

**Third Wave Feminism**  
*A Case Study of BUST Magazine*

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## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The artistic and ideological expressions of independent and underground publications are vehicles of oppositional thought, providing channels of communication to groups otherwise marginalized by mainstream, corporate-produced media. In the absence of status-quo promoting commercial forces, independent and self-produced print media freely express unorthodox thought, connect and educate political movements, and preserve the theoretical and aesthetic attributes of revolutionary communities. The Third Wave feminist<sup>1</sup> press<sup>2</sup> is no exception, initiated by riot grrrl<sup>3</sup> zines<sup>4</sup> popular in the early 1990s (such as *Girl Germs*, *Fantastic Fanzine*, and *I'm So Fucking Beautiful*) and dominated by feisty and savvy, glossy feminist magazines (such as *BUST*, *Bitch*, and *Fabula*), providing a voice to this new, postmodern<sup>5</sup> generation of feminists.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Third Wave feminism is defined as that feminist thought influenced by postmodern social theory in a way which embraces contradictory and multiperspectival feminisms, finds joy and power in hybrid theoretical struggles, and makes use of the existing culture to the greatest benefit. The Third Wave is situated in contrast to prior surges of feminist organization: the First Wave (sparked by the Seneca Falls conference in 1848) and the Second Wave (beginning in the 1960s with civil rights movements and Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*, and gaining momentum in the 1970s). The term "wave" used to demarcate phases of feminist movement was coined in the 1970s to differentiate Second Wave feminist trends from women's rights struggles of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. See pages 11-15 for more definitions, and Chapter II for more discussion on feminist historiography.

<sup>2</sup> Reference to the Third Wave feminist press in this research designates both underground and mainstream print publications expressing theoretical and cultural evidence of Third Wave feminism. As feminist media have rarely enjoyed great commercial support, many feminist periodicals have relied on underground or independent means of publication. The feminist press in general is not easily classifiable and, for purposes of this study, the Third Wave feminist press will be considered to include the spectrum of magazines, from self-produced zines like *Mystery Date* and independent commercial magazines like *BUST* as well as corporate magazines like *Jane*.

<sup>3</sup> Once the name of a short-lived all-female punk band, *riot grrrl* refers to the style and attitude of the radical, activist-oriented female punk bands that emerged from the grunge movement in Olympia, Washington in the early 1990s. See pages 11-15 for more definitions of riot grrrl.

<sup>4</sup> First used in 1965, *zine* is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a shortened version of *fanzine*. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. "zine." In the context of this study, the word *zine* refers to a hand-made, not-for-profit mini-magazine. See pages 11-15 for more definitions of zines.

<sup>5</sup> George Ritzer presents six characteristics of postmodernism: 1) critique of and disappointment in modernity, 2) rejection of a "single, grand perspective or answer," 3) focus on humanistic elements such as experience and emotion, 4) blurring boundaries between unnatural binaries within academia, race and sexuality, 5) rejection of "careful, reasoned style" of modern culture, and 6) focus on that which has been marginalized or otherwise ignored. George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> Following the example of Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, this research identifies the Third Wave as having birth dates between 1963 and 1974. Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 4.

Addressing a range of topics, from music and fashion to date rape and masturbation, riot grrrl zines and glossy Third Wave feminist magazines offer forums for expression not available through commercial media. As Third Wavers react to the theories and politics of Second Wave feminism (feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s), Third Wave feminist publications express ways in which young feminists negotiate the cultural terrain of late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century America. In the limited research dedicated to underground media, there is scant mention of Third Wave feminist publications of the 1990s.<sup>7</sup> As Third Wave feminist movements are included in feminist scholarship, new feminist print media is being given due consideration.<sup>8</sup>

In order to gain a deeper, more detailed, understanding of the Third Wave feminist press, this study focuses on the New-York-based feminist lifestyle magazine *BUST*. Launched in 1993 by Debbie Stoller, Marcelle Karp, and Laurie Henzel, *BUST* is a Third Wave feminist outlet that announces that it is “The Magazine for Women with Something to Get Off Their Chests.”<sup>9</sup> Drawing on the confessional and confrontational style of the feminist teen magazine *Sassy*,<sup>10</sup> the editorial trio wanted a feminist magazine for women ages 18 and beyond, with a similar blend of the personal and the political. Although first appearing<sup>11</sup> as an underground, hand-made zine grown out of the riot grrrl tradition, *BUST* quickly evolved into an independent mass-produced, glossy format magazine.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> For more on additional research on the Third Wave feminist press, see Chapter II: Literature Review.

<sup>8</sup> This increased academic interest in Third Wave feminism is evidenced by this research, as well as academic work by Ednie Kaeh Garrison, David R. Hall, Leslie Heywood, Jennifer Drake, Alison Covarrubias, and Jennifer Schack, and public press writing by Rebecca Walker, Jennifer Baumgardner, Amy Richards, and Debbie Stoller. See Bibliography for complete references.

<sup>9</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, eds., *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin, 1999), cover.

<sup>10</sup> *Sassy* was the brainchild of Jane Pratt (now editor of *Jane* magazine) – a girl’s magazine published by Lang Communications from 1988-1994. It was known for its poignantly confessional tone that related to girls and young teens as intelligent individuals, encouraging them to be strong, honest, and creative.

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix XI (*BUST* no.1).

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix XVI (*BUST* no.16).

The *BUST* team invests each dollar made from the sale of the magazine, reaching more Third Wave feminists with each edition. Never retaining any money from *BUST*'s proceeds, each consecutive issue is superior to the last, with more pages, sharper color, and better production value. Today, still headquartered in New York, *BUST* is owned by the independent publisher Razorfish Studios.<sup>13</sup> The buyout was final in the spring of 2000, resulting in a partnership where this independent media company provides office, salary, and advertising support for the *BUST* staff to produce the same, unchanged periodical they have been printing autonomously for seven years.

*BUST* has stayed true to its riot grrrl zine roots throughout its changing features and professional-magazine improvements. *BUST* has maintained the focus and purpose of the riot grrrl press: to unite, inform, and mobilize young feminist women. At the time of this research, *BUST* has retained many zine-style aspects, such as a commitment to a multiperspectival, anti-essentialist approach that does not compromise its feminist ideals for big-money advertising. Preserving its radical, subcultural attitude, *BUST* has survived and thrived, increasing its scope with each year of publication. In 1999, *BUST* readership was estimated at 7,000. As of September 2001, *BUST* served approximately 300,000 readers<sup>14</sup> and is distributed in major cities throughout the nation's independent and chain bookstores.<sup>15</sup>

The purpose of this study of study Third Wave feminist zines in general, and *BUST* in particular, is to articulate emerging Third Wave feminist theories, as expressed in the Third Wave feminist press, for academic consideration. Beyond greater scholastic

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<sup>13</sup> As a division of Razorfish, Inc., a digital services consulting agency, Razorfish Studios is an independent holding company that "develops unique, daring brands into recognized worldwide entertainment properties,"<sup>13</sup> with investments such as [www.disinfo.com](http://www.disinfo.com) (a conspiracy theory Web site) and Self Timer Films (R.E.M. singer Michael Stipes' production company). Razorfish Studios, "About," [company Web site]; available from, <http://www.siliconalleydaily.com/issues/sar11092001.html>. The editors and management staff refused to disclose details regarding *BUST*'s contract agreements with Razorfish.

<sup>14</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 September 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>15</sup> *BUST* is sold by independent bookstores in major cities such as Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago and Seattle, as well as chain bookstores, such as Borders Books & Music, across the nation.

understanding of these expressions of young women in the 1990s and early twenty-first century, these artifacts of feminist subculture should be preserved for future cultural and historical exploration. The do-it-yourself (DIY)<sup>16</sup> nature of independent publication, adopted from American and British punk subcultures, has empowered young women through self-expression uncensored by mainstream society and the social agendas of commercial media. Although antithetical to subcultural dicta of avoiding the visibility that comes with media or academic attention, applying the tricks of the girl-zine trade<sup>17</sup> to mass-produced feminist magazines, such as *BUST*, is not only possible but is currently being successfully achieved.<sup>18</sup>

This study will explore the nature and status of Third Wave feminist print media through a case study of *BUST* magazine, including participant-observation, in-depth interviews, and content analysis. The resulting data is offered to expand the understanding of Third Wave feminist movements and its press, benefiting disciplines such as sociology, women's studies, and, of course, mass communications.

### Significance of the Study

Homemade feminist newspapers, pamphlets, and magazines were some of the first channels of organization for the First and Second Waves of American feminist movement.<sup>19</sup>

Women have used self-made publications to alter history from crusades such as abolition,

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<sup>16</sup> DIY (do-it-yourself) refers to both a utilitarian understanding of a self-made, hands-on lifestyle, characterized by such things as handmade clothing and homegrown food, as well as an ideological commitment to a corporate-free, autonomous existence, often adopted by anarchists. In the context of this research, DIY will be used throughout this document to connote both the pragmatic and philosophical implications. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has not, as yet, included DIY in their directory. *Chambers 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dictionary* (s.v. "DIY") defines DIY simply as "abbreviation do-it-yourself" without etymological information.

<sup>17</sup> These tricks include a commitment to individual and diverse counter-cultural writing, not produced for profit but for therapeutic personal expression as well as increased awareness of feminist issues.

<sup>18</sup> Zines such as *BUST* as well as *Alice*, *Bamboo Girl*, *Hip Mama*, *Bitch*, and *HUES* are other examples of contemporary glossy feminist magazines with growing financial success.

<sup>19</sup> First wave feminist titles such as *The Revolution* (1868), *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly* (1870), and *The Woman Rebel* (1914), and second wave titles such as *The Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement* (1968), *Sojourner* (1975), and *off our backs* (1970) exemplify a lengthy history of activist publications that served to mobilize feminist movement.

suffrage, and reproductive freedoms. The Third Wave of feminist press has a strong heritage of alternative feminist publications to draw on, and have continued the tradition with riot grrrl zines such as *Indignant Gingham* and *Pucker Up*, and mature counterparts such as *BUST* and *Bitch* that compete with mainstream print media.

Many Third Wave feminists came of age during the late 1970s and early 1980s, during a time when extreme music-based, pop-culture movements, such as punk rock, had great power. The cultural history of punk music is built upon anti-establishment ideologies, including the belief that commercial media is a capitalist tool of oppression and exploitation. Punk rock – the music and the culture – is inherently revolutionary, questioning authority and homogenous, capitalistic society. The DIY aesthetic of punk led to an explosion of underground zines in the 1970s and 1980s, which connected political and cultural revolutionaries. However, like many male-dominated subcultures of the 1970s, punk was not accepting of female artists and fans.<sup>20</sup> Women such as Debbie Harry in the 1970s and Joan Jett in the 1980s were inspirations for young punk girl-bands of the 1990s, such as Bikini Kill and Huggy Bear.

The riot grrrl movement is a blend of the pop-culture glamour of female rock bands and Third Wave feminist theory and activism. Riot grrrls mobilized during the summer of 1991, fueled by the independent (indie) music scenes in the U.S. and Europe.<sup>21</sup> Girl-punk groups and their fans organized to stake a musical claim in the world of punk with such events as girl-only mosh pits<sup>22</sup> and all-girl concerts, often including self-defense workshops

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<sup>20</sup> Lucy O'Brien, *She Bop: A Definitive History of Women in Rock, Pop and Soul* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995). Andrea Juno, *Angry Women in Rock* (New York: Juno Books, 1996).

<sup>21</sup> Indie or independent media, such as film and music, are produced without help from major commercial entities, and are therefore often more controversial and radical in nature. Young grunge artists in Olympia, Washington and other major cities established substantial groups of indie musicians who helped produce and promote one another's albums.

<sup>22</sup> To *mosh* can be defined as "a form of dance, violent and aggressive in manner, involving flinging the limbs wildly, jumping up and down and crashing into other dancers" and *mosh pit* as "the area in a club or rock arena

and political fund-raising. As a feminist blend of “punk with politics,”<sup>23</sup> the riot grrrls were primarily connected by their music, as well as the production and trading zines.

Many of these zines became costly and time-consuming for their producers, and began to fall away as the indie music scene changed. *BUST* is one of the only original riot grrrl-era zines to have survived the ages,<sup>24</sup> and one of the few feminist titles in magazine history to achieve substantial financial success. Having matured into a glossy, mass-produced magazine in its seven independent years, *BUST* has continued to increase its popularity and readership.<sup>25</sup> A study of *BUST* will contribute greatly to both feminist and communication scholarship. In the rare academic study of Third Wave feminism and its related media, there are only peripheral mentions of the impact and importance of philosophical and cultural expressions in magazines such as *BUST*. Communication and Women’s Studies departments throughout U.S. colleges and universities lack a solid understanding of young feminist perspectives, cultures, and media. This thesis contributes to a necessary increase of this awareness.

Expressions of theory, ideology, and experience contained in zines such as *BUST* are vital to understanding Third Wave feminism, as well as the lives of young women in general. Contemporary feminist and communication scholars must be aware of the emerging feminist movements embodied in publications such as *BUST*. This research serves as an academic

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where such dancing takes place.” Jonathon Green, ed., *The Cassell Dictionary of Slang* (London: Cassell, 1998): 804-5. Note: moshing is the closest thing to a punk dance-trend; the mosh pit is the result of spectators packing themselves in close to the stage, forming spontaneous pits of people skipping fast and dancing in a somewhat chaotic circular motion.

<sup>23</sup> Amy Raphael, *Grrrls: Viva Rock Divas* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1995), xxvii.

<sup>24</sup> *BUST* is one of only a few Third Wave feminist zines launched in the early 90s to have become a professionally published magazine. (Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, July 26, 2001, email correspondence.)

<sup>25</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, “The Birth of Bust,” introduction to *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order*, eds. Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999), xii-xv.

megaphone to the voices in Third Wave feminist print media otherwise overlooked by academic scholarship.

### Theoretical Framework

The very nature of this case study demands an open and flexible framework, with a feminist approach to both data collection and analysis. A removed and positivistic framework, traditionally employed in the sciences, would be neither suitable for access to nor understanding of Third Wave feminist media.

As outlined in her introduction to *Feminism and Methodology*,<sup>26</sup> Sandra Harding notes that effective feminist inquiry should counteract the fundamental characteristics of the traditionally male-centered approach to research, which holds that acceptable study is that which is non-judgmental, without ulterior, social agenda, and free of the researcher's personal biases. Harding's assessment supports the need for further study of underground feminist media in her support of further exploration of feminist experiences silenced by patriarchal society. This research holds the expressions of young women as important and diverse. This study is focused on the improvement and proliferation of alternative feminist media, geared toward making a positive impact on the lives of young feminists (a huge yet underrepresented segment of U.S. society).<sup>27</sup>

Harding's final point about the importance and acknowledgement of the researcher's personal situation is a poignant one for me. I was born in 1972 and am the daughter of liberal feminist parents. I was raised with Second Wave feminist rhetoric and came to

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<sup>26</sup> Harding, Sandra, "Is There a Feminist Method?" intro. in *Feminism and Methodology, Social Science Issues*, ed. Sandra Harding (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), 1-13.

<sup>27</sup> In the U.S. in 1995, there were counted 18,003 girls aged 10-19 and 29,235 women aged 20-34. Source: *Bureau of the Census, Population Projections of the United States, by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: 1992-2050, Current Population Reports, P25-1092*, 1992. Statistics found in: Susan Mitchell, *The Official Guide to the Generations* (New York: New Strategist Publications, Inc., 1995), 25.

embrace the notion of sexual and racial equality at an early age. In my undergraduate studies, I immersed myself in feminist theory, culture, and activism. I am a member of the Third Wave feminist movement, as I have attended countless girl-punk shows, am a loyal fan of radical feminist music, writing, and art, and have played a part in the production of subversive feminist print media.<sup>28</sup>

I have an unabashed personal agenda for better understanding feminist subcultural media, given my investment in the continued success of alternative Third Wave periodicals. To approach this study using a traditional scientific framework would be counterproductive, as it runs contrary to my beliefs and value system. A positivist framework would ultimately skew the results of this case study, and produce inaccurate and ineffective communication research. In the execution of native research, acknowledgement must be made to the relationship between the researcher and the material.

The theoretical framework of this study is also strongly guided by theories drawn from the chosen areas of research, namely underground media of the riot grrrl movement and Third Wave feminist theory and activism. The ideologies associated with the production of independent and often subversive periodicals – exemplified by Third Wave feminist magazines such as *BUST* – include irreverent perspectives on mainstream structures such as corporate media. This resistance to an advertising-controlled press, the recognition of the history of alternative feminist media, and their relationship grounds this thesis.

The sentiment in the introduction to *Third Wave Agenda* rings true for this work:

Following the lead provided by the work of bell hooks, Susan Bordo, and others that has reshaped the critical paradigms of our time, we try to confront the complications of contradiction in ways that begin to expand comfortable cultural polarities and situate youth culture squarely within lived experience and cultural practices. We also

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<sup>28</sup> Lettie Conrad, *Bird in the Hand*, Santa Cruz, 1994. Lettie Conrad and Wendy VanThiel, eds., *Pandora's Box*, Santa Cruz AIDS Project, Santa Cruz, 1995. Lettie Conrad, "DES Daughters," *Fabula* (Winter 1999): 48. Lettie Conrad, "Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 69-71.

begin to chart a series of directions for Third Wave feminism as a cultural movement when mainstream hostility to such projects has reached new peaks.<sup>29</sup>

Third Wave feminism is just beginning to evolve, developing within the pages of feminist magazines such as *BUST*. Similarly, Third Wave feminism is also developing within academic explorations such as this thesis. The print media studied here, and the study itself, are forums in which young women use the power of publication to express experience, opinion, and emotion, offering both support of and reflection on these expressions. This thoroughly native study of Third Wave feminism is rooted in Third Wave theory, in so far as it takes an anti-essentialistic approach to the embrace of multiculturalism, individualism, and postmodernism.<sup>30</sup>

This analysis of *BUST* as an example of young feminist media was not conducted with a pre-determined agenda to be fulfilled. Questions were asked of the content and producers of *BUST* without looking to satisfy particular imperatives, open to acknowledge all evidence discovered. While honoring the importance of personal experience and individual beliefs, care was taken to include all perspectives present. This research did not produce a tidy conclusion on the status and future of Third Wave feminist print media or a singular definition of Third Wave feminism. Drenched in a postmodern age, this study of the Third Wave feminist press welcomes the chaotic and contradictory nature of

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<sup>29</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 18.

<sup>30</sup> Following the critique of Pauline Rosenau, George Ritzer presents six distinct characteristics of postmodernism: 1) critique of and disappointment in modernity, 2) rejection of a “single, grand perspective or answer,” 3) focus on humanistic elements such as experience and emotion, magic and mysticism, 4) blurring boundaries between unnatural binaries within academia, race and sexuality, 5) rejection of “careful, reasoned style” of modern culture, and 6) focus on that which has been marginalized or otherwise ignored.<sup>30</sup> Third Wave feminism fulfills each of these criteria, offering revisions to second wave feminism’s precisely deconstructed canon of liberal ideology, focusing on the personal experiences and desires of young people, disregarding binary abstractions of culture, and highlighting those voices that have been previously neglected. George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), 8-9.

postmodern life. Ultimately, the bond between the researcher and the material studied provides flexibility, as well as an enduring loyalty, to the theoretical framework of this thesis.

### Research Question

The underlying query in this research was to better understand the diverse, multiperspectival nature of feminist ideologies expressed in one example of the Third Wave feminist press. By narrowing the scope of the study to *BUST*, questions about zine production, distribution, and promotion techniques were raised. While spotlighting how *BUST* represents the Third Wave feminist movement, this thesis study explicates how Third Wave feminist media offers visibility and support to this community of unorthodox voices often marginalized by mainstream media.

The pivotal research question for this study is: What do Third Wave feminists express about identity, philosophy, political belief, lifestyle choices, and sexuality in their publications? In other words, what can be learned about Third Wave feminism from the study of *BUST* magazine?

This case study of *BUST* was performed using participant-observation, in-depth interviews, and content analysis of the magazine itself. These research methods are discussed further in Chapter III: Methodology, the results of these examinations are reported in Chapters IV-VI: Findings, and the resolution to the above-mentioned research question is presented in Chapter VII: Conclusion.

## Delimitation & Limitations

The delimitations imposed on this research revolve around the amount of time allotted for the observation of *BUST*,<sup>31</sup> the participation in one piece of original writing,<sup>32</sup> in-depth telephone interviews,<sup>33</sup> and the review of *BUST* nos. 1-17.<sup>34</sup> While up to one month of observation was originally planned, financial limitations of the researcher and production pressures of the editorial staff resulted in a compromise of four days of observation. Although participation was offered during those four days, my primary mode of participation was in the production of one article for the feminist-themed issue of 2000. Due to the limited observation period, interviews were restricted to telephone conversations. In an effort to include as broad an understanding of *BUST* as possible, issue nos. 1-17 were analyzed.

The nature of underground media and subversive subcultures defies mainstream access, challenging scholars to think outside the commercial and academic box for data gathering. Luckily, the success and continued publication of *BUST* offers a chance to study the phenomena of feminist zines without struggling for samples. Cooperation from the editors and staff of *BUST* was, for the most part, gracious and effortless.

## Definition of Terms

Third Wave Feminism: Young feminist theories are still being formulated, negotiated, and understood in the realms of academic and political feminist thought. As such, *Third Wave feminism* does not have an established, single definition. Sometimes called

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<sup>31</sup> Observations took place October 24-28, 2000. See Chapter IV for more on the observation segment.

<sup>32</sup> Lettie Conrad, "Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 69-71.

<sup>33</sup> Telephone interviews were conducted during the fall and winter of 2000 and the spring of 2001. See Chapter V: Interview Findings for more on the interview segment of this case study.

<sup>34</sup> See Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings for more on the content analysis of *BUST*.

“youth feminism,” Third Wave feminism can be seen as contemporary feminist theory and culture. Born in a postmodern era, Third Wave feminists have diverse approaches to activism and widely disparate values regarding such intimate topics as sexuality, lifestyle, and identity, as well as political conceptions of gender, race, and class.

Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake offer this characterization: “we define feminism’s Third Wave as a movement that contains elements of Second Wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while it also acknowledges and makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures.”<sup>35</sup> As a hybrid, almost chameleon, body of theory, the Third Wave is a non-positivist approach to feminism, informed and transformed by awareness of racism, classism, and homophobia, and reacting to, as well as adopting, Second Wave feminist theories.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, Third Wave feminism is characterized by a focus on individualism and anti-essentialism,<sup>37</sup> alternative and diverse sexualities, contradiction and contrast, and multiculturalism. Drawing from queer theories, in the use of camp,<sup>38</sup> and postmodern theories, such as the use of pastiche,<sup>39</sup> Third Wave feminism cobbles together various contemporary social theories to express multiple Third Wave perspectives.

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<sup>35</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 3.

<sup>36</sup> While Third Wave feminism is often found to both reject and embrace elements of second wave culture, theory, and activism, this research acknowledges that there is no definitive, singular body of thought or history that encompasses the second wave. Generally, the term ‘second wave’ will refer to the overwhelmingly liberal feminist theories formed and expressed during the 1960s and 70s. Further discussion of these feminist waves in Chapter II: Literature Review (p. 26-35).

<sup>37</sup> In this context, *anti-essentialism* refers to the rejection of essentialist philosophies within certain camps of feminist theory, which hold “that females (or male) have an essential nature (e.g. nurturing and caring versus being aggressive and selfish), as opposed to differing by variety of accidental or contingent features brought about by social forces.” *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, s.v. “essentialism.”

<sup>38</sup> *Camp* is a term established by queer studies to identify those cultural expressions that are exaggerated, affected, and ostentatious, playfully calling the status quo into question. See Chapter VI, pages 144-157 for more.

<sup>39</sup> *Pastiche* is a postmodern technique that can be defined as the random assembly of fragmented images and meanings, counterposing accepted structures, thus challenging and redefining traditional social assumptions. See Chapter VI, pages 144-157 for more.

Third Wave feminism represents a body of feminist theory as well as a growing movement within a new generation. The nationwide Third Wave Foundation began forming in 1989, making its first official political appearance at the Freedom Summer youth organizing event in 1992,<sup>40</sup> the same year that a feminist conference at Hunter College in New York featured a panel dedicated to Third Wave feminism.<sup>41</sup> From anthologies such as *To Be Real*<sup>42</sup> and *Listen Up*,<sup>43</sup> to articles on “Gen X” or “girlie” feminism in *Spin*<sup>44</sup> and *Seventeen*<sup>45</sup> magazines, Third Wave feminism has been brewing for over ten years now. Yet, some scholars still see the Third Wave movement as entirely inter-textual, with no basis in political action or consciousness-raising. Ednie Kaeh Garrison admits that there are some elements of wishful thinking in the way this generation of feminist scholars use the term. “The name ‘Third Wave feminism’ may be more about desire than a reflection of an already existing thing,” Garrison cautions.<sup>46</sup> Regardless, Garrison relies, as do I, on the use of these words, and the power of young feminist communities, to establish this phrase in reference to the new wave of feminist thought and action.

Underground press: In this study, underground and alternative media refer to those print publications produced outside of the commercial media system. Within this genre, many distinctions can be made as to the style and format as well as the purpose and focus of the publications. Many examples of the underground press can be seen to defy publication traditions, constructed without financial or creative involvement with commercial interests,

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<sup>40</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 241, 268.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*: 78.

<sup>42</sup> Rebecca Walker, ed., *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism* (New York: Anchor, 1995).

<sup>43</sup> Barbara Findlen, *Listen Up: Voices From the Next Feminist Generation* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1995).

<sup>44</sup> “The Girl Issue,” *Spin* (November 1997).

<sup>45</sup> Malkin, Nina. “The Scene: It’s a Girl Thing.” *Seventeen* 52 (May 1993): 3.

<sup>46</sup> Ednie Kaeh Garrison, “U.S. Feminism--Grrrl Style!: Youth (Sub)Cultures and the Technologies of the Third Wave” (*Feminist Studies*, Spring 2000): 165.

focused on challenging status quo politics and culture. Some underground periodicals can offer non-corporate alternatives to mainstream media, while maintaining a for-profit status and a standard journalistic approach. This study of the underground feminist press will focus on examples of the latter, such as *BUST*, which strive to compete with mainstream media through unconventional means.

Zine: First used in 1965, *zine* is defined as a shortened version of *fanzine*.<sup>47</sup> Emerging from European and U.S. punk movements of the 1970s, zines have been utilized as powerful subcultural organizing tools. Zines are often subversive handmade, underground magazines, usually constructed by a small group of activists, artists, or musicians with a specific, esoteric theme or purpose. Today, zines range in format from handmade booklets to sophisticated independent magazines to electronic journals.

Third Wave feminist zines can be both handcrafted mini-magazines as well as glossy publications, such as later editions of *BUST*. Karen Green and Tristan Taormino “define ‘girl zines’ as do-it-yourself publications made primarily by and for girls and women.”<sup>48</sup> In the context of this study, the word *zine* refers to an independently produced magazine without corporate funding. In this review, the terms *zine*, *grrl-zine*, or *Third Wave feminist zine* will be used interchangeably.

Riot Grrrl or Punk Feminism: Suggesting an angry growl, the word *grrrl* (or *gurl*, *gerl*, *grrl*, or *girrrl*) challenges the nice, sweet, and unassertive stereotypes of “girls.” Beginning as a “loose network of women from Olympia and Washington D.C.,”<sup>49</sup> the riot *grrrl* movement offered young women a sisterhood of Third Wave feminist musicians and artists, as well as a

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<sup>47</sup> Oxford English Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “zine.”

<sup>48</sup> Karen Green and Tristan Taormino, eds., *A Girls Guide to Taking Over the World: Writings from the Girl Zine Revolution* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1997), xi.

<sup>49</sup> Barbara O’Dair, ed., *The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock: Trouble Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997), 458.

forum for feminist action to reclaim radical activism from apathetic, male-dominated punk communities. Garrison defines riot grrrl as “an alternative subculture built around opposition to presuppositions that young (usually white) American girls and women are too pre-occupied with themselves and boys to be interested in being political, creative and loud.”<sup>50</sup> Along with girl-punk music, zines became an important organizational and educational agent of the riot grrrl movement – as a vehicle for riot grrrl’s “call to action.”<sup>51</sup>

While not the first rock-and-roll-based feminism, the riot grrrl movement developed out of the indie punk scene by women demanding a female-positive voice within the male-dominated punk movement. Allowing each girl to define punk and feminism the way she saw fit, riot grrrls were a fierce force within Third Wave feminism throughout the early 1990s. Misunderstood by mainstream media, such as *USA Today* and *Newsweek* magazine, as a cute trend, several commercial venues publicized the end of the riot grrrl movement by 1995.<sup>52</sup> However, with the proliferation of feminist punk bands and the growing readership of maturing feminist zines, it can be argued that riot grrrls are still developing into focused, articulate Third Wave feminists.

*The New Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll* offers this definition: “Riot Girl, also spelled Riot Grrrl, was a feminist movement that rose out of the punk-rock underground of the early Nineties. The group was formed by a national network of young women who had met at college or through fanzines and bands.”<sup>53</sup> This study refuses to refer to the riot grrrl

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<sup>50</sup> Ednie Kaeh Garrison, “U.S. Feminism--Grrrl Style!: Youth (Sub)Cultures and the Technologies of the Third Wave” (*Feminist Studies*, Spring 2000): 142-3.

<sup>51</sup> Jessica Rosenberg and Gitana Garofalo, “Riot Grrrl: Revolution from Within,” *Signs* 23 no. 3 (Spring 1998): 809.

<sup>52</sup> Barbara O’Dair, ed., *The Rolling Stone Book of Women in Rock: Trouble Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997), 460-461.

<sup>53</sup> Patricia Romanowski and Holly George-Warren, eds., *The New Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll* (New York: Fireside, 1995), 836.

movement in the past tense; the term *riot grrrl* for this research refers to the first visible movement of Third Wave feminists, with roots in the indie music scene.

### Summary

This research hopes to elucidate the emerging theories and praxes of U.S. Third Wave feminist movement through the study of its feminist press. Focusing on the production of *BUST*, the evidence procured from this case study illuminates ideologies and expressions of Third Wave feminism. Examination of the emergence of new feminist thought and the history of Third Wave feminist print media is vital to an understanding of this developing school of thought as well as to the lives of young women and the media they create and consume.

*BUST* is a maturing riot grrrl zine, developing into a powerful force in Third Wave feminist culture and, as such, deserves academic consideration. As demonstrated in the following Literature Review, Third Wave feminist theory is challenging the foundations of academic feminism and Third Wave feminist culture is testing the traditions of feminist communication with new images of what a feminist looks like and new definitions of what theories and actions are considered feminist. The Third Wave promises to be an exciting new philosophy of race, gender, and postmodern social theories. Contributing to both a deeper examination of subversive feminist media and Third Wave feminist theory, this thesis articulates the theory and reality of Third Wave feminism for the advancement of feminist and communications scholarship.

## CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

The Third Wave feminist movement and its press have been largely ignored by communications and feminist studies. Research on underground media is more challenging than conventional media, as traditional avenues of research, such as library archives and online databases, are not readily available. In fact, underground publications fundamentally avoid involvement with mainstream media and often evade coverage. One major principle of early Third Wave feminist activists, such as the riot grrrl movement, is the belief that commercial attention weakens radical thought and, over time, assimilates feminist activism into shallow sound bites and fashion trends. Without organized publishing houses, many Third Wave feminist magazines and zines have circumvented customary library categorization and archival procedures. Luckily, recent books<sup>54</sup> and growing library collections<sup>55</sup> have begun to document and preserve some of this feminist print media.

As the “voice of the new girl order,”<sup>56</sup> *BUST* strives to address a diverse community of feminists with an anti-essentialistic, postmodern, individualistic, and multicultural approach. Beginning as a hand-made publication collated and stapled in the homes of Debbie Stoller, Marcelle Karp, and Laurie Henzel in 1993, *BUST* is one of only a few riot grrrl zines launched in the early 1990s to become a professionally published magazine.<sup>57</sup> The *BUST* girls began pulling their zine out of obscurity with improvements to the quality and distribution of each issue. Now, as a product of Razorfish Studios, *BUST* is no longer

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<sup>54</sup> Francesca Lia Block and Hillary Carlip, eds., *Zine Scene: Do It Yourself Guide to Zines* (Los Angeles: Girl Press, 1998). Seth R. Friedman, *The Factsheet Five Zine Reader: The Best Writing from the Underground World of Zines* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1997). Debbie Stoller and Michelle Karp, *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999).

<sup>55</sup> Third Wave feminist zines are being archived at the New York State Library in Albany, New York and the Department of Women’s Studies at the Washington State University in Olympia, Washington. Additionally, the Sallie Bingham Center for Women’s History and Culture in the Perkins Library at Duke University is building a comprehensive archive of *BUST* magazine.

<sup>56</sup> *BUST* no. 13 (Fall 1999): cover.

<sup>57</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, July 26, 2001, email correspondence.

considered a zine, with national distribution to a readership estimated at 300,000.<sup>58</sup> *BUST* is a quarterly periodical that is largely misunderstood by journalism, advertising, and communications industries, often either ignored, mistaken for a pornographic magazine, or disregarded for its controversial feminist content. As *BUST* expands its scope, it strives to compete with mainstream lifestyle and women's magazines without compromising its Third Wave feminist ideals.

This study of the Third Wave feminist press involves an understanding of the history of underground feminist print media, as well as a review of the Third Wave's roots in the riot grrrl movement and the feminist theories that have become signature of the Third Wave of feminism. The primary cognate areas addressed by this study are: 1) feminist alternative or underground print media, 2) the riot grrrl movement and subsequent zines, and 3) Third Wave feminist ideology. A review of previous studies on feminist print media and the growing body of research and writing about the riot grrrls and other developing Third Wave feminist movement is necessary for this case study of *BUST* magazine. As an expanding body of theory and maturing community of 21<sup>st</sup> Century feminists, this study of the Third Wave feminist press is steeped in contemporary understandings of feminist and communications studies. As demonstrated in the following chapter, the history of U.S. feminist movement reveals a strong reliance on creative and subversive print communications; the presented literature will show that Third Wave feminist zines, exemplified by *BUST*, fit into this feminist heritage and communicate postmodern developments in feminist theory and activism.

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<sup>58</sup> *BUST* has a current estimated readership of 300,000 (Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 September 2001, email correspondence). Additionally, *BUST* is sold by independent bookstores in major cities such as Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago, New York, and Seattle, as well as chain retailers across the nation, including Tower Records, Barnes & Noble, and Borders Books & Music.

## Feminist Print Media

You can't have a revolution without a press.

Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History*

Throughout the legacy of U.S. feminist thought and action, the feminist press has played a pivotal role as a key channel by which women organize, debate, connect, and educate. Feminist publications have been political instigators of American campaigns to change women's political, social, and economic status. In her history of the feminist underground press, Lauren Kessler demonstrates how feminists have both contributed progressive thought to mainstream publications as well as publishing exclusively feminist-centered vehicles. Since "the first women's crusade of the 1840s ... feminist newspapers and periodicals have been the backbone of the ongoing women's movement," states Kessler.<sup>59</sup> Each wave of American feminist advancement has seen feminist publications scattered on a scale from liberal to radical. Beginning with the suffragist newspapers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and carried on by hundreds of feminist periodicals produced in the 1970s, the organized feminist movement has relied on self-made print communications as organizational and consciousness-raising tools.

Due to a lack of mainstream commercial support and media ownership, many feminist periodicals through the ages have been produced by underground and alternative methods, addressing a range of issues pertinent to women's movements of each era. Not yet referring to themselves as feminists, radical women of the 1700s contributed to the

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<sup>59</sup> Lauren Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984), 74.

publication and distribution of such anti-slavery vehicles as *The Liberator* and *The North Star*.<sup>60</sup> The Seneca Falls convention in 1848 sparked women's rights periodicals far and wide. Dozens of new titles sprouted up across the growing nation, from the *New Northwest* in Oregon to the *Women's Exponent* in Nebraska, calling for women to rise up and create change.<sup>61</sup> Amelia Bloomer's *Lily* began as a temperance paper in 1849, but grew more vocal in support of women's suffrage over the next ten years, with Susan B. Anthony's encouragement.<sup>62</sup> Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton began the 16-page weekly, the *Revolution*, in 1868, daring to declare women's rights to participate in the democratic process. *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly* was considered even more radical, frankly discussing sexuality and reproductive rights, as well as promoting Victoria Woodhull's presidential bid in 1876.<sup>63</sup> Other titles such as Alice Paul's *The Suffragist* and *The Woman Citizen* carried on into the early 1900s.<sup>64</sup>

Several early suffrage papers lasted well into the 1920s, including the National Union of Women's Suffrage serial *Common Cause* and the Women's Freedom League's publication, *Vote*.<sup>65</sup> For the most part, suffrage organs were devoted to inspiring political reformation and rallying women rabble-rousers, standing in stern contrast to their fashion-laden counterparts and the glossy pages of *Godey's Lady's Book*.<sup>66</sup> The purpose of the early alternative feminist press was rather utilitarian - these self-produced magazines were vital communication

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Terry Mehlman and Anne Trager, *Annotated Guide to Women's Periodicals in the United States and Canada* (Richmond: The Women's Programs Office, Earlham College, 1985).

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Lauren Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984), 74.

<sup>64</sup> Kathleen L. Endres and Therese L. Lueck, eds., *Women's Periodicals in the United States: Social and Political Issues* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996).

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Nancy K. Humphreys, *American Women's Magazines* (New York: Garland, 1989).

devices for Victorian feminists.<sup>67</sup> Some of the first vocally feminist national literary magazines – namely, Charlotte Perkins Gillman’s *Forerunner* – were widely published within the First Wave of feminism.<sup>68</sup> While the seven outspoken issues of Margaret Sanger’s *Woman Rebel* came and went in 1914, Sanger picked up the *Birth Control Review* in 1921, bringing contraception into the mainstream within ten years.<sup>69</sup> In the 1930s, the mainstream press was hitting its peak with such lucrative titles as *Ladies Home Journal*. The proliferation of feminist publications slowed to a trickle, with most periodicals being produced by women’s organizations and small university presses. This era saw some of the first nationally distributed feminist journals written by and for professional women, such as *Medical Women’s Journal* and *Women Lawyer’s Journal*.<sup>70</sup>

While volumes of independent feminist material had been published in the 300 years since the printing press arrived on U.S. shores, feminist journalists, activists, and scholars did not utilize zines until the late 1970s. The origin of the standard zine format can be traced to the science fiction mini-magazines in the 1940 and 1950s. Dominated by male authors and fans, science fiction zines were established as a male-oriented medium. Feminists began to address and challenge the exclusivity of alternative media when a group of women put pressure on the Underground Press Syndicate in 1969 to eliminate “male supremacy and chauvinism.”<sup>71</sup> The Second Wave struggled to add feminist perspectives to progressive underground literature, often encountering resistance from their liberal-male counterparts.

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<sup>67</sup> Lauren Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984), 74.

<sup>68</sup> Nancy K. Humphreys, *American Women’s Magazines* (New York: Garland, 1989).

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Terry Mehlman and Anne Trager, *Annotated Guide to Women’s Periodicals in the United States and Canada* (Richmond: The Women’s Programs Office, Earlham College, 1985).

<sup>71</sup> Lauren Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984), 83.

A second World War and the dawning of the sexual revolution gave way to an alternative media explosion in the 1970s.<sup>72</sup> Continuing the enduring legacy of subversive feminist periodicals, and joining the rebellious ranks of the anti-Vietnam war and civil rights movements, Second Wave feminism sparked thousands of women's newsletters, journals and pamphlets in hundreds of cities. Three hundred feminist periodicals were available in the U.S. in 1972.<sup>73</sup> Eleven new feminist magazines were launched in 1979 alone, including *Black Maria*, *Motherfoot*, and *Sing Heavenly Muse!* The *Feminist Bookstore News* spent over ten years cataloging the cacophony of 70s feminist publications.<sup>74</sup>

The Second Wave feminist press offered diverse periodicals, from those for women over 40 (*Broomstick*) and Latina artists (*Third Woman*) to members of the Women's Itinerant Hobo's Union (*Boxcar*) and feminist photographers (*Blatant Image*).<sup>75</sup> Second Wave underground magazines covered all the bases and were not always serious and political, or strictly feminist. For the first time, women's zines were authentically diverse – taking on everything from race to rock-n-roll – with more channels of expression opening to groups that had been otherwise silenced in the mainstream media. Many adopted traditional newspaper-style formats, reporting facts from the feminist front lines, such as *New Directions for Women*, *Majority Report*, and *Quest*.<sup>76</sup> Some took on standard magazine-layouts such as *The Furies*, *It Ain't Me Babe*, and *Lavender Woman*.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Lauren Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984), 83.

<sup>74</sup> Kathleen L. Endres and Therese L. Lueck, eds., *Women's Periodicals in the United States: Social and Political Issues* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996).

<sup>75</sup> Nancy K. Humphreys, *American Women's Magazines* (New York: Garland, 1989).

<sup>76</sup> Carol Zavitz and Hans Kleipool, *International Guide to Women's Periodicals and Resources, 1981/2* (Ontario, Canada: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1982).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

The 1980s saw underground publications again serving utilitarian purposes, keeping girl-power vocal in the face of a backlash and the crush of “Reaganomics.”<sup>78</sup> Ohio female prisoners sparked an inmate-rights lawsuit in Marysville in 1981 with their production of the zine *No More Cages*.<sup>79</sup> Operative papers such as *Union WAGE* fought for working women’s economic and legal rights.<sup>80</sup> The 80s also introduced many young feminist magazines, talking back to their Second Wave mothers with lesbian erotica in *On Our Backs* and the beginnings of punk-rock zines such as *Riot Grrrl* and *Bitch*.<sup>81</sup>

The punk scene is yet another terrain in which women have fought for equal access and representation.<sup>82</sup> As sizable zine production took hold in punk communities in the late 1970s and 1980s, feminist musicians began to co-opt the format for their own uses.<sup>83</sup> Punk-feminist zine production was most prolific in the early 1990s, with riot grrrl titles such as *Girl Germs* and *Riot Grrrl*.<sup>84</sup> Responding to traditional notions of beauty and femininity, as well as male-punk sexism, feminists in the punk scene organized resistance through their DIY music and publications, the first Third Wave feminist media. From first-wave suffrage-era papers such as *The Revolution* to Third Wave feminist magazines such as *BUST*, the feminist press has produced hundreds of uncensored, progressive pamphlets, newsletters, magazines, and newspapers.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *A History of Popular Women’s Magazines in the U.S. 1792 – 1995* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998).

<sup>79</sup> Nancy K. Humphreys, *American Women’s Magazines* (New York: Garland, 1989).

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *A History of Popular Women’s Magazines in the U.S. 1792 – 1995* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998).

<sup>82</sup> Lucy O’Brien, *She Bop: A Definitive History of Women in Rock, Pop and Soul* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995).

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Karen Green and Tristan Taormino, Eds. *A Girls Guide to Taking Over the World: Writings from the Girl Zine Revolution* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1997).

<sup>85</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000).

In his analysis of alternative media, Peter Lewis presents three “breeding grounds” for underground press: “new social movements,” “old, continuing struggles,” and “newly emerging political demands.”<sup>86</sup> Although Lewis identifies feminist movements<sup>87</sup> as part of the first category, it can be argued that the Third Wave feminist press satisfies all three divisions. As each new generation redefines and rediscovers political realities relating to the fight for gender equality, feminism is both a ‘new social movement’ and an ‘old, continuing struggle.’ And, as factions of these generations agree on revised and revisited feminist beliefs and values, ‘newly emerging political demands’ are undoubtedly evident.

American Studies scholar Stephen Duncombe braves the predominately uncharted territory of zine production in *Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture*<sup>88</sup> As a musician and zine-producer, Duncombe conducts a study of zines as a cultural American text, finding that the medium fulfills Antonio Gramsci’s definition of counterhegemonic culture.<sup>89</sup> He observes that, within this revolution against mainstream culture, zines’ messages are often housed in the medium itself; the act of zine production is in and of itself an act of political rebellion. Noting zines’ potential for feminist resistance, Duncombe devotes a segment of his chapter on zine-built communities to the riot grrrl movement.

