

Chicago Surrealism, Herbert Marcuse, and the Affirmation of the Present and Future Viability of Surrealism'

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Writing in 2008 about the student and worker uprisings in France that took place forty years earlier, the Surrealism scholar Don Lacoss stated: “Herbert Marcuse more than once observed that May ’68 brought together André Breton and Karl Marx.”¹ Although several scholarly inquiries have emerged over the past few decades documenting ways in which Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin reflected deeply on the role of Surrealism in twentieth century culture, the field of Surrealism Studies has not extensively investigated the continuation and augmentation of this Frankfurt School tradition with their contemporary, the German philosopher Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979). While the reason for this dearth of commentary is in itself significant, the aim of this essay is to revisit and reconsider the epistolary exchange between Franklin Rosemont and other members of the Chicago Surrealist group with Marcuse, which took place over the course of the 1970s and has never been published in its entirety. Chicago Surrealism, one of several interconnected geographic centers of American Surrealism, was founded as an official group of the Surrealist International in 1966 by a group of recent graduates and dropouts of Roosevelt University, and retains active members to date. Some of its participants started publishing the far-Left underground press publication, *The Rebel Worker*, in 1964, and solidified surrealist ties thereafter through extended meetings with Paris Surrealists in the spring of 1966—a transatlantic rapport that persisted between members in subsequent decades.

My analysis investigates archival, oral and primary sources in order to establish a detailed historical overview of the events surrounding the acquaintance of Chicago Surrealists with Marcuse in 1971, since no secondary record yet exists. This essay also provides the first historical analysis, and a necessarily preliminary one given the brevity of the essay format, of the full extent of their intermittent

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correspondence over the final eight years of the philosopher's life. Marcuse's last letter to Franklin Rosemont was dated March 2, 1979, just shy of five months before the philosopher's death. Previous publications have only reprinted Marcuse's letters up to March 6, 1973, but Marcuse sent Rosemont five additional letters between August 6, 1973 and March 2, 1979.² These materials are accessible in the Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers at the Labadie Archives of the University of Michigan Library. Although these letters from Marcuse are short, collegial notes of interest in Chicago Surrealist activities, I argue that their contents are significant, demonstrating the lasting and comradely nature of this correspondence. The letters sent by Franklin Rosemont between 1971 and 1979, and also the extended remarks by Rosemont and former Chicago Surrealists David Schanoes and John Simmons (in response to Marcuse's October 1972 statement about Surrealism), remain unpublished despite their importance for the understanding of the full scope of this historic exchange. Therefore, the focus in my essay is upon the significance of this episode for the Chicago branch of American Surrealism during the 1970s and the significance it has for Surrealism Studies at large.

In this regard my discussion undertakes an extended consideration of what Franklin Rosemont termed the question of Surrealism's "present and future viability" in the process of cultural and political revolution. In light of this archival material and the more complete chronology of historical events made possible by it, I contend that the important exchange between Marcuse and the Chicago Surrealists was one of lasting mutual affinity and influence, through which Marcuse continued to shape his opinion of Surrealism's vital and ongoing role in the process of revolution, both in connection to and independent of New Left counterculture. By examining this historical episode of mutual influence established almost entirely through the post, crucial insights can be gained about the significance of aspects of post-World War II Surrealism for ongoing discourses of critical theory as well as certain facets of the broader international counterculture at this time. An analysis of the full extent of the Chicago Surrealist exchange with Marcuse arguably demonstrates that Marcuse understood Surrealism as a thriving subculture rather than a refashioned neo-avant-garde. Primary documents reveal that, by the end of his life at least, Marcuse thought that Surrealism had not been entirely co-opted by the culture industry, but unmistakably retained explosive potential for radical sociocultural rupture in the service of future revolt. In turn, certain core members of the Chicago Surrealist group held fast to their admiration of Marcuse and the role that Surrealism played in his theory, declaring their ongoing solidarity with his overall aims.

Herbert Marcuse and the Chicago Surrealists at The Second Telos International Conference, 1971

By the end of the 1970s, the Chicago Surrealists were prepared to interface

extensively with radical facets of the American Left and certain aspects of the broad swath of American counterculture beyond the boundaries of their home turf and outside surrealist tendencies. Sources of theory were diverse: the Chicago Surrealists avidly read studies by Marcuse, Malcolm X, Paul Lafargue, Frantz Fanon, and early twentieth-century IWW sabotage theorists. The Chicago Surrealist network was substantially expansive; they established contact with groups such as the San Francisco Diggers, the Yippies, and the Dutch Provos. Correspondence with underground American journals sympathetic to or involved in Surrealism was maintained, such as *Resurgence* and *Black Mask*, and the latter's subsequent collective incarnation, *Up Against the Wall Motherfucker*. By 1967, the Chicago group also began to branch out to less-surrealist corners of the American New Left through increased involvement with the SDS and SDS journals such as *Radical America*.³ As seen in the case of the Chicago Surrealist interaction with the community around the journal *Telos* in 1971, these interactions often resulted in fractious disagreements regarding politics, tactics, goals, and rhetoric—especially when tensions arose regarding the New Left's affiliation to thinkers with roots in the so-called “Old Left,” such as György Lukács and Herbert Marcuse. Here we can keep in mind Don LaCoss's point that Chicago Surrealists did not think the New Left was responsible for the revitalized revolutionary movement of the late sixties.⁴ In many ways, the Chicago group looked to pre-war examples of radicalism for their models of insurgency.

Their meeting with Marcuse at “The Second *Telos* International Conference” in 1971 is one important encapsulation of the Chicago Surrealist approach to the New Left through expressions of solidarity with pre-war Leftist foundations. After spending an extraordinarily productive winter, spring and summer in Paris in 1965 and '66, meeting much of the French surrealist group as well as members of the Situationist International, the Rosemonts returned to Chicago and contributed to the last issue of *The Rebel Worker*, number 7. In 1967 at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Paul Buhle, who was pursuing a doctorate at the time, cofounded the syndicalist, SDS-affiliated journal *Radical America*, which would continue publication for the next thirty years. Buhle was influenced by *The Rebel Worker* before commencing his eclectically Marxist *Radical America*, and he and Franklin Rosemont began corresponding during the second half of the 1960s.⁵ The first issue of volume 4 of *Radical America* (January 1970) was a special issue guest edited by the Rosemonts, “Surrealism in the Service of the Revolution,” featuring a number of Chicago-based and international Surrealists.

