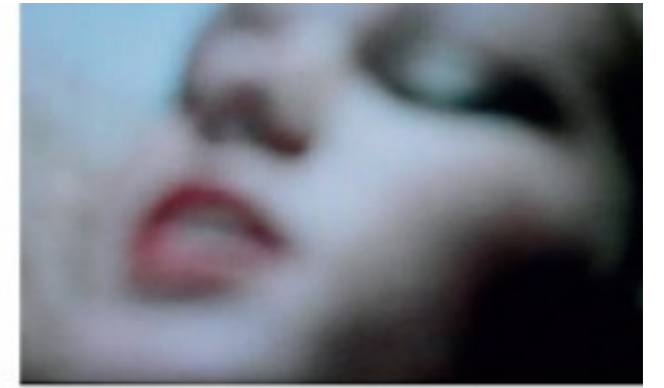
No modern, rational, secular person thinks that pictures are to be treated like persons, but we always seem to be willing to make exceptions for special case



... can say that "image is everything" and be understood as speaking not only about images, but for images, as someone who is himself seen as "nothing but an image."



Catherine MacKinnon
that pornography is
not just a
representation of
violence toward and
degradation of
women, but an act of
violent degradation...



...the unlettered masses are manipulated by the images of visual media and popular culture; that people of color are subject to graphic stereotypes and racist visual discrimination...



Pictures are a popular political antagonist because one can take a tough stand on them and yet, at the end of the day, everything remains pretty much the same

In short, I think it may be time to rein in our notions of the political stakes in a critique of visual culture and to scale down the rhetoric of the “power of images.” Images are certainly not powerless, but they may be a lot weaker than we think. The problem is to refine and complicate our estimate of their power and the way it works. That is why I shift the question from what pictures *do* to what they *want*, from power to desire, from the model of the dominant power to be opposed, to the model of the subaltern to be interrogated or (better) to be invited to speak. If the power of images is like the power of the weak, that may be why their desire is correspondingly strong, to make up for their actual impotence. We as critics may want pictures to be stronger than they actually are in order to give ourselves a sense of power in opposing, exposing, or praising them.

Fanon: "corporeal malediction"

"abomination" and "adoration."

What is it that women most desire?

- The right answer turns out to be "maistrye," a complex Middle English term that equivocates between "mastery" by right or consent, and the power that goes with superior strength or cunning.

What is the moral for pictures?

- But above all they would want a kind of mastery over the beholder
- the Medusa effect
- The power they want is manifested as lack, not as possession



WALTER DUNTON/FLAGG

**I WANT YOU
FOR U.S. ARMY**

NEAREST RECRUITING STATION



WARNER BROS present

A MASTER PICTURE



AL JOLSON

THE GREATEST ENTERTAINER ON THE STAGE!
NOW! GREATEST ENTERTAINER ON THE SCREEN!

in **"The JAZZ SINGER"**

A STORY OF MELODY AND LOVE
THE MOST EMOTIONAL MASTERPIECE
THE SCREEN HAS EVER KNOWN



EXCLUSIVELY CONTROLLED BY AUSTRALASIAN FILMS LTD - W.A. GIBSON GENERAL MANAGER
DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT N.Z. BY AUSTRALASIAN FILMS (N.Z.) LTD.

ROTARY PRESS LTD, LITHO 190a Sussex St. SYDNEY