While both Lewis and Duncombe lack comprehensive research of the cultural practices and ideological messages of riot grrrl zines, they offer scholarly support for the impact of feminist alternative/underground media proliferation. In her doctoral dissertation, Caroline Kaltefleiter observes, “in the 1990s, feminist publishing finds itself recreating the

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<sup>86</sup> Peter Lewis, ed., *Alternative Media: Linking Global and Local* (Paris: UNESCO, 1993), 15.

<sup>87</sup> Although Lewis does not specify a particular era or wave of feminist movement, one can only guess that he is referring to contemporary liberal feminism popularized in the 1970s.

<sup>88</sup> Stephen Duncombe, *Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture* (London: Verso, 1997).

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

idiosyncratic newsletters of the eighteenth century through postmodern publications known as fanzines.”<sup>90</sup> Discussing how these zines resist mainstream feminist notions and provide a subcultural identity, Kaltefleiter notes that over two thousand riot grrrl zines were still in production in 1995. Much has yet to be acknowledged and explored about the Third Wave feminist press and this thesis strives to fill this gap.

### Riot Grrrls & Zines<sup>91</sup>

Putting the punk back into feminism and the feminism into punk.

Liberty, *Riot Grrrl* 5<sup>92</sup>

Suggesting an angry growl, the word *grrrl* challenges the nice, sweet, and unassertive stereotypes of “girls.” These grrrls were known for promoting a postmodern blend of carefree youth with a serious, mature awareness of society and politics, best exemplified by their signature baby-doll dresses worn with heavy, black combat boots.<sup>93</sup> The riot grrrl movement and its subsequent underground network of zines were the first visible and nationwide manifestation of the Third Wave feminist press. Neither scholars nor girl-punks agree on the exact moment the riot grrrl movement took shape. Many say it centered on Kathleen Hanna and her all-girl punk band, Bikini Kill, launched in 1991.<sup>94</sup> Others hold that the term was first used in a fan letter from the same year to the lead singer of another girl band, Bratmobile.<sup>95</sup> Regardless, most agree that by the time K Records of Olympia,

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<sup>90</sup> Caroline K. Kaltefleiter, “Revolution Girl Style Now: Trebled Reflexivity and The Riot Grrrl Network.” Ph.D. diss. (Ohio University, August, 1995), 76.

<sup>91</sup> See pages 11-15, Definition of Terms.

<sup>92</sup> Liberty, “What Riot Grrrl Means To Me,” in *Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture*, Stephen Duncombe (London: Verso, 1997), 175.

<sup>93</sup> This riot-grrrl fashion trend signified a pastiche of girlish inno ence and militant defiance, an early Third Wave expression of individualism, anti-essentialism, and postmodern feminism.

<sup>94</sup> Caroline K. Kaltefleiter, “Revolution Girl Style Now: Trebled Reflexivity and The Riot Grrrl Network.” Ph.D. diss. (Ohio University, August, 1995).

<sup>95</sup> Lucy O’Brien, *She Bop: A Definitive History of Women in Rock, Pop and Soul* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995).

Washington opened their summer 1991 International Pop Underground Festival with “Girl Day” (featuring all-girl indie bands and their zines), the riot grrrl movement was established and infiltrating the punk and indie music scenes with Third Wave feminism.

Drawing on the DIY attitude of U.S. and European punk subcultures, the riot grrrls organized musical and political events primarily via zines and other self-made media. With cut-and-paste formats, zines were constructed on kitchen tables and bedroom floors, and reproduction was stolen, traded, or donated. Addressing a range of topics from music to fashion to date rape, riot grrrl zines offered forums for expression not available through commercial media. Publications such as *Angry Young Woman*, *Spilt Milk*, and *Fierce Vagina*, as well as zines dedicated to all-girl punk bands such as *Bikini Kill*, served as underground bulletin boards for Third Wave feminist practice and theory for these young rockers and revolutionaries. Amy Richards and Jennifer Baumgardner observe that the riot grrrls “mixed a childish aesthetic with all that is most threatening in a female adult: rage, bitterness, and political acuity.”<sup>96</sup>

Riot grrrls gained mainstream visibility through national music media coverage of musicians such as Courtney Love of the band Hole and girl-punk musical collaborations with matrons of rock such as Joan Jett. The riot grrrls and their zines drew media attention and were labeled fashion-trendsetters in articles printed by *Rolling Stone*.<sup>97</sup> As in the First and Second Wave’s feminist subcultures, riot grrrls struggled with the meanings of and approaches to this media coverage; there were many disagreements within the movement about how to handle attention by the commercial press. Riot grrrls discussed this media

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<sup>96</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 133.

<sup>97</sup> Kim France, “Grrrls at war,” *Rolling Stone* (8 July 1993): 23.

coverage and commercial appropriation in their zines, as well standard feminist issues such as body image, sexual violence, and male domination.

In one of the few scholarly works addressing riot grrrls, David R. Hall addressed “The Rhetoric and Subcultural Practices of Riot Grrrls” in his masters dissertation for Chapel Hill University.<sup>98</sup> Focusing on how riot grrrls reconceived male-dominated punk subcultures, Hall identifies the impact of the riot grrrl movement within a few years after its peak. Hall does not reflect on the importance of the riot grrrls in the history of feminism or as the first rumblings of Third Wave feminism. Also published as a dissertation in 1995, Kaltefleiter digs deeper into the significance of the riot grrrls by discussing the philosophical implications of the lyrics of their music and content of their zines.<sup>99</sup> She sees this punk-feminism as articulating a “trebled reflexivity,” or what Kaltefleiter sees as the triad of female oppression for girls and women: subjugation of the female self or body, male domination, and resistant subculture.<sup>100</sup> Kaltefleiter’s work views grrrl-style feminism as a defiant force fighting against the oppression of women, understood to be a broad coalition of issues encompassing race, class, and gender. Without using the ‘Third Wave’ moniker, the conclusions of her research find these zines to be “oppositional feminist media,”<sup>101</sup> laying the groundwork for the future of the young feminist press.<sup>102</sup>

Discovering punk-rock feminist resistance in 1980s-era issues of the zine *Maximumrocknroll*, Duncombe sees riot grrrl zines as “bringing together the radical critique of patriarchy and desire for female community of past feminist movements, and the in-your-

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<sup>98</sup> David R. Hall, “Revolution Grrrl Style Now!: The Rhetoric and Subcultural Practices of Riot Grrrls.” M.A. diss. (Chapel Hill University, 1995).

<sup>99</sup> Caroline K. Kaltefleiter, “Revolution Girl Style Now: Trebled Reflexivity and The Riot Grrrl Network.” Ph.D. diss. (Ohio University, August, 1995).

<sup>100</sup> Ibid, 246.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, 258.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

face, rebellious individualism of punk rock.”<sup>103</sup> Duncombe makes shrewd observations about riot grrrls’ negotiations with Second Wave ideologies and utilization of the zine format as political resistance and organization. However, his research fails to go beyond the pages of the few zines New York State Library archived.<sup>104</sup> Duncombe does not mention the existence of the Riot Grrrl conventions of 1990-1994 in Washington D.C., nor does he acknowledge that this emerging punk-feminism was a diverse and multiperspectival movement. Relying on the work contained in only two grrrl-zines, Duncombe’s analysis only skims the surface of the riot grrrl beginnings of Third Wave feminism.

Providing testimonials to the feminist power of riot grrrl zines, Jessica Rosenberg and Gitana Garofalo recorded a conversation among eight riot grrrls in the 1998 special issue of the journal *Signs* devoted to “Feminisms and Youth Culture.”<sup>105</sup> In their introduction tracing the cultural development of the riot grrrl movement, Rosenberg and Garofalo quote one interviewee as saying, “Zines are so important because so many girls feel isolated and don’t have other girls to support them in their beliefs. Zines connect them to other girls who will listen and believe and care if they say they’ve been raped or molested and harassed. Zines provide an outlet for girls to get their feelings and lives out there and share them with others.”<sup>106</sup> Also focusing on youth culture, Angela McRobbie’s cultural study of girls’ subcultures and feminist beliefs explains that punk was “the first form of rock ... to allow female voices to be heard that are not often allowed expression on records, stage or radio –

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<sup>103</sup> Stephen Duncombe, *Notes from Underground* (London: Verso, 1997), 66.

<sup>104</sup> The New York State Library in Albany holds a limited and closed archive of zines, ending with those produced in 1992. Compiled by Mike Gunderloy, editor of *Fact Sheet Five*, in 1982 and categorized by 22 subject areas, this collection does not include a feminist zine subject area, and only few riot grrrl zines were included.

<sup>105</sup> Jessica Rosenberg and Gitana Garofalo, “Riot Grrrl: Revolution from Within,” *Signs* 23 no. 3 (Spring 1998): 809.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, 811.

shrill, assertive, impure individual voices.”<sup>107</sup> Although re-released in 2000, McRobbie’s research was completed prior to the 1990s riot grrrl upsurges in the U.S. and Europe, and therefore does not address this early Third Wave feminism.

Mentioning riot grrrls as members of a larger feminist punk movement, sociologist Lauraine Leblanc offers an ethnography of women in punk subcultures with her 1999 release of *Pretty in Punk*.<sup>108</sup> After spending two years conducting field research on women in punk communities in major U.S. cities such as San Francisco and Chicago, Leblanc presents evidence from hundreds of interviews that express a punk-rock version of feminist subcultural resistance. In a discussion of punk girls’ negotiations with mainstream notions of femininity, she admits that “only a few punk girls, like the riot grrrls, raise their voices in protest”<sup>109</sup> to sexist stereotypes. In so doing, Leblanc concludes, riot grrrls became a sub-cultural manifestation of Third Wave feminist theory within the punk scene.

Volumes such as *Zine Scene*<sup>110</sup> and *DIY Feminism*<sup>111</sup> have drawn important, while not erudite, connections between the riot grrrl movement and Third Wave feminist theory and practice.<sup>112</sup> The legacy of the riot grrrls has been preserved in collections of interviews and cultural history, such as *Grrrls: Viva Rock Divas*<sup>113</sup> and *She Bop: A Definitive History of Women in Rock, Pop and Soul*.<sup>114</sup> Acting as evidentiary work, these books do not draw scholarly analysis about their subjects, but act as further indicators of the riot grrrl movement as a Third Wave

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<sup>107</sup> Angela McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 152.

<sup>108</sup> Lauraine Leblanc, *Pretty in Punk: Girls’ Gender Resistance in a Boys’ Subculture* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>110</sup> Francesca Lia Block and Hillary Carlip, eds. *Zine Scene: Do It Yourself Guide to Zines* (CITY?: Girl Press, 1998).

<sup>111</sup> Kathy Bail, ed. *DIY Feminism* (St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1996).

<sup>112</sup> Such as: Karen Green and Tristan Taormino, eds., *Girls Guide to Taking Over the World: Girl Zine Revolution* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1997).

<sup>113</sup> Amy Raphael, *Grrrls: Viva Rock Divas* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1995).

<sup>114</sup> Lucy O’Brien, *She Bop: A Definitive History of Women in Rock, Pop and Soul* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995).

feminist revolution. Many provide first-person accounts as evidence of the punk-feminist subculture and the underground network of zines.

With the purpose of preserving and promoting punk feminism, *A Girls Guide to Taking Over the World: Writing from the Girl Zine Revolution*<sup>115</sup> reprints hundreds of riot grrrl zine excerpts. Editors Karen Green and Tristan Taormino offer a diversity of young female perspectives expressed in these “quietly subversive”<sup>116</sup> girl zines, organized into chapters representing “the spaces in women’s lives where they communicate with each other and themselves.”<sup>117</sup> Carefully avoiding essentialist statements about the entire Third Wave feminist movement, Green and Taormino state, “zines are sites for communication, education, community, revolution, celebration, and self-expression.”<sup>118</sup>

Trina Robbins’ compilation of women-oriented comics *From Girls to Grrrls*<sup>119</sup> is introduced by riot grrrl “zinester”<sup>120</sup> Carla Sinclair, who is currently producing the Internet zine, *NetChick*. Chronicling the impact of images of women in comics such as *Love and Rockets* and the fight for recognition of female-produced comics, Robbins’s work unites women involved in numerous formats of underground feminist media.

The underground press, in its attempts to document sectors of subcultural history and art, has supplied evidence of the riot grrrl movement and its zines. Focusing on the documentation of diverse U.S. zines, releases such as *The Book of Zines*<sup>121</sup> and *The Factsheet Five*

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<sup>115</sup> Karen Green and Tristan Taormino, eds., *Girls Guide to Taking Over the World: Girl Zine Revolution* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 1997).

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>119</sup> Trina Robbins, *From Girls to Grrrls: A History of {Venus - symbol for female} Comics from Teens to Zines* (San Francisco: Chronicle, 1999).

<sup>120</sup> Zinester: one who authors, edits, produces, distributes and/or collects zines.

<sup>121</sup> Chris Rowe, ed., *The Book of Zines: Readings from the Fringe* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, Inc., 1997).

*Zine Reader*<sup>122</sup> situate the punk-rock, hand-made magazine trend firmly within liberal underground political and artistic movements. Looking at *The Book of Zines*, author Chris Rowe calls zines “tinkertoys for malcontents.”<sup>123</sup> While representing the wide range of zine material, Rowe includes three girl zine excerpts, two of which are from early issues of *BUST*. While failing to make the connection between riot grrrl zines and Third Wave feminism, Rowe does articulate an important purpose of zine production: “You can get to know people pretty well through their zines, which are always more personal and idiosyncratic than glossy magazines because glossies and the celebrities they worship are so busy being well known.”<sup>124</sup>

*The Factsheet Five Zine Reader* also joined the compilation bandwagon in 1997, edited by zine-world-celebrity R. Seth Friedman. *Factsheet Five* was one of the original punk/grunge zines to hit the scene in 1991 and Friedman’s collection pays homage to the scope of zine production. This compilation outlines zine history and explains how zines evolved out of underground music collectives. Friedman also holds zines to be representative of trail-blazing movements of all kinds, including labor unions, sexual revolutions, and homeless activism. In the introduction to his chapter on girl-zines, Friedman correctly surmises, “these ‘Riot Grrrls’ have created a new form of feminism that makes sense for the 90s.”<sup>125</sup>

Academic researchers have not given the Third Wave feminist press much attention; specifically, examination of *BUST* as a representative of the Third Wave feminist movement has yet to be successfully achieved either within public or scholarly publications. *BUST* has

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<sup>122</sup> R. Seth Friedman, *The Factsheet Five Zine Reader: The Best Writing from the Underground World of Zines* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1997).

<sup>123</sup> Rowe, 1.

<sup>124</sup> Rowe, 2.

<sup>125</sup> Friedman, 117.

been gawked or giggled at in magazines such as *G.Q.*,<sup>126</sup> *Time*,<sup>127</sup> and *Vogue*,<sup>128</sup> but has also been given fair and accurate coverage in the *Los Angeles Times*<sup>129</sup> and *Media Life* magazine.<sup>130</sup> The *BUST* anthology<sup>131</sup> was reviewed in the likes of *The New York Times*<sup>132</sup> and *Newsweek*.<sup>133</sup> However, only two books incorporate *BUST* into an educated perspective on Third Wave feminism and its place in the history of feminist theory.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Darcy Cosper, "Girlie Action," *Gentlemen's Quarterly* 68 no.5 (May 1998): 120-121.

<sup>127</sup> Ginia Bellafonte, "Feminism: It's All About Me!" *Time* 151 no.25 (June 29, 1998): 54-62.

<sup>128</sup> Amely Greeven, "Don't Touch That Dial!" *Vogue* 187 (October 1997): 176-180, 184.

<sup>129</sup> Susan Carpenter, "When the Third Wave of Feminism Went *BUST*," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 August 1999, E(2).

<sup>130</sup> Jennifer Cox, "*BUST*, Where Sex is a Girl Thing," *Media Life* (March 9, 2001) [magazine online]; available from [http://www.medialifemagazine.com/news2001/mar01/mar05/5\\_fri/news3friday.html](http://www.medialifemagazine.com/news2001/mar01/mar05/5_fri/news3friday.html).

<sup>131</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, *The Bust Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999).

<sup>132</sup> Maria Ricapito, "'Girl' Just Wants to Have Fun," *The New York Times*, 28 December 1997, Book Reviews (9).

<sup>133</sup> Elizabeth Angell, "Welcome to the 'New Girl Order,'" *Newsweek* 134 no.8 (August 1999): 32.

<sup>134</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997). Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000).

## Third Wave Feminism<sup>135</sup>

I am twenty-five years old. On my left upper arm I have a six-inch long tattoo of a voluptuous cowgirl. One of her hands rests jauntily on her jutting hip. The other is firing a gun. An earlier feminist might frown upon my cowgirl's fringed hot pants and halter top as promoting sexual exploitation, and might see her pistol as perpetuating male patterns of violence. Yet I see this image as distinctly feminist. Having a tattoo signifies a subculture that subverts traditional notions of feminine beauty. That this tattoo is a pinup girl with a gun represents the appropriation and redefinition of sexuality, power, and violence – ideas characteristic of Third Wave punk feminism.

Klein, "Duality and Redefinition: Young Feminism and Alternative Music Community"<sup>136</sup>

Drawing on previous waves of feminist movement and varied civil rights campaigns, Third Wave feminism cannot be considered a singular volume of belief.<sup>137</sup> This research will, however, attempt to articulate the diverse ideologies of this evolving intellectual movement. Rather than splitting hairs to satisfy all definitions of feminist reality, this study will refer to Third Wave feminism as both *generational* and *theoretical* manifestations of contemporary feminist culture, theory, activism, and mass communication.

Before discussing theoretical specifics of the Third Wave of feminism, the underlying historical implications of this discussion of the term 'Third Wave' feminism will be addressed. Juxtaposing itself to past cycles of feminist movement, Third Wave feminism alludes to a chronological progression of feminist action and thought. The majority of scholars and historians, such as Linda Kerber and William Chafe, begin counting waves of feminist movement with the first known use of the term *feminism* in 1910 to refer to the

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<sup>135</sup> See pages 11-15: Definition of Terms.

<sup>136</sup> Melissa Klein, "Duality and Redefinition: Young Feminism and Alternative Music Community," chap. in Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 207. Klein is a feminist activist, artist and author of the zine *inkling*.

<sup>137</sup> Although it is understood that the term *feminism* is plural in and of itself, occasional reference will be made to *feminisms* to stress the multiplicity of theoretical, political, and social ideologies that address gender inequality and sexist oppression.

cultural, political, and legal struggles for gender equity.<sup>138</sup> Therefore, the feminist disputes of the late 1800s and early 1900s, including abolition and suffrage movements, constitute the First Wave of feminism. Although feminist fights for reproductive rights and women in the workforce were fought through the fifty years following passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, Barbara Ryan explains that the explosion of feminist factions and philosophies that developed in the 1960s and 1970s marks this era as the Second Wave of feminism.<sup>139</sup>

However, some scholars do not agree to these historical divisions of First, Second, and Third Wave feminism. For example, Rita James Simon begin counting with the women's rights campaigns that joined forces with abolitionists and mobilized with the "Declaration of Sentiments" produced by the Seneca Falls convention of 1848.<sup>140</sup> She then considers the suffrage advancements of the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as the Second Wave of feminist movement, which places 1970s women's liberation movements as the Third Wave of feminism. Simon does not consider this Third Wave to be obsolete, referring to all current feminist activism as 'contemporary feminism.' An application of this school of thought can be found in Lauren Kessler's history of underground feminist press.<sup>141</sup> Kessler also demarcates waves of feminist activism by imposing the feminist label on women's movement of the 1700s and 1800s.

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<sup>138</sup> Feminism, referring to that ideology that supports the equality of women, is borrowed from the French *féminisme* - a word originally created to refer to the Nineteenth Century American woman's movement. Replacing "womanism" of the 1890s, the feminist title was vigorously donned by U.S. suffragists in the early 1900s. [Linda K. Kerber and Jane Sherron De Hart, eds., *Women's America: Refocusing the Past, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). William H. Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).]

<sup>139</sup> Barbara Ryan, *Feminism and the Women's Movement: Dynamics of Change in Social Movement Ideology and Activism* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

<sup>140</sup> Rita James Simon, *Women's Movements in America: Their Successes, Disappointments, and Aspirations* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1991).

<sup>141</sup> Lauren Kessler, *The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in American History* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984).

For purposes of this research, however, I align myself with the historical and theoretical works of such scholars as Kerber, Chafe, and Ryan.<sup>142</sup> The progression of feminist movement begins with the first group of women's rights activists who applied the term *feminism* to their political and social struggles, who were the suffragists of the early 1900s. The second swells of feminist activity took place between 1966 and the early 1970s. And, free of any blame of historical presentism, this study refers to the Third Wave of feminism as that revolutionary thought and action, beginning in the early 1990s, which worked for changes in gender equity by young people and others reacting to the dominant feminist cannons of the Second Wave.

A wave can be seen as "one among others."<sup>143</sup> In its etymological basis, Third Wave feminism can be simply defined as the next current of feminist theory and politics. Some feminists, such as Jo Trigilio,<sup>144</sup> believe the Third Wave movement is entirely inter-textual, with no foundation in political action or consciousness-raising. As mentioned previously, Heywood and Drake define "feminism's Third Wave as a movement that contains elements of Second Wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse, and power structures while it also acknowledges and makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures."<sup>145</sup> Third Wave feminism has come to be characterized by a focus on individualism and anti-essentialism, postmodernism, contradiction and contrast, mysticism, and multiculturalism.

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<sup>142</sup> Linda K. Kerber and Jane Sherron De Hart, eds., *Women's America: Refocusing the Past, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). William H. Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). Barbara Ryan, *Feminism and the Women's Movement: Dynamics of Change in Social Movement Ideology and Activism* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

<sup>143</sup> Cathryn Bailey, "Making Waves and Drawing Lines: The Politics of Defining the Vicissitudes of Feminism," *Hypatia* 12 no. 3 (Summer 1997): 17.

<sup>144</sup> Rita Alfonso and Jo Trigilio, "Surfing the Third Wave: A Dialogue Between Two Third Wave Feminists," *Hypatia* 12 no. 3 (Summer 1997).

<sup>145</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 3.

Balancing contemporary concerns with the awareness of feminist critiques and political and social advancements of the First and Second Waves, Third Wave feminist theory is presently developing, expanding, and taking shape. Third Wave feminisms are still being formulated, negotiated, and understood in the realms of academic and political thought. As such, Third Wave feminist theories must be teased out of various publications, ranging from the few academic articulations of Third Wave feminism, the works of diverse feminist writers and thinkers, and cutting-edge grassroots writings, such as underground magazines and books.

*Feminist Fatale*, Paula Kamen's collection and analysis of thousands of interviews with young women, was one of the first academic volumes to explore the social and political pressures of the third wave carrying on feminist battles into the new millennium.<sup>146</sup> Kamen's informants reveal the powerful forces against contemporary feminism in young women's fears of the "f-word," misconceptions about Second Wave feminism, and emerging new brand of feminism that includes diverse sexualities, individualism, and new, culturally-based forms of activism. While not using the term 'Third Wave' feminism, Kamen signals the swell that became the riot grrrl movement in 1991.

*Third Wave Agenda* is the first scholarly compilation dedicated to the academic exploration of Third Wave feminist theory. Heywood and Drake's volume is a collection of essays by a variety of activists, artists, journalists, and scholars, covering Third Wave perspectives on subjects ranging from identity and epistemology to music and political activism. These writers dialogue with other Third Wavers' critiques of Second Wave feminisms in hopes of modeling a new, productive approach to feminist theory that does not vilify, dismantle, or ignore the past. Blending Marxist analysis of "Generation X's" financial

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<sup>146</sup> Paula Kamen, *Feminist Fatale: Voices from the "Twentysomething" Generation Explore the Future of the Women's Movement* (New York: Fine, 1991).

future and radical queer<sup>147</sup> feminist approaches with theories of Third Wave identities, Heywood and Drake have compiled a volume of what they call *hybrid feminist theory*<sup>148</sup> or “lived theory.”<sup>149</sup>

Susan Lee Biesecker-Mast uses her doctoral dissertation in philosophy to discover a critical rhetorical framework for Third Wave feminism in three texts: Susan Faludi’s *Backlash*, Naomi Wolf’s *The Beauty Myth*, and Gloria Steinem’s *Revolution From Within*.<sup>150</sup> While not addressing young feminist thought directly, Biesecker-Mast makes Third Wave assumptions from Second Wave work. She acknowledges, however, that while Third Wave forces will struggle with aspects of feminist solidarity and sisterhood, it “also would unlikely be as exclusionary as the Second Wave.”<sup>151</sup> And, academic research and theoretical analysis dedicated to youth culture and feminism, such as the special issue of *Signs* in spring 1998<sup>152</sup> and Angela McRobbie’s examination of girls and feminist subcultures,<sup>153</sup> do not discuss theories or cultures of this feminist Third Wave.

Third Wave feminist activists and scholars Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, occasional contributors to *BUST* magazine, released their feminist *Manifesta* for the Third Wave in 2000.<sup>154</sup> Baumgardner and Richards explain, “...for anyone born after the early

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<sup>147</sup> For purposes of this study, the term queer is a term reclaimed from its classification as derogatory slang by the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered rights movements as a gender-neutral reference to those individuals and communities that reject essentialist notions of sexuality to embrace a range of identities and lifestyles. Queer is a term that is still in transition and development; it is used “sometimes as an umbrella term for a coalition of culturally marginal sexual self-identifications and at other times to describe a nascent theoretical model which has developed out of more traditional lesbian and gay studies.” Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory* (New York: New York University Press, 1990): 1.

<sup>148</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 3.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>150</sup> Susan Lee Biesecker-Mast, “Vital Signs: Rhetorical Refigurations of the ‘Feminist’ for a Third Wave.” Ph.D. diss (University of Pittsburgh, April, 1995).

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 376.

<sup>152</sup> *Signs* (Special Issue: Feminisms and Youth Cultures) 23 no. 3 (Spring 1998).

<sup>153</sup> Angela McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>154</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000).

1960s, the presence of feminism in our lives is taken for granted. For our generation, feminism is like fluoride. We scarcely notice that we have it – it's simply in the water."<sup>155</sup>

*Manifesta* is written to inspire a range of Third Wave feminists, and steeped in popular culture, using sociopolitical landmarks such as Mia Hamm's Women's World Cup successes and feminist mother's Internet chat rooms as landmarks in Third Wave feminism.

Baumgardner and Richards explain how Third Wave feminist activism will take on new forms than the previous generation, taking over the pop cultural terrain of media to spread the feminist message.<sup>156</sup> Providing a women's history timeline and 13-point agenda for the Third Wave, the authors justify why "many young feminists today are choosing to call themselves Third Wave in order to herald the future."<sup>157</sup>

Another substantial scholarly presentation was the summer 1997 special issue of *Hypatia* dedicated to Third Wave feminist theory, which featured nearly a dozen philosophers' attempts to define this feminist generation. For example, Jo Trigilio defined the Third Wave as "an academic construction, used to mark the development of postmodernist critiques of Second Wave feminism."<sup>158</sup> In an attempt to locate the Third Wave feminist movement, Catherine M. Orr discussed new anthologies by young feminists as the beginnings of feminist identity and activism.<sup>159</sup> These volumes of deeply personal essays, poems and self-styled monologues by young activists are popular culture's first official look at several important cultural aspects: Third Wave feminisms, substantial feminist critique of Second Wave ideologies and a historical perspective on U.S. feminist activism and scholarship.

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid, 281-285.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, 69.

<sup>158</sup> Rita Alfonso and Jo Trigilio, "Surfing the Third Wave: A Dialogue Between Two Third Wave Feminists," *Hypatia* 12 no. 3 (Summer 1997): 8.

<sup>159</sup> Catherine M. Orr, "Charting the Currents of the Third Wave," *Hypatia* 12 no. 3 (Summer 1997): 29-46.

Edited by Rebecca Walker, daughter of literary feminist Alice Walker,<sup>160</sup> *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism*<sup>161</sup> is a popular collection of Third Wave feminist essays. This publication displays the work of young people navigating a range of ideological struggles from a curiosity in alternative sexualities such as Sadism/Masochism, friends who insult others with the word “pussy,” an affinity for misogynist hip-hop and the desire for a white wedding. These may seem insignificant to some, however, Walker recognizes they are problematic within the feminist doctrines with which these young authors were raised. She asserts that young people must change the role of feminism to create a movement in which we can “be real.” Walker does not use the “term Third Wave feminism,” yet she offers her book as an example of a new feminist movement. Walker introduces this anthology, saying, “the writers here have done the difficult work of being real (refusing to be bound by a feminist ideal not of their own making) and telling the truth (honoring the complexity and contradiction in their lives by adding their experiences to the feminist dialogue).”<sup>162</sup> Possibly offering second-wave feminist credibility, Walker’s volume is sandwiched between a foreword by Gloria Steinem and an afterword by Angela Y. Davis.

A similar collection, *Listen Up: Voices From the Next Feminist Generation*, is edited by Barbara Findlen<sup>163</sup> who comments on the unique political and cultural circumstances with which the Third Wave has been socialized. Findlen introduces this assortment of personal essays with the defense that these individual perspectives must be regarded as important. She recognizes that one’s personal experience is the exact point of entry for young people into

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<sup>160</sup> Rebecca Walker is also the co-founder of Third Wave Foundation, a multiracial feminist activist group based in Brooklyn, New York.

<sup>161</sup> Rebecca Walker, ed., *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism* (New York: Anchor, 1995).

<sup>162</sup> Rebecca Walker, ed., introduction: *To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism* (New York: Anchor, 1995), xxxiv.

<sup>163</sup> Barbara Findlen, ed., *Listen Up: Voices From the Next Feminist Generation* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1995).

feminist consciousness. *Listen Up* features essays by Rebecca Walker, sex-radical Nomy Lamm and several women of color who have felt betrayed by white feminism.

A Third Wave collective of young feminists rarely mentioned in the above texts is *HUES (Hear Us Emerging Sisters)* magazine. Founded by Ophira and Tali Edut with Dyann Logwood, *HUES* is the only glossy feminist magazine for the next generation that succeeds in representing a true rainbow of races and cultures. Tali Edut has written the astrology section of *BUST* for the past few years and Ophira Edut recently released an anthology of young feminist writing about body image, *Adiós Barbie*.<sup>164</sup> These women are strong voices in Third Wave culture, advocating a new decade of multiperspectival feminism. Similarly, drawing on their work with riot grrrl zines, Hillary Carlip's anthology *Girl Power* gives voice to a diverse community of Third Wave feminist activists.<sup>165</sup>

Third Wave feminism, similar to the Second Wave, consists of individuals existing on a spectrum from liberal to radical. Third Wave feminist theory is designed to ebb and flow with localized perceptions and subjective experiences, attempting to validate a wide range of feminist opinions. Although some feminists can be divisive in their critiques of others, the majority of Third Wavers respect a rainbow of theory. Heywood and Drake see Third Wave feminism as another response to Second Wave gender theory, a movement which is "hard at work on a feminism that strategically combines elements of these feminisms, along with black feminism, women-of-color feminism, working-class feminism, pro-sex feminism, and so on."<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Ophira Edut, ed., *Adios Barbie: Young Women Write about Body Image and Identity* (Seattle: Seal Press, 1998).

<sup>165</sup> Hillary Carlip, ed., *Girl Power: Young Women Speak Out!* (New York: Warner Books, 1995).

<sup>166</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 3.

On one radical extreme is “*Bad Girls/Good Girls*”<sup>167</sup> which deals directly with the polarities facing young feminists. While avoiding the Third Wave moniker, this anthology struggles with a divergent multitude of feminist perspectives, addressing lifestyle, academia, sexuality, career and activism. Aligning itself more strictly with the style of radical feminism developed in the 1970s, the “*Bad Girls/Good Girls*” collection sees patriarchal capitalism to be the fundamental root of female oppression. This volume’s work draws heavily on third world and multiracial feminist theory, and is impatient with traditional expressions of sexuality and femininity.

On a more conservative note, *Fire with Fire* is a controversial Third Wave feminist book by Naomi Wolf.<sup>168</sup> This work does not embrace feminist diversity and is often challenged as being from a limited, privileged perspective. Wolf argues that feminist techniques such as raising public awareness of rape with Take Back The Night marches is an act of *power feminism*, while consciousness-raising in secret meetings and bathroom-stall theories are types of *victim feminism*.<sup>169</sup> She encourages women to discard liberal or second-wave feminist analysis of patriarchal oppression and subjugation to seize the power within capitalism that will further the feminist cause. Wolf states: “In the First World, and certainly in the United States, political equality – indeed, political primacy – is within women’s grasp, if they choose to seize it.”<sup>170</sup> Wolf rarely focuses on the grass-roots activism promoted by the majority of Third Wave scholars and organizers. Although she is often criticized as not belonging to the Third Wave because of her lack of incorporation of third-world or

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<sup>167</sup> Nan Bauer Maglin and Donna Perry, eds., “*Bad Girls/Good Girls: Women, Sex & Power in the Nineties*” (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996).

<sup>168</sup> Wolf is a controversial figure, being a media-savvy feminist who is often tokenized as a representative of the Third Wave. Naomi Wolf, *Fire with Fire: The New Female Power and How to Use It* (New York: Ballantine, 1993).

<sup>169</sup> The victim versus power feminism debate is popular among young feminists. Generally, victim feminism is that activism which focuses on the identification of specific sites of sexist oppression and discrimination. Power feminism is a reaction to this legacy of activism, focusing instead on the ways in which feminists can assert resistant voices and affect progressive change.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid*, xv.

multiracial theories, Wolf is Third Wave in many ways. Her use of the system and gender codes and her dedication to revamping feminism to appeal to younger voices places her squarely within the Third Wave feminist movement.

Along with critiques of Wolf, Third Wave criticism by young feminist academics such as Katie Roiphe and Rene Denfeld<sup>171</sup> highlight major intersections between second and Third Wavers. While angering many Third Wave feminists, the beliefs of Roiphe and Denfeld, often labeled postfeminism,<sup>172</sup> are a part of the diverse and wildly variant opinions of Third Wave feminists. With widely variant reactions, young feminists of all camps struggle with their image of feminism, perceptions instilled by the media, by academic historical accounts, and by our feminist foremothers. Third Wave feminists grapple with issues of feminist identity, personal choices such as appearance and sexuality, and chosen tactics for the political mobilization necessary to live empowered lives. With divergent conclusions to these questions, Third Wave feminism is characterized by bridging differences and negotiating contradictions.<sup>173</sup>

Although the critiques of young feminist approaches highlight important areas still to be resolved, Third Wave feminists are bringing the discussion into the light through publications such as zines. The best Third Wave writers have adopted the useful parts of a variety of theories to compile a hybrid approach that works for them. Rather than striving for a meta-narrative, Third Wave feminists struggle to find unity through diversity and completeness in difference. The feminist press studied here expresses a range of Third

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<sup>171</sup> Rene Denfeld, *The New Victorians: A Young Woman's Challenge to the Old Feminist Order* (New York: Warner Books, 1995). Katie Roiphe, *The Morning After: Sex, Fear and Feminism* (Toronto, Canada: Little, Brown and Company, 1993).

<sup>172</sup> For purposes of this study, I will align myself with Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake's definition: "'postfeminism' characterizes a group of young, conservative feminists who explicitly define themselves against and criticize feminists of the second wave." [Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 1.]

<sup>173</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997).

Wave perspectives on these issues, illuminating how Third Wave feminists set themselves apart from and/or build upon the critiques of the Second Wave.

At the time of this study, there is a growing multitude of voices promoting Third Wave feminism, competing with commercial publications on mainstream newsstands in magazines such as *BUST* and staking a claim in academia with volumes such as *Third Wave Agenda*<sup>174</sup> and journals such as *Sexing the Political*.<sup>175</sup> The Third Wave has been organizing politically with the Third Wave Foundation in New York since 1989<sup>176</sup> and is thriving on the Internet with sites such as “The 3<sup>rd</sup> WWWave.”<sup>177</sup> Increasing numbers of theses and dissertations<sup>178</sup> are being devoted to the explication of the Third Wave of feminism and this manuscript contributes to this growing interest in this new wave of feminist theory and activism.

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<sup>174</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997).

<sup>175</sup> *Sexing the Political: A Journal of Third Wave Feminists on Sexuality*. [journal online]; available from <http://www.sexingthepolitical.com>.

<sup>176</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 79, 80.

<sup>177</sup> The 3<sup>rd</sup> WWWave: Feminism for the New Millenium. [Web site online]; available from <http://www.io.com/~wwwave>.

<sup>178</sup> Susan Lee Biesecker-Mast, “Vital Signs: Rhetorical Refigurations of the ‘Feminist’ for a Third Wave” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1995). David R. Hall “Revolution Grrrl Style Now!: The Rhetoric and Subcultural Practices of Riot Grrrls” (M.A. diss., Chapel Hill University, 1995). Caroline K. Kaltefleiter, “Revolution Girl Style Now: Trebled Reflexivity and The Riot Grrrl Network” (Ph.D. diss., Ohio University, August, 1995). Alison Covarriubias and Jennifer Schack. “Discovering Feminism’s Third Wave” (B.A. diss., California State Polytechnic State University, 1998). Susanne N. Beechey, “The Third Wave: Young Feminists at the Millenium” (Honors paper, Macalester College, 1999).

### CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

This study of Third Wave feminism as expressed through *BUST* magazine describes and analyzes a segment of U.S. feminist culture and the nature of its communication. As such, this research relies on qualitative research techniques. The academic approach to contemporary subcultural communication must allow for subjectivity and flexibility, and this research project was designed with similar elasticity. Rather than entering into this inquiry with predetermined conclusions, this study is grounded in Third Wave feminist theory, and yet open to new discoveries. This case study of *BUST* was made up of three segments: participant-observation,<sup>179</sup> in-depth interviews,<sup>180</sup> and content analysis.<sup>181</sup>

Better understanding today's emerging feminist theories demands an inherently feminist epistemological foundation, specifically one that is determined to vocalize the experiences and beliefs of young women and to illuminate their expressions from a 'native' perspective. While drawing on a range of approaches to feminist research, discussed by such scholars as Ann Oakley, Sandra Harding, and Liz Stanley, this study also uses related work as research models.

For example, analysis and research by Ednie Kaeh Garrison,<sup>182</sup> a Women's Studies professor at Washington State University in Olympia, represents an increased academic interest in and articulation of Third Wave feminism. Garrison has immersed herself in the musical expressions of the riot grrrl movement, finding important connections between

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<sup>179</sup> Participation included the contribution of one piece of original writing (Lettie Conrad, "Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines," *BUST* no. 16 (Winter 2000): 69-71. See Appendix VI.) and general office assistance during the week of observation, October 24-28, 2000.

<sup>180</sup> The interviews of *BUST* staff and editors were conducted via email, facsimile, and telephone between November 16, 2000 and September 25, 2001

<sup>181</sup> Content analysis was applied to *BUST* nos.1-17. The results of these three segments can be found in Chapters IV-VI: Findings. Worksheets were used during this phase of the research, see Appendix III and IV.

<sup>182</sup> Ednie Kaeh Garrison, "U.S. Feminism--Grrrl Style!: Youth (Sub)Cultures and the Technologies of the Third Wave," *Feminist Studies* 26 no.1 (Spring 2000): 141-170.

punk culture and new feminist movement. Also approaching her research from a 'native' position,<sup>183</sup> she mingles ethnographic inquiry with the development of Third Wave feminist theory.

Although not announcing the methods used in her essay, "U.S. Feminism--Grrrl Style!: Youth (Sub)Cultures and the Technologies of the Third Wave," Garrison blends in-depth interviews and participant-style observation with philosophical reasoning to articulate the hybrid cultural terrain of the riot grrrl movement as a "node" of Third Wave feminism.<sup>184</sup> Garrison asks questions about the ways in which young feminists utilize technologies and identity politics to negotiate their political and social environments. Avoiding concrete divisions and definitions, Garrison's essay ferrets out some of the same feminist theories from a cultural perspective that this thesis will articulate from a communication perspective, namely postmodernism, anti-essentialism, and multiculturalism.

Another model for this study lies in the style of feminist rhetoric and philosophy of the journal *Hypatia*.<sup>185</sup> While each quarterly issue serves as an academic model for feminist studies, the dozen essays in the summer 1997 special issue devoted to Third Wave feminism guide my understanding of this emerging theory. *Hypatia* is respected for its focus on diversity, as well as its grounding in the history of both U.S. feminist movement and philosophical tradition. Characterized by a solid engagement with popular culture, ongoing debate and multiperspectival expressions, *Hypatia's* theoretical approaches to Third Wave thought will help guide this research. Each of the dozen essays is markedly diverse, representing a range of perspectives from conservative to radical. In its open dialogue-style

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<sup>183</sup> She identifies herself as a member of the Third Wave of feminism.

<sup>184</sup> Ednie Kaeh Garrison, "U.S. Feminism--Grrrl Style!: Youth (Sub)Cultures and the Technologies of the Third Wave," *Feminist Studies* 26 no.1 (Spring 2000): 151.

<sup>185</sup> *Hypatia* is a journal of feminist philosophy published quarterly by Indiana University Press. *Hypatia* 12 no. 3 (Summer 1997) is a special issue addressing different perspectives on Third Wave feminist theories.

approach to the developing theories of Third Wave feminism, this special issue of *Hypatia* models a respectful, academic approach.

While Third Wave feminist zines have not been studied in a way similar to this study, the approach to this research was also modeled on the cultural work of Stephen Duncombe.<sup>186</sup> Employing both a content analyses of zines, as well as in-depth interviews with zinesters, he draws sociological and philosophical conclusions from his findings. Additionally, Duncombe's own creation of DIY zines and music contributes to the participant-observation approach in studying the underground press.

This inquiry into Third Wave feminist zines was conducted with what can be called a feminist case study. Following the format of traditional case studies,<sup>187</sup> this examination of *BUST* magazine was made up of three components: participant observation, in-depth interviews, and content analysis. The participant observation was made up of the contribution of one piece of original writing<sup>188</sup> and four days observing the *BUST* staff's pre-production work for *BUST* no.16 from October 24-28, 2000.<sup>189</sup> The interviews were informal telephone conversations that blended in-depth interview styles with a working knowledge of *BUST* history and content; protocol worksheets, questionnaires, and standard interview questions were employed for data gathering.<sup>190</sup> Content analysis of *BUST* was performed through the review of issue nos. 1-17; categories of Third Wave feminist theory

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<sup>186</sup> Stephen Duncombe, *Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture* (London: Verso, 1997).

<sup>187</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods, Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994). John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), 12.

<sup>188</sup> Lettie Conrad, "Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines," *BUST* no. 16 (Winter 2000): 69-71. See Appendix VI.

<sup>189</sup> For more on these observations, see Chapter IV: Observation Findings.

<sup>190</sup> See Appendixes I, II, and VIII, and Chapter V: Interview Findings.

were used to scrutinize the messages of these eight years of *BUST* and worksheets were used to guide this data collection.<sup>191</sup>

Relying on the social science traditions of case study research methods, the examination of *BUST* as a representative of the Third Wave feminist press was conducted with a fluid, non-positivist feminist approach. This hybrid feminist investigation of Third Wave communications has harvested data about Third Wave feminism and its print media. The following sections explore each method in detail – Feminist and Case Study Methodologies – followed by discussion of Data Collection/Recording, Data Analysis, and Validity/Reliability.

### Feminist Methodology

The research into Third Wave publications was influenced by feminist methodology for data gathering, interpretation, and epistemology. The study and analysis of contemporary feminist media requires, by definition, a feminist foundation of systematized inquiry. This research meets the three criteria presented by Sandra Harding in her introduction to *Feminism and Methodology*. Harding asserts that valuable feminist research:

- 1) presents women's experiences as valuable, multifaceted and diverse,
- 2) studies women's lives with the benefit of those women in mind and
- 3) situates the researcher on the same critical plane as the participants, utilizing the researcher's personal beliefs and background as epistemological data.<sup>192</sup>

The Third Wave feminist press and this study of Third Wave feminism embodies this first notion, as both represent and celebrate the multiplicity of young feminist agendas,

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<sup>191</sup> See Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings and Appendices III: Content Analysis Protocol Worksheet and IV: Content Analysis Summary Page.