Buhle was in contact with Paul Piccone, a doctoral candidate in philosophy at the State University of New York at Buffalo and the founding editor of the radical journal *Telos*. Thanks in part to these connections, the Rosemonts and their friends were invited to speak at the Second *Telos* International Conference, held in mid-November of 1971 at SUNY Buffalo.⁶ *Telos* was founded as a philosophy and critical

theory journal in May of 1968 and was deeply indebted to both Marxist Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School and Structuralism. Buhle, Piccone, and the *Telos* group began collaborating, starting with the November 1969 issue of *Radical America*. Focused on the subject of youth culture, the issue was guest edited by Piccone and *Telos* affiliates, who called themselves the “Buffalo collective.” In a page devoted to advertising *Telos* in the guest-edited *Radical America* issue, the *Telos* mission statement reads as follows: “*Telos* is a philosophical journal definitely outside the mainstream of American thought. It is meant to counter the sterile trivia and nonsense which nowadays passes for philosophy and whose hidden function is to stultify critical thinking.”⁷

The fourth issue of *Telos*, published in the fall of 1969, opened with a translation of Marcuse’s Heidegger-era “Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism” (1928). Other essays by Marcuse followed in subsequent issues.⁸ The *Telos* guest-edited issue of *Radical America*, published just before the Chicago Surrealist issue, was replete with reference after reference to Marcuse’s vast bibliography—but not without critique from his New Left admirers. For instance, Paul Piccone’s essay “From Youth Culture to Political Praxis,” while full of praise for Marcuse—and brimming with spite for Theodore Roszak’s concept of counterculture—took issue with Marcuse’s pessimism in *One-Dimensional Man* about the possibility for resistance in the face of bureaucratized oppression in late capitalism.⁹

Notably, in 1970 the first issue of Chicago Surrealism’s journal *Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion* ran an advertisement for *Telos*.¹⁰ At that point, affinities between the two groups were obvious. *Telos* 5 and 6 from Spring and Fall of 1970 featured articles on Lenin by the Marxist Humanist philosopher, much admired by the Chicagoans, Raya Dunayevskaya. However, by the time the second *Telos* conference took place in late autumn of 1971, Chicago Surrealist sentiments had changed dramatically and a newly sectarian attitude toward the Buffalo circle had emerged. Even before that, Piccone and his editorial board were well aware of the presence of the Chicago Surrealists, given the group’s searing attack on *Telos* in their printed pamphlet, *In Memory of Georg Lukacs [sic]* (1971). In a statement signed by Paul Garon, the Rosemonts, Schanoes, Stephen Schwartz, Simmons, and others, *Telos* is condemned for its tribute to the Hungarian Marxist philosopher, who had died in June, and György Lukács is excoriated by the Surrealists in light of his accommodation of Stalinism.¹¹ Despite this offensive, in mid-October, Piccone reached out to the Chicago group to explain the critical views about Lukács actually held by the *Telos* editors.¹² He also issued a collegial, if expletive-ridden, invitation to attend the summit in Buffalo the following month, offering them plane tickets and free housing.¹³

Marcuse, then at the height of his significance for the American New Left through his ties to activists such as Angela Davis, was the most famous speaker at the

second *Telos* conference.¹⁴ The *Telos* summit pronounced political organization as its overarching topic and advertised itself as follows: “Without question, the problem of organization is very urgent: the whole future of the American New Left depends on it. This conference will attempt to bring together an international group of activists, organizers and scholars interested in this issue.”¹⁵ Each of the four days of the conference was devoted to one of the following topics: “grass roots organization,” “party structures,” “totalization and intermediations,” and “bureaucracy and postrevolutionary problems.”¹⁶ Franklin and Penelope Rosemont and Chicago Surrealist members Schanoes and Simmons drove from Chicago, the men wearing suits as a form of satirical protest against the hippie fashion of the day.¹⁷

Franklin Rosemont and Schanoes gave their papers on the same well-attended panel during the first morning of the conference, right after Piccone’s opening remarks. Rosemont’s paper, “Surrealist Point of Departure,” fused the poetic play of the surrealist revolution with a global worker’s revolution. At 9:30 p.m. that Thursday night, Schanoes represented the Chicago group on a joint panel devoted to “The Function of Radical Media” with members from other alternative media publications: *Telos*, *Radical America*, *Socialist Revolution*, and *Les Temps Modernes*. Simmons presented his lecture, “Surrealism and Psychoanalysis,” on Saturday, the same day that Marcuse spoke.¹⁸ The group also distributed the papers by Rosemont, Schanoes, and Simmons in the form of a pamphlet called *Surrealist Intervention: Papers Presented by the Surrealist Group at the Second International Telos Conference* (Black Swan Press, 1971), with a drawing by Guy Ducornet on the back cover and a series of collages throughout the text.¹⁹ Rosemont, Simmons, and Schanoes all payed homage to Marcuse in their *Telos* papers, with Rosemont quoting from *Reason and Revolution* (1968) and *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (1968), Simmons leaning heavily on *Eros and Civilization*, and Schanoes invoking Marcuse at large in order to combat Maoists, Stalinists, and other authoritarian neo-Marxists. By the late sixties, Marcuse was already a comrade in the eyes of the Chicago Surrealists. He had recently testified in the American popular press to the historical justification of Surrealism in the student and worker uprising in Paris in May 1968. Answering his *New York Times Magazine* interlocutor, Marcuse asserted that the uprising’s graffiti was the most interesting aspect of the event. He continued, “[T]he coming together of Karl Marx and André Breton. Imagination in power: that is truly revolutionary.”²⁰

Despite perceived differences with the conference hosts and other conference participants—such as Murray Bookchin, who openly criticized the papers by the Surrealists during his session—the Chicagoans had hoped their attendance would facilitate the pooling of resources with other factions of the New Left. Their goals in attending the conference, beyond this projected cooperation, were to affirm the “leading role of the working class” in the United States for the revolution, as well as the “crucial strategic significance” of the point of production in the struggle; to promote a surrealist revolution.²¹ Other outcomes also proved beneficial. Nearly two

hundred copies of the *Surrealist Intervention* pamphlet and half as many of the Lukács invective were sold at the conference. The presentation by representatives of the Italian workers' movement, Lotta Continua, and a subsequent discussion of anarcho-syndicalism were also of much interest for the Chicagoans.²² Most importantly, a friendship with their new correspondent Herbert Marcuse had been cemented.

Franklin Rosemont had first written to Marcuse some months in advance of the *Telos* conference in 1971 and again that October.²³ Marcuse replied and the two made tentative plans to meet at the Buffalo event.²⁴ Rosemont's initial dispatch, typed on *Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion* letterhead, included his volume of poems *Morning of a Machine Gun*, his letter in defense of Marcuse and Freud to the editor of *New Politics* from the spring of 1970, and Penelope Rosemont's poetry chapbook *Athamor* (1970). A second letter, sent a few months later, included two examples of Chicago Surrealist statements published by the group: the broadside "The Anteater's Umbrella: A Contribution to the Critique of the Ideology of Zoos" from August of 1971 and the leaflet "Toward the Second Chicago Fire: Surrealism and the Housing Question" from September of 1971, which was printed for the centennial of the Great Chicago Fire. The "Fire" pamphlet is indeed an incendiary text. It condemns modernist architecture in Chicago by Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and the "monarchist by pretension" and "swine by profession" Frank Lloyd Wright and calls ironically for "insurrectionary arson" to create a Second Chicago Fire in order to clean the slate.²⁵ The "Zoo" broadside was a Fourierist condemnation of the "performative slavery" of the "zoological bastille."²⁶ Marcuse was enthusiastic about both of these American surrealist publications, and in his first letter to Franklin Rosemont, he writes, "It is somehow comforting to see how much our lines of thought converge. I hope you will recognize much of your animal leaflet in my new book."²⁷