<sup>192</sup> Sandra Harding, "Is There a Feminist Method?," chap. in *Feminism and Methodology, Social Science Issues*, ed. Sandra Harding (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), 1.

styles, and ideologies. A theme intrinsic to Third Wave feminism – and displayed in girl-zines – is the rejection of a singular, political canon of feminist ideology, politics, and style. Their very nature is non-traditional and rebellious. The perspectives expressed in Third Wave feminist publications contain important lessons for both feminism and journalism. While the practice of theorizing often results in an oversimplification of culture and life, this study does not strive to make essentializing statements about Third Wave feminists as a whole. Rather, patterns and trends have been illuminated which can then be used in theoretical discussion. This approach is taken not only in honor of the diversity of feminist thought, but also in support of the value and importance of women’s experiences and communications.

This study satisfies Harding’s second criteria for feminist research. The initial motivation, and underlying goal, for this thesis is to better understand Third Wave feminist publications, those that dare to take a step beyond *Ms.* and offer young women a new and open vision of Third Wave feminism. One key to the success of such a project is learning from those women who act as writers, editors, publishers, promoters, and readers of underground feminist publications. As a cross between communication research and movement organization, this research is completely focused on and committed to the happiness, empowerment, and successes of women.

Thirdly, this study speaks directly to the personal beliefs and experiences of the researcher, as a Third Wave feminist, aspiring journalist and zinester.<sup>193</sup> In the researcher’s contributions recently submitted to *BUST* and the overall participant-observative nature of this case study, there is an undeniable element of ‘going native’<sup>194</sup> as mass communication

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<sup>193</sup> Lettie Conrad, *Bird in the Hand*, Santa Cruz, 1994. Lettie Conrad and Wendy VanThiel, eds., *Pandora’s Box*, Santa Cruz AIDS Project, Santa Cruz, 1995. Lettie Conrad, “DES Daughters,” *Fabula* (Winter 1999): 48. Lettie Conrad, “Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 69-71.

<sup>194</sup> Liz Stanley, “My Mother’s Voice? On Being ‘A Native’ in Academia,” chap. in *Feminist Academics: Creative Agents for Change*, eds. Louise Morley and Val Walsh (London: Taylor & Francis, 1995), 183 (12).

lessons are turned upon myself as a feminist writer, reader, and scholar. I am on a similar critical plane as the participants. However, as a feminist journalist, some of these women are more experienced in matters of magazine production.

Heeding the warnings of scholars such as Ann Oakley and Gesa E. Kirsch,<sup>195</sup> this research design was successfully feminist. Seeing 'textbook' social research as inherently male-oriented, Oakley and Kirsch urge feminist researchers to think outside these positivist constructions in order to give voice to women's experiences. Based on their analyses, there are three main feminist challenges to scientific study: the researcher/subject hierarchy, the manipulation of participants by the interviewer, and the unacknowledged presence of the researcher's personal and social perspectives. This thesis project defies all three concerns, approaching the study of contemporary feminist magazines from an entirely non-hierarchical, thoroughly respectful, and completely 'native' position.

This work speaks to aspects of existence highly regarded as important to me, as well as what I believe to be politically vital to women as a whole, and therefore each observation, interview, and magazine are viewed as vital to the cultural organization of this feminist generation. The Third Wave staff of *BUST* contributing to this study was under no obligation or coercion, and was treated as cooperative peers. The researcher/participant relationships were both mutually beneficial and strictly professional, as one result of this thesis was a better-educated journalist (myself): an experienced, articulate writer with an excellent understanding of young feminists in specific, and subcultural communications in general. For these reasons, hierarchical binaries of traditional research are nonexistent in this study.

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<sup>195</sup> Ann Oakley, "Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms," chap. in *Doing Feminist Research*, ed. Helen Roberts, (London: Routledge, 1981), 30. Gesa Kirsch, "What Do You Know About My Life, Anyway? Ethical Dilemmas in Researcher-Participant Relations," chap. in *Ethical Dilemmas in Feminist Research: The Politics of Location, Interpretation, and Publication* (Albany: S.U.N.Y. Press, 1999), 25 (20).

Finally, I have no desire, nor any mastery, for masking or disregarding personal history, experiences, and opinions in the report of this research. Additionally, no one feminism was elevated over another, but all were balanced as a unified whole to better understand Third Wave feminism. I was both subject and scientist in this study and performed each role with honest, professional vigor, neither ignoring nor inflating personal involvement. The debates inherent in feminism should be given space to be articulated and shared, which is the ultimate purpose of the feminist press. This analysis of a Third Wave feminist publication furthers this interest, while both preserving the messages of a prime example of the Third Wave feminist movement as well as producing a discussion of Third Wave feminist theory accessible for further academic exploration.

### Case Study

The case study segment of this thesis was focused on *BUST* magazine. Detailed consideration of this zine consisted of participant-observation, in-depth interviews, and content analysis.<sup>196</sup> Participant-observation offered a privileged glimpse of the Third Wave feminist press. Beyond the general help offered during my week of observation, I worked with editor Debbie Stoller to prepare one piece of original writing for *BUST* no.16.<sup>197</sup> Silent observation of four days of *BUST*'s production work for the same issue took place on October 24-28, 2000. Catherine Marshall's and Gretchen B. Rossman's assessment of participant-observation supports my use of this methodology: "Immersion in the setting allows the research to hear, see and begin to experience reality as the participants do."<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> See Chapters IV-VI: Findings.

<sup>197</sup> Lettie Conrad, "Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 69-71.

<sup>198</sup> Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research, Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 79.

During my week of observation, I offered intern-level assistance to the *BUST* editorial staff and performed such tasks as running errands. Briefly acting as a contributing member of the *BUST* team, the aesthetics, working environment, relationships of crewmembers were witnessed from this viewpoint. Interactions between these women was possibly the most informative source of data in this observation period, revealing the nature of the production process on a personal level for these Third Wave feminist media producers.

Access and cooperation, two the main challenges of case studies and in-depth interviews, was never a problem. The founding editors of *BUST* were instantly interested in participating in this thesis work. They donated back issues of *BUST* and photocopied other material for my review. Logistics were smoothly arranged and questions happily answered by everyone working with *BUST* and their publisher, Razorfish Studios. Although my physical presence in New York only lasted a matter of days, further contact with *BUST* writers and editors continued via email, telephone, and fax throughout the duration of this study.<sup>199</sup>

Looking at the academic tradition of case studies, it can be argued that this study satisfies several major criteria for implementing this methodology: “how” or “why” research questions,<sup>200</sup> contemporary material studied, lack of researcher control over outcome, and a “desire to understand complex social phenomena.”<sup>201</sup> Common misunderstandings of case study techniques lie in patriarchal, positivist scientific structures, with criticisms ranging from researcher bias to a lack of generalizability. These issues were negated by the aforementioned dedication to a non-hierarchical, feminist technique.

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<sup>199</sup> The crew working for *BUST* during the time of this research was interviewed as a part of this case study; see Appendix V for a complete staff list. For a complete interview schedule, refer to the Bibliography.

<sup>200</sup> See Chapter I, page 10.

<sup>201</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods, Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), 3.

Given the combination of questions asked and the contemporary nature of the phenomena studied, in-depth interviews were the most effective and illustrative methodology. Simply put, there was a great deal of information that could not be gleaned from any other source than directly from the participants' themselves. As stated earlier, this study is characterized both by a respect for subjective truth and feminist expression. The informal, thorough interviews of *BUST* editors and crew offer Third Wave feminist theories a voice.

A wide range of rich material is provided by these “conversations with a purpose.”<sup>202</sup> These telephone interviews proved to be open and honest with researcher contributions provided. The magazine's history of funding, advertising, publication, and personnel management is illuminated, as well as larger issues of feminist politics and social agendas. Personal backgrounds and professional vitae of these initial interviewees also shed light on vital demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Third Wave feminist press.<sup>203</sup> These interviews were conducted with the *BUST* staff as any standard business proposal or creative venture: with honesty, courtesy, and professionalism. Relying on the understanding of subjective experience, these extensive interviews with *BUST* producers provided 'behind-the-zines' insight into Third Wave feminist communications. This method is chosen to allow young feminist voices a chance to express, reflect, and identify Third Wave theories in their own words. Data collection methods are explained later in this chapter.<sup>204</sup>

To help define both feminist theoretical and cultural developments, a Third Wave ideological analysis of *BUST* nos.1-17 constitutes the content analysis phase of this study. Applying a qualitative approach to *BUST* content, each magazine's entire format, content,

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<sup>202</sup> Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research, Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 80.

<sup>203</sup> See Chapter V: Interview Findings.

<sup>204</sup> See Appendix I and the Data Collection/Recording section of this chapter.

and scope were examined. Important theoretical and cultural patterns helped to articulate *BUST*'s expression of the emerging Third Wave feminist movement. Conclusions were drawn regarding the impact and meanings of this magazine, used to further ensure triangulation with observation and interview findings of Third Wave feminism.<sup>205</sup>

Spanning a total of eight years, the content analysis segment of this study inspected *BUST* page-by-page. The review of *BUST* nos.1-17 involved evaluating each edition for one of seven chosen categories of Third Wave feminist theory: 1) reaction to, or adoption of, Second Wave feminist theory; 2) multiculturalism; 3) alternative and diverse sexualities; 4) anti-essentialism; 5) individualism; 6) contradiction or contrast; and 7) pastiche<sup>206</sup> and camp.<sup>207</sup> Each theoretical category was assigned a code, which was used to review these seventeen issues of *BUST*. Protocol worksheets were used to guide the content analysis data-collection, and summary sheets provided quick-reference outlines of facts such as page numbers, themes, and advertising.<sup>208</sup>

This process remained open to new theoretical or cultural discoveries, resulting in two additional Third Wave feminist expressions unique to *BUST* magazine; all theoretical categories are discussed in detail in Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings. The purpose, as mentioned, of this content analysis of *BUST* itself was twofold. A careful examination of this range of *BUST*'s development proffers a detailed picture of the Third Wave press as a whole and of Third Wave feminist perspectives specifically, safeguarding this study from faults of oversimplification. Secondly, this content analysis contributes to the wider understanding of

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<sup>205</sup> See Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings.

<sup>206</sup> An as element of postmodern theory, *pastiche* can be defined as “the wild, wanton, creative (depending on your attitude) opposition of styles, often ripped – like collage cut-outs – from their original contexts.” Richard Campbell and Roseanne Freed, “We Know It When We See It’: Postmodernism and Television,” *Television Quarterly* 26, no.3 (Winter 1993): 79.

<sup>207</sup> For purposes of this discussion, *camp* as a verb is “to use exaggerated movements, gestures, etc., to over-act” and, as an adjective, *camp* refers to that which is “ostentatious, exaggerated, affected, theatrical.” *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “camp.” Further discussion of this phenomenon will follow (see pages 144-157).

<sup>208</sup> See Appendixes III: Content Analysis Protocol Worksheet and IV: Content Analysis Summary Worksheet.

*BUST*'s history and content, rounding out the living example of the Third Wave feminist press.

### Data Collection & Recording

Evidence of Third Wave feminism and analysis of its messages have been culled from this case study of *BUST*. The pre-production week of observation resulted in notes, photocopied material and back issues, and photographs of the busy *BUST* crew, as well as my contributions to *BUST* no.16, during the summer and fall of 2000. Gleaning predominately aesthetic and cultural data about this example of the Third Wave feminist press, my report on the findings of the participant-observation phase of this case study can be found in Chapter IV. All notes, artifacts, and photographs obtained during this week of observation have been preserved in notebooks and binders for future review.

As previously mentioned, worksheets guided the interview and content analysis data-collection.<sup>209</sup> The interview worksheet was supplemented by a staff-wide questionnaire<sup>210</sup> and was used during the tape-recorded telephone interviews during the winter of 2000 and spring of 2001. Content analysis categories were applied to *BUST* nos.1-17 to identify concepts of Third Wave theory that surfaced in the content analysis phase of this research. Again, summary pages were employed to track the publication dates, page numbers, advertising, and themes of each issue.<sup>211</sup> These original seven categories were not viewed as comprehensive or exclusive, allowing for the discovery of new elements of Third Wave feminism; several new observations came to light during the content analysis, creating two additional

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<sup>209</sup> See Appendixes I: Preliminary Interview Questions, III: Content Analysis Protocol Worksheet, and IV: Content Analysis Summary Worksheet.

<sup>210</sup> See Appendix VIII: Questionnaire and Interview questions.

<sup>211</sup> See Appendix IV: Content Analysis Summary Worksheet.

categories of the Third Wave feminist expressions in *BUST*. All magazines, notes, and audio recordings from these data collection procedures have been preserved for future review.

### Data Analysis

The collection and analysis of Third Wave feminist communications in this case study was simultaneous.<sup>212</sup> Therefore, the collection of data was concurrent with the development of theoretical conclusions. Under the guidance of my faculty thesis committee,<sup>213</sup> categories were drawn from the literature review and applied to the data analysis process. Collecting the maximum amount of data within a limited time, I remained open to a nonlinear progression of the overall analysis of contemporary Third Wave feminist media. Each phase of data collection was concurrently characterized by documentation and interpretation, with a progressive focus on data reduction to simplify analysis. Relying on the scholarly literature reviewed in Chapter II, this *BUST* case study has shown to express important characteristics of both subversive underground publications and Third Wave feminism. New insights are shared in Chapters IV-VII based on lessons learned from this study of a Third Wave feminist magazine.

### Validity & Reliability

The traditions of the chosen case study methodology are in some degree of conflict with the revolutionary spirit of the overarching feminist approach. One site of contention is in the academic process of proving the validity and reliability of the research presented.

While some feminist scholars would deny the need to offer such proof, this researcher

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<sup>212</sup> Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research, Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 112. John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 153.

<sup>213</sup> See page iii at the front of this manuscript.

understands the pragmatic and utilitarian purpose of reassuring the reader of the authenticity and trustworthiness of this thesis work.

As for internal validity, this study includes two necessary design features: triangulation and full participant involvement.<sup>214</sup> The content analysis segment, previously pilot tested,<sup>215</sup> is included as a method of validation: Third Wave theories gleaned from the first eight years of *BUST* complete the underground feminist picture of *BUST*. All staff and editors of *BUST* and Razorfish Studios volunteered friendly cooperation throughout the duration of this research. My participation in production of *BUST* no.16 during the observation phase of this study ensured that the valuable connections made through these relationships would carry on through my future work in the Third Wave feminist press.

This last point further ensures the external validity of this study. Through the process of this thesis, the researcher has established a larger network of Third Wave feminist contacts. The 'native' Third Wave feminist perspective brought to this study proved to help me gain access to and acceptance by the producers of *BUST*.

The challenges of a study of underground, subcultural communications decrease the ease of replicating this work. The nature of the researcher's approach and personal history has opened doors that may not be available to other scholars. However, *BUST* has grown out of its obscure birth in the underground press to a nationally-distributed magazine on the

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<sup>214</sup> John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994), 157.

<sup>215</sup> A pilot study of the content analysis of *BUST* nos.11-13 was compiled for *Mass Communications* 620, *Media Criticism*, offered at California State University, Northridge, Fall 1999.

shelves of commercial bookstores,<sup>216</sup> archived in major universities,<sup>217</sup> and reaching an estimated 300,000 readers quarterly.<sup>218</sup>

While attempting to further establish Third Wave feminist theories for cultural and theoretical academic examination, this study does not oversimplify the messages within *BUST*, the chosen vehicle of Third Wave feminist communication. Similar conclusions can be drawn by contemporary and future scholars upon review of *BUST* and other examples of the Third Wave feminist press. This research meets the criteria necessary for full transferability.

### Summary

Previous work on Third Wave feminist magazines has been sparse, with even fewer considerations of alternative and underground periodicals. Often ignoring gender theory, accepted communication research has focused on commercial, consumer magazines, and related demographic data.<sup>219</sup> Reaching beyond these limited conventions, this research is grounded in a feminist theoretical framework, focused on non-commercial, underground publications, and designed to draw theoretical conclusions about cutting-edge feminist movements.

By its very definition, this inquiry into the Third Wave feminist press is a multifaceted feminist project. Beyond the well-known *Ms.*, there is a great diversity of experiences expressed in today's feminist magazines. This in-depth case study of *BUST* has illuminated Third Wave feminist ideologies and unique factors of mass communication

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<sup>216</sup> *BUST* is sold by independent bookstores in major cities such as Los Angeles, Boston, Chicago, and Seattle, as well as chain bookstores, such as Borders Books & Music, across the nation.

<sup>217</sup> The Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture in the Perkins Library at Duke University is building a comprehensive archive of *BUST* magazine.

<sup>218</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 September 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>219</sup> Sammie Johnson, "Magazines: Women's Employment and Status in the Magazine Industry," chap. in *Women in Mass Communication*, ed. Pamela Creedon, (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993), 134.

within the Third Wave feminist movement. The chosen research methods mimic the professional aspects of traditional social research, while employing the informal, non-hierarchical constructs of feminist epistemology.

Offering data on Third Wave feminist expression and publication, this research will contribute to ongoing discussions in the fields of Women's Studies and Mass Communication. Furthering the understandings of subversive thought, feminist organization, and gender theory, this thesis is among the first of what promises to be many future examinations of Third Wave feminism. The study of underground feminist communication would have been a restrictively controversial subject of academic study even ten years ago and, as such, this research is breaking new ground and writing a new history.

## **CHAPTER IV PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION FINDINGS**

The case study of *BUST* magazine was performed in three phases: participant-observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The findings from these segments will be reported in the following chapters – Chapter IV: Observation Findings, Chapter V: Interview Findings, and Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings. The participation element of this segment was limited to a contribution of original reporting<sup>220</sup> for the feminist-themed issue, *BUST* no.16.<sup>221</sup> Also, during the week of observation (October 24-28, 2000), minimal general participation was included in the 20 hours spent in *BUST*'s New York City offices. These four days of observation resulted in primarily visual and aesthetic data, given the visitation restrictions set by the editorial staff and their pre-press deadline for the production of *BUST* no.16. This chapter reports the findings of the observation phase of this case study.

Observation of the magazine began with a brief introductory visit to the *BUST* offices on Friday, June 9, 2000.<sup>222</sup> *BUST* was acquired by Razorfish Studios<sup>223</sup> in the spring of 2000 and the ownership contract was finalized on August 9, 2000.<sup>224</sup> Without imposing any content or style changes, Razorfish Studios became publisher of the magazine, providing financial, online, advertising, management, and promotional support to *BUST* in exchange for the production of quarterly issues.<sup>225</sup> The founding editors, Debbie Stoller, Marcelle Karp, and Laurie Henzel, have made the zine without income for seven years, re-investing

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<sup>220</sup> Lettie Conrad, "Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines," *BUST* no. 16 (Winter 2000): 69-71. See Appendix VI.

<sup>221</sup> *BUST* no. 16 (Winter 200) is the first strictly feminist-themed issue of this feminist lifestyle magazine.

<sup>222</sup> My initial visit was made during a personal vacation in New York City. I was in the *BUST* offices from 2:00 - 4:30 p.m. on June 9, 2000.

<sup>223</sup> Razorfish Studios is a small independent holding company with media products such as www.disinfo.com (a conspiracy theory Web site) and Self Timer Films (R.E.M. singer Michael Stipes' production company). Razorfish, Inc. is the parent company, a digital services consulting agency. The editors and management staff refused to disclose details regarding *BUST*'s contract agreements with Razorfish.

<sup>224</sup> Jeff Canzona of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 December 2000, email correspondence.

<sup>225</sup> The editors refused to disclose further details regarding *BUST*'s contract agreements with Razorfish.

profit from the sale of *BUST* and advertising to increasing the quality and quantity of each additional issue. In partnership with Razorfish Studios, these editors became salaried, full-time employees of *BUST*. Another important change was the magazine's move out of the editors' home offices and into the Razorfish office suite in the East Village.<sup>226</sup> During my first visit, the *BUST* crew<sup>227</sup> was adjusting to the new partnership and work environment.

When I arrived on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of 419 Lafayette Street, I encountered a bustling office of busy young hipsters. Razorfish occupied two floors of the building, with warehouse-style offices decorated in retro-meets-minimalist furniture. Guests were greeted by a colorful, studio-sized lobby, whose walls featured four-foot wide prints of beauty-magazine-style photographs of women with black magic-marker beards and moustaches drawn on their faces. During this first visit, the receptionist waved me into the office with directions to the *BUST* cubicle.

At this point, the newly expanded staff<sup>228</sup> was in the last month of production for *BUST* no.15 and they were humming with activity. For the first hour or so, I silently observed their activity. The cubicle was rather large, made up of two long worktables, each with three fairly new computers. The three editors were glued to their monitors: Stoller working silently and wearing headphones, and Karp, 6-months pregnant at the time, talking business with Henzel while updating an inventory of back issues. Two college-aged interns flitted in and out of the office as they ran assorted errands for the magazine.

After a while, the three editors began to warm to my presence and Karp offered me copies of back-issues to photocopy or take home. She reflected on the marked improvement

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<sup>226</sup> The Razorfish offices are located at 419 Lafayette Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003. This required only a cross-town Manhattan move, providing increased production space and resources.

<sup>227</sup> At this time, the *BUST* staff consisted of the three founding editors as well as two part-time interns. See Appendix V: *BUST* Staff List.

<sup>228</sup> See Appendix V: *BUST* Staff List.

of each issue. Feeling positive about the Razorfish buy-out, Karp said the editors were relieved to have the chance to quit their day-jobs and work on *BUST* full-time. Pregnant with her first child, Karp planned to be on maternity-leave during the production of *BUST* no.16.

Then Stoller took a break from her computer and spent a moment talking with me about the case study. We spoke about what I would need from the *BUST* staff for observation and interviews. They agreed to participate and we discussed my visit during the production for *BUST* no.16, deciding to set a schedule after *BUST* no.15 went to press. After seeing *BUST* in action that afternoon, I was interested in contributing an article for the upcoming feminist issue. Communicating via email, Stoller suggested I write a piece on feminist zines through history, to be due September 1, 2000. She advised that I write in the tone I'd expect to encounter in such a segment as a *BUST* reader. Once the research and first draft was complete, Stoller and I worked together to edit the piece.<sup>229</sup> Stoller chose the title and I contributed images of magazine covers to act as accompanying art for my contribution.

Once my submission was complete, I began to plan the observation period. I asked the staff to identify a week during which I could witness the final stages of production. *BUST* no.16 was scheduled to go to press on November 1, 2000, so I proposed a visit in late October. Stoller had some misgivings about my presence in their office disrupting their pre-production workflow, but we reached the compromise of four six-hour days of observation. I extended the participation aspect of this case study by offering my services for any tasks necessary during that week. We finally agreed my observation period would be October 24 - 28, 2000, with logistical details to be discussed in person.

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<sup>229</sup> See Appendix VI: Lettie Conrad, "Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 69-71.

*BUST* Offices ~ Tuesday, October 24, 2000

Upon my arrival, I noticed the lobby area had changed since my visit in June. It was less chaotic, without a manic flow of people streaming in and out; the office was more quiet and organized. The lobby was painted and the once-open door to the offices had been locked with a key-card security system.

When Stoller retrieved me from the waiting area and led me back to *BUST*-central, I noticed how the zine had taken over most of the main office space. She introduced me to Kat McAndrew, a former intern who was recently promoted to Editorial Assistant. Stoller wanted McAndrew to be my “chaperone,” or main contact, during this week of observation. We discussed what my visit would entail (quiet observation and note-taking) and set some ground rules (to observe quietly without being intrusive).

I again volunteered my intern-level assistance with pre-production chores, however Stoller and McAndrew insisted that their newly enlarged staff,<sup>230</sup> including two part-time interns, would be able to handle everything. Stoller reiterated her wish for a shorter visit, but I insisted that I was scheduled to be in town all week and wanted to make the most of that time. “Even being quiet as a mouse,” she said, my presence may be distracting and somewhat disruptive. With some trepidation, she agreed to adhere to the original plan.

*BUST*'s fourth-floor offices in the renovated six-story theatre building on Lafayette Street had all hardwood floors with high warehouse-style ceilings. The cheerful lobby was rather tiny compared to the spacious, SoHo-style, loft-like office interior. A long hallway, with an open coat closet and two unisex bathrooms, opened into the main office area. At the end of the hall was an informal meeting area decorated with two diner-style booths,

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<sup>230</sup> Aside from the three founding editors, Razorfish had hired five other full-time employees to *BUST* for a total of eight staff members at the time of observation. See Appendix V: *BUST* staff list.

complete with bright, vinyl seats and Formica tables. A canvas banner with the Razorfish logo – a simple line drawing of a hand poking the top of a beehive<sup>231</sup> – hung over the break area. “Hello Kitty” mugs and stickers were found on many *BUST* staffers’ desks and crates of women’s magazines from the 50s and 60s were stored under almost every workspace. A disco ball hung in the center of the office and an office-wide stereo system played the staff’s latest musical favorites. I noticed that the suite had undergone several changes since June, from increased security to assigning *BUST* more office space. The magazine now used most of the open floor area with six or eight desks dedicated to the zine. *BUST* still occupied that first cubicle they moved into in June, but now it is dedicated to graphics and layout work. They expanded the “Boobtique” operation (the magazine’s online retail business) to another office with part-time help from Noel, a Razorfish employee, who ships and processes customer orders.<sup>232</sup>

As an orientation, McAndrew showed me around the office, explaining each station and its uses. The editorial department consisted of a half-dozen desks in an asymmetrical arrangement facing each other. The art department was several computer workstations in a large cubicle. McAndrew introduced me to the staff and explained that Stoller was editing last-minute stories and Erlbaum was selecting reader letters for publication, while Henzel selected graphics for the subscription insert. McAndrew said that the majority of the graphics and editorial material were already chosen and the sequence of magazine pages was laid out. Using a map-style layout with thumbnails of each page posted on a bulletin board, the *BUST* staff was able to look at the entire magazine at a glance. Colored squares

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<sup>231</sup> See Appendix VII: Razorfish logo.

<sup>232</sup> This is a marketed improvement in staff support and efficiency than existed during my visit in June 200, when (then-intern) Molly Simms distributed “Boobtique” orders from a corner of the cubicle the magazine occupied directly after their move to the Razorfish offices. During the six years prior to the Razorfish partnership, *BUST* interns prepared these orders in the home/office space in Henzel’s Manhattan apartment.

represented sold advertising and completed artwork. This week, there was much editing to be done to fit the text into the empty spaces on the page-layout maps. A dry-erase board hung in the hallway with lists of the current issue's ad sales and related figures for all to see.

McAndrew explained that, at this stage of production, everyone worked autonomously on individual assignments, with no regularly scheduled meetings. Collaboration occurred on a need-by-need basis, with some small, spontaneous meetings.<sup>233</sup> Most of the major decisions for *BUST* no.16 – such as choosing submissions and selecting artwork – were made prior to my visit. All material was loaded onto a collective hard-drive for everyone to access. General layout, systematic proofreading, and other fine details were the order of this week. It occurred to me at this point that observing *BUST*'s final week of production may not have been as rich with essential information as seeing their process of selecting material to represent the issue's theme.

Razorfish now has eight full-time employees working for *BUST*, including the three founding editors.<sup>234</sup> The *BUST* staff was extremely busy during the fall of 2000, adjusting to Karp's maternity leave and an array of changes related to the Razorfish partnership. Newly minted staff positions were temporarily rearranged to account for Karp's duties, leaving Stoller and Henzel as the editors through the production of *BUST* no.16. The pace of production doubled to satisfy the Razorfish contract, which required quarterly publication. *BUST* production now flowed from one issue to the next with little downtime in between.<sup>235</sup> Procedural changes were illuminated in much greater detail during the interview process.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> This is a production pattern apparently facilitated by the open, newsroom style layout of the office space.

<sup>234</sup> At this point, each *BUST* staff member agreed to future interview conversations for this study. See the Bibliography at the end of this paper for a complete list of interviews conducted with the *BUST* staff and Chapter V: Interview Findings for a report of the findings of these interviews.

<sup>235</sup> When *BUST* was produced in the editors' homes, the zine was published twice a year and allowed a couple months' lag-time between issues.

<sup>236</sup> See Chapter V: Interview Findings.

At lunchtime, I was invited to join the staff that casually hovered in the break area to eat together. Relaxed conversation revealed that Razorfish recently laid off about 200 people in its New York offices and rearranged office space at this location to make more room for *BUST* production. Staff members, such as McAndrew as well as Senior Editor Janice Erlbaum and Production Assistant Molly Simms, were confident that Razorfish was strongly invested in *BUST* and believed the magazine to be a steady source of revenue for the publisher. I had brief, impromptu interviews with these three, to be discussed later.<sup>237</sup>

I spent the remainder of the day collecting observations, and reviewing back-issues and reader correspondence. While watching the *BUST* crew, I noticed how the magazine functioned with an internal structure and hierarchy at every stage of production. Each staff member was assigned a designated job title with a specific role to be played. And, while each member was there to get a job done, there was a playful sense of community and friendship among the staff. The founding editors were obviously in charge, but each member of the team treated one another with equal levels of respect and good cheer.

For example, Stoller established a system of proofreading in which a story began with her final line-edits and passed through a series of lower editors and editorial assistants. This cycle was repeated after Stoller chose which edits to make final for publication. Stoller held each member of the proofreading team accountable for her share of the work, while not being dogmatic or unpleasant about those expectations. Although she spoke with authority, Stoller approached each editor and assistant as a friend.

I witnessed this same balance when Simms suggested an idea to Stoller about changing subscription procedures. Until recently, *BUST* had allowed a box-checked choice of the current and previous issues to begin new subscriptions. Simms said this procedure

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

made subscription management too confusing and she'd rather that new subscribers automatically receive the following issue. Stoller agreed to this policy change, without much discussion. She simply said: "Sounds good. I trust you."

Later that afternoon, Stoller and Jeff Canzona, the Marketing Director, held an impromptu meeting. Canzona said *BUST* was making an average of \$100 per page in ad sales and the two discussed strategies for increasing that dollar amount. During this meeting, it was clear that Canzona was taking instructions from Stoller, who ultimately called the shots. Canzona told me that *BUST* needed him to "get their books in order" because their pre-Razorfish money-management was rather shoddy. He was quick to explain, however, that bookkeeping was not the editors' first priority when *BUST* was produced in their homes.

On a lighter note, Stoller broke a roughly hour-long silence of hard work with the "hamster song," a tune she downloaded from a children's Web site. Putting the song on the office stereo system, Stoller danced around her staffers' desks, inspiring a few minutes of silliness. The *BUST* crew went back to work at the end of the song. I found the crew to be devoid of pretension and, while sometimes elusive, the *BUST* staff was made up of fundamentally nice people who were working hard on a magazine they loved.

#### *BUST* Offices ~ Wednesday, October 25, 2000

When I arrived at the office on the second day of observation, McAndrew introduced me to the two current *BUST* interns sharing a six- to eight-hour shift every Tuesday and Thursday. Erika Lofstedt was a junior at Fordham University in the Bronx, double-majoring in English and Communications; she received class credit for her internship work with *BUST*. Shannon Ziemba, who graduated in June of 2000 with an English degree

from the same university, continued to volunteer her time with the magazine. The two interns were chatty and friendly, obviously enjoying their part of the production of *BUST*.

While the interns stuffed envelopes with subscription renewal notices, we spoke briefly about the crew and production of the magazine. Lofstedt explained that *BUST* maintains a delicate balance of creative energies to produce the magazine and even a minor structural change can disrupt their flow. They observed that, with the Razorfish acquisition, the *BUST* crew was in a particularly difficult period of adjustment. I observed that both McAndrew and Simms initiated new jobs for the interns with almost sheepish trepidation. They made an obvious effort to be respectful and kind, saying something such as: “I was wondering, if you weren’t busy, would you be able to...?”

I noticed copies of the freshly distributed Razorfish weekly newsletter. “Something Fishy” was adorned with fish fins and fish puns, with four pages outlining the latest news and project developments of the New York Razorfish offices. Brief articles announced the release of a modern-music compilation raising awareness and money for Tibetan freedom fighters, a new web site revealing underground research on government conspiracies, and the Halloween party and costume contest. Apparently, Razorfish held counter-cultural media ideals similar to *BUST*s.

McAndrew handed me a red-marked copy of my submission, “Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines,”<sup>238</sup> and asked if I would look over her final edits. She wanted my feedback and any changes to be made by the end of the month. With this, I felt as if I were part of the magazine crew. I looked at her edits: she questioned my date given for Victoria Woodhull’s Presidential bid and the validity of a statement that *Ms.* had not missed an issue since the 1970s. I changed the later immediately, revising that statement to not include *Ms.* in

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<sup>238</sup> Lettie Conrad, “Mag Hags: 200 Years of Feminist Zines,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 69-71. See Appendix VI.

a series of examples of feminist magazines, such as *off our backs* and *Sojourner*, which had published continuously for 30 years. I stood by the accuracy of my date for Woodhull's candidacy, but told her I would email her with verification once I returned to my research records in California.

During that first hour, there were visible signs of the staff's discomfort with my note taking and observation. Stoller and Erlbaum were not as talkative as yesterday, and they spoke softly on the telephone. McAndrew and Simms, after checking for my location in the office, often whispered private conversations to one another. They were always polite and friendly in conversation with me and seemed to relax after a few hours. However, I noted the air of defensiveness that greeted me in the early parts of those first two days of observation. I attributed this to what appeared to be a tight-knit environment that was both social and professional.

Transfixed by the screen of an orange Macintosh I-book, Stoller was clad in a short black dress, leopard-print cardigan and big black boots. At her feet were a crocheted purple purse, a "Be-Dazzler" kit,<sup>239</sup> and a kitty book-bag. When she was not on the phone or in an impromptu meeting, Stoller worked quietly on the computer with headphones blocking out most distractions. Stoller was the queen of her office – she carried herself with authority and self-confidence, but appeared relaxed and focused. It was evident that the staff greatly respected her but was also comfortable being themselves.

Henzel and others stopped to eat lunch, and all took turns pouring over an issue of *Vogue*. Simms and Stoller, not yet stopped for lunch, came over to the break table to join in the girl-magazine fun. The group giggled and made jokes about the models and various

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<sup>239</sup> This was the new "Be-Dazzler," a craft tool made by NSI Innovations for attaching bead-like decorations to cloth, updated in 2000.

headline-promises. Then, Stoller shouted: “Hello! Can you say implants?!” At this point, my snapping camera and note taking did not attract funny glances.

While the staff was anxious about the production work ahead, everyone seemed to focus on one task at a time without panicking or losing their tempers. Small, spontaneous meetings were necessary and inevitable, although most work seemed to be done autonomously at individual workstations. The *BUST* offices maintained a certain level of seriousness about the work at hand, but also encouraged casual conversation.

For example, McAndrew was editing music review submissions, occasionally asking others for input on word choices. At one point, McAndrew announced that she received an email from a writer who wanted to pull her submission to *BUST* due to “creative differences” with another zine to which she had submitted the same music review. This contributor apologized, saying that she hoped the *BUST* staff understood that she could not offer them a review she had originally sold to another publication. The group laughed at this, and someone said: “Oh, she’s so noble!” Apparently the *BUST* crew found the writer’s concern a foreign or trivial one. Considering the underground, zine-culture beginnings of *BUST*, journalistic policies of contracts and ownership must have been new thoughts for the crew to consider. This may have had something to do with the way *BUST* defines itself.

When Stoller shouted, “I need coffee,” I jumped at the chance to be helpful. I told her I wanted coffee, too, and offered to bring her some. I took orders from other staffers, ventured out onto Lafayette Street and headed to a Starbucks on Aston. On this errand, I noticed this East Village business neighborhood was full of arty, young people busily darting from theatre buildings, subways, and coffee houses. I returned to *BUST* headquarters, and deposited money and coffee quietly on the appropriate desks. When staff began to realize I’d paid for their drinks, they insisted they owed me money. I joked that it was not a good idea

to argue with me and they relented, smiling and thanking me. This was my first truly friendly moment with the staff, after which relations with the magazine were easier and their acceptance of my visit increased.

Once they learned that I could be a trusted volunteer, Henzel commissioned me to retrieve a copy of an art piece from a West Side art gallery. A photo collage by feminist artist Pipilotti Rist's was on display at the Luhring Augustine Gallery and was to be featured in *BUST* no.16's art review segment, "Gallery Gal." I called the gallery and they agreed to loan the magazine a 'chrome' of the collage for use in the magazine. Henzel told me to take a taxicab, keep the receipts and she would reimburse me. The gallery staff was familiar with the zine and trusted *BUST* to return the photograph by mail later in the month. The whole trip took me about an hour, returning me to the offices just after 5 p.m. The receptionist whispered that the door to the production offices had never been locked and said I could let myself in. Henzel was impressed when I returned successfully, reimbursed me for the cab rides, and thanked me profusely. When Stoller came into the design area, Henzel boasted: "Look what Lettie just ran to get us!" They both seemed pleased that they could trust me.

By this time, the interns and most Razorfish staffers had gone home, but *BUST* folks were facing a long night of production preparation. Henzel said she and her assistant, Kate Gilbert, would work there until 10 p.m. McAndrew said she and Simms would stay late as well. She said most *BUST* workers either came in on the weekends or stayed late through the last few weeks of production for each edition. Once no.16 has gone to the printers, she said, they would return to a 9-5 routine.

Although a larger staff may have reduced this occasional unpaid overtime,<sup>240</sup> McAndrew reasoned that the work would be spread much thinner. She said she'd rather

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<sup>240</sup> *BUST* and Razorfish employees received fixed salaries rather than hourly wages.

work long hours around production time than have less input on the magazine. She said design might have been the only area that could have used more employees. But even then, Debbie and Laurie would still needed to approve each page and every word, which demanded their time.

On my way back to the hotel, I passed a small antique store with a box of old magazines on display. I browsed the crates of dusty periodicals and found two special knitting issues of *McCall's*<sup>241</sup> and a 1972 edition of *Life*<sup>242</sup> with Bella Abzug on the cover with the headline: “Women in Politics – Bella Abzug fights to stay in Congress – How are they doing? Where are they going?” I paid the quarter each, hoping to add to *BUST*'s arsenal of retro images for their zine.

East Village ~ Thursday, October 26, 2000

I began my third day in the city with an observation walk around the *BUST* office neighborhood, photographing the building and surroundings. The Lafayette Street headquarters was in the district known as the East Village. There were several old business offices and classic, bank-style buildings, many with long, colorful banners announcing theaters, studios and art galleries. It was just as dirty a neighborhood as the rest of the city and the streets had a worn antiquity to them.

See Hear,<sup>243</sup> the only store to have sold every issue of *BUST* since it's debut as a paper zine, was a mere 10-block walk from the Lafayette Street offices. The zine shop is in a quiet, residential neighborhood with old, bohemian-ized Victorian apartment buildings and small, independent businesses. See Hear is in a basement-level unit, with a small, handmade

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<sup>241</sup> *McCall's* Spring/Summer 1957. *McCall's* Fall/Winter 1965-66

<sup>242</sup> *Life*, June 9, 1972

<sup>243</sup> See Hear Fanzines, Magazines and Books: 59 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10003.

sign hanging at the first-story level – with the store name on one side and a line-drawing of an ear and an eye painted on the other. Inside, I found zines lining one long wall, organized by genre. The store carried several mainstream magazines, mostly art, culture and music titles. *BUST* was displayed with other “women’s” zines. Other zines in that section were: *Motomama: Biker Chicks of SF*, *Motto Muffin: Biker Chicks of America* (NY), *Mohawk Beaver: A zine dedicated to the clits of tomorrow* (Copenhagen), *Rollerderby*, *Venus*, *Virago Violet*, *Chickfactor: Independent Women’s Music* (NY), and *Bitch: Feminist Response to Popular Culture*.

I introduced myself to the store clerk and owner of See Hear, Ted Gottfried. He founded the store in 1985 to support self-published writers and artists like himself. Gottfried remembers when *BUST* editors Stoller and Karp asked him for help with tips on zine distribution and promotion; he has carried *BUST* since the first hand-made issue in 1993. Gottfried has helped publish zines such as *Ben Is Dead* and does not take a profit for most small zines. Since the early days, he has expanded beyond zines – the store also carried comics, graphic novels, diverse music magazines, and other edgy, unconventional titles – “anything to do with sex, drugs and rock-n-roll,” Gottfried said.

On my way to the *BUST* offices, I stopped at two vendors of the magazine, Tower Records/Books and Barnes and Noble, to check on their *BUST* stock. Both stores were sold out of the current issue, which had been out for a month at that point. I called the offices several times from pay phones, without an answer. After an hour, I finally reached Stoller and was told that only a short visit would be allowable that afternoon.

*BUST* Offices ~ Thursday, October 26, 2000

When I arrived back at the *BUST* headquarters, I encountered a miscommunication about the day’s schedule. Stoller said she had sent most of the staff out to have a long lunch

together and that she and Henzel were the only ones in at the time. I offered to help, but she said there was not much I could do. I gave them the aged magazines I had found the day before and they were thrilled. Stoller immediately hunched over a copy of *McCall's* and squealed when she found a crochet-dress pattern for Barbie dolls. Henzel was pleased with the copy of *Life*, and said, "Oh, I remember seeing this one..." They wanted the name of the antique store for future old-magazine shopping. They were both gracious and happily surprised by the gift.

Henzel suggested that Stoller put me to work proofreading, but Stoller explained that she was working with McAndrew and Erlbaum on a system of reads and re-reads that she did not want to disrupt. Stoller said I should have the rest of today off, to enjoy myself in the city. However, she said, they may need help the next day because they were expecting an intern to be out sick.

When the staff returned from lunch, Erlbaum showed me their proofreading table with drafts of each page laid out. A grid was pasted on the wall above the table, with a page numbers listed on the left and a series of proofing-tasks across the top, each initialed by McAndrew, Erlbaum, or Stoller. "This is how we keep track of where we are in the proofing system," she said. Stoller first worked one-on-one with contributors to do structural edits, and then the three-gal team worked through a series of fact-checks and line-edits. There have been cases in which a contributor is unwilling or unable to do additional rewriting and the editorial crew will have to edit the entire piece on its own.

Erlbaum said they were often overwhelmed by the amount of editorial material in each edition of *BUST*, which she said was more than most other publications. "There's quite a volume here – there's just so much editorial content," Erlbaum reflected. She said that Henzel does a "magnificent job" of popping-in the half-page and full-page graphics for the

text to work around. Henzel's graphics were "part of the reason we were nominated for best indie mag for design by Utne Reader for 2000" Erlbaum said. She regretted not being able to spend time with me for an interview, but I reassured her that I planned to conduct telephone interviews over the coming months from California.

When Stoller took a lunch break, she continued to work on edits and layout. She was not alone for long, as Gilbert and Erlbaum frequently came to the break room to ask her questions. I again asked if I could help and McAndrew suggested I go to each person individually to see if I could do anything. Through some clenched teeth, I was told by all that everything was under control and I told McAndrew I'd call tomorrow morning about the next day's observation schedule.

During the subway ride back to my hotel, I recorded a few reflections. The crew's tension was exhausting to be around. Their fierce drive for the magazine's success was tangible, and their well-controlled *BUST*-creation process came with a good deal of anxiety. It seemed that much of their stress was not exclusive to *BUST*, but typical of most media workers, certainly of most magazine producers. While not having the rough-and-gruff approach of most newspaper offices, the staff had pressures with career-making or -breaking potential. The pace of their production was quiet and focused, smattered with spasms of activity and tension-releasing laughter.

It was evident that the *BUST* staff demanded much from each other, expecting both individuality and responsibility to a collective goal. The energy among the women felt like a tenuous balance of close friendship and focused professionalism. Each of the women could be grumpy at times, but each was also very friendly on occasion.