After the *Telos* summit, Rosemont corresponded frequently with Marcuse for about a year and a half, just before the publication of Marcuse's *Counterrevolution and Revolt* in 1972, and then less frequently for most of the 1970s until Marcuse's death in 1979. Despite the fact that the Chicago Surrealists only met Marcuse in person during the short duration of the second *Telos* conference, the eight years of collaborative correspondence that followed deepened the friendship to the extent that they were invited by Marcuse's family and the Department of Philosophy at the University of San Diego to attend Marcuse's memorial service on campus. They were also asked to submit words in memoriam.²⁸ More than an epistolary relationship, however, their interaction fostered a unique situation of mutual influence. Disagreements over Marcuse's long statement about Surrealism sent to the group in an early letter polarized the Chicago Surrealists, eventually contributing to a group rupture in 1973, and the departure of Simmons, Schanoes, and April Zuckerman. All members of the Chicago group took issue with Marcuse's tendency to discount the present-day revolutionary possibilities of the working class and his presumption

of the all-encompassing sway of the culture industry. However, against the opinions of Schanoes and Simmons, who fully discredited Marcuse's views on Surrealism, the Rosemonts and Paul Garon held that, despite their differences with the philosopher, his confidence in the relevance of Surrealism for ongoing revolution secured his permanent position as a crucial ally and spokesperson for contemporary Surrealism. For Marcuse's part, the dialogue with the Chicago Surrealist group fueled his interest in the complex relationship between art and politics. It also eventually shaped important aspects of his argument about the role of art in revolution in his final book, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics* (1977).

Yet the impact of Chicago Surrealism upon Marcuse appears to have been more immediate. Just a month after meeting with the surrealists in Buffalo, Marcuse made one of his most definitive statements about the revolutionary potential of Surrealism in a lecture for The Van Leer Foundation in Jerusalem in December of 1971:

If the surrealists insisted on the truth value of the dream they meant, beyond all Freudian interpretation, that the images of freedom and fulfillment not yet attained must be present as a regulative idea of reason, as [a] norm of thought and practice in the struggle with necessity—must be present in the reconstruction of society from the beginning. To sustain this dream as against the dreamless society still is the great subversive function of art, whereas the progressive realization of the dream, while preserving the dream, remains the task of the struggle for a better society where all men and women, for the first time and history, live as human beings.²⁹

Marcuse's already-existing preoccupation with Surrealism was augmented in force and focus by the exchange with the Chicago Surrealists. Apart from his early, extended work on Romanticism as a young scholar, Marcuse's resulting meditations on Surrealism during the last decade of his life constituted the most sustained dialogue with a single art movement in his career.

“What is Your Estimate of the Present and Future Viability of Surrealism?”

Herbert Marcuse wrote Franklin Rosemont approximately ten letters between 1971 and 1979. At Rosemont's prompting, two of these contained extended remarks on the question of Surrealism's revolutionary potential.³⁰ Although the surrealist side of the correspondence has received scant scholarly attention, it poses a remarkable opportunity to reassess Surrealism as a type of radical activist art in the twentieth century.³¹ Rosemont wrote the best summary of Marcuse's interest in Surrealism and correspondence with the Chicago group for the fourth and final issue of *Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion* in 1989, entitled “Herbert Marcuse and Surrealism.”³² There, Rosemont muses that perhaps Marcuse recognized affinities with Surrealism

already while writing on Hegel in the early 1930s, the period when Marcuse most likely met Walter Benjamin in Paris or Berlin.³³ For Rosemont, *Eros and Civilization* (1955), with its quotes from Breton, is a proclamation of Marcuse's "surrealist affinities." Rosemont asserts that "at least from May '68 on...Surrealism was central to [Marcuse's] vision of revolutionary social transformation."³⁴ Rosemont calls upon studies such as Jean-Michel Palmier's *Herbert Marcuse et la nouvelle gauche* (1973) and Douglas Kellner's *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism* (1984) to demonstrate how scholars have agreed that Marcuse's concept of the "Great Refusal" was indebted to the theories of André Breton. Rosemont felt Marcuse's *An Essay on Liberation* (1969), with its powerful call for a return to utopian socialism, was the philosopher's most surrealist text. The fact that Marcuse's knowledge of Surrealism was far from complete in the end, according to the Chicago Surrealists, only served for Rosemont as an even deeper confirmation of the fortuitous and rich convergence between Marcuse and Surrealism.³⁵ Marcuse, Rosemont wrote in 1989, "old enough to be our grandfather and whom we loved dearly," was the only member of the Frankfurt School to sustain his confidence in the feasibility of a surrealist revolution.³⁶

The key question that Rosemont posed to Marcuse as the subject of their correspondence was: "*What is your estimate of the present and future viability of Surrealism?*"³⁷ For Marcuse, the young Americans appear to have been a living example of the radicalism of Surrealism and a demonstration of the identity of Surrealism as revolutionary praxis rather than just theory. For the Rosemonts and their friends, Marcuse's call for a "Great Refusal" of capitalism and its repressive way of life bolstered and strengthened their own highly specific position. Marcuse's influence upon the Chicagoans proved even greater than it was for the European Surrealists in the 1960s, who also recognized the compatibility of the philosopher's approach with their own. One of the key reasons that the Chicago Surrealists were so drawn to Marcuse was the fact that he linked the discoveries of psychoanalysis to a Frankfurt School critique of capitalism rooted in a discussion of revolutionary action. In an essay from 2005, Rosemont wrote, "Our interest in psychoanalysis was greatly deepened by Surrealism...It would be no exaggeration to say that we used psychoanalysis just as we used Marxism, anarchism, anthropology and every other instrument of knowledge that came our way: that is, for explicitly surrealist purposes."³⁸

It must be remembered that in the book that made Marcuse internationally famous, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (1964), he describes the full integration of the working class into the capitalist system in the United States and Europe after World War II. For this reason, Marcuse thought that a largely proletarian-driven revolution was no longer feasible. Such integration was a result of capitalism's totalitarian control, its "total mobilization" of humans into the endless propagation of production through recuperative mechanisms such as repressive desublimation, in which gratification is granted to more people through

the cheapened, shallow means of mass consumerism.³⁹ For the Chicago Surrealists, who were as much members of the working class and Wobblies—the popular nickname for IWW members of the Industrial Workers of the World union (IWW; founded 1905)—as they were intellectuals and surrealists, the proletariat had certainly not lost its crucial role in a desired overthrow of technocratic capitalism. This was one point of staunch disagreement that came out in the letters.⁴⁰

Surrealists in France had evinced a predilection for Marcuse since at least the early 1960s and certainly following the 1963 translation into French of *Eros and Civilization*. Given the movement's interest in Hegel, Marcuse's two major books on Hegel's ontology and dialectical theory (from 1932 and 1941) may also have captured surrealist attention, although they were not translated into French until the late 1960s and early 1970s. Marcuse was the main Frankfurt School theorist to have aroused significant collective notice from Surrealists during the 1960s and '70s, while Surrealism was a central preoccupation for Walter Benjamin starting as early as 1926.⁴¹ For the European Surrealists, Marcuse's engagement with Freud—but even more his Fourierist emphasis on eroticism as a revolutionary tool—differentiated him from his German Marxist milieu. In the fifth issue of the surrealist journal *La Brèche*, published in October of 1963, Gérard Legrand cites a short text by Marcuse in his larger discussion of Freud, Norman O. Brown and the concepts of Eros and Thanatos.⁴² In December of 1966, about a year after the closing of the “L'Écart absolu” exhibition at the Galerie de l'Œil in Paris, Michel Pierson interviewed Herbert Marcuse about revolutionary emancipation and oppression in a brief discussion, later printed in the second issue of *L'Archibras* in October of 1967.⁴³ The interview focuses on *Eros and Civilization*, and Marcuse emphasizes to his interlocutor the importance of oppositional, “libertarian aggression” in the form of “counter-intelligence,” “counter-propaganda,” “counter-images,” and “counter-language.”⁴⁴ As a concrete link between French Surrealism and Marcuse, the interview in *L'Archibras* probably took on substantial significance for the *Rebel Worker* group well before they began to correspond with the philosopher in 1971. Already by 1965, Franklin Rosemont urged Nicolas Calas to write an essay about Norman O. Brown and Marcuse for the long-anticipated first issue of *Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion*, which would not appear until five years later, in 1970.⁴⁵

It was during their first trip to Paris in 1966 that the Rosemonts became keenly aware of the French surrealist interest in Marcuse. The 1965–66 “L'Écart absolu” exhibition in Paris took as its title the Fourierist notion of “absolute deviation,” which in itself resonated with Marcuse's call for a “Great Refusal” in *Eros and Civilization*. Marcuse repeated this call in his *One-Dimensional Man*, which was published in 1964 and translated into French in 1968. Over the course of their sojourn, the Rosemonts noted the strong utopian and Marcusean strains of the exhibition's critique of technocracy.⁴⁶ In his aforementioned retrospective essay on Marcuse and Surrealism in the final issue of *Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion* in 1989,

Franklin Rosemont writes that “Marcuse’s all-out assault on the ideology of the ‘consumer society’ in his *One-Dimensional Man* provided part of the theoretical background of...*L’Écart absolu*.”⁴⁷ As if in response, the Rosemonts co-wrote “Situation of Surrealism in the U.S.” that winter while in Paris. It included a tribute to Marcuse and his call for a “non-repressive civilization” in its opening lines.⁴⁸

The influence of a surrealist Marcuse continued to reverberate once the Rosemonts left Paris. Franklin Rosemont retrospectively characterized the fifth issue of *The Rebel Worker*, from March of 1966, as a demonstration of the Marcusean idea of the power of negative thinking, a form of critical dialectics applied to the superstructure, and a deployment of the politics of the pleasure principle as a rebellion against work.⁴⁹ In addition, in a joint publication between the group’s Black Swan Press and Paul Buhle’s SDS-affiliated journal *Radical America*, a pamphlet containing an English translation by Guy Ducornet of the interview that first appeared in *L’Archibras* and Marcuse’s previously unpublished lecture “The Obsolescence of Psychoanalysis” was released in an unauthorized copy in 1968. Marcuse’s lecture had been delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in New York City in September of 1963. The text contends that Freudian psychoanalysis possesses great potential to become a “social and political instrument . . . because Freud had discovered the mechanisms of social and political control in the depth dimension of the instinctual drives and satisfactions.”⁵⁰ This countercriticism of the anti-Freudianism in establishment psychoanalysis after World War II resonated deeply with the Chicago Surrealists.

There was a significant international surrealist interest in Marcuse’s work during the 1960s and ’70s, with the April 1968 “Princip slasti” (Pleasure Principle) exhibition in Brno, Bratislava, and Prague. The exhibition’s important manifesto, “The Platform of Prague,” salutes the Chicago Surrealists and discusses the ramifications of Marcuse’s *principe de rendement*, the performance principle.⁵¹ Although it was the Chicago group that carried out the correspondence with Marcuse throughout the 1970s and received his long statement on the subject of Surrealism in revolution in October 1972 and March 1973, the Paris contacts were the first to publish the fruits of this discussion in French translation in the sixth issue of their journal, *Bulletin de liaison surréaliste*, in April 1973.⁵² The issue also included lengthy responses to the Marcuse statement on Surrealism by Jacques Abeille, Vincent Bounoure, and Robert Guyon, all of whom question Marcuse’s designations of Surrealism as art, and most of all, his assertion that Surrealism had failed in its revolutionary aspirations.⁵³ Perhaps since Marcuse stipulated to Rosemont that his epistolary statements were not meant for publication in any form, Marcuse’s texts did not appear in print in the United States until after his death.⁵⁴ When they finally did emerge in 1989, they were published without the responses penned by Rosemont, Schanoes, and Simmons and sent to Marcuse sometime in the last days of 1972 or early in 1973.

Yet, it was ultimately the Chicago group that maintained the most profound surrealist investment in Marcuse's ideas. Chicago Surrealist artworks, essays, exhibitions, and other manifestations appearing through the 1980s and '90s repeatedly revealed the palpable influence of Marcuse's core idea from the early to mid-1960s: the Great Refusal of the performance principle. Victory over the repressive work ethic would be realized by means that had long attracted the IWW: a minimized working day, the reversal of the division of manual and intellectual labor, a rejection of surplus production, and the total abolition of wage labor. In the radical union of these ideas with Surrealism, the Great Refusal emphasized the revolutionary desire for a life lived under the pleasure principle.⁵⁵

Cat Food Dyed Green

The beginning of 1972 was a busy time for the Chicago Surrealists, with the group travelling to Toronto that February to agitate at the Conference on Madness, following an invitation from the event's organizers.⁵⁶ Correspondence with Marcuse was paused for seven months until Franklin Rosemont reached out at the end of June 1972, asking for the philosopher's opinion of the group's activity and the relevance of Surrealism in the ongoing process of revolution.⁵⁷ While praising Marcuse's earlier books, as well as his *Telos* lecture, Rosemont reiterated points from their conversations in Buffalo, in which the Chicago group had made it clear that they did not agree with Marcuse's view that the current proletarian *Weltanschauung* was no longer revolutionary. Rosemont further stated that he generally disagreed with many aspects of the discussion of art in the just-published *Counterrevolution and Revolt*. Despite these reservations, Franklin continued, "There is no one else, let me say, to whom we could address ourselves in this way; no one else whose response to us would be awaited with such fervent interest... We ask for your comments and criticism only in order that our footsteps will be guided that much more certainly in the direction of human emancipation."⁵⁸

Counterrevolution and Revolt had clarified Marcuse's belief that not only the ontological character but the very existence of art was dialectically related to and dependent upon the continual process of revolt against a potentially imminent state of total barbarism that could emerge even at the height of civilization. Fascism was Marcuse's model for such barbarism. Referencing Antonin Artaud's midcentury call for an art that moves out of the studio and into lived reality, Marcuse states in his essay "Art and Revolution," published in the spring of 1972: "The fate of art remains linked to that of the revolution... it is indeed an internal exigency of art which drives the artist to the streets."⁵⁹ For Marcuse the "end of art" was probable only if civilization reverted to barbarism. In order for art to survive long-term, therefore, the artist needed to subsume art into "radical practice"—although this process was in itself antagonistic to the autonomy of art, an autonomy which in turn prevented art from actively changing reality. The relationship between art and

revolution was therefore a tragic, contradictory, and self-defeating one for Marcuse.

As had been the case in the meeting with Marcuse at the second *Telos* conference, Marcuse's fourteen-page typed response to Rosemont's inquiry about the present and future viability of Surrealism in October of 1972 was a pivotal event in the Chicago group's development, and in the history of Surrealism itself. In his exegesis, Marcuse describes Surrealism's admirable attempt to restore individuality through an art that used alienation as a form of critical negation or refusal—and its inevitably failed attempt to unite art and revolution. He also discusses automatism as a futile attempt to retrieve the inaccessible unconscious.⁶⁰ For Marcuse, no art form could truly be united to the masses and their desire for freedom until the entire capitalist sphere came to an end in a postrevolutionary society where art and life would be harmoniously fused. He thought Surrealism, like all other attempts at a desublimating revolutionary art, was doomed in the end to fail when it came to actually stimulating the revolution and dealing with the requisite practicalities.