*BUST* Offices ~ Friday, October 27, 2000

When I called the *BUST* offices that morning, I encountered some minor confusion. McAndrew told me there would be no need for me to come in that day and that I should be finished with the observation. I reminded her that Stoller had said they would need help, but McAndrew asked me to call back around noon to check if their second intern was indeed out sick. “But, if I were you,” she said, “I’d go do something fun. Enjoy this city while you’re here, ok?” Catching up on reading and a few telephone calls, I did not leave the hotel right away and began making other plans. After less than an hour, McAndrew called the hotel in a panic because neither intern had shown up yet and they were hoping I would come in to help out. I insisted that this is what I wanted her to say and I was at the office in 20 minutes.

McAndrew smiled apologetically when I arrived and said, “I’m so happy to see you.” She had set me up for the first errand that needed immediate attention. First, I walked to a computer supply store for Henzel, who gave me directions, a credit card, and instructions to purchase a particular 11x17 photo-quality printer paper. The store was two blocks away on Broadway. The task took me 10 minutes and when I returned Henzel laughed, saying, “That was fast! You did good, girl!”

Then, McAndrew said that I would need to take a cab to Karp’s house to pick up CDs for the music review spread. As they were beginning to tell me where to go, Lofstedt showed up and took over the job. McAndrew and Stoller seemed relieved, possibly to have Lofstedt’s trusted assistance, but also because they were wary about exposing Karp to my observation during her maternity leave. With most gals chugging coffee and wearing their sweats and sneakers, the anxiety was most palpable in the office that day – just four days until *BUST* no.16 was scheduled to go to press.

A few minutes later, Stoller asked if I would be willing to run to a couple of bookstores. The crew was assembling a retrospective piece on classic feminist media and needed a copy of Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying* to add to the accompanying photograph. I was given another credit card and set of directions. Stoller wanted me to start with a three-story used bookstore a few blocks away on Broadway, because she was hoping for a well-worn copy that showed its age as a 30-year-old novel. Stoller said she would accept a reissued version from a newer bookstore.

The Strand Book Store<sup>244</sup> was a classic old bookseller, with musty, used volumes in dusty piles covering the high-ceilinged, wood-paneled shop. Books were not cataloged or alphabetized, but clumped together by subject and genre. The Women's Studies section was sparse, and I browsed the five narrow shelves, reading each spine with no luck. As instructed, I settled for a new \$7 mass-market copy at Barnes & Noble.

Back at the office, a CD-mix of girl-power songs was playing with the volume up higher than usual. Songs such as the disco hit "I'm Every Woman" and Dolly Parton's "9 to 5" inspired laughter, conversation, and spontaneous desk dancing. The tension was still high, but at this point was channeled into silliness and chatter. After a few tunes, the office returned to a quiet, focused atmosphere. I lingered until after 5 p.m., asking frequently if I could do anything to assist. The editors felt the crew would be ok on their own and I said quick good-byes and left the *BUST* headquarters quietly.

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<sup>244</sup> The Strand Book Store: 828 Broadway, New York, New York, 10003.

New York Public Library ~ Saturday, October 28, 2000

On my last day in New York City, I visited the historic mid-Manhattan branch<sup>245</sup> and Humanities and Social Sciences Library.<sup>246</sup> I learned that *BUST* was not among the available magazines in the new periodicals room in the main branch. I crossed the street to the historic Humanities and Social Sciences building in hopes of finding the zine archive referenced by Stephen Duncombe.<sup>247</sup> After speaking to a few attendants, I found a librarian who knew about the zine collection. She said she remembers hearing about a holding of this sort in upstate New York and suggested I call Duncombe directly.

This facility did not carry a separate classification within their publications holding for zines or underground magazines. They had periodical listings made up of newspapers, magazines and art/literary journals. I spent time looking through the 35<sup>th</sup> edition of the *International Directory of Little Magazines and Small Presses*.<sup>248</sup> Although there was no mention of *BUST*, when I indexed the word “zine,” I found listings for current girl-zine titles I recognized, such as *Broken Pencil* and *Dead Fun*. A search in the library index brought up four book titles I was familiar with and two titles I decided to research further in California.

### Conclusions

Upon my return home, I made contact with Duncombe and learned that the archive used in his research is located in the New York State Library (NYSL) in Albany, New York.<sup>249</sup> Billie Aul, head librarian at the NYSL facility, told me that this archive is a limited and closed collection of zines, ending with those produced in 1992. Compiled by Mike

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<sup>245</sup> Mid-Manhattan Library: 455 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York, 10016.

<sup>246</sup> Humanities and Social Sciences Library: Fifth Avenue & 42<sup>nd</sup> Street.

<sup>247</sup> Stephen Duncombe, *Notes from Underground* (London: Verso, 1997), 2.

<sup>248</sup> *International Directory of Little Magazines and Small Presses 1999-2000* (Paradise, California: Dustbooks, 1999).

<sup>249</sup> Stephen Duncombe of State University of New York, interview by author, 9 March 2001, email correspondence.

Gunderloy, editor of *Fact Sheet Five*, in 1982 and categorized by 22 subject areas, this collection does not include a feminist zine subject area, and few riot grrrl zines were included in the set. For the purposes of this case study, I determined that further investigation of this archive was not necessary.

I have also been in correspondence with Cristina Favretto,<sup>250</sup> and her assistant Amy Leigh,<sup>251</sup> regarding the *BUST* archive at the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture in the Perkins Library at Duke University. The library holds a complete and growing set of *BUST* that is available for browsing in its original printed format as well as on microfilm. The Duke University library also makes the production and sale of photocopies of the magazines available upon request. As noted earlier, I have acquired, through back-issue purchase and photocopy, a complete set of *BUST* from no.1 through no.17 for the content analysis segment of this study.<sup>252</sup>

Again, I found my observation of *BUST* to produce mainly visual and aesthetic data, as well as a better understanding of the personal aspects of the crew and how they function to produce the magazine. The close-knit nature of the *BUST* team was apparent; the women are both friends and coworkers. The team is focused equally on their professional and political efforts in production of this Third Wave feminist independent publication. The crew's approach to their work is both unconventional, such as their subject matter and bold honesty, and conventional, as in the hierarchical structure of staff positions and responsibilities. With the time limitations imposed by the crew and their production cycle, my four-day observation did not glean further information about the *BUST* team's editorial

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<sup>250</sup> Cristina Favretto of Duke University, interview by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>251</sup> Amy Leigh of Duke University, interview by author, 13 April 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>252</sup> See Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings.

procedures and ideological negotiations. These are, however, covered in the following unit,  
Chapter V: Interview Findings.

## CHAPTER V INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The case study of *BUST* magazine was performed in three phases: participant-observation (Chapter IV), in-depth interviews (Chapter V), and content analysis (Chapter VI). As mentioned previously, the observation of *BUST* took place during the magazine's pre-press production of *BUST* no.16, thus, staff members' schedules did not allow for in-depth interviews to be conducted in person.<sup>253</sup> Therefore, the majority of interviews were conducted via email, facsimile, and telephone between November 16, 2000 and April 18, 2001, with follow-up questions posed between July 25, 2001 and September 25, 2001.<sup>254</sup> This chapter reports the findings of the interview phase of this case study.

All magazine staff members<sup>255</sup> were interviewed during their normal workday at *BUST*, except for Marcelle Karp who resigned from the magazine in spring of 2001. All interviewees completed identical questionnaires and were asked the same basic questions during the interviews,<sup>256</sup> yet subsequent questions were posed to each *BUST* staff member differently. Although the interviews were professional, the familiarity between the staff and myself made for casual, conversational discussions; the report of the interview findings will stay true to that tone. Managerial staff with Razorfish granted only minimal interview contact.<sup>257</sup>

The telephone interviews revealed diverse personalities and backgrounds; however, a common vision for the magazine's content and purpose, as well as an accepted hierarchical staff structure, united the crew. While all of the women producing, editing, and designing

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<sup>253</sup> Three staff members made time for short introductory interviews with me during the observation period while on their lunch breaks: Molly Simms, Kat McAndrew, and Janice Erlbaum. See the Bibliography at the end of this paper for a complete list of *BUST* interviews.

<sup>254</sup> Telephone interviews were recorded for accuracy. See Bibliography for more information.

<sup>255</sup> See Appendix V: *BUST* staff list.

<sup>256</sup> See Appendix VIII: Interview questionnaire and telephone interview questions.

<sup>257</sup> Laurie Windrow of Razorfish Studios, Inc., interview by author, 25 July 2001, email correspondence.

*BUST* expressed passionate feminist beliefs from both a personal and political realm, the three founding editors (Stoller, Karp, and Henzel) answered each question with a heightened level of individual commitment and investment that set them apart from the younger, more recent staffers.

Conversations with Razorfish employees, however important to understanding the big picture, did not contribute to the understanding of the mission, content, or philosophy behind *BUST*. It is evident that the recently installed publisher trusts the writers, editors, and artists of *BUST* and operates in complete support of the Third Wave publication. The following subsections encapsulate the evidence drawn from telephone interviews with the *BUST* crew.

### The Birth of *BUST*

The history of *BUST* magazine, from zine to mainstream magazine contender, unfolded during my conversations with the three founding editors – Debbie Stoller, Marcelle Karp, and Laurie Henzel. They met while working for Nickelodeon in New York City in the early 1990s. A creative combination of feminist inspiration and a shared desire for a *Sassy*-style<sup>258</sup> magazine for their generation sparked the creation of *BUST*. Although the three were media-savvy and full of ambition, none had previous magazine experience.

Stoller, a recent Social Psychology doctoral graduate from Yale University, started work for Nickelodeon's typing pool in 1989. Karp had been working with various television production companies in New York after graduating with a Communications Bachelor of Arts degree from Queens College in 1982; she began work with Nickelodeon in 1990. With a

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<sup>258</sup> *Sassy* was the brainchild of Jane Pratt (now editor of *Jane* magazine) – a girl's magazine published by Lang Communications from 1988-1994. It was known for its poignantly confessional tone that related to girls and young teens as intelligent individuals, encouraging them to be strong, honest, and creative.

Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Parsons School of Design, Henzel worked with *Rolling Stone* for two years before taking a job with Nickelodeon's creative team.

Stoller and Karp worked in the same cubicle area and quickly found social and political kin in each other. "We both read *Sassy*, we were both very well versed in feminism and we were both quite opinionated about the absence of female representation in mainstream women's magazines and in the culture at large," said Karp.<sup>259</sup> During this time, they often spoke of launching an alternative feminist magazine together, sometimes involving other Nickelodeon colleagues such as Henzel. Although the idea was bantered around half-jokingly, the seed of this Third Wave feminist magazine was planted during these conversations, and finally took root and bloomed in 1993.

Karp left Nickelodeon for freelance work in television production and travel abroad. Upon her return, she contacted Stoller to reinvigorate their earlier dream of starting a magazine together. Never seriously committed to television production, Stoller was thrilled to launch a new feminist project with her friend. "I just wanted to be involved making some kind of better media for women," Stoller said. "So, whether it was magazines or TV or movies ... it didn't matter so much what way it was done."<sup>260</sup> The more they talked, the more they realized they had the skills and power to fill a media void with a strong Third Wave feminist publication.

They were thrilled to learn that, although they had lost contact for a year, the two women still had much in common. "It turned out that we were very much on the same page. We wanted to create a magazine that would be for women, about women, by women in its rawest, most honest form," said Karp.<sup>261</sup> The name for their new rag came to them instantly:

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<sup>259</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>260</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>261</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

*BUST* captured both the feisty anger and the honest sexuality they wanted their magazine to embody. As they write in their anthology, *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order*, they envisioned “a magazine for broads who weren’t afraid of any f-words – from feminism to fucking to fashion.”<sup>262</sup>

One of the main inspirations to publish *BUST* was to offer an antidote, or alternative, to women’s magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* – magazines that, as Karp explained, are some “of the biggest perpetrators of keeping women down while pretending to build women up.”<sup>263</sup> Stoller could not agree more; she wanted to offer a Third Wave feminist platform for all kinds of women to express themselves. “So many magazines that want to be, you know, ‘good for women’ spend all their time just trying to present positive role models,” Stoller said.<sup>264</sup> She felt that corporate women’s magazines “present a very narrow definition of what women should be.”<sup>265</sup> Karp and Stoller wanted *BUST* to be built on a variety of voices and perspectives.

Drawing on a wide range of contributions from friends and colleagues, Stoller and Karp edited, designed, and wrote content for *BUST* no.1, published July 1993. Stoller and Karp did not use their real names; Stoller wrote as “Celina Hex” and Karp as “Betty Boob.” They playfully signed the first letter from the editor<sup>266</sup> as “the left one and the right one.”<sup>267</sup> While several writers signed their real names, most of the contributors used pseudonyms. Many pen names were intentionally comical, with tongue-in-cheek double messages often

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<sup>262</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, eds., *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999), xiii.

<sup>263</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 22 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>264</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>266</sup> This first letter from the editors is now referred to as the “*BUST* Manifesta.” See Appendix IX.

<sup>267</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, eds., *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999), xi.

relating to aspects of female sexuality; for instance, Henzel used the alias “Aureola.”<sup>268</sup> Other early contributors were “Girl,” “Blonde Fury,” “Scarlett Fever,” and “Dreaded Sister.”

The editors first began using pseudonyms as a way to maintain their anonymity among their media peers and employers. And, while these pen names were often enjoyed for their added humor, the names also provided the protective cover necessary for editors and contributors alike to be brutally honest about their lives. Borrowing the confessional, conversational tone of *Sassy* magazine, *BUST* was partly launched to offer a safe space for Third Wave feminists to express real emotions, opinions, and personal histories relating to nearly every issue that matters to women, including identity, sexuality, religion, politics, race, gender, and relationships. Pseudonyms allowed writers to address taboo issues, such as masturbation and pornography, as well as criminal behavior, such as prostitution and drug use. These scandalous topics added to *BUST*'s early classification as a zine.

The first issue of *BUST* appeared in a traditional zine format.<sup>269</sup> While it was predominately produced using personal computer design and word processing technology, 500 copies of *BUST* no.1 were printed with photocopiers and bound with staples in a Nickelodeon workroom. *BUST* no.1 was available in only a handful of independent New York City bookstores and newsstands. Stoller insisted that publishing *BUST* as a zine was a transitional phase; she said the editors always pushed *BUST* to become a formal, glossy magazine. However, they understood that the magazine's limited distribution, lack of corporate advertising, use of borrowed and donated artwork and writing, and underground

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<sup>268</sup> Henzel's pseudonym is sometimes spelled “Areola.” This alias is obviously a flirtatious word play: The word *aureola* refers to the halo around the head of a saint or other religious figure, while the word *areola* refers to the dark or pink skin surrounding the nipple.

<sup>269</sup> See Appendix XI (*BUST* no.1).

networking involved in its production placed the early issues of *BUST* well within the zine category.<sup>270</sup>

Determined to become a mainstream magazine contender, Stoller and Karp pushed ahead to *BUST* no.2 and beyond. For Karp, those early years were all about collaboration. “We came up with the *BUST* Manifesta,<sup>271</sup> we wrote the editors letter together, came up with lots of different things we were going to do to revolutionize the way men and women looked at women’s magazines.”<sup>272</sup> In the beginning, their Third Wave feminist collective was a team of equals with the founding editors at the helm, but no one of them holding power over the others. They divided the editorial duties evenly and worked from their home offices and kitchen tables.

In late 1993, the *BUST* team grew to three, when Stoller and Karp formally invited Henzel to act as their Art Director in time for *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993). While *BUST* was the brainchild of Stoller and Karp, Henzel brought in images of sexy women from pop art and advertisements of the 1940s and 1950s, and the look of *BUST* took shape. “It was really sort of by accident,” Henzel said.<sup>273</sup> She has always been interested in the way women are portrayed in media, going back as much as one hundred years ago. “I thought that it contrasted with the stories in an interesting and fun way.” Henzel said, “I always liked that those women had regular bodies. They had some fat on them. It’s much more sexy, to me, than fake boobs and a 20-inch waist. I think that those images are really powerful and it’s one of the ways that women have power is through their looks – and I was just celebrating that with those images.”<sup>274</sup> Initially, *BUST*’s use of retro imagery was a way to get free

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<sup>270</sup> *BUST*’s transition from zine to magazine is discussed later in this chapter; see the section “To Zine or Not To Zine...” for more.

<sup>271</sup> See Appendix IX: *BUST* Manifesta.

<sup>272</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April, 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>273</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*

artwork, but it became a theme that had deeper meaning to the magazine.<sup>275</sup> And, although popular with a small circle of feminists in New York City, the *BUST* team wanted to reach a larger audience.

The three editors soon learned that no major distributor or vendor would carry *BUST* unless they moved out of the Xerox-and-staple method of printing. Using their first small advertisement sales and their personal savings, they pooled together the necessary funds for the initial offset lithographic publication of *BUST*. The team researched cheap printers and plunked down the \$900 to order 3,000 copies of *BUST* no.2. This was the first and only substantial financial investment the editors made in the production of *BUST*; they invested the advertisement and unit sales of each issue to the printing of the next. This snowball effect allowed them to slowly increase the quality and quantity of the magazine, and they continued to invest their entire revenue in the printing of subsequent issues for seven more years.

Keeping their day jobs – Stoller at Nickelodeon, and Karp and Henzel doing freelance work – the three set out to offer the world a Third Wave feminist magazine. Devoting all their free time to the production of *BUST*, the three women juggled the bi-annual publication of their magazine with full time work, personal life, and other pressures. During the early years of *BUST*, Henzel married and had two children. Stoller and Karp were understanding of Henzel's additional family obligations and the three tried to help pick up each other's slack whenever possible. "If the three of us weren't working as a well-oiled machine," Karp said, "if the three of us weren't dividing up the duties in the way that we were, nothing would have gotten done."<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> See Appendix X: Examples of *BUST*'s Retro Imagery.

<sup>276</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April, 2001, telephone conversation.

Although each editor took turns reading through the 200-250 submissions and writing original work for each issue, they had primary divisions of labor based on interest and skill. With Karp doing most of the advertising sales and promotional tasks, Stoller focusing her time on editing stories and columns, and Henzel designing the artwork and layout from her home office, the three self-published fourteen issues of *BUST* magazine. While *BUST* had thrived on volunteer work and unpaid contributions, the editors began working with interns in 1998, using them mainly for running errands and general office help.

Stoller remembers feeling utterly satisfied with the evenings and weekends they dedicated to *BUST*. “I mean, I had other work and stuff, but it was really *BUST* that was the thing that fulfilled me. It made me feel like ... I was being what I wanted to be when I grew up.”<sup>277</sup> All three found work that paid the bills, but it was *BUST* that held their interest. They worked with Third Wave feminists, artists, and writers, and produced a magazine they were proud of – an enterprise that felt like part magazine, part social and cultural movement. Stoller and Karp’s paying jobs in television helped them land an MTV pilot based on *BUST* in 1998. “*BUST* on MTV” was, as Stoller said, “ahead of its time, because it was before the whole big girl-power explosion in the media.” While the *BUST* show was not picked up for regular programming, they forged ahead with their multimedia dreams with the publication of the *BUST* anthology, *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order*.<sup>278</sup>

Looking back, the editors agree their seven years of self-publication were full of personal sacrifice, but all they also agree that it was worth the work. “The three of us really had no life,” Karp said. “At the same time, so many women benefited from my little bit of

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<sup>277</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>278</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, eds., *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999).

sacrifice. Ultimately, that's what mattered.<sup>279</sup> But, this kind of energy and personal commitment could not last forever. When Multi-Vision Publishing, Inc., an alternative magazine producer, approached them about a buy-out in 1999, the editors were faced with an opportunity to unload the burden of carrying *BUST* alone – a decision that could determine the future of *BUST* and their own careers.

The question of whether to join the publisher of Canadian *Shift* magazine relied on understanding how much money *BUST* needed to run as an independent business and how much money it could earn. “Because we were all doing all this other stuff,” Stoller remembers, “we never really got it together to do what any other business would do, which is put together a business plan.”<sup>280</sup> They realized their team was weak on mass-marketing skills, and that, even with their collective talent and vision, they lacked a trained business manager. The editors worked with a consultant-in-training at a local business school to write a budget, mission, and comprehensive projection for *BUST* Company, Inc. This work prepared *BUST*'s founders to understand that Multi-Vision's proposal to pay them \$500,000 to own 40% of the magazine was not an offer that could carry *BUST* very far. Their first lesson in business management helped them envision what could constitute an agreeable buy-out offer.

When a friend of Henzel and her husband, Michael Lavine, mentioned that his company, Razorfish Studios, whose parent company is an Internet-based digital media consulting firm, was looking to invest in a print publication, *BUST* was prepared to talk business. Negotiations were tense, but ultimately fruitful when Razorfish bought the magazine in 2000 from the three founding editors and provided them with an annual budget to produce quarterly issues of *BUST*. Razorfish vowed to act as a hands-off publisher,

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<sup>279</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April, 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>280</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

making no demands on content, philosophy, imagery, or style. They offered simply to distribute and promote *BUST* in its original form, as an alternative women's magazine that addresses a previously ignored segment of the world's population.<sup>281</sup>

Razorfish made *BUST* a deal they could not refuse. The buy-out was finalized on August 9, 2001. "It was scary, but it became a quality of life issue," said Stoller. "I wanted to just be able to do *BUST* – go to the job, come home afterwards, go to sleep, and just go to work the next day."<sup>282</sup> The Razorfish partnership made this possible for the three founding editors, who became employees of their own magazine. They were given ample office space in a theatre building on the East Side of New York City stocked with computers, telephones, and other office equipment, a full-time Advertising/Marketing Manager, and a large enough budget to pay writers and artists as well as hire former interns and contributors for a total of eight full-time staff members.

The decision to sell *BUST* was mutually agreed upon by the three women, as they were eager both to see their magazine grow and to simplify their work schedules. The deal came at an auspicious time for Karp, who learned she was pregnant in the summer of 2000. She took a paid maternity leave and used the time to consider her life. Karp found herself at a personal and professional crossroads. "*BUST* was my baby for a very long time," Karp said, "but once I got pregnant, my priorities changed."<sup>283</sup> Eventually deciding to keep the baby, Ruby, and marry her then-boyfriend, Dave, Karp felt assured her first 'baby' was in good hands with Razorfish and resigned her post as Executive Editor of *BUST* in April 2001. She took another freelance job, this time with the on-air promotions department of HBO/Cinemax, and began juggling her new life and new family.

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<sup>281</sup> The editors did not disclose further details regarding *BUST*'s contract agreements with Razorfish.

<sup>282</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>283</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

These changes also ushered in the formal beginning of the current *BUST* staff structure, with clear divisions of labor, salary scales, and a hierarchy. “I have no interest in doing a collective-thing,” Stoller said. “I don’t think it works.”<sup>284</sup> She admits that, although *BUST* has settled into a somewhat traditional business structure, “there are hierarchies and there are hierarchies. We are interested in contributions to the magazine from interns on up.”<sup>285</sup> With Karp off the *BUST* staff, Stoller was considered the Editor-in-Chief, a title she had wanted for some time but given the triad of *BUST* power, she had settled for Editorial Director. “I wouldn’t have given Debbie the Editor-in-Chief title,” Marcelle said, “whether or not she was performing those duties, I wouldn’t have given it up to her.”<sup>286</sup>

Henzel is still considered the Creative Director, but she hired her own graphics assistant. Other new staff positions were established as the *BUST* staff grew. Stoller insisted there were no hard feelings between the editors, however these changes followed internal tension and many difficult conversations among the three women. “We were really doing this thing by the seat of our pants for so many years,” Henzel said, “and it was fine when we did it on a small scale. But, because it’s grown so much and people expect it to come out and want more issues, it became a huge job – and a financial burden because you can’t work full-time on a job that pays you zero.”<sup>287</sup> Stoller and Henzel feel good about the new writers, designers, managers, and editors *BUST* is working with, and they both have great hope to see *BUST*’s biggest dreams come true.

The financial backing and management support of Razorfish is liberating, but the team is now saddled with new business concerns. Stoller, Henzel, the new Senior Editor, Janice Erlbaum, and other *BUST* staffers believe in their magazine, but they all recognize

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<sup>284</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>286</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>287</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

that Razorfish's financial stability directly affects *BUST*'s survival. The challenge of landing high-paying advertising for an outspoken feminist lifestyle magazine has them worried about whether they can keep *BUST* in the black. Stoller is convinced that *BUST*-style feminism is marketable. "I think that if we make a magazine that looks good and that people buy, that's all the advertisers care about. They care that there's people are reading it," she said, "...we're going to have to prove to the advertisers that there's a readership for this."<sup>288</sup> The crew is planning changes for the future, including a re-launch of the magazine with a new look in January 2002. While fighting to stay true to their original Third Wave feminist mission, *BUST* is becoming business-savvy and grown-up.

#### What is *BUST* to You?

*BUST* was the brainchild of Stoller, Karp, and Henzel, who saw a void in the magazine industry and felt obliged to fill it with their own sassy and honest feminist lifestyle magazine. *BUST* is "the magazine for women with something to get off their chests."<sup>289</sup> *BUST* is "the zine that's strong enough for a man ... but made for a woman."<sup>290</sup> *BUST* is "the only zine that lifts and separates."<sup>291</sup> And, of course, *BUST* is "the voice of the new girl order."<sup>292</sup>

*BUST* addresses the latest shoe fashions with equal zest as their confrontation of the beauty myth. *BUST* teeters on the line between for-profit magazine and grassroots vehicle of the Third Wave feminist movement. *BUST* strives to earn \$2500 in advertising revenue per page and they court celebrities for features and cover photographs similar to any other

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<sup>288</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>289</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, eds., *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999), cover.

<sup>290</sup> *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): cover. See Appendix XI.

<sup>291</sup> *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): cover. See Appendix XII.

<sup>292</sup> *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): cover.

magazine. However, considering *BUST*'s underground beginnings, its jump from 3,000 to 50,000<sup>293</sup> copies per issue and the overwhelming reader feedback prove that *BUST* is connecting to a vocal, self-aware audience of Third Wave feminists. With a current circulation of 100,000, estimated readership of 300,000,<sup>294</sup> and an eight-member staff,<sup>295</sup> *BUST* has come to mean a lot of things to a lot of different people.

When encountering a person who has not seen *BUST* before, Molly Simms, Publishing Assistant and former intern with *BUST*, would say “it’s a woman’s magazine with a feminist twist.”<sup>296</sup> To a friend, Jeff ‘adboy’ Canzona, *BUST*'s Marketing and Ad Sales Manager, might say that *BUST* is a “feminist magazine, but very tongue in cheek.”<sup>297</sup> But to potential advertisers, Canzona says that *BUST* “has the look and feel of *Ally McBeal* but the tone of *Murphy Brown*.”<sup>298</sup> Kat McAndrew, a *BUST* Editorial Assistant, says she does not usually give novices an easy, one-line answer. “I start off by saying that it’s a hybrid between *Jane* and *Ms.*, so that I can explain that it’s a fun, women’s lifestyle magazine that covers a lot of terrain,” McAndrew said. “It’s funny and hip and could be read by lots of different people. But, also the *Ms.* part comes in for the sense that it being feminist, of course, and it having a lot more intelligence than your run-of-the-mill newsstand women’s magazine. And sometimes I’ll throw in that it’s kind of like a *Maxim* for women, in the sense that it’s kind of racy but it’s a lot smarter.”<sup>299</sup>

Simms finds that, when she tells folks she works for *BUST*, they sometimes assume it is a pornographic publication. Others equate ‘feminist magazine’ with being a magazine for

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<sup>293</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>294</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 September 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>295</sup> See Appendix V: *BUST* staff list.

<sup>296</sup> Molly Simms of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 25 October, 2000, telephone conversation.

<sup>297</sup> Jeff Canzona of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 15 November 2000, telephone conversation.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>299</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

lesbians, and ask Simms: “What’s the matter? Don’t you want a boyfriend?”<sup>300</sup> Kate Gilbert, Henzel’s Associate Art Director, said she would temper her description of *BUST* depending on the vibe she gets from someone. “A lot of times when I explain the magazine to people,” Gilbert said, “I’ll gauge their reaction before I say it’s a feminist magazine.”<sup>301</sup> If she got the wrong feeling, she might have simply said *BUST* is an alternative women’s magazine. She found that it is mostly young men who assume *BUST* is for lesbians, which she attributed to a common straight-male fantasy of two women having sex together.

In terms of like-minded female audiences, the *BUST* staff was confident they appeal to a wide range of women. Stoller says *BUST* has always been focused on offering diverse voices and opinions. “The importance of showing a variety of perspectives is central to our mission,” she said.<sup>302</sup> While publishing material that the editors found interesting, compelling, and important, and balancing reader and publisher demands, *BUST* strives to represent as great an assortment of Third Wave feminists as possible.

“Obviously you can’t make a magazine for all women,” McAndrew said, “but I would hope that a lot of women could pick up *BUST* and find something for themselves in it ... based on intelligent writing, creative stories, and reasonable fashion spreads... My biggest hope is that people who pick it up will find something that they identify with in the magazine.”<sup>303</sup> From the beginning, submissions for the magazine have been chosen to represent an array of women and their lives. “I wanted to make sure I had every single angle covered,” Marcelle remembered. “I wanted the full spectrum, I wanted as much as possible,

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<sup>300</sup> Molly Simms of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 25 October 2000, telephone conversation.

<sup>301</sup> Kate Gilbert of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 13 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>302</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>303</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

as many different voices – I wanted to achieve my goal for *BUST* – which is as many different voices being represented as possible.”<sup>304</sup>

The *BUST* team had faith that they reached a scope of perspectives, as well as ages. Erlbaum said *BUST* appeals to women 17- to 44-years-old. Henzel estimated *BUST* readership at the even broader range of ages between 15 and 45; a readership survey from fall of 2000 put the median reader age at 26. “I’m really glad that we can reach a broad range of ages,” Henzel said, “because I think there’s stuff in *BUST* for all ages.”<sup>305</sup> Karp said that, while teen-aged women and older women have alternative magazines to address their populations, “the particular women that we’re serving – who are sort of, in my eyes, a little ageless – I don’t feel like they’re being address by any magazine” except *BUST*.<sup>306</sup>

If reader letters and emails are any test of the success of these goals, the *BUST* crew has nothing to worry about. “Most people are very positive, people are very, very passionate about *BUST* magazine,” Stoller said. “They write us and thank us for existing, and tell us they’re such big fans.”<sup>307</sup> McAndrew, who reads most of the recent letters to the editor, was impressed to see that *BUST* is affecting women of all ages in a multitude of ways. “Letters to the editors are great windows into your readers’ minds,” Karp said. “They’re invaluable.”<sup>308</sup> While not all letters are positive, Erlbaum and Karp agree that readers’ feedback is an important connection to a magazine’s audience; these letters should guide a magazine, but it should not try to change to suit each individual opinion.

The majority of reader letters prove to Stoller that *BUST* is fulfilling their original mission in launching this Third Wave feminist magazine. “We wanted to make a women’s

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<sup>304</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 22 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>305</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 15 May 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>306</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>307</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>308</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

magazine that, instead of making women feel crappy about who they were, could make women feel really great about being women – that would tell the truth, that wouldn't present another stereotype to aspire to, that would be as smart and as funny as we knew women to actually be," Stoller said.<sup>309</sup> The *BUST* staff, and presumably thousands of *BUST* readers, would agree that they have achieved this goal and that *BUST* provides a substantial challenge to magazines such as *Cosmopolitan*.<sup>310</sup>

"*BUST* is creating a platform for women to talk about what they do, who they are and why it's great and stop beating themselves up over all sorts of things," said McAndrew.<sup>311</sup> Unlike mainstream women's magazines, she does not think "that *BUST* is on this mission to save women, save them from themselves, save them from those terrible self-esteem problems, and their weight issues, and their emotional dysfunction. I think that *BUST*, apart from presenting a picture of female-ness that is good and enough...I think also at its core is celebrating being a woman and all the really great things that are able to happen to us because we are women."<sup>312</sup> And, while Karp believes the magazine has achieved its goal to counter-balance patriarchal women's media in major ways, Stoller said they will have met their aim when they have readership and revenue numbers that rival corporate women's magazines.

Erlbaum, who has watched *BUST* grow from zine to glossy magazine, agreed that in order to reach the full potential of their target audience they must alter the goals of *BUST*. She said these changes have already taken place in the hearts and minds of *BUST* producers. "The mission has expanded beyond 'let's get this out to a small group of like-minded people'

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<sup>309</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>310</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 22 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>311</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

to 'let's take ourselves seriously as a powerful voice in the media,'" said Erlbaum.<sup>313</sup> Stoller, Henzel, Erlbaum, and crew have a new set of goals, many of which are connected to objectives Razorfish has set out in order to push *BUST* into the realm of lucrative publications. Stoller realizes the weight of the task before her. "Making a magazine work is a really difficult thing to do," the head editor said. "...something like 90% of new magazines fold within the first five years. It's very hard to do. So, this is a really risky business proposition that we're involved in here. Of course, my main concern is always what goes in the magazine and how it goes in."<sup>314</sup> Stoller said they have changes planned for *BUST* to meet their new funding and readership goals.

Razorfish is playing a major role in these changes, ranging from the 2002 re-launch to a new pilot show for television.<sup>315</sup> Laurie Windrow, the Senior Vice President of Distribution, Sales & Marketing hired in spring of 2001, said *BUST* is "*Sex and the City* in a magazine. It is the future of women."<sup>316</sup> Windrow trusts that there is great potential in *BUST*'s target audience who, she said, has a large disposable income. Canzona went even further when he said "it's *Sex and the City* in print ... it was around before that and it'll be around after that."<sup>317</sup> While he said he does not pressure the editorial staff to produce content that conforms to advertisers' wishes, Canzona expressed doubts that *BUST* could survive on corporate advertising. Stoller, Windrow, Canzona, and the rest of the *BUST* team believe Third Wave feminism is marketable and that *BUST*-style will be lucrative for major advertisers.

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<sup>313</sup> Janice Erlbaum of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>314</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>315</sup> *BUST*'s planned changes and developments will be discussed further in this chapter. See pages 119-122.

<sup>316</sup> Laurie Windrow of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 25 July 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>317</sup> Jeff Canzona of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 15 November 2000, telephone conversation.

## Are You Surfing the Third Wave?

Labels often repel today's young feminists, with 'feminism' itself being among the most problematic. Third Wave feminists often hear their generational peers say "I'm not feminist, but..." they believe men and women should be treated equally. No single feminist has the exact same definition of her/his beliefs as another. And *BUST* staffers are no different – some do not find the term 'Third Wave' applicable to contemporary expressions of feminism, while others work to make the concept of a third feminist wave acceptable to more of the world's population.

Stoller, Karp, and Henzel were not calling themselves Third Wave feminists when they launched *BUST* in 1993. They called themselves 'groovy girl women'<sup>318</sup> or referred to *BUST* as a voice of 'girl culture.'<sup>319</sup> The first reference to *BUST*'s audience as Third Wave<sup>320</sup> appeared in a 1999 book review of *The Feminist Memoir Project*.<sup>321</sup> The first reference to the 'new girl order' also appeared in 1999 as a tag line above the smiling face of feminist activist, comedian, and actor Janeane Garofalo.<sup>322</sup>

Stoller, who coined the phrase 'new girl order,' said she "meant Third Wave feminists, the new generation of feminists that had a number of different types of strategies with their feminism that the Second Wave didn't – namely, we had a strategy of reclaiming ... and revering girl culture and girly-ness."<sup>323</sup> She clarified that Third Wave feminism is "not standing opposed to Second Wave feminism, but it's an updated feminism with different strategies, more focused on media and culture, than on politics, as a site for change."<sup>324</sup> For

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<sup>318</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 15 May 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> *BUST* no. 12 (Spring 1999): 104.

<sup>321</sup> Ann Snitnow and Rachel Blau du Plessis, eds., *The Feminist Memoir Project: Voices from Women's Liberation* (New York: Three Rivers, 1998).

<sup>322</sup> *BUST* no. 13 (Fall 1999): cover.

<sup>323</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 15 May 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

the most part, the editors generally agree that their magazine represents and gives visibility to Third Wave feminist issues, but they believe *BUST*-style feminism encompasses more than a single label.

Erlbaum sometimes gets frustrated with people who need to pinpoint what kind of feminism *BUST* represents. She knows it's not radical feminism and she wouldn't use the term post-feminism. Often, she thinks of *BUST*'s feminism simply as "post-Second Wave feminism," she said. "That's why we called it '*BUST*-style', because it's fairly unique. Which is not to say that it doesn't share a lot with pro-sex feminism and what is popularly understood as Third Wave feminism."<sup>325</sup> Karp believes the Third Wave label applies to *BUST* simply because of the era in which they are publishing. "We came out in the 90s," Karp said, "We didn't come out in the 70s."<sup>326</sup> She believes that part of being Third Wave is having a direct connection to Second Wave feminism, the wish to learn from what was done and not done during our mother's feminist generation, and an urge to rewrite and revise Second Wave theory to suit today's culture.

While this connection to our feminist foremothers is essential to Karp's understanding of Third Wave feminism, she said the two movements look very different. While the Second Wave was known for its sit-ins and consciousness-raising activities, the Third Wave is happening in dance clubs, movie houses, and newsstands. Being diverse and culturally based, the "Third Wave doesn't follow the patterns" of Second Wave feminist activism.<sup>327</sup> "The first and Second Waves had many very important women, whereas the Third Wave seems to have a lot of different voices... of course, without the Second Wave, us Third Wavers wouldn't be able to do the kind of shit we're doing now. Without the

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<sup>325</sup> Janice Erlbaum of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>326</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

Second Wavers really focusing on the political agendas and trying to get abortion legalized ... us Third Wavers wouldn't have the luxury of saying 'the pop is political'.<sup>328</sup>

The academic feminist of the group believes that, at least at this point, a Third Wave feminist movement is not unified or mobilized. "Third Wave feminism is so unclearly defined," Stoller said. "I guess I do think that (*BUST*) sort of represents a feminist voice that departs, in many ways, from the feminism that was popularized in the 70s and some aspects of that are starting to get labeled as Third Wave feminism. The problem is, though, I think that there are people who consider themselves Third Wave feminist, and there's Third Wave organizations, who would disagree with *BUST* or who'd feel that very important parts of what they're considering Third Wave feminism aren't included. Some people just think that Third Wave feminism doesn't even have it's own philosophy, that it's just what you say when you're just referring to feminist movement – any kind of feminist activity – that's happening now."<sup>329</sup>

Henzel does not feel the need to differentiate between second and Third Wave feminism, or to define either movement. She is more concerned that her staff, readership, and her daughters, identify as feminist – period. "I feel like the goal (of *BUST*) is to make feminism ok, to turn it around and not make it a dirty word," she said. "Because it's so looked down upon and there's nothing wrong with it. I mean, so many young women say 'I think *BUST* is great, I want women to be able to make the same amount of money as men do, but I don't consider myself a feminist.' That just makes me insane. It's ridiculous – you are a feminist and you don't even know it!"<sup>330</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>330</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

The new, younger *BUST* staff recently hired gives Henzel and the others hope for today's feminists. McAndrew sees 'Third Wave feminism' as a general label that covers the disparate cultural movements of her generation. "I think I'm no different than anyone else that would consider themselves feminist right now," she said. "I'm ok with using 'Third Wave' because I think that ... it is just an umbrella term for all these different kinds of feminism that are existing and colliding and growing and confronting each other, and hopefully learning."<sup>331</sup> Gilbert describes *BUST*'s brand of feminism as "fun feminism." She said *BUST* feminism is inclusive, not exclusive. Gilbert said: "It's not man-hating. It's going against the stereotypes of what people like to think feminism is. It's proving that you can be a feminist and still wear a dress."<sup>332</sup> Simms is proud to be an employee of an alternative feminist magazine, which she sees as part of a new feminist movement. "We may not be the serious feminists... Our beliefs are still intact, but we may not be driven to pursue that as a political agenda."<sup>333</sup>

McAndrew sees *BUST* as having its roots in the riot grrrl movement of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Karp said the punk-rock feminism, and subsequent zines and underground culture, was part of the inspiration for starting *BUST*. "At the time, riot grrrl was just brewing and we wanted something that was addressing all these political things in feminist life," Karp said, mentioning the Anita Hill trial and the outspokenly feminist lifestyle and music of Courtney Love of Hole.<sup>334</sup> McAndrew disregards those who believe the riot grrrl movement was a phase that has died; she said *BUST* would always be connected to that early Third Wave culture.

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<sup>331</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>332</sup> Kate Gilbert of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 13 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>333</sup> Molly Simms of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 2 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>334</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

One undeniable aspect of *BUST*'s feminism is their blatant honesty about all things sexual and their unabashed pro-sex attitude. Third Wave feminism, and *BUST*'s 'new girl order,'<sup>335</sup> Stoller said "came out of the sex-wars on the pro-sex side, the non-politically correct side of things, which is sort of flaunting glam" and embracing all things feminine.<sup>336</sup> Karp agreed that *BUST* dwells on the sexual, but said that it is not so much a problem, but more a reality of this generation of feminists. Encouraging women to seek out the pleasurable aspects of life is part of *BUST*'s mission. "Pretending that a 25- or a 35- or a 45-year-old woman isn't concerned about her sexual appetite is just ignoring the facts," Karp said. "Would you rather ignore what's pleasurable to women, and rather focus on what's not pleasurable to women?"<sup>337</sup>

The pro-sex attitude of *BUST*, and other Third Wave media, has received numerous criticisms from some Second Wave feminists and other conservative elements of society.<sup>338</sup> In their defense, Erlbaum said not only are *BUST* readers thinking and talking about, as well as having, a lot of sex, but they are also aware that female sexuality is a common site of gender discrimination worldwide. She thinks those critics who focus on the sexual aspects of *BUST* are missing the big picture. "It's not just sex – there's politics, there's motherhood, there's so much in the magazine," Erlbaum said. "If people are only pulling out the sex stuff, that's great. It's a very important part of the message, to say: 'know what turns you on and know what doesn't turn you on and feel free to experiment for yourself as to what that is. Once you have settled on it – whether it's for a day or for the rest of your life – stick to your

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<sup>335</sup> *BUST* no. 13 (Fall 1999): cover.

<sup>336</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 15 May 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>337</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 22 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>338</sup> There are many articles and books that include the critique that Third Wave feminists are egocentric, narcissistic, and overly sexualized. Below are listed two of these numerous analyses. A) Yvonne Abraham, *Lipstick Liberation* (Boston: Phoenix, May 29 – June 5, 1997) [magazine on-line]; available from <http://www.bostonphoenix.com/alt1/archive/news/97/05/29/FEMINISM.html>. B) Ginia Bellafonte, "Feminism: It's All About Me!" *Time* 151 no.25 (June 29, 1998): 54-62.

goddamned guns and don't let anybody else shove anything else down your throat. Don't let them tell you it's wrong to enjoy being spanked, don't let them tell you that you have to enjoy porn. If you hate porn, go ahead and fucking hate porn.' What we're saying, in an overall sense, is: 'trust in yourself once you have really taken the time and energy to really investigate for yourself.'<sup>339</sup> Stoller responds to critics by saying: "Maybe we're talking about getting comfortable with your sexuality more than we're talking about rape, but I really think that all those things are tied together."<sup>340</sup>

Looking at girl-power sensations such as Britney Spears and the Spice Girls, the *BUST* crew understands that it is this sexual empowerment that could make potential advertisers interested in their version of Third Wave feminism. Karp wants *BUST* to jump on that band-wagon of "girl-power girls" who said "look we're cute and sexy and cuddly and – oh, that's right, we're gonna smack you down if you get out of line' ... that was sexy and acceptable. I feel like all of those forces joined together to create an atmosphere where feminism is not something to be concerned about in a way that's threatening, but something to be concerned about in a way that's illuminating and enlightening."<sup>341</sup> *BUST* editors like the way in which HBO's hit *Sex and the City* has popularized strong, autonomous, complex, and honestly sexualized female characters. They hope this phenomenon helps spark *BUST*'s mass-audience popularity.

Ultimately, the founding editors believe that *BUST* is feminist, without further labels or explanation necessary. Karp said "as long as the bottom line is that you agree that men and women are of equal value," it would fit in *BUST*'s version of feminism."<sup>342</sup> Yet, their definitions of *BUST* – pro-sex, pro-choice, anti-essentialist, a vehicle promoting a diverse

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<sup>339</sup> Janice Erlbaum of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>340</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>341</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*

range of perspectives, post-Second Wave feminist, voice of honest personal expression, a sassy underground magazine born during the riot grrrl movement – are very Third Wave.

### What is *Ms.*-ing From Other Magazines?

The lack of a *Sassy*-style<sup>343</sup> Third Wave feminist presence in the magazine industry was a major impetus for the creation of *BUST*. Among the available commercial lifestyle magazines and independent feminist news-monthlies, the creators of *BUST* felt something was missing from American newsstands. The editors said that *BUST* was not meant to be either a *Ms.* for the next generation or a feminist version of *Cosmopolitan*. They felt the Third Wave needed a smart, playful, and culturally-literate lifestyle magazine as seen through groovy feminist lenses. And, they also hoped to be uplifting, wanting their readership to feel good after reading *BUST*, rather than depressed, fat, or imperfect.

“We think there’s a huge untapped amount of women out there that are ready for something that’s different from *Cosmo* and *Glamour* and all those other magazines,” said Henzel.<sup>344</sup> While Simms takes pleasure in corporate fashion magazines, and enjoys them “kind of like pastry,”<sup>345</sup> she realizes the patriarchal fantasy involved in these publications. She feels better partly because of her work with *BUST*, which, she said, is “a good, weird, funnier, smarter combination of *Ms.* and *Cosmo*.”<sup>346</sup> Although she goes to great lengths to justify her weekly mainstream women’s newsstand splurges, Simms has never felt that she could relate to feminist magazines except *BUST*. Even with the Women’s Studies classes she took at Sarah Lawrence College in New York City, magazines such as a *Ms.* make Simms feel

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<sup>343</sup> *Sassy* was the brainchild of Jane Pratt (now editor of *Jane* magazine) – a girl’s magazine published by Lang Communications from 1988-1994. It was known for its poignantly confessional tone that related to girls and young teens as intelligent individuals, encouraging them to be strong, honest, and creative.

<sup>344</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>345</sup> Molly Simms of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 2 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*

that she is not understanding something or is not politically active enough to appreciate what's being said. "I want to wear lipstick and I don't always pay for dinner!"<sup>347</sup>

Stoller agreed that *Ms.* is addressing a different generation of feminists. "*Ms.*, obviously, is more reflective of second-wave feminism," she said.<sup>348</sup> Unlike *BUST*, *Ms.* has taken on the task of "reporting on all the different instances of sexism in the world, sort of being sexism watchdogs. (*BUST* is) trying, in a way, to be an antidote to that sexism, reporting on it, but also presenting an embrace-able alternative ... not just criticizing the dominant culture."<sup>349</sup> Karp sees that *Ms.* has, historically, disregarded youth movements and cultural movements; but she also sees that *Ms.* has made a concerted effort to broaden their perspective. "I think," she said, "for a long time, they just ignored riot grrrl, and for a long time they ignored a lot of things that were going on in the feminist subculture. At the same time, they were not ignoring what was going on in the big picture of feminism, around the world. They spent so much time going international, they forgot to look at what was going on locally."<sup>350</sup>

When asked to compare *BUST* to other feminist magazines, Stoller and Henzel could not think of any slick feminist magazines beyond *Ms.* Reminded of titles such as *Sojourner*, *off our backs*, *Iris*, and organization publications from the National Organization for Women, the Feminist Majority, and the American Association of University Women, the editors said they felt that those periodicals were more in line with *Ms.* Erlbaum finds that *BUST* appeals better, or relates more, to a more diverse readership, which includes gay and straight men, women of color, and anyone who feels like a cultural outsider. And, while the above-mentioned periodicals are doing a stellar job at feminist news analysis, Erlbaum,

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<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

*BUST*'s current events columnist, said she was sure they would never hire her. "I'm too libertarian ... I'm not the right kind of feminist," she said, meaning her Third Wave values, such as being pro-sex, would restrict her from working with these established feminist publications.<sup>351</sup>

Of the Third Wave (mostly underground) periodicals out there – such as *HUES*, *Bitch*, or *Moxie* – the *BUST* crew could not see that any zine, magazine, or online periodical is addressing this generation of feminists with success equal to *BUST*. Stoller said *Bitch*, a San Francisco-based zine, focuses exclusively on the feminist analyses of current media trends, "a pursuit that they do really well," she said.<sup>352</sup> Karp said that *Bitch* serves an important purpose, but as a 5,000-reader zine that is often "preaching to the choir."<sup>353</sup> While *BUST* prints regular columns by *Bitch* editors for their own media-related departments, this is only one element of the multi-faceted feminist lifestyle and culture *BUST* works to represent. In its early years, *BUST* was satisfied to enlighten and empower a limited feminist subculture. But, as *BUST* matures and widens its influence, the editors are determined to make the magazine a mainstream contender. They want to pose a credible challenge to the likes of *Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, and *Vogue*, corporate women's magazines that the *BUST* crew believes to be a root of patriarchal evil. Some staffers admit to having indulged in the impossible perfection and decadence of glossy fashion magazines, but all agree they distrust and, through the production of *BUST*, are working to counteract the effects of mainstream women's magazines.

Karp believes these mainstream magazines are good at tapping into that addictive part of our personalities that obsess about physical details and image issues. "They create this

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<sup>351</sup> Janice Erlbaum of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>352</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>353</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 22 April 2001, telephone conversation.

sort of need, like you need them to tell you how to fix all the things that are wrong with you,” she said, and she wanted *BUST* to not be a part of those industry tactics.<sup>354</sup> Kat agreed that *BUST* works to make women feel good about being women, rather than insecure and imperfect. “I think so often reading mainstream women’s magazines is just an exercise in self-esteem destruction,” she said. “There’s always something that you could be doing, you should be wearing, that you’re not.”<sup>355</sup> Henzel hates the lack of original art and illustrations in mainstream women’s magazines, relying instead on staged and digitally altered photographs of people with the right body type wearing the right brand of clothing.

Even magazines such as *Rosie* or *Oprah*, that try to offer positive messages, irritate Stoller in their incessant hype over role models and gurus. *BUST* works to offer a diverse range of beautiful and strong female images, rather than trying to “present another monolithic idea of what the perfect woman is supposed to be or aspire to,” Stoller said. “That’s why also so many magazines that want to be, you know, ‘good for women’ spend all their time just trying to present positive role models. That really irks me because I think that the last thing you need is going from one crappy role model, like in *Cosmo*, to a whole magazine full of positive role models that present a very narrow definition of what women should be. I think the main thing is to have a variety.”<sup>356</sup>

The founding editors of *BUST* adopted their dedication to a diverse range of confessional-style features from *Sassy* Magazine, launched in 1988 by Jane Pratt. Aimed at teen and pre-teen girls, *Sassy* offered the fashion-mag basics of beauty and entertainment in a supportive and empowering girlfriend-style tone.<sup>357</sup> Following her demographic into

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<sup>354</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>355</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>356</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>357</sup> *Sassy* came to an end in 1994 when its publisher, Lang Communications, sold the magazine to Petersen Publishers, who then folded the magazine and used the *Sassy* mailing list to increase the circulation of its already popular *Teen* magazine.

adulthood, Pratt launched *Jane* in 1997, hailing women between the ages of 18 and 30.

However, while *Jane* maintains an intimate 'you-go-girl' tone, it offers the same fashion-and-society fair, and the same corporate advertising featuring rail-thin models, as their mainstream peers. In occasional in-depth features and first-person stories, *Jane* flirts with feminist messages of empowerment, independence, and gender equity. Hyped as being a feminist fashion magazine by the media,<sup>358</sup> *Jane* was criticized by feminists far and wide for being celebrity-obsessed, male-identified, and promoting negative body-image messages.<sup>359</sup>

While *BUST* has published similar criticisms of their *Sassy*-hero's new magazine, Karp feels that *BUST* and *Jane* have more in common than the current crew would like to admit. "A lot of people would disagree with me on this one," she said, "but I think that *Jane* editorially, comes close to our voice, but that's also because we stole a lot of our shtick from *Sassy*... They broke ground in terms of how magazines were able to write their voice, how a magazine could ... be like a diary, be confessional. *Jane* – for all its faux pas and celebrity obsession and fashion bullshit – editorially, comes really close [to *BUST*]."<sup>360</sup> Karp said she does not feel that *Jane* is doing that bad of a job, balancing strong third-wave messages with the need to turn a profit and cooperate with powerful corporate advertisers.<sup>361</sup>

Stoller and others feel that their semi-feminist mainstream competitor, *Jane* is compromising its message to play the same corporate games as other women's magazines. They also realize the Disney-owned magazine has achieved the level of readership and revenue of which *BUST* is currently dreaming. For Stoller, her plans to launch *BUST* into a

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<sup>358</sup> An example of media that assumed *Jane* would be a feminist magazine: Susan Douglas, "Valley Girl Feminism: New Feminist Magazine *Jane* Does Not Compare to *Ms.* Magazine," *The Progressive* 61 no.11 (November 1997): 17.

<sup>359</sup> An example of feminist criticism of *Jane* magazine: Andi Zeisler and Lisa Miya-Jervis, "Love Gone Bad! Why *Jane* Broke Our Hearts: Ten Things to Hate About *Jane*," *Bitch* (Winter 1998): 18-23.

<sup>360</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>361</sup> Note: Karp has published freelance articles in *Jane*, the most recent being: Marcelle Karp, "You'll Have Sex Like 6,000 Times in Your Life," *Jane* (February 2001): 42.

new realm of media influence are based in the belief that the Third Wave generation deserves a far-reaching feminist voice that can stand in defiance of sexist corporate magazines. “I really think that we women deserve something real, and not just some funny, silly little underground piece of flotsam and jetsam that very few people know about,” she said. “I really want this magazine to let people know that there’s more to life than *Cosmo* and I think the bigger we get, the more we’re able to make that point.”<sup>362</sup> While Razorfish is making no demands on content or message, they are formulating an aggressive five-year plan to put *BUST* in the black.<sup>363</sup> The crew knows that the future of *BUST* lies in their ability to balance their feisty Third Wave feminism with the demands of corporate advertisers.

#### To Zine or Not to Zine...

A zine, by definition, is an independently produced magazine or journal, often of homemade quality, distributed and sold through underground or non-commercial venues. The early issues of *BUST* – in a true do-it-yourself effort to get in print – were published zines. This was intended only to be a temporary existence, needed to launch *BUST* into public awareness. “I thought of self-publishing only as a means to an end and not as a category of being,” said Stoller. “The only choice we had for publishing was to self-publish. So that meant using cheap methods of printing, stealing other people’s art. You know, by hook or by crook doing what we could.”<sup>364</sup> *BUST* creators have worked to elevate each issue a step closer to looking and operating like a mainstream, for-profit magazine. Now, *BUST* editors believe they have “crossed over” from the zine-world and are striving to compete with popular commercial magazines.

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<sup>362</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>363</sup> Laurie Windrow of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 25 July 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>364</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

The founding editors acknowledge their zine beginnings, and look back with pride. The three women, along with dozens of volunteers, managed to publish bi-annual issues of *BUST* – not to mention make a living, care for family, have love lives – for seven years without financial support. Until the Razorfish partnership, *BUST* creators were unable to pay writers, artists, interns, proofreaders, designers, photographers, or themselves. They relied on an inspired national readership to donate material and a passionate local fan base to do the fact checking, editing, and errand running. This network of women worked together to get *BUST* into every hand they could. One reward of this hard work, Stoller said, was when Susie Bright, Third Wave author and ‘sex-pert,’<sup>365</sup> volunteered in 1997 to write a regular advice column for *BUST* readers’ sexual questions, called “Susie Q’s.”<sup>366</sup>

*BUST* was assembled in the editors’ home offices, and sometimes with the computers and photocopiers at their paying jobs. They had no more clout in landing celebrity features than the next zine. And, the *BUST* editors quickly learned they must trade favors, share self-publication tips, and collaborate with other zine-makers to survive in the underground press. Karp, who was in charge of selling ads for *BUST*, found that sense of zine-community extended beyond magazines to the growing independent music industry of the early and mid-1990s. The “indie” music producers were supportive of grassroots magazines because they not only drew on the same DIY philosophies, but shared the same college-aged target audiences.

Even in their zine years, the crew was working to push each issue of *BUST* closer to the mainstream magazine industry. It only took them one issue to realize they had to publish with an offset press. Karp was selling advertising space by *BUST* no.3. And, before no.4 went to press, Lucy Gwen, creator of the zine *Mouth*, introduced Karp to the magical world

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<sup>365</sup> Susie Bright, *Susie Bright’s Sexual State of the Union* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

<sup>366</sup> Bright’s first column appeared in *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 120.

of subscriptions. Having their readers pre-pay for issues gave *BUST* the assurance that they could always, at least, pay the printer. “At every step, we learned more about the economics of running a magazine,” Karp said. “It never ceases to amaze me how little we knew then, all the shit we learned – I look at it now and I wonder ‘how did we ever fucking get to the printer?’”<sup>367</sup>

And, so, *BUST* began to transition out of the zine world and into the world of profitable, mass-distributed magazines. Because the change happened gradually, the editors do not identify one issue as the first to break out of the underground. By the time *BUST* no.6 was for sale, they had a presence on the World Wide Web.<sup>368</sup> *BUST* no.8 was the first to be on sale at a large chain bookstore. It was after the release of *BUST* no.10 that they could count national distribution as over 20,000. By this time they realized that they had outgrown the zine classification – *BUST* had become a mass-produced magazine on sale in stores whose cafés rivaled Starbucks.

*BUST* was still not financially independent – ad sales and subscriptions paid only for printing and distributing. “The benefit of us not paying ourselves and making it a labor of love is that we were never losing any money,” Stoller said. “We didn’t have anything to lose, really, except for our sense of pride if the magazine folded.”<sup>369</sup> It was not until *BUST* no.12 that the editors acknowledged to readers that *BUST* was shopping for a publisher to invest in their mighty mag. Two issues later, they were in bed with Razorfish. The crew contends that, although they needed a publisher for financial backing, *BUST* had graduated from the zine format independently. “Razorfish didn’t reach down and pull *BUST* out of the

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<sup>367</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>368</sup> *BUST* established its Web site ([www.bust.com](http://www.bust.com)) in 1995.

<sup>369</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

zine world, they were doing it on their own,” McAndrew said.<sup>370</sup> Razorfish’s investment offers *BUST* a chance to grow in a way it could not have as a self-published magazine. This move from an independent to a publisher-owned magazine has made some long-time readers and zinesters uncomfortable.<sup>371</sup> They understand that the lack of corporate-invested control allows writers, artists, and designers a chance to publish free from censorship. The flip side of this equation, of course, is having the power to reach a huge national audience.

While the crew insists they can balance these demands and they are on their way to profitable, mainstream magazine, *BUST* continues to appear in the pages of *Zine Guide*, a nationally distributed directory of zines produced in America.<sup>372</sup> Celia Perez-Zeeb, one of hundreds of zinesters who contribute reviews and commentary for the entries in *Zine Guide*, said she does not consider mass-distributed magazines such as *BUST*, which are sold using barcodes in corporate bookstores, to be zines. She said that to her it seems antithetical to the spirit of the independent press. “Zines are a culture, and there’s more to them than just saying they’re self-published,” Perez-Zeeb said. “Like, I can’t bring myself to buy zines at Tower Records. That to me just seems totally oppositional to the spirit of independence and of not having need or use for mainstream approval that is the drive behind why so many people create zines.”<sup>373</sup>

McAndrew believes that they have different spirits driving *BUST* now. “Zines are a positive way – and serious way – of achieving (visibility) when you don’t see yourself represented in the mainstream...to make it yourself is just incredible,” she said.<sup>374</sup> But, if

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<sup>370</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>371</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation. Celia Perez-Zeeb creator of the zine *I Dreamed I Was Assertive*, interview by author, 17 October 2000, email correspondence.

<sup>372</sup> *Zine Guide* no.4 (Fall/Winter 2000): 31.

<sup>373</sup> Celia Perez-Zeeb creator of the zine *I Dreamed I Was Assertive*, interview by author, 17 October 2000, email correspondence.

<sup>374</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

“mainstream approval” means they can successfully compete with sexist women’s magazines, then that is the goal of *BUST*. “You can’t stay a zine and hope to be placed on the newsstand right next to the magazines that are so detrimental to women,” McAndrew said.<sup>375</sup> She insists that no one at *BUST* is prepared to make apologies for the changes that have pushed it into a more mainstream status. She recognizes that the goals are very different for zines, but *BUST* has other objectives now.

“I love zines, they’re personal and great,” agreed Henzel, “but because we’ve grown so much and we have so many subscribers and it takes so much leg-work to get the thing on the newsstands ... we are not a zine anymore and we don’t want to be a zine again... We want to reach a way larger audience than a zine would ever reach and we’re interested in making this a business.”<sup>376</sup> Canzona said *BUST* is no longer operating as a zine, but more a start-up company. He said that although *BUST* still gives readers a sense of community, “they are trying to become a full-fledged magazine.”<sup>377</sup>

Stoller is certain that, regardless of the work they must do to reach mainstream status, *BUST* is definitely no longer a zine. “I think most people who get us on the newsstand have no idea that we were a zine, don’t even know what a zine is,” she said. “I mean, we (print) 50,000 copies of the magazine – I don’t think there’s any zine that comes anywhere close to numbers like that.”<sup>378</sup> Some of the newer *BUST* staff members have never identified *BUST* as a zine. “I think that perhaps some of the mentality here is still zine-based, because that’s what *BUST* has grown out of,” Gilbert said. “But, I’ve never considered it a

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<sup>375</sup> Ibid.

<sup>376</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>377</sup> Jeff Canzona of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 15 November 2000, telephone conversation.

<sup>378</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 18 April 2001, telephone conversation.

zine. I mean, we're four-color, glossy pages at Barnes & Noble and I don't think that's ziney."<sup>379</sup> Simms agreed, saying, "...magazines have spines and are sold in big bookstores."<sup>380</sup>

*BUST* and their parent Razorfish are focused on their financial and readership goals, working to make both numbers rise in the coming years. Karp worries that, although Razorfish is committed to changing the public's perception of *BUST*, the process will not be an easy one. "It's also one of those things like 'once a secretary, always a secretary,'" she said. "You know, the only way to get away from being considered a secretary is if you leave the company and come back as a (vice president). And I think that's what *BUST* is going to do."<sup>381</sup> With the re-launch planned for January 2002, *BUST* is hoping to reenter the magazine industry as a profitable Third Wave feminist publication.

#### For the Love of Money!

Poets often say that love makes the world go 'round – but, *BUST* producers have learned that if they want the world to go 'round with *BUST* on every coffee table, they must work within the confines of capitalism. That means finding a way to market their Third Wave feminism in an industry where money rules the day. The *BUST* crew is determined to make this happen and, with Razorfish's support, they are prepared for the long haul ahead.

In their early DIY years, the *BUST* gals got their magazine to the printer with proceeds from subscriptions and indie ad sales. Although, in 1995, they realized they could combine promotion with income by selling *BUST* t-shirts in hot pink and costume-jewelry rings adorned with two shapely stainless steel breasts. In 1999, they furthered this effort by launching the *BUST* "Boobtique," an online store selling hard-to-find underground kitsch

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<sup>379</sup> Kate Gilbert of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 13 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>380</sup> Molly Simms of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 2 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>381</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

such as crocheted cellular telephone covers, hand-towels embroidered with “Total Bitch,” and PMS chocolate bars. Razorfish wanted to see the editors hold onto their popular online store, as well as pursue other simple income strategies. In Fall 2000’s issue no.15, the first Razorfish-funded issue, *BUST* added a classified advertisement page, only one of many new moneymaking tricks the founding editors are learning from their publisher.

“Now that we’re here and that we’ve been bought,” Stoller said, “I have to worry about the financial viability of this magazine in a way that I never did.”<sup>382</sup> At the time of these interviews, *BUST* was not earning a profit – they made roughly 50 cents for each dollar they spent – but Windrow said *BUST* is planning to be in the black in 2002. “I am finalizing a 5-year plan with a huge revenue goal,” she said.<sup>383</sup> Canzona said they are working to correct *BUST*’s income/expense imbalance, but, because their current editorial costs are so low, they are staying within their budget for the time being.<sup>384</sup> Karp said that if they want to make it in the mainstream world, *BUST* will eventually have to cut back on editorial content to achieve the moneymaking ratio of 40% advertising per issue. “We print way more editorial than standard magazines do,” she said.<sup>385</sup>

It was Karp who brought in the majority of *BUST*’s ad sales between 1994 and 1998, and she supervised sales in 1999 and 2000, when they split the duties between other *BUST* staff. “But, if it weren’t for me,” Karp said, “*BUST* wouldn’t exist at the moment because I got all that money” that kept the magazine afloat in the lean years.<sup>386</sup> They relied mainly on selling (relatively inexpensive) ad-space to independent music and other alternative retailers

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<sup>382</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>383</sup> Laurie Windrow of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 25 July 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>384</sup> Jeff Canzona of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 15 November 2000, telephone conversation.

<sup>385</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 22 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*

to fund publication.<sup>387</sup> Although the editors never had rules against accepting corporate funding, mainstream advertisers were not courting *BUST*. Needless to say, they were never forced to have long discussions about compromising feminist content for big-money fashion or beauty ad sales – it was simply never an option. But, in early 2000, the editors began to notice that fewer and fewer companies were willing to advertise in *BUST*.

“When I came back from maternity leave” in the spring of 2000, Karp said, “I had so much trouble selling ads to major players.”<sup>388</sup> Even the reliable income from the music industry dried up as the numbers of independent musicians and producers decreased. It was during this ad-slump that they signed on with Razorfish and Karp announced her resignation. She has hope and best wishes for *BUST*'s survival, but she understands the enormity of their challenges. “I think they’re going to have a really hard time,” Karp said. “Unless they can show that *BUST* is a contender on the level of *Jane* and those magazines, they’re just not going to succeed.”<sup>389</sup>

Stoller and the others are working to make *BUST* attractive to deep-pocket advertisers, but they are all too aware of the threat of extinction. “They’ve been having some problems getting advertisers in *BUST*,” said Stoller, “and that’s very worrying because if people won’t advertise with us, then we’re not going to have a magazine anymore.”<sup>390</sup>

Canzona, now in charge of ad sales and budget issues, said that the high-end liquor and fashion companies are not taking the chance on *BUST* because they still see them as a zine. “The ones that are in the book now get us,” he said.<sup>391</sup> It is a matter of getting advertisers

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<sup>387</sup> They also, of course, used proceeds from subscription and newsstand sales of *BUST* to fund publication.

<sup>388</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>389</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>390</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>391</sup> Jeff Canzona of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 15 November 2000, telephone conversation.

accustomed to a magazine that thinks and speaks on its own, he said. “But, until we’re a major force to be reckoned with,” he will continue to hustle for the big moneymakers.<sup>392</sup>

Canzona said he never suggests that the editorial staff should compromise content to please a potential advertiser. “For the most part, they don’t listen to me,” he said, “... they don’t give into the pressure and I don’t pressure them.”<sup>393</sup> Although Karp and the other editors had never set up guidelines for *BUST* advertising, she remembers refusing a few ads whose images were misogynist or offensive. While the current *BUST* crew would not consider a sexist advertisement now, they are willing to move into the new territory of liquor, cigarettes, cars, and fashion.

*BUST*'s transition into this new ad-territory has had mixed response from their readers. The back covers of *BUST* no.14 and no.15 feature their first cigarette ad from Kamel, an RJ Reynolds brand often marketed to alternative audiences such as *BUST*'s. After the first run, *BUST* received several dozen negative letters from readers, disappointed that a magazine they trusted to offer mainstream alternatives was now taking money from the tobacco industry. The one letter they chose to print was from a reader who was upset that RJ Reynolds's products were now appearing in bastions of underground culture, such as nightclubs, “and now they have slimed their way into one of our finest women’s magazines.”<sup>394</sup> The printed reply from the “*BUST*Ties” assured their readers that “choosing to accept the ad wasn’t a decision we made lightly, and even now we are still questioning ourselves.”<sup>395</sup> They reasoned that *BUST* has always spoken openly about the vices and adult products they and readers indulge in, and that they were open to any advertiser that did not

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<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

<sup>393</sup> Ibid.

<sup>394</sup> Lauren Holloway, “Selling Out” (*BUST* no.15, Fall 2000): 6.

<sup>395</sup> Editor reply to reader: Lauren Holloway, “Selling Out” (*BUST* no.15, Fall 2000): 6.

levy editorial prescriptions on an ad sale. “At this point,” the editors wrote, “we can’t afford to turn down advertisers. If we do, the magazine may go up in smoke.”<sup>396</sup>

The *BUST* crew is united in their feeling that regular cigarette or liquor ads should be taken in context, “and the current context for us was ‘we need money,’” said Erlbaum.<sup>397</sup> She constantly fluctuates on whether it is better to take money from a company you respect, or if there can be any good found in taking money from the likes of Phillip Morris to pay for the mass-production of a feminist magazine. *BUST* wants to be able to trust its readership to not only understand their financial pressures, but also to make health decisions independent of any form of media. The editors are torn about these issues, too, but they are more concerned with keeping *BUST* alive. “It may sound crass,” Henzel said, “but unfortunately, it’s business. You can’t get (major) ads from thrift stores.”<sup>398</sup> So, they will push on to sign deals with the profitable ads, from The Gap and Apple Computers to General Motors and Coors Light.

Despite their trouble selling ads, Karp is convinced that “girl-power” media such as *BUST* will be profitable. “These days it’s ok,” she said, “the things that the Spice Girls and Britney [Spears] and all those girls have done for feminism is a lot... the important thing to realize is that they commercialized feminism. They made it easy for women to be recognized as sexualized divas in our culture and forces that need to be reckoned with.”<sup>399</sup> *BUST* hopes to convince mainstream retailers that they represent the magazine version of HBO’s award-winning *Sex and the City*. “We want to try to attract the advertisers that are attracted by what

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<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Janice Erlbaum of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>398</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>399</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

we write about and by our numbers,” Henzel said. “If we get our circulation numbers up, they will come, no matter what.”<sup>400</sup>

This relies on proving to their readers that they can deliver a quality feminist publication even with the corporate influence. Erlbaum reassures the worried readers she encounters, saying, “hey, don’t worry, we want this to be looking cool and fierce and out-of-the-ordinary and we don’t want to change.”<sup>401</sup> She suggests readers continue to contribute material that they want to see in *BUST*; although they cannot publish everything that is submitted, a constant flow of input from *BUST* readers will help the editorial crew stay in touch with their audience.

“No one’s just going to print this as a charity case,” Stoller said. “So in order to keep this thing alive, we need to be able to make it financially stable. And, either ... there’s enough women out there who would like this kind of thing that it will be financially stable, or we’re wrong.”<sup>402</sup> Razorfish is convinced they are not wrong. Windrow said Razorfish has faith that *BUST* will make it big in the magazine world. She said that *BUST* has “a huge audience potential and an untapped market.”<sup>403</sup>

Karp fears that fulfilling that potential may be *BUST*’s most difficult challenge. “I think the bigger challenge will be having to satisfy the business end,” she said. “I think that will either be the death knell of *BUST*, or the big crowning prize.”<sup>404</sup> Each of the current staff members expressed concern for *BUST*’s future. “I think at times everyone’s been worried about what the relationship with Razorfish is going to be,” said Gilbert, “but right now I feel good about it.”<sup>405</sup> At the time of these interviews, *BUST* was still basking in the

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<sup>400</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>401</sup> Janice Erlbaum of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>402</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>403</sup> Laurie Windrow of *BUST* magazine (Razorfish), interview by author, 25 July 2001, email correspondence.

<sup>404</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>405</sup> Kate Gilbert of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 13 March 2001, telephone conversation.

glow of spacious new offices, salaries, and contributor stipends. They know, however, that the good stuff come with a price. “It is kind of scary,” Simms said, “because once you hitch your wagon to one of these things, you’re pretty much set. Once you get in deep with the backing, if that falls out, it’s pretty much done.”<sup>406</sup>

### Where is *BUST* Going?

The world will soon know if the early years of this new millennium will see *BUST* become the first commercially successful Third Wave feminist magazine. In the meantime, the team at *BUST* is dreaming of the increased readership and high-paying advertisers that they hope will come after the re-design and re-launch planned for January 2002.

Karp knew, upon her departure from *BUST* this spring, she was leaving the magazine with many challenges ahead. “If *BUST* can grow to 100,000 readers and satisfy the mandate the publishers have set up, they’ll find themselves in a really good place and women all over will benefit,” she said.<sup>407</sup> “They’re going to have to really spend a lot of money on marketing and press ... sending Debbie (Stoller) and Laurie (Henzel) everywhere in the country to shake as many hands as possible to get support.”<sup>408</sup> For now, the *BUST* crew is focusing on giving *BUST* a commercially-friendly makeover.

Stoller wants to simplify the magazine to make it more appealing to a larger population. “People who might like it, who see it on the newsstand and even flip through it, might not necessarily know what it’s about,” she said. “I think it still takes too much work. You really have to be interested before you can get it. It’s not obvious what it is. All I want

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<sup>406</sup> Molly Simms of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 2 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>407</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid.

to do is make it more obvious, what it is.”<sup>409</sup> *BUST* has been known for its friendly chaos, diverse writing and artistic styles, and its average 102 -pages of material ranging from news, analysis, cartoons, product and media reviews, original and borrowed art, interviews, advice, erotica, and both humorous and serious feature articles. For its initial seven years, *BUST* has printed several dozen one- or two-page stories from dozens of writers. “Now I feel like I just want to make it a littler easier on our readers and just give our stories more pages, let them be longer. It means that we can’t run as many reader submissions as we used to. But I think it makes us stronger, more accessible, just an easier magazine to get through.”<sup>410</sup> As the magazine matures, the *BUST* crew has decided that more is not necessarily better.

From a design perspective, Henzel just wants to see some issue -to-issue regularity. “For my sanity’s sake, and for the reader’s too, I want there to be places where you always know that a certain column is there, or this section is going to be in the back of the book,” she said.<sup>411</sup> Henzel is not sure how they will alter *BUST*’s famous retro-style imagery.<sup>412</sup> Although some of their old standards are beginning to bore her, she said they are important for them as “a postmodern feminist magazine.”<sup>413</sup> Henzel is happy to be able to offer artists and photographers \$50 per assignment now, and hopes this increases their selection of cutting-edge art for *BUST*.

Erlbaum, who has been editing and writing the news pages, would rather see *BUST* come out monthly. This, she said, would both help them increase readership and give the writers and editors more room to grow. And, while she is also interested in helping *BUST* launch another TV pilot and beefing up their Web site, her biggest aspiration for *BUST*’s

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<sup>409</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>412</sup> See Appendix X.

<sup>413</sup> Ibid.

expansion is an increased number of pages for each issue. Given the amount of advertising they hope to be printing, they will need at least a 250-page book to fit in all the material *BUST* has to offer.

McAndrew is confident *BUST* has what it takes to seduce more readers in its current form, they just need to diversify their methods of distribution and promotion. She would rather see the *BUST* interns focusing on doing some of the foot-soldier work, such as taking *BUST* to feminist-theme events. And she is excited that 85 Women's Studies departments at high schools, colleges, and universities throughout the U.S. have signed up for annual subscriptions.<sup>414</sup> "*BUST* will speak for itself," McAndrew said. "One of the biggest jobs that we can do is to just get it into the hands of people who would be inclined to read it."<sup>415</sup>

However, when *BUST* reappears after its face-lift in 2002, some of the old standards may not be around. For the last several years, *BUST* editors have waded through more than 200 submissions for each issue. This was necessary when they were just beginning, but the needs of the magazine are changing. At this point, Stoller said they read each and every story, although 10% are well written and they can print only six to ten reader contributions at a time. "That's another reason we can't continue to do it this way – it's too much," she said. "There's also certain things that nobody thinks to write about that, as an editor, you say 'damn, we should really have a piece about this.'"<sup>416</sup> They are also considering phasing out their old, reliable pseudonyms. They needed the anonymity in their early years to protect themselves and their writers in addressing difficult or controversial issues. Now that the editors no longer need to hide, Henzel is not sure why they still use the fake names. "It's

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<sup>414</sup> *BUST* is being sent to nearly 1000 Women's Studies departments, however, the majority of these are free subscriptions, as part of a promotional offer launched this year (Molly Simms of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17, September 2001, email correspondence).

<sup>415</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>416</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

ridiculous,” she said. “I think we’re going to probably stop using them because it’s so silly. I don’t know why we do it. Now, it’s really just out of habit and it’s just dumb.”<sup>417</sup>

Karp is sure that, no matter what changes may take place, that it is *BUST*’s destiny to strive for mainstream-magazine greatness. The editors promise that the new version of *BUST* will have new and exciting features that are sure to shock and amaze readers, increase their circulation, and pull in new advertisers. Karp has nothing but high hopes for her sisters at *BUST*. “I hope that Razorfish doesn’t fold and I hope that those guys can forge ahead and do something important and substantial with *BUST*,” she said.<sup>418</sup> Henzel is keeping the faith that *BUST* is here to stay. “I want us to be around in fifteen years,” she said. “I want us to be important.”<sup>419</sup> McAndrew and the other new *BUST* staff members are certain that, with Razorfish’s help, *BUST* will be giving the magazine world a run for its money. “There’s so much waiting for us. *BUST* is really positioned itself well to meet the rising tide of women who are fed up with mainstream depictions of femininity.”<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>417</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>418</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>419</sup> Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>420</sup> Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

## CHAPTER VI CONTENT ANALYSIS FINDINGS

The case study of *BUST* magazine was performed in three phases: participant-observation (Chapter IV), in-depth interviews (Chapter V), and content analysis (Chapter VI). The evaluation of the first seventeen issues of *BUST* Magazine, and the founding editors' 1999 compilation of their magazine, *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order*,<sup>421</sup> was conducted using content analysis, examined for and identified with elements of Third Wave feminist theory.<sup>422</sup> The editions reviewed in this study were *BUST* no.1 (July 1993) through no.17 (Spring 2001). This chapter reports the findings of the content analysis phase of this case study.

The content analysis of *BUST* was conducted using seven categories relating to Third Wave feminist theoretical patterns. *BUST* nos.1-17 were reviewed to identify representations of the following: 1) reaction to, or adoption of, Second Wave feminist theory; 2) multiculturalism; 3) alternative and diverse sexualities; 4) anti-essentialism; 5) individualism; 6) contradiction or contrast; and 7) pastiche<sup>423</sup> and camp.<sup>424</sup> Excerpts in *BUST* were identified with two or more categories of Third Wave theory (for instance, one story could engage issues of pornography and alternative approaches to sexuality in a reaction to Second Wave feminist theory). I found category to be utilized regularly, with an estimated

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<sup>421</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, *The Bust Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999).

<sup>422</sup> See Appendix III: Content Analysis Protocol Worksheet.

<sup>423</sup> An as element of postmodern theory, *pastiche* can be defined as “the wild, wanton, creative (depending on your attitude) opposition of styles, often ripped – like collage cut-outs – from their original contexts.” [Richard Campbell and Roseanne Freed, “‘We Know It When We See It’: Postmodernism and Television,” *Television Quarterly* 26, no.3 (Winter 1993): 79.]

<sup>424</sup> For purposes of this discussion, *camp* as a verb is “to use exaggerated movements, gestures, etc., to over-act” and, as an adjective, *camp* refers to that which is “ostentatious, exaggerated, affected, theatrical.” *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “camp.” Further discussion of this phenomenon will follow (see pages 144-157).

five or more examples of all seven categories found in each edition.<sup>425</sup> In keeping with the nature of qualitative analysis, the samples from *BUST* that satisfy each category were not counted, yet the following chapter will offer a representative sample as evidence that *BUST* is indeed a Third Wave feminist publication.

New categories were created in the content analysis process to accommodate notions that did not fit neatly into one of the seven above-mentioned categories. These two subsequent categories are as follows: 8) inclusion of, or an appeal to, male readers, and 9) expression of anger, agitation, or impatience, reminiscent of the punk-rock rage of the riot grrrl movement. These two were not as frequently found as the original seven categories. And, while not representing groundbreaking theoretical aspects of Third Wave feminism in general, I observed these new categories illuminated the magazine's spin on Third Wave feminist culture and theory.

The examination of these eight years of *BUST* put the magazine's gradual move to a standard magazine format into perspective. From no.1's homemade photocopies to no.17's tight, glossy neatness, it is strikingly obvious that *BUST* has matured. However, for better or for worse, *BUST* still has many features that resemble a zine. For example, each story finishes within its allotted maximum of four pages, with rare 'jumps' or stories continued at the back of the book. The advertising content is far below that of mainstream women's magazines, where as much as fifty percent or more of each book is promotional; *BUST* nos. 1-17 carry a median of 30 ads per issue, many of them half- or quarter-page ads, in an average of 102 pages. Advertising content is not mimicked in editorial material and the middle of the book could go up to twelve pages without advertisements. Witty and wry

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<sup>425</sup> The chapter subsections that follow discuss the evidence found for each category, and are limited to only those examples that are the most descriptive of each element of Third Wave theory. Mention of every applicable sample would be redundant and produce an unwieldy manuscript.

hand-drawn cartoons are frequently scattered among personal, first person stories. As it matured, however, *BUST* has adopted structured departments, many of which play on traditional magazine sections, such as advice columns and astrological predictions. Of course, *BUST*'s versions of these lifestyle-standards are filled with pro-sex verbiage and pro-girl messages.

*BUST* producers strive to defy many publication standards and traditions of both its women's lifestyle competition as well as its feminist sisters. I observed that *BUST* does not provide its readers with features enumerating the "10 Easy Steps" to the fad of the week or the cosmetic magic of fashion makeovers, nor does it have many interviews with international women's rights activists or exposés on female genital mutilation in third world countries. There may be a well-loved celebrity on the cover, but he or she is not held up as icons of perfection. A *BUST* story may address sexual assault, but it does not feel compelled to quote statistics on women and rape.<sup>426</sup> The media review section may admit that parts of Fox's latest installment of *Ally McBeal* were hilarious, but it will also analyze the racist subtext in the title character's conversation with her African-American roommate. And, *BUST* will acknowledge a boycott of The Gap for its treatment of Mexican women in sweatshops on U.S. borders, but it also encourages its readers to make political and personal decisions for themselves.

Several general features of *BUST* exemplify its Third Wave feminist mentality. The magazine's use of reader submissions creates a publication that is truly multicultural and multiperspectival. *BUST* takes a defiantly Third Wave stance with its regular zine, pornography, and sex-toy reviews, as well as erotic stories called "One-Handed Reads." The

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<sup>426</sup> *BUST* differs in this way from feminist magazines such as *Ms.*, which work to educate and raise political awareness of various feminist issues. For example, a *Ms.* story about sexual assault would undoubtedly include statistics about battered women.

*BUST* approach is 100% unconventional, always looking for the unusual and counter-cultural spin. Even the beauty product recommendations are cynical and creative, promoting things such as body paint in new shades for Halloween and hemp soap made by a company that does not test on animals. And “She’s Crafty,” the regular do-it-yourself arts and crafts how-to segments, defy the stereotype of domestic arts as oppressive to women.

Each installment covers a single theme, announced in a call for submissions in the preceding issue. Well-written syntheses of all things Third Wave in the editors’ premise-setting opening letters surmise their generation’s feminist perspectives on the topic at hand. The regular “Fashion Nation” section celebrates a Third Wave embrace of diversity with photos of women of many different sizes, shapes, and colors, wearing crazy thrift-inspired or homemade clothes. “Media Whore,” later dubbed “Bitchy Bits,” is a regular reprint from *Bitch* magazine with Third Wave feminist critiques of popular culture. The writers’ use of pseudonyms<sup>427</sup> seems to be a symptom of a postmodern approach that celebrates the death of the subject as well as the many shades of personality and range of beliefs that exist within each one of us. Of one thing I am sure, this is not my mother’s feminist magazine.

### Reactions to & Adoption of Second Wave Feminism

As demonstrated in Chapter II: Literature Review, Third Wave feminists are in the process of creating new ideological frameworks while simultaneously responding to the feminist debates of previous generations. *BUST* makes no apologies for its frequent

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<sup>427</sup> While contributors and some *BUST* staff varied in their use of pseudonyms or their given names, the three founding editors used their pseudonyms without fail throughout the seventeen issues discussed in this chapter. Therefore, references to material written by the editors will refer to them by the pseudonyms in the bylines: Stoller was Celina Hex, Karp was Betty Boob, and Henzel was Areola. For other *BUST* staff members who used their pen names on an occasional basis, both names will be given in references to their material.

reactions to, and adoption of, Second Wave feminist theories.<sup>428</sup> The founding editors, now nearing their 40s, cut their teeth on their parents' second-wave principles. And, their magazine continually dialogues with these underlying feminist understandings as it attempts to *BUST*-out with a new spin on gender equality and sexist-free living – whether they're addressing issues of sexuality or body image, motherhood or relationships. The feminists producing *BUST* can be seen as both dismantling and building upon second-wave understandings of gender and oppression. This balance is the fundamental terrain of Third Wave feminism.

The chosen themes of *BUST* strike this balance in each edition, by compiling widely varying third-wave perspectives on such mainstream feminist topics as body image and the economic condition of women. Announcing, “feminists just wanna have fun,”<sup>429</sup> the feminist-themed issue<sup>430</sup> is filled with reflections on and confrontations with Second Wave feminism. This edition wrestles to understand the generations-old feminist tendency towards hatred and distrust of men,<sup>431</sup> as well as punctuating how much the Second Wave has done to open doors to personal, professional, and legal opportunities for the Third Wave.<sup>432</sup> One writer takes a cynically humorous approach to her second-wave upbringing as she admits her weakness for beautiful shoes: “Fashion and feminism?,” Jayne Air asks, “that was an argument for my mom to have with her friends back in the early 1970s, so that I might move

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<sup>428</sup> While Third Wave feminism is often found to both reject and embrace elements of second wave culture, theory, and activism, this research acknowledges that there is no definitive, singular body of thought or history that encompasses the second wave feminist movement. Generally, the term ‘second wave’ will refer to the overwhelmingly liberal feminist theories formed and expressed during the 1960s and 70s. Further discussion of these feminist waves in Chapter II: Literature Review (33-54) and Chapter VII: Conclusions (196-200).

<sup>429</sup> *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): cover. See Appendix XVI.

<sup>430</sup> *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000).

<sup>431</sup> Janice “Girlbomb” Erlbaum, “Attack of the Man-Haters!,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 42-44.

<sup>432</sup> Mimi Coucher, “Back in the Day: There Was Life Before Feminism, But it Wasn’t Pretty,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 50-51.

on to bigger issues, like the freedom to enjoy being shallow.”<sup>433</sup> Although humor is a common relief of feminist tension for *BUST*'s Third Wavers, the plain, honest truth can be both funny and powerful. “In elementary school,” Celina Hex writes in her opening editor’s letter, “thoroughly indoctrinated in Second Wave lingo, I would ask my mom if I could invite a few of the ‘women’ from my sixth grade class over to play.”<sup>434</sup> She said she cannot remember a time when she was not a feminist.

While Gloria Steinem graces the cover of *BUST*'s feminist edition (wearing a bejeweled “F-WORD” t-shirt), her feature interview<sup>435</sup> is shared with Kathleen Hanna.<sup>436</sup> Often credited with launching the riot grrrl movement, as well as coining the phrase, Hanna is the former front grrrl of the punk band Bikini Kill and is often considered to be Ms. Steinem’s third-wave counterpart. In an ultimate display of Third Wave’s consistent reflection on the feminism of their mothers’ generation, Steinem and Hanna discuss the two waves important similarities and cultural differences.

The two women agreed that the basic tenet of feminism is a belief in the equality of men and women, and that feminism is also a broad-based coalition of a range of civil rights movements such as racism and classism. Steinem coos with joy when Hanna describes her 9-year-old memories of hearing Bella Abzug speak at a Solidarity Day event in Washington D.C. in the late 70s, yet Steinem admits that *Ms.* didn’t give the riot grrrl movement fair coverage initially because “older feminists don’t always recognize feminism when it comes in a different form.”<sup>437</sup> But the women agreed to disagree when it came to issues of sexually explicit media and the sex trade; Steinem feels that pornography should be treated the same

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<sup>433</sup> Jayne Air, “I Love It, I’ve Got to Have It, I’m Going to Kill Myself,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 31.