Marcuse claims that authentic art cannot be instrumentalized into hybrid aesthetic propaganda, a point which is underlined by his reminder to the Chicago group that French Surrealism itself refused to submit to the bureaucratic demands of the revolution under the Parti communiste français.⁶¹ Even so, Marcuse's text argues that Surrealism's uncompromising autonomy and purity of critical negation offered society a crucial, if fleeting, glimpse of what freedom might embody and so contributed to the development of a prerevolutionary consciousness and an intuitive social drive for resistance.⁶² As he claimed in *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, the "political potential of art" is "blocked by an *unsolved contradiction*:" How does "*praxis*" link with art's "*internal subversive force*"?⁶³

Arriving fairly close on the heels of Marcuse's positive response to the leaflets they had mailed, and after years of interpreting Marcuse's books as statements of support for what appeared to be the viability of a surrealist cause, this new prognosis of necessary futility came as a blow to the Chicago Surrealists. In their view, authentic art was not autonomous and critical but oppositional. Authentic oppositional art was inherently a protest against capitalism in its identity as a form of nonalienated labor independent from capitalist use and exchange value. Oppositional art was also, as a political event of social dissent, activated through group solidarity. Simmons in particular took issue with what he felt to be Rosemont's overly critical and yet simultaneously evasive response to Marcuse. Simmons's "attack" on Rosemont was read aloud at one of the meetings.⁶⁴ All of the Chicago Surrealists agreed that Marcuse was mistaken about the context, import, and aim of Surrealism, and in his belief that the embrace of radical art by the masses would be postponed to a postrevolutionary era.

The response to Marcuse constructed by Simmons set out to distinguish the surrealist revolution from a proletarian socialist revolution. According to Simmons, even if a workers' revolution was accomplished and alienated labor came to an end,

the surrealist revolution—an ideological liberation that accompanied a material one—would not necessarily have been achieved. Meanwhile, Schanoes lambasted what he perceived to be Marcuse’s misunderstandings in a polemical account that poised Surrealism as the aesthetic counterpart of Bolshevism. Rosemont’s statement gently discussed Marcuse’s “professorial limitations” while debunking *Telos’s* Trotskyist critique of Marcuse. Marcuse’s assumption that Surrealism and the cause of revolution were “irreconcilable” was politely corrected. Like Simmons, Rosemont asserted that there was more to the revolution than just the abolition of the class system and wage labor; the worker’s limitless imagination for the ways in which life can be lived in the fullness of experience and pleasure should also be considered.

Rosemont’s core example is one of sabotage rather than art history: workers in an American factory had recently poured green dye into a huge vat of cat food, thereby damaging thousands of dollars of employer property. Rosemont upholds that the worker should use irrational, humor-laden, and imaginative means when necessary to provoke revolt and that this workplace malingering already proves a revolutionary Surrealism in action.⁶⁵ According to Rosemont, the history of aesthetics is not needed to make the case for a revolutionary Surrealism. It already exists in the working class struggle against the performance principle of labor efficiency and profitability, the creative sabotage of production means and ends, and the more mundane popular cultural means of coping with the oppressive capitalist status quo. Rosemont did not share Marcuse’s lasting concerns about the problematics of affirmative culture in bourgeois or mass art forms, heavily influenced as Marcuse was at this time by the work of his Frankfurt School colleague Theodor Adorno. Although Marcuse was actually interested in the revolutionary potential of certain forms of popular culture, he surmised that affirmative culture supported the continuation of the repressive regime through various kinds of catharsis and palliation versus the purity of negation in oppositional art.⁶⁶ Rosemont countered that by merging certain forms of authentic popular culture, such as modern types of folklore and, importantly, avant-garde culture with direct action as a daily and revolutionary practice, revolutionary impulses could be activated.

The surrealist responses were mailed in late 1972 or early 1973, and by early March of 1973, Marcuse’s reply arrived, accompanied by a request for a meeting with the Surrealists in Chicago in late spring.⁶⁷ By that time, Schanoes and Simmons had already broken with the Chicago group over bitter arguments against doctrinaire Surrealism, dissatisfaction with the responses to Marcuse, and interpersonal issues in the group. In March 1973, Schanoes and Simmons published their dissident pamphlet, “Surrealism? I Don’t Play that Game; No More Room Service.”⁶⁸ The requested meeting with Marcuse in Chicago never took place, and given the extent of disagreement about Surrealism, such a meeting would have been collegial but contentious. Yet Marcuse seemed to take the rebuttals mailed by Simmons, Schanoes, and Rosemont in stride. His detailed answer sent in return stands firm on his original

point that Surrealism exists in a permanent antinomy with revolution. It fights for art's total autonomy while promoting materialist revolution, only reaching the masses—burdened by “lifelong servitude”—from “without” as autonomous art rather than emerging from “within,” as Rosemont had argued. Citing André Breton's *Légitime défense* (1926) and Breton and Trotsky's manifesto *Pour un art révolutionnaire indépendant* (1938), both of which oppose the instrumentalization and restriction of art in and by propaganda or bureaucracy of any kind, even radical propaganda, Marcuse finds surrealist confirmation of his own critique of Marxist aesthetics.⁶⁹ Surrealism must hold itself separate from the masses as a form of prerevolutionary libertarianism in order to maintain its negative potential as unassimilable to the performance principle in any regard.

In this capacity, Marcuse views Surrealism as a stubborn and partially successful assertion of freedom at all costs, an assertion composed of a kernel of idealism, which is a “prerequisite for the development of a revolutionary consciousness at large.”⁷⁰ At the heart of the debate between Marcuse and the Chicago Surrealists, therefore, is the question of the worker and the worker's subjectivity before and after the revolution. For Marcuse, Surrealism was a helpful teacher for the worker in advance of revolution rather than the worker's own tool to be used before, during, or after revolution. No amount of aesthetic experimentalism could remove the privilege inherent in art's system, according to Marcuse. Only the final abolition of the “social division of labor” could result in art made by all.⁷¹

Rosemont and Marcuse continued to correspond after this final rebuttal by Marcuse but with much less frequency. However, it is certain that Marcuse intended to stay in contact with Rosemont and continue the conversation about Surrealism. The collegial tone in the late correspondence demonstrates that there was no break in the relationship and that Marcuse's interest in Surrealism and the Chicago group remained vivid. In the summer of 1973, just six days after Marcuse's wife Inge died following a long illness, Marcuse wrote to Rosemont explaining that he was forced to stop work on their correspondence during his wife's decline.⁷² In a short but important letter of 1974, Marcuse requests that Franklin send him the address of the Surrealists in Paris, and notes, “I have also tried to elaborate on the letters I wrote you. Perhaps I shall succeed in getting something ready for publication in the near future.”⁷³ Was that hoped-for publication ultimately Marcuse's critique of socialist realism in *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics*, published three years later in 1977?