<sup>434</sup> Celina Hex, “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad F?,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 4.

<sup>435</sup> Celina Hex, “Fierce, Funny, Feminists,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 52-56.

<sup>436</sup> Hex wanted both women photographed together for the cover, but she explained in the introduction that Steinem’s wedding and Hanna’s tour of her new band Le Tigre prevented scheduling this shot. See Appendix XVI.

<sup>437</sup> Gloria Steinem, “Fierce, Funny, Feminists,” interview by Celina Hex. *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 54.

as racist literature and Hanna rejects the idea of “feminists working with the police and with the government to enact laws . . . that will hurt women who work in the pornography industry.”<sup>438</sup>

*BUST*'s Third Wave contributors have been wrestling with their Second Wave inheritance since issue no.1. Often, *BUST*'s reactions to the Second Wave are merely generational in nature. In their first opening letter, the founding editors proclaim, “we are the women who were raised on feminism” and that they hate the thought of “juggling career and family.”<sup>439</sup> When Tabitha Rasa waxes poetic about her love affair with slacks in “The Fashion and Beauty Issue” and refers to previous generations of “steely babes” who defied patriarchal stereotypes by wearing pants, readers know the wave of feminists she invokes.<sup>440</sup> Poonteesha remembers being disgusted at her mother’s Second Wave choices: “‘Mom, can’t you please shave your legs?’”<sup>441</sup> In contrast, Peekaboo P. espouses on the merits of body hair, referring to the Second Wave refusal to participate in the social norm of hair removal as “the good old days.”<sup>442</sup> Inga M. Muscio reflects on the feminist choices made by generations of strong women before her in “My Grandma Wore Combat Boots.”<sup>443</sup> And sometimes *BUST*'s Third Wavers are just plain disappointed in their Second Wave foremothers. In her regular media analysis, *Bitch* magazine editor Lisa Miya-Jervis presents a Coach leather advertisement in *Bazaar* magazine featuring ‘writer’ Gloria Steinem as a shocker. “I guess ‘godmother of contemporary feminist publishing’ wouldn’t be enough of an enticement to get *Bazaar* readers to shell out the big bucks,” Miya-Jervis snaps.<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> Kathleen Hanna, “Fierce, Funny, Feminists,” interview by Celina Hex. *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 56.

<sup>439</sup> Celina Hex and Betty Boob, “*BUST* Manifesta,” *BUST* no.1 (June 1993): 1-2.

<sup>440</sup> Tabitha Rasa, “Slacker,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 17.

<sup>441</sup> Poonteesha, “My Teenage Mom,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 96.

<sup>442</sup> Peekaboo P., “Don’t Worry, Be Hairy,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 79.

<sup>443</sup> Inga M. Muscio, “My Grandma Wore Combat Boots,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 40-41.

<sup>444</sup> Lisa Miya-Jervis, “Bitchy Bits,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 8.

While raised on the feminist revolution of the 60s and 70s, *BUST's* head editor admits to becoming part of a new feminist wave in the 80s. "Punk rock and new wave gave a loud new soundtrack to my feminist leanings. 'I might like you better if we slept together' was certainly no Second Wave sentiment, yet I felt fierceness and the early stirrings of girl power when I sang along to it in the college pub."<sup>445</sup> This generation's version of feminism will not look, speak, or behave in the same way as the previous one. *BUST* has been voicing Third Wavers' rejections of various aspects of Second Wave feminism as we negotiate gender politics in the new millennium.

*BUST* is determined to redefine feminism to suit their generation. *BUST's* Third Wave feminist readers and contributors take a stand against Second Wave traditions in the arena of language. In true postmodern fashion, *BUSTy* feminists find power in the reclamation and redefinition of previously stigmatized words or phrases. In "A Vindication of the Rights of Cunt,"<sup>446</sup> Jane Air argues with Second Wave feminists who find the word 'cunt' to be a violent, misogynist insult. Using a play on the title of a famous feminist treatise of a previous generation, Air attempts to return the definition of the term to its ancient reference to female magic and power. A sidebar in "The Motherhood Issue" reassigns the meaning of the put-down 'motherfucker' to instead refer to "the ultimate sexual partner; one who delights the other with continuous orgasms and attention."<sup>447</sup>

Sexuality is another major terrain of *BUST's* rejections of common Second Wave beliefs. Unwilling to live with the fear and danger second-wavers such as Andrea Dworkin saw in pornography and the sex industry, *BUST* promotes female involvement in and empowerment through sex toys, sadomasochistic games, and erotic imagery and literature, as

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<sup>445</sup> Celina Hex, "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad F?," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 4.

<sup>446</sup> Jane Air, "A Vindication of the Rights of Cunt," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 80-81.

<sup>447</sup> Nancy E. Young, "Mother Tongue," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 19.

well as a support of women who choose to make a living through sex work. In her discussion of the pros and cons she considered before acting in an underground erotic film, Gina Velour listed the “Social Stigma” of knowing that “pornography isn’t ‘cool,’ and certain feminist will hate me” as one reason to not participate.<sup>448</sup> In the end, Velour took the job and found it to be both empowering and enjoyable work.

Although the editors acknowledge that every girl must make sexual choices for herself, porn is definitely cool within the pages of *BUST* magazine. *BUST* no.7, dedicated to “bad girls” and their vices, launches *BUST*’s “Sex Files,” a regular collection of consumer reports on explicit videos and magazines featuring feminist-friendly sex. “Kitty Porn: A Guide for *BUST* Gals Who Ask ‘Where’s the Beef?’”<sup>449</sup> admits that while “women’s porn was an oxymoron in the 70s,”<sup>450</sup> women are now taking greater production control in the sex industry and the selection of women-centered adult entertainment has increased tenfold. The second sex issue is even stronger in their embrace and support of patriarchy-free pornography. For example, Celina Hex interviews feminist porn star and producer Candida Royalle<sup>451</sup> and Jayne Air reflects on why *Playgirl* magazine is less tantalizing than *Playboy*.<sup>452</sup>

*BUST*-style feminism also often rejects the second-wave understanding that housekeeping and other nesting pastimes are de facto discrimination against women. For *BUST*, it is a matter of both acknowledging and accepting those things which bring us pleasure, no matter what the socialized stigma against them, as well as supporting the domestic arts as a way of elevating and valuing what is traditionally considered ‘women’s work.’ In her dust-ball-busting recommendations, Mikki Halpin recognizes her Third Wave

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<sup>448</sup> Gina Velour, “The Creation of a Cyber Porn Star,” *BUST* no.4 (Fall 1994): 16.

<sup>449</sup> Lori Seto, “Kitty Porn: A Guide for *BUST* Gals Who Ask ‘Where’s the Beef?’” *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 70-73.

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>451</sup> Celina Hex, “Candida Confesses,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 16-18.

<sup>452</sup> Jayne Air, “Playgirl in Boyland,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 22.

defiance against Second Wave rejections of homemaking: “Although my *Ms.*-reading mother is not thrilled, I must admit that I enjoy tidying up.”<sup>453</sup>

In honor of feminists who embrace their inner “homegirl,” *BUST* no.17 is devoted to the Third Wave reclamation of domestic bliss. In her opening letter, the lead editor reflects on how Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* showed the world that there should be life beyond the front door for American housewives. While she recognizes the necessity of this phase of the women’s rights movement, as well as her own fulfilling career choices, “lately I’ve been rediscovering the joys of cooking, knitting, sewing, and other simple domestic activities,” regardless of the fact that some feminists find it demoralizing and the rest of the world may think it is stupid.<sup>454</sup> This issue is full of tips and quips about modern household chores, providing the practical yet humorous ““*BUST*ier Home and Gardens: Bad Girl’s Guide to Good Housekeeping.”<sup>455</sup>

Acknowledging a Third Wave tendency to find joy in the housework their mothers felt trapped by, “A Broom of One’s Own”<sup>456</sup> describes one woman’s realization that housekeeping requires tremendous skill and imagination, and that generations have dismissed it as banal matronly duties. A sidebar at the end of this piece, “Swept Under the Rug,”<sup>457</sup> traces the history of Home Economics courses and how the post-war culture of the 1950s pushed the study of domestic arts from science to stigma with textbooks preaching protocol for making husbands comfortable after work. “This was the version of Home Ec that was so soundly rejected by the Second Wave.”<sup>458</sup> Sue D’Nym rejoices in her conclusion, which tells readers that there is a growing appreciation for Home Ec, now being renamed as

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<sup>453</sup> Mikki Halpin, “I Might Like You Better If We Swept Together” *BUST* no.15 (Fall 200): 18.

<sup>454</sup> Celina Hex, “Take Back the Knit,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 4.

<sup>455</sup> Various authors, “Bad Girl’s Guide to Good Housekeeping: *BUST*ier Home and Gardens,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 71-84.

<sup>456</sup> Jean Railla, “A Broom of One’s Own,” *BUST* no. 17 (Spring 2001): 40-45.

<sup>457</sup> Sue D’Nym, “Swept Under the Rug: The Secret History of Home Ec,” *BUST* no. 17 (Spring 2001): 45.

<sup>458</sup> *Ibid.*

Family Environmental Sciences, giving credence to those essential aspects of our every day lives, and “to celebrate the women who made them their lives’ work.”<sup>459</sup>

The Third Wave feminism of *BUST* can also be seen to directly adopt or incorporate aspects of Second Wave culture. *BUST*'s tongue-in-cheek references to a feminism of yore are often used to both entertain and to remind readers they are part of a legacy of women's rights activists. “True Beauty, or What to Wear to the Sit-In” by Freedom Writer chronicles her third-wave negotiations between a fashion-conscious culture and her struggle for inner beauty.<sup>460</sup> Mimicking a common slogan of 70s feminism, “BUSTerhood is global”<sup>461</sup> headlines a page of reader letters. Regular *Ms.*-style critiques of popular culture in “Media Whore”<sup>462</sup> and “Bitchy Bits”<sup>463</sup> segments are borrowed from the editors' Second Wave predecessors, although they also include positive media feedback. Similarly adopted is the “News From a Broad”<sup>464</sup> section responding to current events and broadcasting news about the status of women around the world that is often unreported in mainstream media. Occasional reproductive health advice<sup>465</sup> and exposés on international women's issues<sup>466</sup> also sponge techniques from popular Second Wave feminist publications.

Drawing on many second-wave incarnations of divine feminist liberation, *BUST*'s “Goddess Issue”<sup>467</sup> strives not to characterize the perfect woman but to celebrate those who have broken out of society's limited female stereotypes. While the concept was “almost

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<sup>459</sup> Ibid.

<sup>460</sup> Freedom Writer, “True Beauty, or What to Wear to the Sit-In,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 27.

<sup>461</sup> *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 6.

<sup>462</sup> “Media Whore” is a two- or three-page segment written by Lisa Jervis that debuted in *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 24-25. This department remained the same through *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999).

<sup>463</sup> In *BUST* no.13, “Media Whore” became a department made of several pieces by different authors and analysis by Jervis (now Lisa Miya-Jervis) entitled “Bitchy Bits.” This arrangement ran through *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000) until “Media Whore” became a segment written entirely by staff and other writers, with no items by Miya-Jervis in *BUST* nos. 16 and 17.

<sup>464</sup> “News From a Broad” first appeared as a multi-authored department in *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 24-26, and later became a regular column by Janice Erlbaum in *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 31-32.

<sup>465</sup> Jane Air, “Reproductive Health Newsflash from *BUST*,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 67.

<sup>466</sup> Kitty O'Shea, “Erin Go Breed: The State of Abortion in Ireland,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 82-83.

<sup>467</sup> *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997). See Appendix XIV.

ruined by all those goddess-worshipping freaked-out frizzy-haired femmes of the 70s,” this issue has several pieces that outline various sects of women’s spirituality<sup>468</sup> and offer a primer on hallowed characters from mythology<sup>469</sup> to increase readers’ awareness of female holiness in our modern lives.

In its second whack at Third Wave sexuality, *BUST* asks second-wave trailblazer and author Erica Jong about “men, women, sex, and The Merv Griffin Show.”<sup>470</sup> Jong responds to some common misunderstandings of her generation of feminists, saying, “I think that (Andrea) Dworkin and (Catherine) Mackinnon were the aberration” in terms of Second Wave views on sexuality and erotic media.<sup>471</sup> *BUST* displays further Third Wave fascination with Second Wave literature with “Tales from the Liberation Library.”<sup>472</sup> Reviewing two anti-feminist titles from the early 1970s, Peril shows how cultural resistance to women’s rights movements are not exclusive to the Third Wave.

Most often, *BUST* exhibits the Third Wave tactic of balancing an awareness and respect for Second Wave achievements by updating theories and practices for a new generation. For example, a cartoon in the “Fashion and Beauty Issue” depicts several young women quibbling about one another’s appearance, with quotes such as, “everyday’s a runway in New York, honey,” “make-up is only skin deep,” “she’s obviously desperate,” “self-hatred is what does us in,” and “talk about the ‘beauty myth.’”<sup>473</sup> The last frame shows a woman with her arms raised in exasperation, saying, “Feminists – no wonder they can’t dress!!!”<sup>474</sup> Juggling an awareness of Second Wave theories of the patriarchal manipulations of female

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<sup>468</sup> Jill Cuniff and Jodie Platner, “The Goddess Squad,” *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 28-29.

<sup>469</sup> Martine Hackett, “Goddess 101,” *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 24-27.

<sup>470</sup> Celina Hex, “Ma Jong,” *BUST* no.19 (Winter/Spring 1998): 37.

<sup>471</sup> *Ibid*, 38.

<sup>472</sup> Lynn Peril, “Tales from the Liberation Library,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 23.

<sup>473</sup> Girlbaum, Celina Hex, and the Pussy Poets, “Queens of Shade,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 10-12.

<sup>474</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

appearance with an affinity for fashion and beauty, *BUST* uses humor to negotiate a compromise.

“The Body Issue”<sup>475</sup> continues this trend, as *BUST* editors express a desire to voice Third Wave feminist’s experiences of the physical, while not limiting discussion to weight and dieting. Second Wave theories equating unrealistic body images in mainstream media with patriarchal oppression appear to many Third Wavers as an overdone issue. While not shying away from big-girl woes, the editors give this issue “alotta vagina...[because] this was the thing that was conspicuously missing from most discussions of women’s bodies.”<sup>476</sup> Instead, they turn their focus on physical features such as bellybuttons, dimples, feet, eyes, noses, and armpits. Taking this step beyond second-wave theories of fat and female oppression, *BUST* tries to offer a happy, shiny, Third Wave alternative.

Several *BUST* samples show how the Third Wave continues to battle similar gender imbalances as the Second Wave feminist movement. Marion Winik describes her experiences with breastfeeding in public in “The Madonna About Town.”<sup>477</sup> Miss Mammary enumerates the disproportionate amount and cost of female products necessary in modern times, from bras and birth control to make-up and menstrual protection, in “Why it Cost\$ More to Have Boobs.”<sup>478</sup> And, The Ranting Chick writes about her confrontations with McDonalds’ employees over the gender-typed toys provided in happy meals; being asked to choose between a free Barbi doll or Hot Wheels car, the young mother wrestles with how to raise a sensitive yet well-adjusted son in the face of these “corporate sexist policies.”<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999).

<sup>476</sup> Celina Hex, “Getting’ Jiggly With It,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 4.

<sup>477</sup> Marion Winik, “The Madonna About Town,” *BUST* no. 8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 48-49.

<sup>478</sup> Miss Mammary, “Why it Cost\$ More to Have Boobs,” *BUST* no.7 (Summer 1996): 18.

<sup>479</sup> The Ranting Chick, “Unhappy Meal,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 33.

*BUST* contributors often enjoy the benefits of Second Wave feminist legal, professional, and cultural achievements, while not always addressing this connection. For example, “The Travel Issue” offers advice and stories from women on the go in a time in which women have historic amounts of freedom and independence. *BUST* readers revel in the moderate safety of solo travel in “There She Goes: A Girl’s Guide to Traveling Alone.”<sup>480</sup> In “The Motherhood Issue,” Simone de Boudoir divulges a series of unwanted pregnancies through her young adulthood, without thanking her Second Wave mothers for her freedom of choice, in the “Abortion Story.”<sup>481</sup> And, most segments in “The Money Issue”<sup>482</sup> display a Marxist feminist influence on *BUST*’s overwhelmingly positive and hopeful approach to female economic empowerment. With segments profiling young feminist entrepreneurs and representing a range of perspectives on the sex trade, this edition enjoys Third Wave luxuries won, in part, by the Second Wave. Many aspects of Third Wave feminist values – individualism, multiculturalism, diverse sexualities, anti-essentialism, pastiche, and camp – can be seen to be reactions to Second Wave theories and culture.

### Contradiction & Contrast

The stereotypical image of feminism is one that rejects all things relating to the traditional social conception of all that constitutes the feminine. Therefore, the image of a feminist wearing high-heeled shoes and lipstick would be antithetical to this stereotype. *BUST* embodies this contradiction and embraces these contrasts.

The peaceful coexistence of such dissenting elements is a defining factor of Third Wave feminist theory and a pivotal aspect of *BUST*. Mirroring aspects of both anti-

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<sup>480</sup> Michelle Snider, “There She Goes: A Girl’s Guide to Traveling Alone,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 75-77.

<sup>481</sup> Simone de Boudoir, “Abortion Story,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 78-79.

<sup>482</sup> *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999). See Appendix XV.

essentialism and the frequent use of pastiche, *BUST*'s Third Wave custom of promoting a variety of conflicting aesthetics and philosophies is essentially postmodern. *BUST* represents a powerful hybrid of empowered sexuality, diverse cultural representations, and educated feminist critiques, while acknowledging personal confusion and political variance. By offering a place where chaotic, otherwise clashing voices can dialogue, *BUST* accepts and celebrates Third Wave disagreement and discord. Contrasting images, opinions, and ethos allows *BUST* to express a variety of Third Wave contradictions in proud, postmodern style.

*BUST*'s practice of publishing a range of perspectives relating to each issue's unifying theme again exhibits this Third Wave embrace of the world's distinctions and disparities. The founding editors built this practice into the magazine's mission; they were determined to host opposing feminist viewpoints in an effort to represent an array of Third Wave voices. For example, when they print their interview with Nina Hartley celebrating pro-feminist pornography<sup>483</sup> they also give voice to a woman whose relationship with her boyfriend ended over his need for a daily dose of porn videos, featured just pages apart in the same edition.<sup>484</sup> The "Motherhood Issue"<sup>485</sup> features both women who want to have children and those who choose not to reproduce. The feminist-themed issue<sup>486</sup> supports those women who identify as feminists and those who shy away from the term and movement. A first-person essay by a woman who conducted an experiment in not shaving her legs after decades of hair-removal<sup>487</sup> is printed with a sidebar from another woman's list of reasons why "being hairy

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<sup>483</sup> Betty Boob, "She's Gotta Have It," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 92-93.

<sup>484</sup> R.F. Misseus, "My Boyfriend The Pornoholic," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 64-65.

<sup>485</sup> *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996).

<sup>486</sup> *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000). See Appendix XVI.

<sup>487</sup> Louis, "Hairy Diary," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 78-79.

can be sexy.”<sup>488</sup> This point/counterpoint approach to being the “voice of the new girl order”<sup>489</sup> signifies *BUST*'s appreciation of conflicting and contrasting influences.

The nature of Third Wave contrast becomes obvious when *BUST*'s feminists interface with disparate perspectives – from mainstream feminism to dominant capitalism, from radical lesbianism to African-American feminism. In a segment profiling the girl-band Alice B. Talkless, “Lust” writes, “contradiction is a girl’s middle name. It’s our ace. We coo, we hurl, we whisper, we shout.”<sup>490</sup> The “Boy du Jour” segments often prove that Third Wave feminist men, too, play with contradictory aspects of gender, as in Jake Fogelnest’s treatise on his seemingly doomed plutonic friendships with women<sup>491</sup> or Chris Lee’s essay about his interest in knitting.<sup>492</sup> Whether we agree that Third Wave inconsistencies are inherently tied to gender or simply an aspect of feminist postmodernism, *BUST* embodies Third Wave acceptance of ideological distinctions.

*BUST* does not advocate one correct version of feminism, but rather a coalition of complimentary yet unique feminist perspectives. Prefacing their “Fashion and Beauty Issue,”<sup>493</sup> the founding editors explain that “whether it’s left us gagging from it or hungry for more,” Third Wave feminist discussions of “the fascism of fashion and the beatitude of beauty” are essential.<sup>494</sup> “Call us ‘do-me’ feminists, call us third-wave feminists,” they declare, “just don’t call us late for the sale at Betsey Johnson<sup>495</sup>.”<sup>496</sup> Highlighting other’s vague notions of how “real” feminists should look, feminist scholar and author Elaine Showalter

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<sup>488</sup> Peekaboo P., “Don’t Worry, Be Hairy,” *BUST* no. 13 (Fall 1999): 79.

<sup>489</sup> *BUST* no. 13 (Fall 1999): cover.

<sup>490</sup> *BUST* no.11, 101.

<sup>491</sup> Jake Fogelnest, “Ladies Man” *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 77-78.

<sup>492</sup> Chris Lee, “Obsession for Men,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 30.

<sup>493</sup> *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994).

<sup>494</sup> Betty Boob and Celina Hex, letter from the editors, *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 3.

<sup>495</sup> Betsey Johnson is an eccentric New York designer who uses playfully postmodern juxtapositions of texture and color for her feminine yet aggressive line of women’s clothes; Johnson was one of the first designers to make the riot-grrrl inspired look of baby-doll dresses with combat boots popular on high-end runways.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*

says, “If fashion is free speech, why do we feminists get stuck with such a pitiful vocabulary?”<sup>497</sup> Quoting Showalter’s *Vogue* magazine article “The Professor Wore Prada,”<sup>498</sup> *BUST* celebrates her affirmation that she has seen “the best feminist minds of my generation ogling shoes.”<sup>499</sup> Amanda-Ray’s “She’s Crafty” pattern for a crocheted bikini<sup>500</sup> flies in the face of the stereotype of non-feminine feminists. And the feminist-themed edition features contrasting elements such as fashion spreads<sup>501</sup> and recipes<sup>502</sup> as well as feminist “News From a Broad.”<sup>503</sup>

Many *BUST* excerpts embody common Third Wave feminist debates, engaging a range of arguments while promoting a balanced understanding of the feminist issue at hand. For example, founding editor Celina Hex details the history behind Mattel’s Barbi doll while highlighting a range of feminist deliberations on, and Third Wave feminist fascinations with, this commercial icon of female perfection.<sup>504</sup> Jayne Air cautions readers to not expect hard-driving analysis “about how fashion is evil and tries to get us to throw our backs out” from mainstream women’s magazines, “because, while those things might be true, I just can’t be angry at *Vogue* and *Bazaar* for being fashion magazines for the same reason I can’t get mad at a horse for not being a cow.”<sup>505</sup> And, *BUST*’s news column reports that the New-York based watch-dog Morality in Media advocated to block the displays of *Cosmopolitan* magazine’s half-dressed cover models and teases for “better orgasms” from the eyes of the general public because they found these aspects to be pornographic.<sup>506</sup> While this report may appeal to

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<sup>497</sup> Andi Zeissler, “Too Rich and Too Thin,” *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 9.

<sup>498</sup> Elaine Showalter, “The Professor Wore Prada,” *Vogue* 187 (December 1997): 80, 86, 92.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>500</sup> Celina Hex and Amanda-Ray, “She’s Crafty: Knits are for Chicks,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 17.

<sup>501</sup> Edward Smith, “Fashion Nation,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 32-33.

<sup>502</sup> Chef Rossi, “Eat Me,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 22.

<sup>503</sup> Janice “Girlbomb” Erlbaum, “News From a Broad,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 17-18.

<sup>504</sup> Celina Hex, “Doll Parts,” *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 48-50.

<sup>505</sup> Jayne Air, “*Vogue* vs. *Harper’s Bazaar*: It’s a Catfight!,” *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 10-12.

<sup>506</sup> Janice “Girlbomb” Erlbaum, “*Cosmo*=Porno: Nice of Someone to Notice,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 31.

those feminists who despise corporate women's media and male-centered pornography, this piece raises issues that contrast with those feminists who support explicitly erotic media and fashion magazines, as well as those who resist censorship in all its forms.

In their attempt to publish a wide variety of feminist perspectives, *BUST* has made an effort to print essays of opposing views in a nearly point/counterpoint style. A striking case on this point appears in the feminist issue, with two adjacent pieces representing contrary views of the movement: R. Eirik Ott is a man who sees the necessity of the political and social push for equality of the sexes,<sup>507</sup> while Susannah Breslin rejects the entire movement because of narrow definitions of feminism that disregard fashion and the sex trade.<sup>508</sup> *BUST*'s first "Men We Love" issue contains two markedly different experiences with fathers. Lotta Gal explains how her sensitive, supportive, and artistic dad has "ruined" her because he is "far greater than most of the men I've dated."<sup>509</sup> But, a few pages away, Girl mourns how her cold, distant, and "emotionally unavailable" father is slowly dying.<sup>510</sup> Two women take two different approaches to managing relationships while working to undermine socially imposed gender roles: Tabitha Rasa tries to keep sex and friendship separate,<sup>511</sup> while Mary Elizabeth decides to stop putting effort into dating entirely.<sup>512</sup> And two others have contrasting perspectives on the legacy of film noir heroines – one rejects "the women who knew too much" as seen from the perspective of male protagonists,<sup>513</sup> and

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<sup>507</sup> R. Eirik Ott, "I Love Feminism," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 35-36.

<sup>508</sup> Susannah Breslin, "I Hate Feminism," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 34-36.

<sup>509</sup> Lotta Gal, "The Electra Company," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 29-30.

<sup>510</sup> Girl, "Farewell, Father," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 32-33.

<sup>511</sup> Tabitha Rasa, "Friendships? We Don't Need No Stinkin' Friendships!," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 68-69.

<sup>512</sup> Mary Elizabeth, "No Man's Land," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 70-71.

<sup>513</sup> Dixie LaRue, "Vicarious Vixen," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 85.

the other celebrates them as proving “that the association between women and vice goes back as far as the eye can see.”<sup>514</sup>

Often, *BUST*'s displays of contrasting perspectives can be found years apart in different editions. In 1996, Amelia Richards tells her story of being Gloria Steinem's roommate, who was also a peer during her internship at *Ms.* magazine and “the perfect girlfriend;”<sup>515</sup> Richards cannot say enough positive things about the impact this second-wave matriarch had on her personal and political life.<sup>516</sup> On a harshly opposing track in 1999, Gloria Stymied divulges the details of five years' employment with *Ms.*, which she characterizes as suffering from “Battered Women's Movement Syndrome.”<sup>517</sup> This Third Waver rants that the “work atmosphere itself [was] that of a misogynist slum, full of daily reminders that women will eat shit and call it feminism.”<sup>518</sup> This sentiment contrasts with the earlier piece that had a fond outlook on the *Ms.* founding editor. While not directly attacking her, this second writer would never consider sharing a home with Ms. Steinem.

Another set of contrasting pieces addresses issues of women and smoking. Andie's poem “7 Reasons to Smoke a Cigarette”<sup>519</sup> diverges from the reader letter by Lauren Holloway, who accuses *BUST* of selling out with a cigarette advertisement, which, in her mind, is irresponsible given the number of women who die from related cases of heart disease and lung cancer.<sup>520</sup> And, representing a further gap in Third Wave interests, Elizabeth Ziff fumes at what she sees as the Surgeon General's attempt to control female behavior with health warnings on cigarette and alcohol labels.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> Jayne Air, “Basic Vice,” *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 25-26.

<sup>515</sup> Amelia Richards, “Gloria Stein-mom” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 97.

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*, 97-98.

<sup>517</sup> Gloria Stymied, “*Ms.ery*,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 15-16.

<sup>518</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>519</sup> Andie, “7 Reasons to Smoke a Cigarette,” *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 31.

<sup>520</sup> Lauren Holloway, “Selling Out” (*BUST* no.15, Fall 2000): 6.

<sup>521</sup> Elizabeth Ziff, “That Time of the Month,” *BUST* no.16: 16.

Another cluster of contrasting articles engage individualistic perspectives on the ever-fascinating world of fashion and beauty. Rosanna finds salvation and healing from a difficult break-up through makeup and new clothes,<sup>522</sup> while Kiley cures her ambivalence about traditional feminine pastimes, such as makeovers, by joining a nationwide women's mountain biking club.<sup>523</sup> And, defying the stereotype that fashion is only for women, Adam Roth lays out his recommendations for chic boys in his essay "Clothes Make the Man."<sup>524</sup>

Many examples of *BUST*'s Third Wave feminist contradictions are designed to point out a larger rejection of mainstream cultural norms. Paula Wehmeyer refers to cultural definitions of femininity and beauty, and feminist responses to them, as she struggles to balance these seemingly contradictory philosophies, saying: "Where do the chicks fit in who, like me, are sexual and strong and want the world to know it, yet who aren't willing to wear (or not wear) certain attire to be tantalizing?"<sup>525</sup> Mary Gorson points out the social pressure to be monogamous in her essay about her wish to meld a friendship with a sexual relationship in hopes of discovering true love, while, "contrary to popular belief, I don't think very much about getting married and racing my biological time clock."<sup>526</sup> And the editor's introduction to the issue dedicated to "Bad Girls" insists that women do not fall into black and white categories such as bad and good, but instead assume contrasting and contradictory behaviors, opinions, and attitudes through the course of their lives.<sup>527</sup>

*BUST*'s confessional tales of internal conflict and confusion further exemplify this theoretical aspect of Third Wave feminism. Twenty-nine year-old Betty Boob illustrates this personal discord in her thoughts as she peers at herself in a mirror, noticing both the

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<sup>522</sup> Rosanna, "Vanity Fare," *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 29.

<sup>523</sup> Kiley, "Hostile Makeover," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 74-75.

<sup>524</sup> Adam Roth, "Clothes Make the Man," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 14.

<sup>525</sup> Paula Wehmeyer, "I'm Too Sexy for These Pants," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 64-65.

<sup>526</sup> Mary Gorson, "Sexual Baggage," *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 47.

<sup>527</sup> Celina Hex, "She's Got it Bad, and That Ain't Good," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 2.

innocent, “girlish” features as well as more adult characteristics, such as “the laugh lines around the mouth;” in the end, she finds that she is a peaceful balance of both young and aging aspects of herself.<sup>528</sup> This sentiment is echoed in another essay, “The Three Faces of Scarlett,”<sup>529</sup> whose author explains she has more than mood swings, but actually feels she has three different personas depending on her attitude. As a self-identified “femme,” Sheri Gumption revels in her attraction to tough, nearly macho women in “My Heroes Have Always Been Tomboys.”<sup>530</sup> Marybeth tussles with her Catholic beliefs and her own desire for pleasure, as she unearths her “born-again bad girl.”<sup>531</sup> In their first sex-themed issue, the founding editors support Third Wave feminist self-exploration and all the chaos that comes with it, declaring: “We’re here, we’re confused, get used to it.”<sup>532</sup>

*BUST*’s expression of Third Wave contrast and contradiction can sometimes be seen in the magazine’s own elements of chaos and inconsistency. Many entries in the regular “Media Whore” column pokes holes in the popular culture many *BUST* articles revere. Lisa Jervis admits as such in the introduction to the segment’s debut: “Everything sucks. Every fucking slick, glossy, gorgeous movie, TV show, magazine, and ad. They all suck. I hate them. I hate them so much I can’t look away.”<sup>533</sup> Of course, there are some media contradictions that even *BUST*’s Third Wave feminists do not tolerate. For example, Jervis rakes actress Cybill Shepherd over the proverbial coals for her conflicting body image messages; one month Shepherd graces the cover of *Mode*, a magazine celebrating and supporting women larger than a size 10, and the next she is featured in a lipstick advertisement with the tag line, “I’d take a little less fullness in the hips and a little more

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<sup>528</sup> Betty Boob, “Tales of Me,” *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 4.

<sup>529</sup> Scarlett Fever, “The Three Faces of Scarlett,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 25-26.

<sup>530</sup> Sheri Gumption, “My Heroes Have Always Been Tomboys,” *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 78-80.

<sup>531</sup> Marybeth, “I Brake for Sin,” *BUST* no.7 (Spring 1996): 44-45.

<sup>532</sup> Betty Boob and Celina Hex, letter from the editors, *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 2.

<sup>533</sup> Lisa Jervis, “Media Whore,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 24-25.

fullness in my lips.”<sup>534</sup> And, Rachel Fudge gives an equally unhappy review of writer Ginia Bellafante’s statement that, despite her “top-drawer feminist education,” she still can’t balance her checkbook.<sup>535</sup>

All contrasting and contradictory variations express *BUST*’s Third Wave feminist support of the diverse, myriad voices of this generation. Their chaotic mix of dissenting voices do not detract from or destabilize of the movement, but instead unit to comprise the new, postmodern face of feminist activism and coalition politics. The contemporary feminist movement will not look like it did in the last century, but will learn to unite the ever-growing contrariety of Third Wave feminism.

### Pastiche & Camp

Closely tied to elements of contrast and contradiction, *pastiche* can be defined as the random assembly of fragmented images and meanings, counterposing accepted structures, thus challenging and redefining traditional social assumptions. *Camp* is a term established by queer studies to identify those cultural expressions that are exaggerated, affected, and ostentatious, playfully calling the status quo into question. Drawing on the flamboyant theatrics of vaudeville and female impersonators, camp has become a kind of pastiche within *BUST*’s Third Wave feminism, rejecting narrowly defined gender roles, ideological structures, and cultural homogeneity through showy stylishness and overblown parody. In *BUST*, camp was sometimes, while not always, exemplified through pastiches. Similarly, illustrations of pastiche were often discovered without campy satire. On the whole, I found both elements were often indistinguishably represented in the eight years of *BUST* reviewed for this study.

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<sup>534</sup> Lisa Miya-Jervis, “Bitchy Bits,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 11.

<sup>535</sup> Rachel Rudge, “Money Makes the Girl Go Around,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 10.

Pastiches are “wacky or arcane juxtapositions”<sup>536</sup> that are historical or generational in nature; they are “hodgepodes of ideas, sometimes contradictory or confused, about the past”<sup>537</sup> where the “past and present are inextricably intertwined.”<sup>538</sup> Richard Campbell and Roseanne Freed explain how they recognize the use of pastiche when they see it; they offer this definition: “pastiche is . . . the wild, wanton, creative (depending on your attitude) opposition of styles, often ripped – like collage cut-outs – from their original contexts.”<sup>539</sup> There is an element of subjectivity within discussions of camp, as well; Wayne R. Dynes writes: “To a large extent camp is in the eye of the beholder.”<sup>540</sup> Camp originated in expressions of “gesture, performance, and public display,”<sup>541</sup> but, in verbal form, camp is communicated through the use of “implication, innuendo, and intonation.”<sup>542</sup> In the introduction to *PoMoSexuals*, Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel observe similarities between pastiche and camp, which they define as “queerdom’s own ironic social theory, which developed to let us criticize (particularly heterosexist) relations of power.”<sup>543</sup> I will offer examples of how *BUST* represents both camp and pastiche, followed by discussion of the magazine’s display of the indiscernible combination of the two.

Some demonstrations of pastiche in *BUST* take the form of actual collages of photographs and illustrations from a variety of time periods. Evelyn McDonnell’s review of three feminist poets, who she lovingly calls “Big-Mouthed Bad Girls,” is punctuated by an

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<sup>536</sup> Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, eds. *PoMoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997), 21.

<sup>537</sup> George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997), 183.

<sup>538</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>539</sup> Richard Campbell and Roseanne Freed, “‘We Know It When We See It’: Postmodernism and Television,” *Television Quarterly* 26, no.3 (Winter 1993), 79.

<sup>540</sup> Wayne R. Dynes, ed., *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* (New York: Garland Publishers, 1990), 189.

<sup>541</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>542</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>543</sup> Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, eds., *PoMoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality*, (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997), 21.

aerial image of a woman with a larger, more exaggerated mouth pasted over her face.<sup>544</sup> A hodgepodge of disparate body parts hovers in a distorted visage of a person alongside Nicola's story about losing her virginity,<sup>545</sup> while Martha Stewart's face is taped onto the leather-clad body of a dominatrix for Mause's piece about an ex-lover with a subscription to *Martha Stewart Living*.<sup>546</sup> And, a tale of two friends trying to strike it rich in Las Vegas is accompanied by the likeness of a glamorous, gambling woman made up of a sketched hoop skirt, numbered like a roulette wheel, and the torso and head of a woman in a grainy, old photograph, holding playing cards bigger than her head while smoking a hand-drawn cigarette.<sup>547</sup> These random images are pieced together in a postmodern exhibition of startling contrasts, symbolizing a greater embrace of chaos, individuality, and diversity.

*BUST*'s most common display of pastiches takes the form of historical graphics, juxtaposing Third Wave feminist writing, and demonstrations of a zealous reverence for fashion. *BUST* employs decades-old imagery, from 1940s kitchen appliance advertisements to 1960s pornographic illustrations, printed without attribution and collaged with contemporary visuals. Dick-and-Jane style line drawings of happy, clean-cut white adults accompany Betty Boob's feisty and frank list of "Don'ts for Boys."<sup>548</sup> Jayne Air's piece on workplace fashion surrounds a photograph of a woman with white gloves adjusting her pillbox hat and smirking into a pocket mirror.<sup>549</sup> Antique girlie shots are favored tools of *BUST*'s Third Wave feminist version of pastiche. For example, a news brief about a European airport crew mistaking a vibrator for a bomb is printed alongside a picture of a woman in a bathing suit straddling an arrow-shaped rocket, an image that may have been

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<sup>544</sup> Evelyn McDonnell, "Big-Mouthed Bad Girls," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 104-105.

<sup>545</sup> Nicola, "Only One Thing Left to Loose," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 71-72.

<sup>546</sup> Mause, "Sex and Martha Stewart," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 94.

<sup>547</sup> T & A, "VEGAS or BUST," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 94-95.

<sup>548</sup> Betty Boob, "Don'ts for Boys," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 26-28.

<sup>549</sup> Jayne Air, "Suits Me," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 18.

ripped from the pages of a 50-year-old pin-up magazine.<sup>550</sup> The table of contents for the second “Men We Love” issue is complemented by a 1970s-era fashion shot of four bell-bottomed men.<sup>551</sup>

*BUST* makes regular use of photos and drawings from the past, most often featuring women.<sup>552</sup> Every issue, starting with *BUST* no. 4,<sup>553</sup> contains at least one subscription form or self-advertisement with grainy photos of the once-scandalous cleavage of Mulva DeWitt or Betty Page. Paid advertisements, often by subcultural retailers, also utilize vintage images. Toys in Babeland, an adult toy and bookstore, reprints a provocative drawing of a woman with her panties around her ankles, possibly from an erotic magazine of yesteryear, with the contemporary tag line, “toys for the new girl order.”<sup>554</sup> The first ten issues are peppered with old-fashioned magazine announcements, such as a 50s-style advertisement of Lysol “For Feminine Hygiene”<sup>555</sup> or the 70s-style t-shirt promotion for \$1 “Rainbow Glitter Transfers.”<sup>556</sup> Inserting graphics popular many years before and during the Second Wave of feminism into a Third Wave publication serves to undermine historic social traditions of gender roles and power, as well as to redefine the meanings inherent in those images.

Retro images are not confined to the realms of popular culture and timeworn media. The three editors reprint girlhood snapshots of themselves to sign their opening letter for the “My Life As a Girl” issue,<sup>557</sup> and they close their letter introducing the “Motherhood Issue” with photos of their moms.<sup>558</sup> Several personal contributions are accompanied by what seem to family pictures as well. *BUST*'s consistent reflection of decades past represents

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<sup>550</sup> Celina Hex, “Skyrockets in Flight,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 24.

<sup>551</sup> *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 2-3.

<sup>552</sup> See Appendix X: Examples of *BUST*'s Retro Imagery.

<sup>553</sup> *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 64.

<sup>554</sup> *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 14.

<sup>555</sup> *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 31.

<sup>556</sup> *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 8.

<sup>557</sup> Celina Hex, Betty Boob and Areola, “Exile in Girlville,” *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 3.

<sup>558</sup> Celina Hex, Betty Boob and Areola, “Dear Mom,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 2.

a kind of pastiche, drawing on and incorporating intimate details of individual, social, and political histories. This technique is inherently postmodern in theory as well as aesthetics, utilized by *BUST* in both their print and online publications. These retro images are more noticeably concentrated in the first dozen issues of the magazine, with the more recent editions carrying more modern photography and original artwork.

The power of *BUST*'s pastiches lies in the contrasts made by the use of historic images, often representing a more traditional time, in the pages of an unorthodox, postmodern feminist magazine. For instance, in 1999, zine-maker Lynn Peril launched a regular column called "Museum of Femoribilia" to feature old-fashioned household and pop cultural products marketed to women and girls. Peril simultaneously celebrates the "retro chic" of these artifacts and questions the cultural messages contained therein. She mentions the antique collectability in her analysis of Milton Bradley's 1965 "Mystery Date," the board game teaching young girls the importance of popularity and secret romantic rendezvous.<sup>559</sup> Peril chuckles at the comeback of "Tupperware," the sale of which spawned teams of successful "Tupperware ladies," often "single or divorced women struggling to raise children on their own," who hosted "home demonstration parties" to sell the trendy reusable food containers to support their families.<sup>560</sup> Reporting from the annals of women's popular culture, she single-handedly discusses social pressures for women to remove body hair while summarizing the 80-year-history of the 'feminine' razor in one issue.<sup>561</sup> And Peril breaks down the social conditioning of Suzy Homemaker toys in another edition, heaving criticisms at this commercial encouragement of girls to tend house with miniature kitchens "just like

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<sup>559</sup> Lynn Peril, "Mystery Date," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 30. [Note: Peril is the editor of a zine of her creation, also entitled *Mystery Date*]

<sup>560</sup> Lynn Peril, "Tupperware," *BUST* no.14 (Fall 1999): 20.

<sup>561</sup> Lynn Peril, "Razors," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 20.

mother's" amid her own fond memories of cookies baked by the "light-bulb-heated Easy Bake Oven."<sup>562</sup>

Often, *BUST's* applications of antique visuals exposes salacious and hedonistic images considered taboo or gauche in mainstream society at the time of its creation. The cover of the "Goddess Issue" is a photograph of a Betty-Page-like nude porcelain doll, made at least forty or fifty years ago, whose bare breasts, pouting red lips, and "come hither" posture suggest it may have been a "gentleman's toy" of yesteryear.<sup>563</sup> Another sexy doll, an anatomically detailed plastic plaything reminiscent of the 1960s, with her arms raised on erotic gesture, wears nothing more than a sheer negligee.<sup>564</sup> The meanings of these sexualized figurines are recovered from the smutty gaze of men who find them arousing, to be celebrated as icons of reclaimed feminine sexuality in the pages of this Third Wave feminist magazine. And the illustration of the winking blonde dusting her floor in a teddy, thigh-high stockings, and sexy shoes opening the "*BUSTier* Home and Gardens: Bad Girl's Guide to Good Housekeeping"<sup>565</sup> juxtaposes Second Wave feminist theories of patriarchal, capitalistic oppression of women through housework with *BUST's* Third Wave feminist redefinitions of domestic pleasures.

Many *BUST* contributors resurrect images and icons from the archives of feminist history and Third Wave feminist redefinitions and negotiations with their Second Wave legacy is a form of pastiche. From the regular references to *Ms.* magazine and its co-founder, Gloria Steinem, to *BUST's* Third Wave reactions against Second Wave struggles against pornography and the fashion industry, the magazine reflects and contrasts the saga of the

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<sup>562</sup> Lynn Peril, "Playing House," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 31.

<sup>563</sup> *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): cover. See Appendix XIV.

<sup>564</sup> *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 5.