In this final book, Marcuse continues the discussion of what he sees as the irreparable contradictions between art and revolution, and between art and the masses. These are the key issues already present in *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, in his statements for the Chicago Surrealists, and indeed, in most of his previous writings on aesthetics. Arguably, his exchange with the Chicago Surrealists, as a living group of Far Left activists, was a contributing factor to his lasting interest

in the perceived dichotomy—an essential dichotomy in the dialectics of art’s resistance to authority—between surrealist aesthetics and its politics. In *The Aesthetic Dimension*, Marcuse repeats, “[S]urrealism in its revolutionary period testified to this inherent conflict between art and political realism.”⁷⁴ Similar to his statements on Surrealism to the Chicago group, *The Aesthetic Dimension* advances a comparable tragic-heroic conception of art’s revolutionary potential. Authentic art is bound to the transcendence of autonomy and is only capable of stimulating a conceptual experience of enduring freedom and happiness for humans in the face of societal limitations and inevitable death.⁷⁵

Although this conception of art as an invaluable prefiguration of freedom was entirely at odds with the utopian premise of the directly transformative power of art espoused by Surrealism, the Chicago group was able to recognize and persistently celebrate a core of mutual agreement between themselves and Marcuse: Surrealism was an emancipatory art. “Thus, Expressionism and Surrealism anticipated the destructiveness of monopoly capitalism, and the emergence of new goals of radical change,” Marcuse wrote in the preface to *The Aesthetic Dimension*.⁷⁶ Their last letters were exchanged as late as four months before Marcuse’s death in 1979. Marcuse wrote to congratulate Rosemont on the publication of his new volume, *André Breton: What is Surrealism?*, and decline an invitation from the Chicago Surrealists to a symposium on Surrealism.⁷⁷ Rosemont’s lengthy introduction to *What is Surrealism?* remained indebted to Marcusean positions, highlighting the pleasure principle as a ready-at-hand subterfuge against the dominant reality principle.⁷⁸ In 1978, in the preface for the catalogue of the “100th Anniversary of Hysteria” surrealist exhibition taking place in Milwaukee, Rosemont gave a final salute to Marcuse with an expression of “fraternal regards, and our warm gratitude to this venerable friend and comrade.”⁷⁹

Surrealism without Conclusion

In 1989, a decade after Marcuse’s passing, Franklin stated, “The letters are a militant defense, no less, of the revolutionary character of what he [Marcuse] calls ‘the surrealist effort.’”⁸⁰ Rosemont writes with palpable regret about “our great friend” and the misunderstandings that ensued over questions of Marxism: they were saying the same thing but not speaking the same language.⁸¹ Nevertheless, Franklin insisted that Surrealism was a concern of lasting importance for Marcuse, who valorized Surrealism’s struggle to merge art and revolution and its attempt to recuperate or co-opt pleasure and subjectivity back into the wasteland of alienated labor. In *Counterrevolution and Revolt* (1972), which Marcuse was still writing when he began his early correspondence with Rosemont in 1971, he almost seems to anticipate the question Rosemont asked a few months after the book was published: “What is your estimate of the present and future viability of Surrealism?”⁸² In the pages of *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, Marcuse affirms the relevance and utility of

Surrealism in a sentence that satisfies Franklin's subsequent prompt and also recalls Walter Benjamin's writings from the 1930s: "If art dreams of liberation within the spectrum of history, dream realization through revolution must be possible—the surrealist program must be valid. Does the cultural revolution testify to this possibility?"⁸³

In the late stages of the New Left during the waning years of the 1970s, Surrealism is still in the present tense for Marcuse. It has not become irrelevant but rather encompasses one continuous thread of this proposition.⁸⁴ Marcuse signs his last letter to Rosemont with the parting words "in solidarity."⁸⁵ For Rosemont's part, he continued to engage with Marcuse's ideas in the decades following the philosopher's death, repeatedly returning to his comrade's rhetorical query—"does the cultural revolution testify to this possibility" of a valid surrealist program?—with patient affirmation. At the narrow confluence of the "cultural revolution" of the international New Left and the ongoing surrealist revolution, Rosemont passionately located an active and explosive core of resistance.

- 1 Don LaCoss. "Surrealism in '68: Paris, Prague, Chicago: Dreams of Arson & the Arson of Dreams." *Surrealist Research & Development Monograph Series*, no. 1 (2008): 8.
- 2 For the complete publication history of Marcuse's letters to the Chicago Surrealists, see the editor's note in: Herbert Marcuse, "Letters to the Chicago Surrealists," in *Art and Liberation: Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, ed. Douglas Kellner (London: Routledge, 2007), 4:178. For the Chicago Surrealist correspondence with Marcuse, see the University of Michigan Library, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, boxes 4, 8 and 24.
- 3 According to Kate Khatib, "members of the RU Wobblies founded the Louis Lingg Memorial Chapter of Students for a Democratic Society in 1967, named for the youngest and most militant of the eight Haymarket defendants." Kate Khatib, "Surrealism's America: Notes on a Vernacular Epistemology" (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2013), 41. Penelope Rosemont was a member of the SDS national staff, working as a printer in the print shop of the SDS national headquarters in Chicago, Liberation Press, between the end of 1967 and 1969. Penelope Rosemont, *Dreams & Everyday Life: André Breton, Surrealism, the IWW, Rebel Worker Students for a Democratic Society and the Seven Cities of Cibola in Chicago, Paris and London: A 1960s Notebook* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 2008), 173–228.
- 4 Don LaCoss, "Surrealism in '68: Paris, Prague, Chicago: Dreams of Arson & the Arson of Dreams," *Surrealist Research & Development Monograph Series*, no. 1 (2008): 18. Also see Joanna Pawlik, "Cartooning the Marvelous: Word and Image in Chicago Surrealism," in *Mixed Messages: American Correspondences in Visual and Verbal Practices*, ed. Catherine Gander and Sarah Garland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 70. For an overview of the New Left in the United States, see John McMillian, "'You Didn't Have to Be There': Revisiting the New Left Consensus," in *The New Left Revisited*, ed. John McMillian and Paul Buhle (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003), 1–8.
- 5 Paul Buhle, interview with the author, March 23, 2018.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 *Radical America* 3, no. 6 (Nov. 1969): 3.
- 8 "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," *Telos*, no. 4 (1969): 3–34.
- 9 Paul Piccone, "From Youth Culture to Political Praxis," *Radical America* 3, no. 6 (Nov. 1969): 20.
- 10 *Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion*, no. 1 (Autumn 1970): 80.
- 11 Paul Garon, Franklin Rosemont, and Penelope Rosemont, "Letter to the Editors of *Telos*," in *Memory of Georg Lukács* (Chicago: Surrealist Editions/Black Swan Press, 1971). Both *Telos* issues from 1970 and the winter issue from 1971 contain submissions devoted to Lukács.
- 12 Unpublished letter from Paul Piccone to Franklin Rosemont, October 12, 1971, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 3, folder 7.
- 13 Unpublished letter from The *Telos* group to conference attendees, November 1, 1971, Personal archives of Penelope Rosemont.
- 14 Unpublished conference schedule, The Second *Telos* International Conference from November 18–21, 1971, Buffalo, NY, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 3, folder 7.
- 15 *Telos*, no. 7 (Spring 1971): Back matter.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 John Simmons, email to author, April 11, 2018.
- 18 Penelope Rosemont did not present a paper.
- 19 Two years following the *Telos* conference, in March of 1973, Simmons and Schanoes, along with April Zuckerman, broke with the Chicago Surrealists and published a dissenting pamphlet. See David Schanoes, John Simmons, and April Zuckerman, *Surrealism? I Don't Play that Game; No More Room Service*. (Chicago, 1973). Simmons and Schanoes both published essays in this pamphlet explaining reasons for the break, such as the need for changing revolutionary tactics given economic shifts in late capitalism and Chicago Surrealism's over-investment in the fetishized myth of the past.
- 20 "Marcuse Defends His New Left Line," *New York Times Magazine* (October 27, 1968). Three years later, Peter Bürger would echo this sentiment in the opening lines of his *Der Französische Surrealismus*.