<sup>565</sup> Various authors, "Bad Girl's Guide to Good Housekeeping: *BUSTier* Home and Gardens," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 71-84. See Appendix X.

women's movement in postmodern style. *BUST* even echoes their own recent past in frequent ruminations on the culture and style of zine-making, punk rock riot grrrls. Two interviews with Kathleen Hanna, former Bikini Kill lead signer and reluctant leader of the riot grrrl movement, both evoke Third Wave riot grrrl roots and track one face of the maturing Third Wave feminist movement. A reprint of a handwritten submission from Jessica Solomon attesting to her worship of musician and actress Courtney Love is reminiscent of the frenetic passion and raw flavor of homemade riot grrrls zines.<sup>566</sup> Of course, this celebrity worship is brought down to earth in true postmodern fashion with a gracious reader letter from Love herself in the following edition.<sup>567</sup> And Kim Miller rejects "girly" fashion statements of the riot grrrl movement, such as baby doll dresses and plastic barrettes.<sup>568</sup>

Another mode of pastiche lies in *BUST*'s varied responses to the traditions and industries of fashion, society, and beauty. As trends and coteries fluctuate with each season, fashion is said to combine elements of the past in contrast with the present, producing a type of pastiche.<sup>569</sup> The cover of *BUST* no.3, dedicated to diverse Third Wave feminist battles on the field of "Fashion and Beauty," features a Charlie's-Angels-type model with blonde, feathered hair and a lipstick-barreled gun.<sup>570</sup> Carly negotiates her infatuation with, and equal abhorrence of, the "mutated Girls' Club" of *Cosmopolitan* magazine.<sup>571</sup> Another contributor breaks down the supposed "feminist 'service' /fashion magazine" *Glamour*.<sup>572</sup> And

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<sup>566</sup> Jessica Solomon, "Goddess with the Most Cake," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 83.

<sup>567</sup> Courtney Love, "Dear *BUST*," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 6.

<sup>568</sup> Kim Miller, "The End of Cute," *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 26.

<sup>569</sup> George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997): 94.

<sup>570</sup> *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): cover.

<sup>571</sup> Carly, "That *Cosmo* Girl," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 26.

<sup>572</sup> Jayne Air, "Glamour, My Ass," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 16.

Fashionette explains with campy, Third Wave chic that, because “fashion is a state of mind,” whether shopping at a thrift store or ritzy boutique, “attitude, my darling, is everything.”<sup>573</sup>

The camp that exists within *BUST* also flirts with the chichi decadence and individualism of fashion. Celina Hex coos about hair color and fake eyelashes in “Kitsch and Make-up,” taking unabashed “girly” pleasure in the fun of dressing up.<sup>574</sup> “Freedom Fighters” is a fashion spread in the second “Men We Love” edition that celebrates fashionable cross-dressers of all size, shape, and color.<sup>575</sup> Girl reviews Marilyn Minter photographs that exhibit close-ups of sensual, painted lips surrounded by short, black stubble, which, she writes, “are such a gorgeous tour-de-force that it takes you a moment to realize their drag performance.”<sup>576</sup> The “Bad Girl” issue’s “Boy du Jour” shares his lust-driven vision of mini-backpack-style purses as erotic representations of female genitalia.<sup>577</sup> James explains that, after slinging one over his shoulders in the accessories department of his local mall, these trendy bags were, to him, “the whole essence of femininity.”<sup>578</sup>

Expressions of camp in *BUST* take a subtly sarcastic tone, suggesting a deeper understanding of Third Wave feminist theory and practice with a playful giggle and “invisible wink.”<sup>579</sup> For example, “The Shit” column promotes items, such as hand-towels with “Bitch” embroidered in blue cursive, with a tongue-in-cheek sensibility.<sup>580</sup> The editors may recommend the new faux-fur, vagina-shaped bag called a “Snatchpack,”<sup>581</sup> but they are not literally suggesting readers buy a “well-endowed” TitPillow for grandma<sup>582</sup> or the Male

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<sup>573</sup> Fashionette, “On Fashion,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 39.

<sup>574</sup> Celina Hex, “Kitsch and Make-up,” *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 91.

<sup>575</sup> Christ Verene and Christian Halstad, “Freedom Fighters,” *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 86-91.

<sup>576</sup> Girl, “Gallery Gal: Marilyn Minter,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 29.

<sup>577</sup> James, “The Mysterious Eroticism of Mini-Backpacks,” *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 15.

<sup>578</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>579</sup> Wayne R. Dynes, ed., *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* (New York: Garland Publishers, 1990): 190.

<sup>580</sup> Celina Hex, “Dirty Word,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 29.

<sup>581</sup> Celina Hex, “Snatch Attack,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 25.

<sup>582</sup> Kat McAndrew, “Dirty Pillows,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 20.

Species line of men's makeup for dad.<sup>583</sup> When *BUST* prints quizzes for readers to learn what kind of Goddess they are<sup>584</sup> or a grid showing readers how to navigate dating the seven basic types of men,<sup>585</sup> they are not seriously prescribing to such a narrow conception of gender or personality.

Camp is known to take "serious things frivolously and frivolous things seriously."<sup>586</sup> *BUST* questions the solemnity of topics such as crime and sexuality as well as the silly meaninglessness of popular culture. For example, Shirley Wood makes murderous criminals, such as Pat Allanson Taylor and Betty Broderick, into "Bad Girl" heroines.<sup>587</sup> The "My Life as a Girl" issue tackles such difficult issues as growing up with physical disabilities, sexual identity, body image, and molestation, but the cover is designed to look like the rainbow-colored cover of a young girl's diary, complete with moon, kitty, and flower stickers and miniature gold pad lock.<sup>588</sup> And, Sister Theresa is not kidding when she says her day is not complete without her afternoon dose of Geraldo Rivera, whose talk-show topics such as women and violence speak volumes about conventional views of gender and feminism.<sup>589</sup>

*BUST*'s use of camp also employs a classic celebration of decadent fashion and hedonistic society. The cover of their second sex-themed issue pictures musicians Christina Martinez and Jon Spencer of the band Boss Hog curled together on a white bear rug in luxurious lingerie.<sup>590</sup> The "Money Issue" edition's cover has actress and author Ann Magnuson, with a big, hammy grin, dressed like a gold-laden Vegas showgirl holding giant-

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<sup>583</sup> Nick Hodulik, "Pretty Boy," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 13.

<sup>584</sup> Joceyln Manutts, "Is You Is Or Is You Ain't A Goddess?," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 82.

<sup>585</sup> T. Dawg, "Dawgie-Style," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 82-83.

<sup>586</sup> Wayne R. Dynes, ed., *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality* (New York: Garland Publishers, 1990): 189. Of course, the definitions of "serious" and "frivolous" used here are those identified by mainstream, patriarchal culture; serious matters would be those of business, education, and politics while frivolity is limited to the realms of entertainment, fashion, and art.

<sup>587</sup> Shirley Wood, "Killer Dames," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 30-33.

<sup>588</sup> *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): cover.

<sup>589</sup> Sister Theresa, "Afternoon Delight," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 61-62.

<sup>590</sup> *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): cover.

sized gold coin.<sup>591</sup> *BUST* prints a photograph, alongside their interview, of the trio rock group Demolition Doll Rods blowing the camera red-lipped kisses while wearing feathered pasties and sequined g-strings.<sup>592</sup>

*BUST* can be seen to juggle techniques of both pastiche and camp as it molds each element to suit its Third Wave feminist worldview. As it contrasts divergent or unrelated images, theories, and ideologies, the pastiche of *BUST* can be seen as a challenge to sexist, homophobic, and racist constructions through the artistic blend of clashing styles and cultures. Taking a more understated and deeply sarcastic approach, *BUST*'s camp is equally subversive as it attacks essentialist notions of safe, middle class good taste and high society through a lipsticked, clenched-teeth grin. *BUST* exemplifies Third Wave feminist uses of these two postmodern phenomena through its signature retro graphics, its mimicry of mainstream magazine techniques, and its reverence for and elevation of a wide range of popular and underground culture.

*BUST*'s use of antiquated graphics gives the magazine a unique, postmodern look. A photo of a young Rosanna Arquette adorns one call for submissions<sup>593</sup> and the editors' letter of *BUST* no.2 features a cutout of Jane Fonda as Barbarella.<sup>594</sup> A collection of new CD reviews is accompanied by a campy graphic of a 50s-style swing band with the declaration: "Here's a Queer Way to Learn Music!"<sup>595</sup> Erika Bardot gives a primer on making decoupage gifts with vintage pin-up models and Betty Boop graphics, playfully asking "Voulez Vous Decoupage Avec Moi?"<sup>596</sup>

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<sup>591</sup> *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): cover. See Appendix XV.

<sup>592</sup> Betty Boob, "Demolition Doll Rods," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 62-63. See Appendix XIX.

<sup>593</sup> Advertisement, *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 7.

<sup>594</sup> Celina Hex and Betty Boob, "Stop Using Fun as a Weapon," *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 2.

<sup>595</sup> Betty Boob, "Booty Pages," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 124.

<sup>596</sup> Erika Bardot, "Voulez Vous Decoupage Avec Moi?," *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 16.

*BUST* demonstrates frequent reflections on and critiques of mainstream fashion, lifestyle, and feminist magazines. Another silly diagram enumerating the “types” of men in *BUST* no.15<sup>597</sup> mimics similar guides to dating in magazines such as *Mademoiselle* or *YM*. Mocking celebrity-fixated magazines such as *People*, *BUST* names musician Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth, photographed with a campy smile as he holds his son on his frilly-aproned hip, their “*BUST* iest Man in America.”<sup>598</sup> Taking sardonic pleasure in the fact that such simple creations would never exist in standard feminist magazines, the editors offer readers a test that asks, “Are You a Card-Carrying Feminist?”<sup>599</sup> Jane Hanuer writes a acerbic take-off of typical women’s magazines’ soft erotic literature in her raunchy story, “*Cosmopolitan Magazine Presents: The Santa I Know*.”<sup>600</sup> Many of *BUST*’s departments draw on standards of women’s magazines such as advice columns,<sup>601</sup> astrological forecasts,<sup>602</sup> and fashion spreads,<sup>603</sup> blended with their own versions of Third Wave feminism and postmodern irony.

*BUST* further coalesces these elements of camp and pastiche with the magazine’s tireless interest in popular culture. Pastiche is understood to be a juxtaposition of high and low cultures,<sup>604</sup> while camp embodies the giddy enjoyment of entertainment, fantasy, and masquerade.<sup>605</sup> Both camp and pastiche extract any and all elements of popular culture for their own uses, exploding the standards of good taste or “superior culture.”<sup>606</sup> *BUST* makes use of an assortment of images and refers to a range of media, from history texts on the

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<sup>597</sup> Aquanetta Jones and Helen Wheels, “Babes in Boyland,” *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 37.

<sup>598</sup> Celina Hex, “Thurston Moore: The *BUST*iest Man in America,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 44-45.

<sup>599</sup> Janice “La Girlbomb” Erlbaum, “Are You a Card-Carrying Feminist?,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 37.

<sup>600</sup> Jane Hanuer, “*Cosmopolitan Magazine Presents: The Santa I Know*,” *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 14.

<sup>601</sup> The “Girlfriend to Girlfriend” column appeared in *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 11, *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 21, *BUST* no. 9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 13, and *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 29.

<sup>602</sup> Tali Edut’s “Gyn-Astrology” column appeared in *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 24-26, *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 14-15, *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 12, and *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 17.

<sup>603</sup> The changeable “Fashion Nation” photo layouts appeared in *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 65-68, *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 20-21, *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 28-30, *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 22-23, *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 86-91, *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 32-33, and *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 22-23.

<sup>604</sup> George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997): 163.

<sup>605</sup> Moe Meyer, ed., *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (New York: Routledge, 1994): 4-5.

<sup>606</sup> George Ritzer, *Postmodern Social Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997): 163.

women's movement<sup>607</sup> to Laverne and Shirley re-runs.<sup>608</sup> Jane Hanauer thinks "Mary Hart Sucks,"<sup>609</sup> while Andi Zeissler thinks American society has sick and twisted veneration of Jacqueline Onassis Kennedy.<sup>610</sup> *BUST* has had celebrity covers since 1998<sup>611</sup> and each issue of *BUST* devotes a minimum of 10 pages to the review of media from music and books to pornography and zines. *BUST* simply contains more discussion of both fiction and nonfiction forms of mass communication than this study could possibly mention.

*BUST*'s insatiable hunger for all things pop cultural spans from TV heartthrobs to B-movie heroines, and all are taken quite personally. The editors open a 15-page devotional to *BUST*'s favorite male celebrities with a multi-authored segment on why the majority of the magazine's Third Wave readers voted for John Cusack as "the most-loved, most-lusted-after, and all-around *BUST*iest man in America."<sup>612</sup> Wendy Shanker writes of her fantasy of being best friends with actresses Winona Ryder and Minnie Driver,<sup>613</sup> and Mary Sunshine explains how her vicious circle of friends resembles the 1980s cult hit *Heathers*.<sup>614</sup> And, another collection of *BUST* contributors vote for the best female-friend duo, such as Natalie and Tootie from TV's *The Facts of Life* and Peppermint Patty and Marcie from the comic strip *Peanuts*.<sup>615</sup>

Some *BUST* pieces can be seen to have aspects of both camp and pastiche distinguishable from one another. For example, in a profile of the founder of the alternative fashion house Peach Bersek, Kingi Carpenter explains how she named her business after the color of "nail polish described in Helen Gurley Brown's how-to guide for the budding

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<sup>607</sup> Jennifer Tilly, "Required Reading," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 104.

<sup>608</sup> Alexandra Richmond, "We're Gonna Do It," *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 39.

<sup>609</sup> Jane Hanauer, "Mary Hart Sucks," *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 17.

<sup>610</sup> Andi Zeissler, "Just Say No to Jackie O," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 11-12.

<sup>611</sup> *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998).

<sup>612</sup> Various authors, "The Men We Love," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 69-83.

<sup>613</sup> Wendy Shanker, "Ladies Night," *BUST* no.11: 50-52.

<sup>614</sup> Mary Sunshine, "My Own Private Heathers," *BUST* no.11: 93.

<sup>615</sup> Various authors, "Bosom Buddies," *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 57-59, 118-119.

temptress called *Sex at the Office*.<sup>616</sup> This segment contains pastiche in its 40-year-old reference to an original New York go-girl and glamour magazine founder, contrasting with the campy flair of this “insubordinate” feminist entrepreneur who paints the outside of her store hot pink. The cover of the first sex-themed issue is another example; it is a close-up picture of a pregnant, bikini-clad woman’s torso, with the word “sex” written across her swollen belly in big, dark letters.<sup>617</sup> This photo is indicative of the riot-grrrl trend of scrawling “slut” or “rape me” in black ink on their bare bellies in a preemptive strike against sexism, constituting a form of *BUST*’s pastiche, but pushing the custom a step further with an insinuated connection between sex and pregnancy, which represents the element of camp with a Third Wave feminist spin.

Through these unique combinations of the postmodern theory of pastiche and the queer theory of camp, *BUST* has developed original versions of these elements filtered through a Third Wave feminist perspective. *BUST*’s rendering of “queer parody”<sup>618</sup> comes out with a punk-rock flavor. For instance, with the bitter attitude of a drag queen in combat boots, Lynn Von Schlicting pens the comic “Penis Story” for *BUST* no.6, which uses dark irony and explicit sketches to express social anxieties and misconceptions about sexuality.<sup>619</sup> And, the “Body Issue” presents an interview with comedian Amy Poehler who is photographed, scissors and tape in hand, surrounded by both vintage and modern X-rated girlie-magazine cutouts collaged on the wall behind her.<sup>620</sup> Poehler is hunched over with the scissors pointed at the camera and her face is wrinkled in a concentrated gesture, as if still carefully snipping her favorite pornographic graphics. This piece uses campy exaggeration

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<sup>616</sup> Lu Cashmere, “The Schmatte of the Western World,” *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 58.

<sup>617</sup> *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): cover. See Appendix XIII.

<sup>618</sup> Moe Meyer, ed., *The Politics and Poetics of Camp* (New York: Routledge, 1994): 1.

<sup>619</sup> Lyn Von Schlicting, “Penis Story,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1997): 88-89.

<sup>620</sup> Tori Galore, “One Upright Chick,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 76-77.

and a literal application of pastiches to showcase this Third Wave feminist artist in *BUST*'s own adaptation of the two theories.

The arrangement of the above samples of *BUST*'s exhibitions of pastiche and camp was among the most complicated segment of this content analysis; this part of the chapter contains the highest degree of analysis being applied simultaneous with the data collection. Since both camp and pastiche are subjective and unwilling to be nailed into rigid theoretical constructions, other researchers may find new or different examples of these postmodern and queer applications.

### Alternative & Diverse Sexualities

As mentioned in the segment discussing *BUST*'s reactions to Second Wave feminism, the arena of sexuality is one in which Third Wave activists are determined to revise for the current feminist generation. While the movement may be widely diverse in matters of personal sexual choices and political stances on issues of sexuality, *BUST*'s Third Wave feminism strives to understand and accept all hues of sexual lifestyles, opinions, and preferences,<sup>621</sup> declaring: "To Thine Own Crotch Be True."<sup>622</sup>

*BUST* has been pushing the sexual envelope since their zine-days. An early cartoon depicts a powerful, naked woman transforming and then making love to phallic national monuments in Washington D.C. in her contribution to *BUST*'s efforts in "Transforming Sexual Politics."<sup>623</sup> Betty Boob's first music reviews used nipples, instead of stars, to rate the quality of new releases, with the highest rating of four nipples being "orgasmic and erect"

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<sup>621</sup> This segment will focus on matters of sexual choices, excluding those relating to sexual violence. *BUST* articles addressing issues of rape and childhood sexual abuse and Third Wave feminist reactions to sexual violence will be discussed in the segment on individualism (pages 179-180).

<sup>622</sup> Spike Gillespie, "To Thine Own Crotch Be True," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 69-70.

<sup>623</sup> Kathy Guidroz, Patricia Barrera, and Jon Greene, "Transforming Sexual Politics," *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 7.

and the lowest being “I’d rather suck on a pacifier.”<sup>624</sup> Barlene’s fiery illustration in the “Fashion and Beauty issue” roars: “Don’t look up my skirt unless you mean it.”<sup>625</sup>

In their first “Sex Issue,”<sup>626</sup> the editors admit they considered announcing *BUST* as “The Official Organ of Do-Me Feminism,” but decided instead that readers would probably better describe themselves as “Fuck me,” or “Fuck you,” feminists.<sup>627</sup> They stress that rather than supporting or rejecting one sexual choice or another, *BUST* is primarily interested in honoring that which brings women sexual gratification. Regardless of social taboo or political incorrectness, Third Wavers address “the pursuit of pleasure, the acceptance of pleasure, and the allowance of pleasure, in whatever form it takes.”<sup>628</sup>

This first sex-themed issue urges readers to *BUST* through a variety of sexual taboos – from homophobia to all forms of prudishness – in their quest for physical satisfaction. Dixie LaRue describes in vivid detail her youthful enjoyment of oral sex<sup>629</sup> and Michelle offers an explicit poem written by her “Inner Slut.”<sup>630</sup> Lisa Palac shares her reflections on multiple sexual partners in her tale of “swinging in suburbia.”<sup>631</sup> And Lust confesses her orgasmic pre-teen experiences with the family dog in “One Sick Puppy.”<sup>632</sup> Sex toys reviews were introduced in this issue with Betty Boob and Celina Hex’s own first-hand report on their initial trials with “the Cadillac of vibrators,” the Hitachi Magic Wand, accompanied by an illustration of a woman masturbating.<sup>633</sup>

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<sup>624</sup> Betty Boob, “*BUST* picks,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 58.

<sup>625</sup> Barlene, “Don’t look up my skirt...,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 19.

<sup>626</sup> *BUST* no.4 (Fall 1994). See Appendix XIII.

<sup>627</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>629</sup> Dixie LaRue, “It’s More Than a Blow Job, It’s a Career,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 14-15.

<sup>630</sup> Michelle, “Inner Slut Speaks” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 24.

<sup>631</sup> Lisa Palac, “Four’s Company,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 18-19.

<sup>632</sup> Lust, “One Sick Puppy,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 10-11.

<sup>633</sup> Betty Boob and Celina Hex, “Betty and Celina Get Wired,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 6-8.

*BUST* pieces defy traditional sexual stereotypes, such as in an article by Crone rejecting the stigma against women who seek out carnal contact simply for pleasure and not for love and long-term relationships.<sup>634</sup> *BUST* no.6's "Boy du Jour," Andrew, explains his attraction to large women in "She Ain't Heavy, She's My Lover."<sup>635</sup> Lotta Gal discusses her attraction to and indulgences with underage males in "Toying with Boys."<sup>636</sup> *BUST* contributors also defy the political stigma against women who participate in sexual exploits often deemed oppressive by Second Wave feminism. Buffy gives a tantalizing report of her side-job as a topless housecleaner in "Dick and Span."<sup>637</sup> Betty Boob celebrates the male organ in her interview with Cynthia Plaster Caster.<sup>638</sup> The first review of pornography is offered in *BUST* no.7.<sup>639</sup> And Serena Worthington writes of the joy and thrills of watching men fall all over themselves in the presence of women with large, prominent breasts, both benefiting from and rejecting the inequities involved in the power women's bodies can hold over men.<sup>640</sup> The "Goddess Issue" celebrates sexual-taboo-breaking women like Madonna,<sup>641</sup> Tura Santana of the cult film *Faster Pussycast! Kill! Kill!*,<sup>642</sup> and 1970s rock and roll groupie Pamela des Barres.<sup>643</sup>

Fiona M. Essa gives both theoretical and concrete encouragement for women to throw "Vixen" parties – gatherings of women for the express purpose of indulging in the hedonistic pleasures of sensual food, fun drinks such as "penis punch," and sex-themed games in varying states of undress. Essa explains that while all-female get-togethers have

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<sup>634</sup> Crone, "Who Says Only Bad Girls Like to Fuck?," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 48-49.

<sup>635</sup> Andrew, "She Ain't Heavy, She's My Lover," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1996): 78-79.

<sup>636</sup> Lotta Gal, "Toying with Boys," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 79.

<sup>637</sup> Buffy, "Dick and Span," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 54-57.

<sup>638</sup> Betty Boob, "Talking Dick with Cynthia Plaster Caster," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 58-60.

<sup>639</sup> Lori Seto, "Kitty Porn: A Guide for *BUST* Gals Who Ask 'Where's the Beef?'" *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 70-73.

<sup>640</sup> Serena Worthington, "Boobs Are Power," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 61.

<sup>641</sup> Mikki Halpin, "Madonna, Mon Amour," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 52-53.

<sup>642</sup> Mae Jest, "Tura, Tura, Tura!," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 84-86.

<sup>643</sup> Rose Tattoo, "'Scuse Me While I Kiss This Guy: Hangin' with the Groupie Goddess Pamela des Barres," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 88-90.

been known to be both powerful and comforting for women, “ever since the women’s lib movement, these gatherings have taken a turn for the serious. Sure, you can get together and examine your vaginas in the name of consciousness-raising, practice a little Paganism, or talk about your eating disorders, but the notion of empowerment through having fun together got lost somewhere in the shuffle. Apparently, a group of wimmin can’t get together and be sexy, silly and salacious, right?”<sup>644</sup>

*BUST*’s second “Sex Issue” affirms the sexual mission of Third Wave feminism: “... we, the women of the New Girl Order, are going back out onto the sexual battlefield to try and get what’s cumming to us. As sexual revolutionaries, we’re interested in experimenting – with porn, with pain, with sex toys, with anonymous fuckpartners, with threesomes, with other girls – with whatever it takes to get us off. But we’re also prepared to be brutally honest: if a string of one-night stands leaves us high and dry, and what really gets our juices flowing is bedding someone for whom we feel both love and lust in equal amounts, then that’s what we’re going after.”<sup>645</sup>

Toward this goal, the cover announces: “This is Girls on Sex – Any Questions?”<sup>646</sup> *BUST* no.10 carries both practical how-to’s on various sexual adventures as well as creative essays about the intimate details of sordid personal experiences. Lacy J. advises readers to foster and satisfy their sexual appetites with the same fervor as most men.<sup>647</sup> Offering perspectives from both the receiving and giving end of oral sex, Dan Anderson and Maggie

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<sup>644</sup> Fiona M. Essa, “Girl’s Night In,” *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 80-81.

<sup>645</sup> Celina Hex, “The Second Sex,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 4.

<sup>646</sup> *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): cover.

<sup>647</sup> Lady J, “How to be as Horny as a Guy,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 91.

Berman provide “Blow Job Tips for Straight Women from a Gay Man.”<sup>648</sup> And Erika Bardot shares her low-cost sexual aids and fantasy games for penny-pinching feminist lovers.<sup>649</sup>

The editors establish regular sex-product reviews with no.10’s “The Vibrator Chronicles.”<sup>650</sup> The next seven issues carry staff-tested feedback on everything from condoms to pornographic videos to strap-on dildos. Queer feminist and author Susie Bright’s sex-advice column debuts in issue no.11. Her column head reads: “Nationally-renowned sexpert and all-around girl genius Susie Bright tells you everything you ever wanted to know about sex but were waiting for someone else to ask.”<sup>651</sup> Through the following six issues, Bright offers open-minded feminist guidance on topics including intercourse during menstruation, mysterious pains during vaginal penetration, and anal sex for men and women. In *BUST* no.13, the erotic product reviews and Bright’s sexual counsel are combined to create “The Sex Files.”<sup>652</sup> Regular entries of risqué literature appear in *BUST* no.12.<sup>653</sup> Sexually explicit stories range from exploits with coworker-inspired fantasies, voyeuristic pleasures, multiple lovers, and bondage.

Many first-person essays discuss specific choices and preferences, from motherhood to sexual partners, giving credence to the full range of human sexuality. Supergirl’s rant about her needs for an unconventional household made up of unmarried, bisexual individuals rails against the standard heterosexual nuclear family.<sup>654</sup> On the other end of the spectrum, Areola expresses the pleasure of bearing her husband’s children in “Makin’ It and

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<sup>648</sup> Dan Anderson and Maggie Berman, “Blow Job Tips for Straight Women from a Gay Man,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1997): 27-28.

<sup>649</sup> Erika Bardot, “Toy Story,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 39.

<sup>650</sup> Betty Boob and Celina Hex, “The Vibrator Chronicles,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 13.

<sup>651</sup> Susie Bright, “Susie Q’s,” *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 120.

<sup>652</sup> Sex Files, *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 13-16.

<sup>653</sup> Malory R., “Bottom’s Up,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 96-97.

<sup>654</sup> Supergirl, “Revolution Mom-Style Now!,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 71.

Makin' Babies.<sup>655</sup> Thelma and Louise are lesbian partners who write side-by-side essays describing their experience in having and raising a child together.<sup>656</sup> Scarlett Fever retells the legend of her swashbuckling hero, bisexual pirate "Mary Anne Blythe: the G-String Buccaneer."<sup>657</sup> *BUST* no.6's Third Wave feminist rant about relationships in "Don'ts for Boys" is decidedly heterosexual.<sup>658</sup>

A good amount of *BUST*'s lusty material is just plain sexual, without specific references to a preferred sexual orientation. Many pieces do not address their sexual inclinations but instead casually make mention of their sexual identity in the process of telling their story. For example, in the course of describing her experiences traveling in Asia, Elizabeth Wallace matter-of-factly mentions that she is a lesbian.<sup>659</sup> And, in her essay about her pre-dating ritual, Mellie Golightly makes reference to her heterosexuality.<sup>660</sup>

More controversial issues that challenge traditional conceptions of gender warrant more direct attention by the magazine. In her profile in *BUST* no.13, Nomy Lamm describes her artist, activist, riot grrrl community in Olympia, Washington as "anarchists and pervy dykes and queers and trannies... The way we think about gender is really complicated. So most of the people that I know, even the ones that are women, don't fully identify as women anyway."<sup>661</sup> Stories such as "My First Gay Boyfriend" by Kerry Daniels<sup>662</sup> represent an acceptance of a variety of perspectives on gender, lust, and romance. Mimi Mimatsu writes about her affection and respect for effeminate men in the celebratory "Dude Looks Like a

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<sup>655</sup> Areola, "Makin' It and Makin' Babies," *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 53.

<sup>656</sup> Thelma and Louise, "Two Girls and a Baby," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 42-45.

<sup>657</sup> Scarlett Fever, "Pirate of a Lady," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 50-51.

<sup>658</sup> Betty Boob and others, "Don'ts for Boys," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 26-28.

<sup>659</sup> Elizabeth Wallace, "Good Morning Vietnam," *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 84.

<sup>660</sup> Mellie Golightly, "The Date," *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 30.

<sup>661</sup> Laurel Rosen, "To Nomy is to Love Her," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 59.

<sup>662</sup> *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 60-61.

Lady.<sup>663</sup> And cross-dressers of both sexes are featured in *BUST*'s fashion spread entitled "Freedom Fighters."<sup>664</sup> These stories reflect the Third Wave belief that matters of sexuality are not black and white, and *BUST* has open arms to contributors of all genders.

However, not all pieces by and about transgendered feminists are so exultant as the ones mentioned above. Tori Adore, born a boy in a small Midwestern town, offers a painful contribution about reconciling memories of her violent and abusive mother with her choice to become a woman.<sup>665</sup> Marci Bowers shares the details of the biological procedures and physical effects of her sex change with Deborah Zimmerman Herz.<sup>666</sup> And Talin S. Shahinian discusses her own unsettling gender confusion in "I'm the Man."<sup>667</sup>

Varying responses by Third Wave feminists to their sadomasochistic sexual experiments offer a wide range of lifestyle choices, embracing each one as valid and equal to the next. Lisa boldly experiments with "water games" as she tries to satisfy her boyfriend by incorporating urination into their lovemaking; however, the relationship does not last as she discovers that they have incompatible sexual desires.<sup>668</sup> On the other hand, Robin Masters writes a deliciously suggestive piece about how her lover binds her like a mummy with soft, white cloth before they ferociously copulate.<sup>669</sup> And, Scarlett Fever fantasizes about whipping her lover as she tries on a black rubber dominatrix outfit,<sup>670</sup> while Tammy Whynot is appalled at her lover's interest in being spanked during sex.<sup>671</sup>

*BUST* contributors also embrace assorted feminist reactions to the sex trade. Helen Stickler, former erotic dancer, offers her perspective of Hollywood's dismal portrayal of

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<sup>663</sup> Mimi Mimatsu, "Dude Looks Like a Lady," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 30-31.

<sup>664</sup> Chris Verene and Christian Halstad, "Freedom Fighters," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 86-91.

<sup>665</sup> Tori Adore, "My Mother, My Hell," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 90-92.

<sup>666</sup> Deborah Zimmerman Herz, "Gyna-Woman," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 46-47.

<sup>667</sup> Talin S. Shahinian "I'm the Man," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 42-44.

<sup>668</sup> Lisa, "Waste," *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 45-46.

<sup>669</sup> Robin Masters, "Mummy Dearest," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 109-110.

<sup>670</sup> Scarlett Fever, "Don't Rubber the Wrong Way," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 64-65.

<sup>671</sup> Tammy Whynot, "Yes, Mistress," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 100.

strippers and showgirls, declaring, “guilt has no place in the hedonistic world of strip joints.”<sup>672</sup> Another retired stripper appeals to readers to understand the pleasure she found in both the fun and the danger of working in the sex industry.<sup>673</sup> Miz Rista gleefully supports her lucrative career of strip dancing through college in “Shake Your Money Maker.”<sup>674</sup> While Joan Kelly writes a dark tale of her experiences as a prostitute,<sup>675</sup> Anne May writes beautifully about her well-paid career selling her body to men for an hour at a time.<sup>676</sup> Betty Boob discusses the joy of uninhibited sexual practices for women with “prostitute/porn star turned performance artist/sexual educator” Annie Sprinkle in her first *BUST* interview.<sup>677</sup> And the magazine reveres porn star Nina Hartley, who is praised for her beauty, brains, and *BUST*-style feminism.<sup>678</sup>

Further embracing the diverse range of Third Wave sexual choices and experiences, *BUST* has published pieces by their celibate, inexperienced, and sexually uncertain readers. Training Bra writes about how her sexually-active friend makes her feel inferior and timid about buying sex toys.<sup>679</sup> “Power and Sex and Fun and No Longer Being a Geek” tells the story of Tabitha Rasa’s awkward entry into sexuality as a young woman.<sup>680</sup> A.E. Berkowitz commiserates about her years-long “dry spell” between lovers in “My Sexless Life.”<sup>681</sup> And Nicola explores her need for a gentle introduction into the world of sex and her experiences

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<sup>672</sup> Philip Sherburne, “A Showgirl on ‘Showgirls’” *BUST* no. 7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 92-93.

<sup>673</sup> Scarlett Fever, “R-E-S-P-E-C-T,” *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 15.

<sup>674</sup> Miz Rista, “Shake Your Money Maker,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 88-90.

<sup>675</sup> Joan Kelly, “The (Un)happy Hooker,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 78-80.

<sup>676</sup> Anne May, “The Professional,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 86-87.

<sup>677</sup> Betty Boob, “Annie Says,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 86-88.

<sup>678</sup> Betty Boob, “She’s Gotta Have It,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 92-93.

<sup>679</sup> Training Bra, “Sexual Oceans Apart,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 27.

<sup>680</sup> Tabitha Rasa, “Power and Sex and Fun and No Longer Being a Geek,” *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 8-9.

<sup>681</sup> A.E. Berkowitz, “My Sexless Life,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 68.

with social pressures to be promiscuous.<sup>682</sup> Clearly, *BUST* readers promote each other's peaceful exploration of their own sexuality, but they are not all on the same sexual page.

*BUST*'s welcoming acceptance and celebration of all shades of sexual choice is a Third Wave feminist brand of pomosexuality. Coined by Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, *pomosexuality*<sup>683</sup> refers to those hybrid queer and postmodern theories that are "challenging assumptions about gender and sexuality," to embrace all variations of sexual behavior and identity.<sup>684</sup> "Pomosexuality lives in the space in which all other non-binary forms of sexual and gender identity reside – a boundary-free zone in which fences are crossed for the fun of it, or simply because some of us can't be fenced in."<sup>685</sup> The illustration accompanying Talin S. Shahinian's article about her gender blending and bisexual variations<sup>686</sup> is a prime example of pomosexuality. The image of a pig-tailed girl in a flowered blouse is mottled with symbols of masculinity, such as facial hair, a penis, and visions of breasts on such things as the leaves of a tree; while the girl looks feminine, these sporadic male images reveal her diverse sexual self. In an era so dedicated to moving away from modern strictures of gender, class, and race, Third Wave feminist expressions of sexuality are illustrating a similar move. Queer and postmodern movements, exemplified in *BUST*'s frisky, pro-sex attitude, have changed the sexual awareness of Third Wave feminism.

From the beginning, *BUST* has made no apologies for its fiercely direct approach to issues of sexual behavior and identity. Many of its pages are filled with graphic images of naked men, women, sexual acts, and a variety of sexual aids, from suggestive photography of

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<sup>682</sup> Nicola, "Only One Thing Left to Loose," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 71-72.

<sup>683</sup> In an effort to break free of the restrictive labels of sexual orientation such as "gay" or "lesbian," "pomosexual" references homosexuality even as it describes the community's outsiders, the *queer* queers who can't seem to stay put within a nice simple identity." [Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, *PoMoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997), 20.]

<sup>684</sup> Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, *PoMoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997).

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid*, 23.

<sup>686</sup> Talin S. Shahinian "I'm the Man," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 42-44. See Appendix XVIII.

nude dolls<sup>687</sup> and lascivious cartoons<sup>688</sup> to advertisements for sexually explicit Internet material.<sup>689</sup> *BUST* refuses to be shy about female sexuality, giving voice to an array of lifestyles, choices, and desires. Taking a decidedly more bold approach than the Second Wave publications before them, *BUST* encourages different sexual perspectives to speak from themselves and to coexist peacefully as a cacophony of Third Wave feminist expressions unified between the covers of one magazine.

### Anti-essentialism

The Third Wave feminist brand of anti-essentialism<sup>690</sup> rejects any theory that declares generalizations about gender, culture, or activism, holding that there is no one perfect way to live or believe. As mentioned in the Literature Review, Third Wave feminism refuses to accept that a single theory, solution, or explanation will satisfy all feminists everywhere. Leaving room for chaotic, multiperspectival dissensions, *BUST* participates in Third Wave anti-essentialism through their unwillingness to let a single article or image speak for the entire Third Wave feminist community.

*BUST* strives to represent every possible shade of feminist experience or ideology with writing and art by rich, poor, fat, skinny, young, old, black, white, professional, working-class, gay, straight, and transgendered feminist contributors. Continuing to '*BUST* through stereotypes and social taboos, the magazine undermines all assumptions and defies rules of both mainstream and underground cultures. The publication of an array of feminist

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<sup>687</sup> Photo by Lorraine Mahru, *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 5.

<sup>688</sup> Lynn Von Schlichting, "Penis Story," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 88-89.

<sup>689</sup> Advertisement by nerve.com, *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 29.

<sup>690</sup> In this context, *anti-essentialism* refers to the rejection of essentialist philosophies within certain camps of feminist theory, which hold "that females (or male) have an essential nature (e.g. nurturing and caring versus being aggressive and selfish), as opposed to differing by variety of accidental or contingent features brought about by social forces." *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, s.v. "essentialism."

voices amalgamated inside one magazine is, in itself, an anti-essentialistic practice typical to Third Wave feminism.

*BUST* represents an assortment of feminist lifestyles, refusing to promote a singular image of femininity or feminism. In their opening letter to the “Fun Issue,”<sup>691</sup> the founding editors challenge the stereotypes of women being air-headed bimbos and feminists being depressingly serious; they ask their readers: “As women, is it even acceptable for us to want to have fun?”<sup>692</sup> This second edition of *BUST* is filled with remarkably different definitions of pleasure and recreation. For example, Barbara Klingman hopes to find some amusement in a trip to a “kegger” party with a friend, but instead finds she enjoys a bubble bath alone much more.<sup>693</sup> And Betty Boob revels in the entertainment of having a crush on her local high-school-aged video store attendant.<sup>694</sup>

Many *BUST* pieces exemplify this feminist anti-essentialism through subjective expressions of experience, which do not attempt to symbolize a prescription for ideal womanhood, or feminist-hood. Defying the concept that the fashion industry is a tool of patriarchal sexual oppression, Lu Cashmere admits to enjoying the competitive and physically rigorous challenges of her short-lived career as a runway model.<sup>695</sup> In her bisexual exploration, Talin Shaninian rejects the idea that she has a “type” or ideal partner, and reflects on issues of socially constructed gender roles.<sup>696</sup> The editors refuse to accept the double standard imposed on women, which equates those who seek pleasure as whores and those who stand up for their autonomy as bitches. Instead, in their “Vices Issue,” they

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<sup>691</sup> Celina Hex and Betty Boob, “Stop Using Fun as a Weapon,” *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 2.

<sup>692</sup> Ibid.

<sup>693</sup> Barbara Klingman, “My Rude Friend,” *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 28-30.

<sup>694</sup> Betty Boob, “Tales of Fun,” *BUST* no. 2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 19.

<sup>695</sup> Lu Cashmere, “Catfighting on the Catwalk,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 28.

<sup>696</sup> Talin Shaninian, “Both Sides, Now,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 73-74.

declare if bad girls are those who act on their desires, then they would rather embrace the idea of being bad than to never pursue pleasure.<sup>697</sup>

Third Wave feminists favor the thought that women are not the sum of their parts. Tara Morgan's story about the annual Mother's Day-eve potluck party she throws for her friends to celebrate their favorite recipes "Just Like Mother Used to Make"<sup>698</sup> plays with the essentialist notion that female cooking is a symptom of sexist oppression. Morgan is encouraging Third Wave feminists to embrace diverse female strengths and skills. Similarly, the same issue celebrates feminist entrepreneurs making a splash in the seemingly unfeminist professions of textiles and fashion design. The subhead reads: "They knit, they crochet, they sew, they spin. In fact, they do everything your grandma used to do except wear glasses on a chair around their necks."<sup>699</sup> These excerpts prove that *BUST* will not accept a singular, fundamentalist definition of feminism.

*BUST*'s contributors refuse to accept that a label or name adequately defines the whole woman. One woman vents her irritation at the social pressures of naming newborn children and the incensing comment she often hears from friends: "You know, you don't look like a 'Lori.'"<sup>700</sup> Another woman, calling herself "The Queen of Conway,"<sup>701</sup> joins in *BUST*'s fashion consciousness, declaring her disinterest in "glamour labels" and reverence for discount clothiers. The magazine's "Fashion Nation" segment supports the Conway Queen's sentiments with regular photo spreads featuring "Real Women in Their Real Clothes," with exceptionally different styles and definitions of beauty and fashion.

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<sup>697</sup> Celina Hex, "She's Got It Bad, and That Ain't Good," *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 2.

<sup>698</sup> Tara Morgan, "Just Like Mother Used to Make," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 67-69.

<sup>699</sup> Girlbomb, "Crafty Ladies," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 46-49.

<sup>700</sup> Lori "Aura Lee" Seto, "The Name Game," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 107-108.

<sup>701</sup> Melicious, "The Queen of Conway," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 56-57.

*BUST* presents unique story after distinctive story, subtly proving that Third Wave feminists do not operate under strict social rules or directives. Often, *BUST* pieces reject the homogenous guidelines frequently stipulated by conventional American culture. Scarlett Fever explains how the generic concept of having fun does not translate to the reality of what she finds relaxing, pleasurable, or joyful.<sup>702</sup> While she loves the idea of death-defying rides at an amusement park, “the fun and thrill of roller coasters for me is only in theory.”<sup>703</sup> The essay concludes with her acceptance that, for her, fun means enjoying simple pleasures, such as having coffee with friends. The “Motherhood Issue” features pieces about a wide range of familial options, from finding fulfillment nurturing a pet dog<sup>704</sup> and your sister’s new baby,<sup>705</sup> to being a young, single mother<sup>706</sup> or having an abortion.<sup>707</sup>

*BUST* rails against society’s typical conceptions of gender in their pursuit of an anti-essentialistic feminist magazine. For example, the “My Life As a Girl” issue<sup>708</sup> rails against the idea that girls are quiet, sweet, and plaintive, being made of “sugar and spice.”<sup>709</sup> Hecuba rejects the narrow gender-typing messages set out in mainstream magazines, where titles for men are devoid of the intimate advice about love and sex that dominates women’s magazines.<sup>710</sup> Another writer, Girl, introduces her sarcastic list of dos and don’ts for male attire by saying that she rejected typical feminine apparel for herself at an early age.<sup>711</sup> “I knew there was a reindeer game being played and, not only did I not want to learn the rules, I didn’t even want to learn the language of being a girl ... and, by the way, I don’t think

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<sup>702</sup> Scarlett Fever, “Fun: Reality vs. Concept,” *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 13.

<sup>703</sup> Ibid.

<sup>704</sup> Betty Boob, “Puppy Love,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 72.

<sup>705</sup> Magdalen, “Motherhood Lite,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 75.

<sup>706</sup> Poonteesha, “My Teenage Mom,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 95.

<sup>707</sup> Simone de Boudoir, “Abortion Story,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 78-79.

<sup>708</sup> *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995).

<sup>709</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>710</sup> Hecuba, “You Just Don’t Understand – Cause You’re Too Dumb!,” *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 27.

<sup>711</sup> Girl, “Girl’s Fashion Tips for Boys,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 49-51.

gender is destiny.”<sup>712</sup> With a similar tone of irony, Jayne Air mocks “The Rules,” the infamously oppressive tome about dating for single girls, with a list of antidotes for Third Wave feminists.<sup>713</sup> Instead of waiting for her man to call, “The Girl Who Rules” used to be a call girl, and instead of trying to be mysterious, Third Wavers should consider writing mystery novels.