- Peter Bürger, *Der französische Surrealismus: Studien zum Problem der avantgardistischen Literatur* (Frankfurt: Athenäum, 1971).
- 21 Anonymous (Franklin Rosemont?), "The Surrealists at the *Telos* Conference," Undated and unpublished essay, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 3, folder 7. 1. 1–4 all.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Unpublished letters from Franklin Rosemont to Herbert Marcuse, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, boxes 8 and 24.
- 24 Marcuse, "Letters to the Chicago Surrealists," 178–99.
- 25 The Chicago Surrealist Group. *Toward the Second Chicago Fire: Surrealism and the Housing Question* (Chicago: Ztangi!, 1971), n. p. Reprinted in Franklin Rosemont, Penelope Rosemont, and Paul Garon, eds., *The Forecast Is Hot!: Tracts and Other Collective Declarations of the Surrealist Movement in the United States, 1966–1976* (Chicago: Black Swan Press, 1997), 126–29.
- 26 The Chicago Surrealist Group, *The Anteater's Umbrella: A Contribution to the Critique of the Ideology of Zoos* (Chicago: Ztangi!, 1971), n. p. Reprinted in Ron Sakolsky, ed., *Surrealist Subversions: Rants, Writings and Images by the Surrealist Movement in the United States* (New York: Autonomedia, 2003), 374–75.
- 27 Marcuse, "Letters to the Chicago Surrealists," 179.
- 28 Unpublished memorial letters for Herbert Marcuse, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, boxes 8 and 24.
- 29 Herbert Marcuse, "Transcript of an untitled lecture at the Van Leer Jerusalem Foundation," in *Art and Liberation: Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, ed. Douglas Kellner (London: Routledge, 2007), 4:165.
- 30 The Labadie Archives contain ten letters from Herbert Marcuse to Franklin Rosemont. Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 24, Marcuse folder. Also see box 4, folders 21 and 24; box 8, folder B. Franklin Rosemont republished six of the ten letters from Marcuse in, Franklin Rosemont, "Herbert Marcuse and Surrealism," *Arsenal*, no. 4 (1989): 39–46.
- 31 Apart from the interest in Marcuse that manifested in journals and texts by surrealists themselves, one of the earliest discussions of the links between Marcuse and Surrealism in secondary scholarship was that of Xavière Gauthier in *Surréalisme et sexualité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971). For a reading of Marcuse's influence on contemporary art beyond Surrealism, see, Claudia Mesch, *Modern Art at the Berlin Wall Demarcating Culture in the Cold War Germany's* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009, 2018). Mesch has also studied Marcuse's views on Surrealism in unpublished scholarship which unfortunately I have not had the chance to review. Claudia Mesch, "Marcuse, Art History, and the Abandonment of 60s Radical Culture," (unpublished talk), Critical Theory Roundtable, University of Kentucky (October 2000).
- 32 Rosemont, "Herbert Marcuse and Surrealism," 31–47.
- 33 Michael Löwy examines the rapport between Marcuse and Benjamin, which, despite their having much in common—Surrealism, Romanticism, and refusal to join the Communist Party—remained a minimized encounter. Michael Löwy, "Under the Star of Romanticism: Walter Benjamin and Herbert Marcuse," in *Revolutionary Romanticism: A Drunken Boat Anthology*, ed. Max Blechman (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1999).
- 34 Rosemont, "Herbert Marcuse and Surrealism," 31.
- 35 Ibid., 35.
- 36 Ibid., 36.
- 37 Ibid., 33. Italics in the original.
- 38 Franklin Rosemont and Charles Radcliffe, eds., *Dancin' in the Streets!: Anarchists, IWWs, Surrealists, Situationists & Provos in the 1960s as Recorded in the Pages of 'The Rebel Worker' and 'Heatwave'* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 2005), 47.
- 39 Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (1964) (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 19. On repressive desublimation and Surrealism, see Susan

- Rubin Suleiman, "The Fate of the Surrealist Imagination in the Society of the Spectacle," in *Risking Who One Is: Encounters with Contemporary Art and Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 133–136.
- 40 On this point, Jean-Michel Palmier's discussion of the transformation of class revolt into a revolt against civilization in general in the New Left is helpful, as is his contextualization of Marcuse's work in relation to Henri Lefebvre's theories of everyday life, which also play an important role in the New Left and in late 1960s Surrealism. Jean-Michel Palmier, *Herbert Marcuse et la nouvelle gauche* (Paris: Éditions Pierre Belfond, 1973), 518, 509–18, 584–619.
- 41 For Michael Löwy, Marcuse, Benjamin, and Ernst Bloch all approach Surrealism through a Romantic Marxism which fights against disenchantment in the modern capitalist world. Michael Löwy, *Morning Star: Surrealism, Marxism, Anarchism, Situationism, Utopia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 22.
- 42 Gérard Legrand, "De L'Histoire, de la voluptué, et de la mort," *La Brèche*, no. 5 (October 1963): 7–17.
- 43 Michel Pierson, untitled interview with Herbert Marcuse (December 15, 1966), in *L'Archibras/le surréalisme*, no. 2 (October 1967): 17. Also see the article by Jean Schuster in issue 1 for a reference to Marcuse. Jean Schuster, "A l'ordre de la nuit, au désordre du jour," *L'Archibras/le surréalisme*, no. 1 (April 1967): 4–9.
- 44 Guy Ducornet, trans., "Herbert Marcuse: Interview with *L'Archibras*," *Cultural Correspondence*, nos. 12–14 (Summer 1981): 63.
- 45 Undated letter from Franklin Rosemont to Nicolas Calas (ca. 1965), Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box, folder A.
- 46 For a discussion of "L'Écart absolu" and a brief characterization of the Chicago Surrealists in light of contemporary Surrealism, see Alain Joubert, *Le Mouvement des surréalistes ou Le fin mot de l'histoire: Mort d'un groupe, naissance d'un mythe* (Paris: Maurice Nadeau, 2001), 295–329.
- 47 Rosemont, "Herbert Marcuse and Surrealism," 33.
- 48 Franklin Rosemont and Penelope Rosemont, "Situation of Surrealism in the U.S.," in *The Morning of a Machine Gun*, by Franklin Rosemont (Chicago: Liberation Press, 1968), 45.
- 49 Rosemont and Radcliffe, *Dancin' in the Streets!*, 165. Marcuse develops the dialectical notion of negative thinking in *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (1941) and *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (1964). See Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* (New Jersey and London: Humanities Press, 1981).
- 50 Herbert Marcuse, *The Obsolescence of Psychoanalysis* (Chicago: Black Swan Press, 1968), 1.
- 51 Don LaCoss, "Surrealism in '68," 9–13. The key text for this exhibition, "La plateforme de Prague," was a cowritten manifesto signed by European surrealists and published in *L'Archibras/le surréalisme*. no. 5 (September 1968): 11–25. "La plateforme de Prague" mentions Marcuse's performance or efficiency principle in its discussion of antirepression aims. The essay also salutes the Chicago Surrealists. On the "Princip slasti" exhibition in Prague, see the following texts: Claude Courtot, Marie-Claire Dumas, and Petr Kral, "Le Principe de Plaisir exposition surréaliste en Tchécoslovaquie, 1968," in *Du surréalisme et du plaisir*, by Jacqueline Chénieux-Gendron (Paris: José Corti, 1987); Jérôme Duwa, 1968, *Année surréaliste: Cuba, Prague, Paris. Collection "pièces D'archives"* (Paris: Institut Mémoire De L'édition Contemporaine, 2008).
- 52 Herbert Marcuse, "Sur le surréalisme et la révolution," *Bulletin de liaison surréaliste*. no. 6 (April 1973): 20–29.
- 53 Jacques Abeille, Vincent Bounoure, and Robert Guyon, "Libre échange avec Herbert Marcuse," *Bulletin de liaison surréaliste*, no. 7 (December 1973): 1–23. Two letters from Vincent Bounoure to Herbert Marcuse in 1973, copies of which are in the Rosemont papers at the Labadie Archive, indicate that Bounoure sought Marcuse's permission to translate and publish the essay. I have not been able to find evidence that Marcuse responded. A comparison of the BLS response to Marcuse

with that of the Chicago Surrealists exceeds this discussion but is a subject ripe for analysis. On June 7, 2018 at the “Revolutionary Imagination: Chicago Surrealism from Object to Activism” conference at the University of Chicago, Michael Stone-Richards presented the relevant paper, “Critical Theory and Practice: Marcuse between Paris and Chicago.” Also see Michael Stone Richards, “Critical Theory,” *The International Encyclopedia of Surrealism*, ed. Michael Richardson et al. (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2019), 1: 503–6.

54 Letter from Herbert Marcuse to Franklin Rosemont, March 6, 1973, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 24, Marcuse folder.

55 Douglas Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 154–96. Also see Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (1964; Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 1–18.

56 Paul Garon, interview with the author, March 23, 2018.

57 Letter from Franklin Rosemont to Herbert Marcuse, June 21, 1972, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 24, Marcuse folder.

58 Ibid.

59 Herbert Marcuse, “Art and Liberation,” *Partisan Review* 39, no. 2 (Spring 1972): n.p.

60 Marcuse, “Letters to the Chicago Surrealists,” 181–88.

61 Douglas Kellner, “Introduction: Marcuse, Art and Liberation,” in Marcuse, *Art and Liberation*, 55–57.

62 It is important to remember that Marcuse’s interest in the question of the role of art in life was a lifelong preoccupation and also that the question of the relationship between art and revolution was a major theme during the second half of his life in particular. His letter to the Chicago Surrealists in 1972 was just one glimpse of an ever-changing and often contradictory social theory of art. Douglas Kellner shows how Marcuse’s views on art’s revolutionary potential shifted quite dramatically from the publication of *Eros and Civilization* in 1955 to *One-Dimensional Man* in 1964 and *An Essay on Liberation* in 1969, in addition to essays and lectures on art from this period. This vacillation continued into the 1970s with his last two books. I argue that the exchange with the Chicago group influenced his continued insistence in the 1970s, despite the significant impact that Theodor Adorno’s theory of aesthetic autonomy also had upon him, that art was in essence an indispensable friend and helper to the cause of revolution. Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism*, 347–362; Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969). Also see Stephen Eric Bronner, “Between Art and Utopia: Reconsidering the Aesthetic Theory of Herbert Marcuse,” in *Marcuse: Critical Theory and the Promise of Utopia*, ed. Andrew Feenberg, Robert B. Pippin, and Charles P. Webel (South Hadley: Bergin & Garvey, 1988); Charles Reitz, *Art, Alienation, and the Humanities: A Critical Engagement with Herbert Marcuse* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2000). I have not yet had the chance to review the following forthcoming essay which deals with Marcuse’s *Eros and Civilization* in relation to surrealism: Alyce Mahon, “Eros and Desire,” *Cambridge Critical Concepts: Surrealism*, ed. Natalya Lusty (Cambridge UP, 2020). Also see Alyce Mahon, *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros, 1938–1968* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2005), 176–81.

63 Herbert Marcuse, *Counterrevolution and Revolt* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 103. Italics in the original.

64 Various meeting minutes from 1972, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 3, folder 4.

65 Untitled, undated, unpublished statements addressed to Herbert Marcuse by John Simmons, David Schanoes, and Franklin Rosemont (ca. November 1972–January 1973), Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 24, Marcuse folder.

66 Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968). On affirmative culture, see Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Bloomsbury, 1997). Peter Bürger famously extended Marcuse’s discussion of affirmative culture and Adorno’s discussion of autonomous art into an examination

of the success, failure, survival, and afterlife of the avant-gardes and an examination of the extent to which Surrealism itself became affirmative culture. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 10–14, 49–53.

67 Marcuse, “Letters to the Chicago Surrealists,” 188.

68 Schanoes, Simmons, and Zuckerman, *Surrealism? I Don't Play that Game*, n.p.

69 Also see Barry Katz, *Herbert Marcuse and the Art of Liberation: An Intellectual Biography* (London: NLB, 1982), 194–205.

70 Marcuse, “Letters to the Chicago Surrealists,” 190.

71 Ibid.

72 Letter from Herbert Marcuse to Franklin Rosemont, August 6, 1973, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 24, Marcuse folder.

73 Letter from Herbert Marcuse to Franklin Rosemont, February 13, 1974, Labadie Archives, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont Papers, box 24, Marcuse folder.

74 Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics* (1977; Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), 37.

75 Kellner, *Herbert Marcuse and the Crisis of Marxism*, 353–57.

76 Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension*, xi.

77 This letter from Marcuse to Franklin Rosemont is dated March 2, 1979, and is reprinted alongside Paul Buhle, “Herbert Marcuse, Surrealism & Us,” *Cultural Correspondence*, nos. 12–14 (Summer 1981): 62–63.

78 Franklin Rosemont, “André Breton and the First Principles of Surrealism,” in *What Is Surrealism?: Selected Writings*, by André Breton, ed. Franklin Rosemont (New York: Monad Press, 1978), 24.

79 Franklin Rosemont, “The 100th Anniversary of Hysteria (1978),” in *Revolution in the Service of the Marvelous: Surrealist Contributions to the Critique of Miserabilism* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, 2004), 123–24.

80 Rosemont, “Herbert Marcuse and Surrealism,” 33.

81 Ibid., 34.

82 Ibid.

83 Marcuse, *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, 102.

84 On this point I am at odds with Fredric Jameson in *Marxism and Form* (published in advance of the Marcuse exchange with the Chicago Surrealists), for whom the hermeneutics of the utopian idea in Marcuse’s thought fully subsumes and “replaces” the past efforts of revolutionary arts, including Surrealism. Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-century Dialectical Theories of Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 111.

85 Buhle, “Herbert Marcuse, Surrealism & Us,” 62.