Akin to these are the *BUST* pieces that insist on an anti-essentialist view of sexual identities. Mila Radulovich and Pauline St. Denis present a “be your own pimp” fashion-photo essay,<sup>714</sup> commiserating with readers how “today’s gal has no time for any man’s Madonna/Whore complex, not since Madonna made it possible for every woman to be her own whore.”<sup>715</sup> Shayna Morgan reports on the mating patterns of lemur monkeys, which include a feisty ritual where the female slaps the male and demands sexual intercourse.<sup>716</sup> Morgan muses that, while she enjoys the mating dance of monogamous humans, “I think I would trade it all just to be as sexually uninhibited as a lemur.”<sup>717</sup> And the *BUST* editors refuse to “pussy foot” around discussions of female genitalia in their “Body Issue,” saying they will not behave like the timid women’s magazines that avoid discussions of “down there.”<sup>718</sup>

*BUST*’s Third Wave anti-essentialism often rebuffs Second Wave feminist theories they find constrictive and limiting. *BUST* rebels against Second Wave definitions of feminism and activism. A Second Wave feminist magazine would never have celebrated the “womanly arts” by publishing recipes<sup>719</sup> or crafting ideas,<sup>720</sup> let alone devoted an entire issue

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<sup>712</sup> Ibid.

<sup>713</sup> Jayne Air, “The Rules Girl vs. The Girl Who Rules,” *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 18.

<sup>714</sup> Mila Radulovich and Pauline St.Denis, “Bad Mother Freaker,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 30-32.

<sup>715</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>716</sup> Shayna Morgan, “Women Who Run With the Lemurs,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 66-67.

<sup>717</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>718</sup> Celina Hex, “Getting’ Jiggly With It,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 4.

<sup>719</sup> The *BUST* food column, “Eat Me,” debuted in *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 16-17.

to the domestic arts.<sup>721</sup> The editors proclaim an insurgence against the decree against feminist activism also being a good time in their opening letter to the “Fun Issue,” declaring, “as girls we demanded our fun as an act of rebellion.”<sup>722</sup> Further announcing the Third Wave belief that feminist battles are fought with diverse methods and assorted personalities, the editor’s “Feminist Fatale” photo essay explodes the definitions of feminism with images of divas from Wonder Woman to Angela Davis.<sup>723</sup>

In general, the feminist ideologies that came out of the 60s and 70s equated social pressure on women to achieve an ideal of feminine beauty to be ipso facto oppression. Third Wavers cannot live with such overarching theories, and *BUST* articles represent a support of anti-essentialistic beliefs. For example, Nicki Miller describes her experiences with insecurity and pleasure as her body adjusts after a breast enhancement operation.<sup>724</sup> Yet Miller’s choice for plastic surgery is not embraced by all *BUST* contributors; I.M. Notta Diva is pained at the thought that some women don’t feel beautiful unless they meet some fashion-magazine image of femininity.<sup>725</sup> Blonde Fury believes a balance between a total rejection of social norms and an openness to experience the pleasures of traditional femininity is possible. She writes, “I’m not a society-driven, *Cosmo* worshiper, but a strong, independent woman who’s not afraid to embrace her sexuality *and* feminism. The longer women get on radical, pseudo-intellectual soapboxes and insist that in order to get the same respect as men we must act and dress like men, the more women as a collective whole shoot themselves in the foot. To them, I say: Get real. Get *BUST*. Free your mind.”<sup>726</sup>

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<sup>720</sup> The *BUST* craft column, “She’s Crafty,” first appeared in *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 8.

<sup>721</sup> *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001).

<sup>722</sup> Celina Hex and Betty Boob, “Stop Using Fun as a Weapon,” *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 2.

<sup>723</sup> *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 48-49. See Appendix XVI.

<sup>724</sup> Nicki Miller, “Take This Bra and Stuff It,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 42-43.

<sup>725</sup> I.M. Notta Diva, “What Price Beauty?,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 36.

<sup>726</sup> Blonde Fury, “Dress for Excess,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 38.

*BUST* leaves ample room for these disagreements and disparate perspectives within the Third Wave feminist movement. One woman does not embrace *Esquire* magazine's 1994 promotion of the "do-me feminist" stereotype of a spirited vixen.<sup>727</sup> While some Third Wavers may find assertive, sexy, and aggressive women to be footing the feminist bill, Babe Queen writes, "it may be novel, shocking, and titillating, and give you the self-confidence of Madonna, but it has jack to do the grunt work of feminism."<sup>728</sup> Although favorable reviews of HBO's series *Sex and the City* appear in several issues,<sup>729</sup> Wendy Shanker is not shy to say that she cannot relate to these young, fashionable women who wax postmodern about their New York City lives.<sup>730</sup>

Some readers do not catch *BUST*'s cocky use of satire, interpreting some pieces to actually be promoting essentialistic views. Jessica DiMaio sarcastically quips that she could not possibly be feminist because her high metabolism leaves her naturally thin.<sup>731</sup> Reader Christine Fickenor writes an angry letter to the magazine stating, "I never thought I would read an article in *BUST* that encouraged women to ridicule and resent other women based on their physical appearance."<sup>732</sup> The editors included a short note insisting this piece was satirical, and they have had to explain this type of cynical mockery to explain their 'essential lists' on one subject or another. For example, *BUST* no.1 features an inventory of things to love and hate, which is billed as Betty's and Tabitha's list, not one to apply to every feminist under the sun.<sup>733</sup> These silly lists appear throughout the eight years of *BUST* reviewed, as well as quizzes such as "Are You a Card-Carrying Feminist,"<sup>734</sup> which is clearly supporting a

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<sup>727</sup> Babe Queen, "Don't Call Me (A Do-Me Feminist)," *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 50.

<sup>728</sup> Ibid.

<sup>729</sup> For example: Betty Boob, "It's a Gal's, Gal's, Gal's, Gal's World," *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 12.

<sup>730</sup> Wendy Shanker, "Wrecks and the City," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 24.

<sup>731</sup> Jessica DiMaio, "Skinny Bitch," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 68-69.

<sup>732</sup> Christine Fickenor, "Dear *BUST*," *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 7.

<sup>733</sup> Betty Boob and Tabitha Rasa, "Love/Hate List," *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 20.

<sup>734</sup> Janice "La Girlbomb" Erlbaum, "Are You a Card-Carrying Feminist," *BUST* no.16: 37.

Third Wave embrace of all variations of feminism while scorning the idea that there would only be four types of feminists.

*BUST* seems to enjoy the disagreements, publishing with a democratic, open-forum approach to Third Wave feminism. In her “Broadcast” new column, Girlbomb reports on a Feminists for Fornication billboard depicting a woman in an embrace with a man with a condom pinched between her fingers.<sup>735</sup> The headline reads: “I’ll Take Something Off If You Put Something On.” Girlbomb explains how a media broker refused to run the ad because they found it to encourage teenage sexual activity. While she points out that maybe the broker is afraid that a woman in control of her sexuality is more appealing than a “billboard bimbo,” the magazine does not promote the essential Third Wave feminist stand on this debate, leaving judgment to individual readers.

The world of options available to Third Wave feminists entrusts young people with an almost overwhelming variety of lifestyles and opinions. In her attempt to become the kind of woman she can respect, Dixie LaRue rejects the notion of a “wonder woman” who can “be it all:” hold down a successful career while fostering a healthy family.<sup>736</sup> She says, “having it all, or being it all, isn’t for everyone. I don’t want to be it all. I just want to be me.”<sup>737</sup> Third Wave feminist anti-essentialism ‘*BUSTs*’ the door wide open for young women to choose the cultures, aesthetics, and beliefs that suit them.

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<sup>735</sup> Girlbomb, “What’s Wrong With This Picture?,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 11.

<sup>736</sup> Dixie LaRue, “Valley of the Dulls,” *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 22.

<sup>737</sup> *Ibid.*

## Individualism

If anti-essentialism is the theory, then individualism<sup>738</sup> is the practice. In an effort to decide upon, or rotate among, different styles of feminism, *BUST* encourages its Third Wave feminist readers to honestly explore themselves and the world, to acknowledge their unique backgrounds and personalities, and to stand in strong defense of their choices. *BUST* supports the act of women speaking truthfully about their experiences as both important for personal mental health, but also as a crucial feminist deed to defy the world's stereotypes, limitations, and double standards. *BUST*'s routine unification of diverse individuals in each thematic issue can be seen here to exemplify this theoretical category: individualistic expression of personal perspective defines the Third Wave feminism of *BUST* magazine.

The confessional writing style of many individualistic *BUST* pieces is reminiscent of the founding editors' favorite teen magazine, *Sassy*.<sup>739</sup> *Girl* evokes the reflective comfort her girlhood diary offered her during the identity crises of pubescent changes.<sup>740</sup> Akin to a kind of diary shared between like-minded women, *BUST* provides a Third Wave feminist arena for women to convey the details of their personal lives. This was a pivotal purpose for launching *BUST* – intimate and honest communication between women is a Third Wave feminist action against narrow societal concepts of female experiences. For example, Celina Hex's opening letter to *BUST*'s "Girlfriend Issue" remembers her childhood friend Rosaline<sup>741</sup> and encourages readers to tell their stories of female friendships. She writes, "we rarely see anything on the subject in our popular culture. Usually when we see something

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<sup>738</sup> *Individualism*, for the purposes of this discussion, refers to "the social theory, which advocates the free and independent action of the individual, as opposed to communistic methods of organization and state interference." *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. "individualism."

<sup>739</sup> As mentioned in Chapter V: Interview Findings, the founding editors set out to produce a frank, feminist magazine akin to *Sassy*. Please see pages 2, 81-82, 84, 103, 106-107, 174, 201, and Appendix IX for more.

<sup>740</sup> *Girl*, "Dear Diary," *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 23-24.

<sup>741</sup> Celina Hex, "Really Rosie," *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 4.

that involves two women intimately connected to one another, it's either because they're fighting over the same man, or because we're watching a porn movie."<sup>742</sup>

*BUST* promotes trust among readers and contributors by supporting a wide variety of independent voices. Many stories are not focused on a feminist or political purpose, but are simply sharing a subjective reality. Mary Gorson's essay about her experiences as a New York art dealer exemplifies this practice.<sup>743</sup> Wanting only to tell her own tale, like a friend chatting over coffee, Gorson reminisces about how she was "a normal suburban honor society loser-type with a bad haircut" before her foray into the art world.<sup>744</sup> Rose Tattoo reflects on her girlhood memories of growing up with her sister in their Midwestern Catholic family.<sup>745</sup> And Blonde Fury reveals her dreams of pet reptiles and menstrual trauma through her descriptions of dream interpretation books.<sup>746</sup> Many pieces relating to sexuality impart tender, intimate details about erotic encounters, giving readers the sense that reading *BUST* is akin to participating in a teenage slumber party. For instance, Nell Carberry divulges the sexy details of making love to a stranger on a subway<sup>747</sup> and Roxie Coleman describes her first erotic encounter with another girl in the sewing closet of a neighborhood friend.<sup>748</sup>

In the stories they publish, *BUST* fosters the native communication of Third Wave feminist culture and experience. In her ode to lipstick, Esther Gyn speaks of how she grew out of her "teenage rebellion stage," where she was convinced the media and fashion industries were warping the minds and bodies of all women, into her hedonistic dedication to that "attitude in a stick" that she now cannot live without.<sup>749</sup> Another woman remembers

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<sup>742</sup> Ibid.

<sup>743</sup> Mary Gorson, "My Groovy Life as an Art Dealer," *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 12-13.

<sup>744</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>745</sup> Rose Tattoo, "Free to Be You and Me," *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 35.

<sup>746</sup> Blonde Fury, "Fun with Dreams," *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 24-25.

<sup>747</sup> Nell Carberry, "Night Train," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 87-88.

<sup>748</sup> Roxie Coleman, "The Girl in the Closet," *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 41.

<sup>749</sup> Esther Gyn, "I Gotta Git That Stick," *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 15.

the thrill, and desperate necessity, of her youthful filching of beauty products from local drug stores.<sup>750</sup> Angela Kelley relays her experiences with serial employment in “Diary of a Mad Worker Bee.”<sup>751</sup> And a cartoon by Andi Zeissler depicts the financial and personal dilemmas she encounters with her boyfriend when he suggests they share the cost of a diaphragm as an alternative to condoms.<sup>752</sup>

Some *BUST* narratives take a personal stand on more difficult issues, without engaging or espousing particular feminist agendas. Clarissa M, for example, writes about the struggles she has had with lovers who are ambivalent about making a romantic commitment and just want to be friends that have sex.<sup>753</sup> In defiance, she declares: “Go ahead and be my friend – be my best friend, if you want. But remember, my friends don’t touch my boobs.”<sup>754</sup> Another contributor explains that until she has her fill of romance and self-realization, she refuses to join the maternal bandwagon that requires “caring for a helpless child other than myself.”<sup>755</sup> And, Nicole Lang accepts her individualism, and her differently sized breasts, in her essay “Twin Freaks.”<sup>756</sup>

These submissions often articulate discovery of Third Wave feminist dilemmas, but make only declarations of personal choices rather than advocating a particular political opinion or action. Appealing for readers’ empathy, a cartoon written by Tamara Paris tells the story of how her 9<sup>th</sup>-grade boyfriend forced her to go to a horror flick and held his hand over her screaming mouth, at which point she realized “this boy was just the first in a long line of men who would try to shut me up.”<sup>757</sup> Paris explains that this was a lesson in love and

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<sup>750</sup> Coco, “Stealing Beauty,” *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 19-20.

<sup>751</sup> Angela Kelley, “Diary of a Mad Worker Bee,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 38-39.

<sup>752</sup> Andi Zeissler, “The Co-Owners Dilemma,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 35.

<sup>753</sup> Clarissa M., “My Friends Don’t Touch My Boobs,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 69.

<sup>754</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>755</sup> Lip Service, “I’d Rather Have a Babe than a Baby,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 55.

<sup>756</sup> Nicole Lang, “Twin Freaks,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 54.

<sup>757</sup> Tamara Paris, “The Scariest Movie I’ve Ever Seen,” *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 29.

life as a woman for her, without drawing universal conclusions. Another woman enumerates her experiences with unwanted pregnancies and her process for deciding to undergo tubal ligation surgery.<sup>758</sup> Kate Leob learns how cruel women can be in competition for social acceptance and male attention in her personal tale of grade school friendships.<sup>759</sup> And another woman's account of her best friend's wedding hints at deeper Third Wave feminist struggles with gender equity in romantic relationships and social pressures of heterosexual monogamy.<sup>760</sup>

The magazine's elevation of individual expression to feminist activism prioritizes Third Wave self-discovery and the embrace of unique lifestyle choices. The carefree independence advocated in *BUST*'s "Travel Issue"<sup>761</sup> exemplifies this spirit of discovery and autonomy. Regular "Fashion Nation" segments that feature "Real Girls in Their Real Clothes,"<sup>762</sup> quote these feminists on their definitions of style and beauty. And, the founding editors admit that their negative personal experiences with men strongly influenced the first "Men We Love Issue,"<sup>763</sup> and how, in their second "Men" issue, *BUST* "tried to be more even-handed."<sup>764</sup> The editors write, "as we've aged, and mellowed, our feeling about guys have too."<sup>765</sup> Both boy-themed editions portray both the personal and political aspects of Third Wave feminist experiences with the "hairier sex."<sup>766</sup>

Drawing on traditions of Second Wave feminist consciousness-raising, *BUST*'s sponsorship of individualistic expression is a Third Wave rebellion against the sexist status quo. Often, telling one's story personalizes the political topics at hand, and opens us up to

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<sup>758</sup> Scarlett Fever, "Tie Me Off," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 62-63.

<sup>759</sup> Kate Leob, "Growing Up Mean," *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 33-34.

<sup>760</sup> Eliza Gran, "My Best Friend's Wedding," *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 74-76.

<sup>761</sup> *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000).

<sup>762</sup> Celina Hex, "Fashion Nation," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 28-30.

<sup>763</sup> *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995).

<sup>764</sup> Celina Hex, "Exile in Guyville," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 4.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>766</sup> *Ibid.*

the possibility of individual changes and feminist activism. For example, as one woman shares her subjective experiences with blowjobs, she deals with patterns of sexist inequality within romantic relationships, and her treatise on lipstick identifies Third Wave feminist perspectives on culturally defined femininity.<sup>767</sup> In her explanation of how her obsession with Princess Leia of the movie *Star Wars* fed her anorexic desire to be thin, Judy Superstar draws readers' attention to destructive patterns of eating disorders among many young women who idolize unrealistic body images in entertainment media.<sup>768</sup>

These individual submissions often impart moral or political lessons. Without preaching one choice over another, *BUST's* personal stories offer readers a range of feminist options. Addressing larger problems of financial independence for women, Hope Swindle reports on how she was coached in money management through her membership in an all-female stock club.<sup>769</sup> Some pieces, in the process of relating a personal story, advise readers to be careful in the dangerous situations self-exploration can often create – such as Amy's near date-rape encounter with a high school heart-throb<sup>770</sup> or Maryhope Tobin's close call while hitching a ride with a lonely, leering truck driver.<sup>771</sup> Other essays serve as warnings for women to be aware of reproductive health issues and sexually transmitted diseases; Katinka lays out the truth she learned the hard way about vulvodynia<sup>772</sup> and River Huston describes her safe sexual revolution after contracting HIV.<sup>773</sup>

A handful of *BUST's* personal stories illuminate Third Wave feminist perspectives on body image and commercially endorsed beauty standards. One example of this type of story is Ann Rex's essay about her fluctuating weight as seen through the appearance of her

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<sup>767</sup> Girl, "Blowjobs, Lipstick, Sidekicks," *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 8.

<sup>768</sup> Judy Superstar, "Star Wars Fever," *BUST* no. 5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 42-43.

<sup>769</sup> "Girls Just Wanna Have Funds," Hope Swindle, *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 464-47.

<sup>770</sup> Amy, "Just a Boy," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 10-12.

<sup>771</sup> Maryhope Tobin, "Keep On Truckin'," *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 68-70.

<sup>772</sup> Katinka, "Ring of Fire," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 70.

<sup>773</sup> River Huston, "HIV, Sex and Me," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 73.

hands.<sup>774</sup> Giana describes her sexual experiences as a “scrawny, sickly pale, crooked-toothed and frizzy-haired” girl.<sup>775</sup> And Jayne Air shares the fashion compromises she learned to make during her transition into a “real job,” balancing her unorthodox personal style with the conventional standards of professional attire.<sup>776</sup>

Several *BUST* articles directly debate feminist issues from an individual perspective. Terri McIntosh recalls her first feminist coalition that left her with a “Fear of the F-Word”<sup>777</sup> during her brutal eighth-grade years, a lack of sisterhood similar to her current Third Wave feminist experiences. McIntosh declares: “No matter what women my age believe about their rightful place in society, few are willing to risk acquiring the loaded, wildly unattractive label of ‘feminist.’”<sup>778</sup> Director Allison Anders, in her discussion with filmmaker Helen Stickler about their experiences as women in the movie industry, says, “it still amazes me that we’re 52% of the population and our experience isn’t [on movie screens].”<sup>779</sup> And *BUST* co-founder Celina Hex explores her understandings of the social pressures on the opposite sex, while challenging mainstream notions of gender, when she enacts a detailed makeover to pass for a day in public dressed as a man.<sup>780</sup>

Frequently, personal stories in *BUST* grapple with the psychological wounds of sexual violence and Third Wave feminist responses to issues of rape, incest, and domestic abuse. Shelley Greenberg imparts the difficult story of how her mother forced her into dating at a young age and how she had to fight off an aggressive suitor with the heel of one of her high-heeled shoes.<sup>781</sup> A poem in the same sex-themed issue describes the experiences

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<sup>774</sup> Ann Rex, “My Left Hand,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 20-21.

<sup>775</sup> Giana, “Sex Diary of an Ugly Girl,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 28-30.

<sup>776</sup> Jayne Air, “Suits Me,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 18.

<sup>777</sup> Terri McIntosh, “Fear of the F-Word,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 38-39.

<sup>778</sup> *Ibid*, 38.

<sup>779</sup> Allison Anders, “Girls on Film,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 35.

<sup>780</sup> Celina Hex, “King For a Day,” *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 50-53.

<sup>781</sup> Shelley Greenberg, “My Mother, My Pimp,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 37.

of a woman who lives with a raping and battering husband.<sup>782</sup> Another piece reveals the memories of a woman who was molested by her father as a little girl.<sup>783</sup> One founding editor illustrates the fear some women feel around men in public.<sup>784</sup> And the other steps up to the feminist soap box in an introduction to her music reviews with a rant about the rapes that took place during the Woodstock revival concerts in 1999.<sup>785</sup>

Plenty of *BUST* articles celebrate individualist feminists who are original, freethinking, and independent. The “Goddess Issue” sets out to do just that: “we pay tribute to those women who have broken the moldy mold of female stereotypes in a variety of ways.”<sup>786</sup> Singer and actress Courtney Love’s contribution to the “Bad Girls” issue adds credence to her “bad girl” reputation by declaring, “bad girls are ‘femmenistes;’ we like our dark Nars lipstick and LaPerla panties, but we hate sexism.”<sup>787</sup> Journalist Spike Gillespie pokes fun at celebrity-fueled magazines, such as Rosie O’Donnell’s takeover of *McCall’s* magazine, by suggesting that she launch a “monthly tribute to me, me, me, and those of you like me.”<sup>788</sup> Musician and activist Kathleen Hanna, “the original rebel girl,”<sup>789</sup> articulates her personal spin on Third Wave feminism and her feelings about being labeled by the media as the leader of the Riot Grrrl movement.<sup>790</sup> And a founding editor spills her guts about her own unique, unconventional path to motherhood, asking, “What happens when a feminist stops being polite and starts getting real?”<sup>791</sup>

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<sup>782</sup> Nicole Blackman, “You’re in the Movie Now,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 48.

<sup>783</sup> Scarlett Fever, “Little Girl Lost,” *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 31-32.

<sup>784</sup> Celina Hex, “Fear of a Boy Planet,” *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 6-7.

<sup>785</sup> Betty Boob, “I Sing the Body Electric,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 105.

<sup>786</sup> Celina Hex, “Goddess!,” *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 2.

<sup>787</sup> Courtney Love, “Bad Like Me,” *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 23.

<sup>788</sup> Spike Gillespie, “Spike: The Magazine,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 32.

<sup>789</sup> Betty Boob, “Rebel Girl: Interview with Kathleen Hanna,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 61.

<sup>790</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-62.

<sup>791</sup> Betty Boob, “Tough Titties,” *BUST* no.16: 72-73.

*BUST* editors strive to unite these strong individuals between the covers of a single Third Wave feminist magazine. Their collages of anti-essentialistic, independent voices are supportive of an array of feminist expressions, providing a Third Wave feminist forum of open discussion and debate. *BUST*'s distinctive feminist ideas and lifestyles often clash and argue with each other, offering contrasts to one another's personal and political differences. Acknowledging these seemingly contradictory expressions, as well as aspects of internal conflict, *BUST* achieves an evocative Third Wave feminist arena of contrasting individuals.

### Multiculturalism

Informed by third world feminism and Second Wave critiques by women of color, *BUST*'s Third Wave feminists strive to revise Second Wave politics with a greater engagement with women of all races, classes, and creeds. While the Second Wave was, much like the First Wave, born during a time of intense civil rights movements in support of racial minorities, especially African-Americans, a large liberal feminist faction of the Second Wave is perceived to have been dominated by white, middle-class women. Deep schisms within Second Wave feminist organizations splintered otherwise compatible activists into ideological and cultural divisions that can still be seen today. Therefore, *BUST* strives to do more to reach across cultural boundaries with wishful thinking and inclusive language; *BUST*'s Third Wave is attempting to bring people of all walks of life together with common goals of equity, freedom, and human dignity.<sup>792</sup>

*BUST* works toward this goal, with varying degrees of success, in their publication of diverse feminist images and voices. *BUST*'s brand of multiculturalism is not preachy or quota filling, yet *BUST* tries to unselfconsciously represent a range of communities, from

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<sup>792</sup> Further discussion of *BUST*'s success with multiculturalism is further discussed in Chapter VII, pages 201-202.

variant classes, races, ages, and religious and cultural backgrounds. Sometimes this embrace of diverse cultures include an acceptance of drug use and diverse body types, yet the multiculturalism in *BUST* can best be seen in their effort to include feminists of all races and nationalities.

*BUST*'s first issue addressed experiences of women of color in "Negros 'r Us."<sup>793</sup> Dreaded Sister, wrestling with the commercial popularity of African-American culture and responding to racist encounters in her work with MTV, writes "so now I think I know why the myth of the strong Black woman has been perpetuated. You have to be, 'cause it's either sink or swim – especially in the 90s."<sup>794</sup> Akiba Solomon struggles with similar issues in "The Booty Myth"<sup>795</sup> which she defines as the widespread understanding that African-American women have larger rear-ends than White women. Solomon, who accounts her own self-conscious awareness of the physical differences between her own developing adolescent body and the mainstream White beauty standards perpetuated by mass media, writes that while she actively opposes stereotypes of all kinds, "I am desperately ambivalent about defining it as a 'myth' ... it's damned hard to actively oppose anything that often appears to be true."<sup>796</sup> These contributions represent *BUST*'s multicultural awareness of the scope of women's perspectives in the Third Wave.

Similar to *BUST*'s engagement with many feminist issues, the magazine's address of racism and multiculturalism is done within its natural course of presenting a young, sassy lifestyle magazine. For instance, Joan Morgan debates issues of women feeling compelled to have sex with a date who pays her way; she says she can't believe there are Black women

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<sup>793</sup> Dreaded Sister, "Negros 'r Us," *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 18-19.

<sup>794</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

<sup>795</sup> Akiba Solomon "The Booty Myth," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 54-55.

<sup>796</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

who “still think men should pay to play.”<sup>797</sup> In their first interview with comedian Margaret Cho, Celina Hex asks the Korean-American feminist about how her comedy routine addresses issues of living as an Asian woman in America.<sup>798</sup> Cho says that she has some fans who respond to her performance with embarrassment, which she explains is because “they just want to blend in, they don’t wanna know that they’re different.”<sup>799</sup>

Issues of race, class, and religion are taken up in several responses to media and popular culture, in such sections as “Media Whore” and “On the Rags.” Responding to a hair-relaxing product advertisement promising it will give African-American women “hair as rich as your heritage,” Uwimana quips “well, okay – my legacy as an African-American woman includes generations of self-hatred engendered by centuries of racist and sexist oppression and denial of our natural beauty, of which hair-straightening was only one symptom.”<sup>800</sup> In her review of the newly-released urban women’s magazine *Honey*, Lisa Miya-Jervis praises the publication for rising above mainstream fashion pitfalls: “In these pages, ‘urban’ and ‘hip-hop’ don’t simply mean ‘black,’ and ‘multicultural’ doesn’t translate to ‘tokenized.’”<sup>801</sup> In a later magazine review, Nicole Moore expresses disappointment that *Vibe*’s new supplement entitled *Home>Girl* is not more daring in its presentation of trailblazing women of color.<sup>802</sup> Moore further criticizes Oprah Winfrey for her lack of meaningful social and cultural engagement in her new *O* magazine, saying, “a hundred rounds of ‘Kum Ba Ya’ and a million jasmine-scented candles won’t begin to address issues of sexism and racism, which is probably at the root of why so many sistas struggle with

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<sup>797</sup> Joan Morgan, “Trick or Treat,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 58-60.

<sup>798</sup> Celina Hex, “The Margaret Cho Show,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 86-88.

<sup>799</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>800</sup> Uwimana, “Too Thin & Too Rich” compiled by Lisa Jervis, *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 8.

<sup>801</sup> Lisa Miya-Jervis, “Bitchy Bits,” *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 8.

<sup>802</sup> Nicole Moore, “On the Rags,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 16.

feelings of empowerment in the first place... it seems like *O*'s attitude is, 'Let them eat poundcake.'<sup>803</sup>

In the spirit of being a self-assured feminist lifestyle magazine, the representations of multiculturalism in *BUST* do not necessarily discuss experiences with and observations of racism or other oppressive influences. For example, without engaging the politics of race, African-American contributor Beatrice Hogg tells her story of a one-night stand with a now-married ex-boyfriend.<sup>804</sup> And, Hapa Wahine mentions her interracial dating as she explains her experiences with receiving oral sex from her male lovers.<sup>805</sup> Often, *BUST* presents a support of a multiracial feminism simply through the images and voices of diverse women. *BUST* covers have featured celebrities of color, such as musicians Björk<sup>806</sup> and Missy Elliot<sup>807</sup> and comedian Margaret Cho.<sup>808</sup> Interviews have highlighted lesser-known multicultural divas such as rap singer Yolanda "Yo Yo" Whitaker,<sup>809</sup> Indian filmmaker Deepa Mehta,<sup>810</sup> and vocalist Ms. Skye of the band Morcheeba.<sup>811</sup> International coverage ranges from Ireland<sup>812</sup> to Vietnam<sup>813</sup> to Fiji.<sup>814</sup>

The "My Life as a Girl" issue features young women of all shapes, sizes, and colors. The "Women & Wheels" photo essay by Cynthia Connolly features two Asian-American women next to their van and a African-American woman with her bicycle.<sup>815</sup> In her banter about physical self-acceptance, J. casually refers to the "bluish purple" skin of her genitals as

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<sup>803</sup> Ibid.

<sup>804</sup> Beatrice Hogg, "Maiming Mr. Right," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 66-68.

<sup>805</sup> "Fear of a Black Cat," Hapa Wahine, *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 74-75.

<sup>806</sup> *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996).

<sup>807</sup> *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998).

<sup>808</sup> *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000).

<sup>809</sup> Tori Galore, "Four Rock Moms," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 58.

<sup>810</sup> Kathleen O'Grady, "Fire Starter," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 94.

<sup>811</sup> Michael Worshipme & Areola, "Please Sir, Can I Have Some Morcheeba," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 82.

<sup>812</sup> Kitty O'Shea, "Erin Go Breed: The State of Abortion in Ireland," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 82-83.

<sup>813</sup> Elizabeth Wallace, "Good Morning Vietnam," *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 84.

<sup>814</sup> Celina Hex, "Fat is a Fijian Issue," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 26.

<sup>815</sup> Cynthia Connolly, "Women & Wheels," *BUST* no.7 (Spring 1996): 86-87.

a characteristic of her Sicilian heritage.<sup>816</sup> Flirting with the perpetuation of a stereotype, Cheryl Morris waxes erotic about lovers of Spanish decent in her sarcastic piece “In Praise of Latin Men.”<sup>817</sup> In *Ms.*-style coverage of “Sheroes,” Tori Galore shows *BUST* readers how the Women’s National Basketball Association is changing the world for many girls, many of them African-American.<sup>818</sup> Ever conscious of anything relating to fashion or magazines, *BUST* devotes a five-page spread to a photo-report on Japans’ *Cutie* magazine featuring girls of many colors.<sup>819</sup>

*BUST*’s multicultural representations are broad coalitions between issues of racism as well as classism. While the average contributor and reader falls somewhere within the middle class, *BUST* strives to ensure that diverse socioeconomic backgrounds are illustrated. For example, in the “Fashion and Beauty Issue,” Olivia grapples with a typical teenage inferiority complex exacerbated by her poor family who could not afford the beauty accessories of her wealthy schoolmates.<sup>820</sup> In rebellion against her middle-class upbringing, Outrider describes her foray into the underworld of a famous motorcycle club in “I Was a Babysitter for the Hell’s Angels.”<sup>821</sup> In a more direct attack on women and classism, *BUST* no.11’s “Media Whore” segment features a *Fortune* magazine advertisement picturing a woman driving a car with a good-looking man in the passenger seat which read: “Many of our readers are rich and powerful. Inevitably, some take trophy husbands.”<sup>822</sup> Jervis praises the magazine for giving “a refreshing tweak to that old gender/power/money/status thang.”<sup>823</sup>

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<sup>816</sup> J., “Me and My Cunt,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 15.

<sup>817</sup> Cheryl Morris, “In Praise of Latin Men,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 107.

<sup>818</sup> Tori Galore, “The WNBA: Ball Busters,” *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 26.

<sup>819</sup> Danielle St. Laurent and Sarah Maher, “Hello *Cutie*,” *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 63-67.

<sup>820</sup> Olivia, “Beauty and the Cuckoo,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 24-25.

<sup>821</sup> Outrider, “I Was a Babysitter for the Hell’s Angels,” *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 82-85.

<sup>822</sup> Lisa Jervis, “Too Thin & Too Rich,” *BUST* no.11 (Summer/Fall 1998): 8.

<sup>823</sup> *Ibid.*

*BUST*'s "Money Issue"<sup>824</sup> is devoted to similar analysis, with deeply personal testimonials and bitterly sarcastic works by women at all rungs of the economic ladder. One contributor describes her transition from a radically devoted riot grrrl activist to a five-digit-earning young professional, as she justifies her ascendance into the realm of "yuppie scum."<sup>825</sup> Ann Magnuson offers ten sardonic "Tips on How to Get Rich and How to Stay Poor,"<sup>826</sup> summing the two classes up as either slimy, politically incorrect money grubbing or foolishly haphazard capital management. One woman describes her middle-class college experiences with peers who found it noble and hip to live like paupers, a group she calls "the poseur poor."<sup>827</sup> Another writes of her upper class life as simple and practical, appealing to readers to not stereotype her as one of "your typical rich bitches."<sup>828</sup>

Coincidentally, it is in this money-themed issue that the *BUST* editors let their readers in on the magazine's own financial struggles. The opening letter, "*BUST* or Bust!,"<sup>829</sup> asks readers to support their goals to elevate *BUST* to mainstream status and to understand the expense of managing a publication, especially one from which the producers earn no financial gain: "We're growing as businesswomen, trying to figure out how to put *BUST* in the black rather than in the red (we look so much better in black, anyway), and still do it our way."<sup>830</sup> This issue also provides readers with a practical, DIY<sup>831</sup> how-to piece on putting

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<sup>824</sup> *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999). See Appendix XV.

<sup>825</sup> Rita Lin, "To Live and Die Yuppie Scum," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 63.

<sup>826</sup> Ann Magnuson "Top 10 Tips on How to Get Rich and How to Stay Poor," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 37.

<sup>827</sup> Mary Elizabeth Williams, "Trash Like Me," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 68.

<sup>828</sup> J.M. Freeman, "Spoiled But Not Rotten," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 71-72.

<sup>829</sup> Celina Hex, Betty Boob, and Laurie Henzel, "*BUST* or Bust!," *BUST* no. 12 (Spring 1999): 4.

<sup>830</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>831</sup> DIY (do-it-yourself) refers to both a utilitarian understanding of a self-made, hands-on lifestyle, characterized by such things as handmade clothing and homegrown food, as well as an ideological commitment to a corporate-free, autonomous existence, often adopted by anarchists. In the context of this research, DIY will be used throughout this document to connote both the pragmatic and philosophical implications. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has not, as yet, included DIY in their directory. *Chambers 21<sup>st</sup> Century Dictionary* (s.v. "DIY") defines DIY simply as "abbreviation do-it-yourself" without etymological information.

together a business plan,<sup>832</sup> concurrent with *BUST*'s own struggles to increase their own managerial organization and partner with a publisher.

In keeping with their Third Wave mission, *BUST*'s multiculturalism also embraces feminists of all religious and cultural backgrounds. The "Goddess Issue" most directly addresses issues of spirituality, with a range of pieces recognizing that some women participate in goddess-based religions,<sup>833</sup> some are devoted to astrology,<sup>834</sup> while others prescribe to more mainstream faiths such as Christianity.<sup>835</sup> In support of their own Jewish heritage, the *BUST* editors included a tribute to the famous yenta Linda Richmond in their "Motherhood Issue"<sup>836</sup> and support the fight against anti-Semitism in sarcastically revealing pieces such as "Jews and Pennies."<sup>837</sup>

*BUST* even strives to be supportive of major and minor cultural subgroups in their Third Wave readership. The magazine includes work by feminists of all ages, printing a letter by an 11-year-old reader in *BUST* no.6<sup>838</sup> and a photo essay celebrating beautiful older women in their "Body Issue."<sup>839</sup> *BUST* makes no qualms of its embrace of women of all shapes and sizes, such as with Laurel Rosen's interview with Nomy Lamm, a "one-legged dyke fat activist."<sup>840</sup> They work to further dispel misunderstandings about those living with disabilities. Nancy E. Young's tale of living with Scoliosis in "A Fine Spine"<sup>841</sup> and Aviva

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<sup>832</sup> Princess Superstar, "Taking Care of Business: How To Write a Business Plan, For the Reluctant Artisteprenuer," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 79-81

<sup>833</sup> Jill Cunniff, "My Day at the Bembe," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 30-31.

<sup>834</sup> Melissa Auf Der Mauer, "Pisces Goddess," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 34.

<sup>835</sup> Jane Russell Simmons, "Running with Mary," *BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 32-33.

<sup>836</sup> Tori Galore, "The Mother of all Mother-in-Laws," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 109-110.

<sup>837</sup> Ophira Edut, "Jews and Pennies: It Just Makes Cents," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 70.

<sup>838</sup> Jennifer Deyoe, "Dear *BUST*," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 8.

<sup>839</sup> Jean Laughton, "Send in the Crones," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 72-73.

<sup>840</sup> Laurel Rosen, "To Nomy is to Love Her," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 59-61.

<sup>841</sup> "A Fine Spine," Nancy E. Young, *BUST* no.5 (Winter/Spring 1995): 36-37.

Rosenthal's travel tips for feminists with physical limitations raise awareness about another unique community of Third Wavers.<sup>842</sup>

Of course, *BUST* acknowledges that they could always strike a better multicultural balance, mainly in terms of reaching out to Third Wave feminists of all races and nationalities. In the opening letter for the "Money Issue," the founding editors explain that, while they feel *BUST* has successfully promoted a fair range of young feminist experiences, they realize they still have much left to achieve: "we've been working at making [*BUST*] more colorful (although we know we have a long way to go before we've reached the rainbow)."<sup>843</sup> Although *BUST* makes an effort to portray images of women of all ethnicities, or at least provide female faces that are racially ambiguous, the overall image of the magazine remains predominately Anglo and middle class.

The first reader complaint of this nature appears in *BUST* no.13 in response to the editors' letter of the previous issue announcing their increasing financial needs and plans to link with a publisher. In her overall negative reaction to *BUST*, Lynne Richards Durham wags her finger at the magazine, saying, "It's beginning to look like the next wave of feminism will be more similar to the last than expected: white and wealthy."<sup>844</sup> The editors responded to Ms. Durham's financial concerns, but did not address her concern over the racial inequities. Two years later, Courtney Ann Becker expresses her disappointment that "*BUST*'s philosophical stance is often wildly antithetical to the experience of Black feminism and the lived reality that Black women face."<sup>845</sup> Ms. Becker could not relate to *BUST*'s brand

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<sup>842</sup> Aviva Rosenthal, "Just Say Go," *BUST* no.14 (Spring 2000): 48-49.

<sup>843</sup> Celina Hex, Betty Boob, and Laurie Henzel, "BUST or Bust!," *BUST* no. 12 (Spring 1999): 4.

<sup>844</sup> Lynne Richards Durham, "Dear *BUST*," *BUST* no.13 (Fall 1999): 6.

<sup>845</sup> Courtney Ann Becker, "Dear *BUST*," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001); 6.

of pro-sex Third Wave feminism, although she said she hopes “*BUST* gets more color in the future.”<sup>846</sup>

In its usual point/counterpoint style, the editors ran an opposing letter from another African-American reader, Heather Sibley, who writes, “I am so very thankful for *BUST*... and find no other magazine that interests me.”<sup>847</sup> Although the producers did not reply in print, the head editor had much to say on the subject during our interview. “It was pretty clear after we started publishing that there was very little writing by Black women or other women of color, and there wasn’t very much writing by gay or bisexual women either. Part of that was because gay women and Black women weren’t submitting [articles] to *BUST*. So, I actively seek out those kinds of pieces and make sure that kind of stuff gets included in the magazine. ...the fact is, we’re a bunch of white straight girls and that stuff’s just not on our radar.”<sup>848</sup> The editorial staff mainly feels that if women of color do not see themselves in *BUST*, they must submit their writing and artwork to correct this imbalance.

Whether or not *BUST* can be said to be publishing a true multicultural magazine, they are undoubtedly trying to represent the full spectrum of Third Wave feminist voices. This applies to issues of race and class as well as to an array of body types, ages, religions, and cultures. In this vein, *BUST* works to embrace variant sexual issues, lifestyle choices, gender identifications, and erotic behaviors. Communities of gay, lesbian, and bisexual feminists, sadomasochistic feminists, sex-industry feminists, transgendered feminists,<sup>849</sup>

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<sup>846</sup> Ibid.

<sup>847</sup> Heather Sibley, “Dear *BUST*,” *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001); 6.

<sup>848</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>849</sup> For purposes of this study, *transgendered* is defined as those individuals and communities who employ anti-essentialistic approaches to gender and sexuality, often taking on the appearance or behaviors of socially imposed definitions of masculinity and femininity to assume aspects of the opposite sex. Similarly, *transsexual* is defined as those who adopt aspects of the opposite sex, but who have additionally enacted biological changes, both chemical and surgical, to physically become a member of the opposite sex.

adventurous heterosexual feminists, celibate feminists, and everything in between are made welcome in the Third Wave world of *BUST*.

### New Categories

In the content analysis portion of this study, I was presented with multifarious aspects of the above-mentioned seven theoretical categories. I created new labels for each new characteristic that presented itself, ultimately finding most to be components of one of the seven identified counterparts of Third Wave feminist theory. For example, I developed a new category I saw as *BUST*'s prioritization of personal experience and emotion. Upon further examination, however, I recognized that expressions of personal experience and emotion were intrinsically related to an underlying Third Wave feminist belief in individualism, one of my original seven categories. Two new ingredients were, however, discovered to be both substantial and unrelated to the above seven categories: an inclusion of, or an appeal to, male readers, and the expression of anger, agitation, or impatience, reminiscent of the punk-rock rage of the riot grrrl movement.

These two new categories were not found to be universally applicable to all Third Wave feminist expressions, but were useful in better understanding the unique feminist approach of *BUST*. The fair and honest engagement with male feminist readers is relatively uncovered ground when it comes to either feminist or lifestyle magazines. *BUST* can be seen to increase the boundaries of its diverse range enough to encompass male readers of all feminist stripes. Similarly, *BUST*'s frequently angry and jaded tones are reminiscent of their riot grrrl roots. This honest rage is also unique to standard feminist or lifestyle magazine formats.

*BUST*'s embrace of male readers and contributors is part of the magazine's efforts to involve Third Wave feminists of all varieties and can be seen as an extension of *BUST*'s dedication to multicultural inclusion. *BUST* has dedicated two issues to celebrating, understanding, and expressing a range of feelings and experiences related to men.<sup>850</sup> While the first of these two issues was dominated by conflicted, hurt, and angry pieces,<sup>851</sup> the second men's issue provided a more positive and balance view of contemporary feminist men.<sup>852</sup> The guys featured in these two editions were famous and civilian, masculine and feminine, romantic partners and patriarchal foes, coworkers and brothers, fathers and drag queens. Interviews with such feminist boys as musicians Ian MacKaye of the punk band Fugazi<sup>853</sup> and Jon Spencer of Boss Hog<sup>854</sup> appear in the feminist- and sex-themed editions as well. Henry Finley, founder of the Museum of Menstruation in Washington D.C., is profiled in the "Motherhood Issue."<sup>855</sup> Men have been responding to *BUST* with interest and support for seven years<sup>856</sup> and the regular "Boy du Jour" column has featured a male contributor since 1994.<sup>857</sup>

A good number of *BUST* submissions have wrestled with the equally oppressive gender roles and sexist limitations imposed on men and boys by our patriarchal society. Many articles have struggled to navigate feminist compromises in a world that restricts male individuality, sexuality, and mental health. For instance, Ana Ease rejects the narrow conceptions of gender that encourage women who blame their relationship problems on the

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<sup>850</sup> *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995) and *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000) were "Men We Love" editions.

<sup>851</sup> Betty Boob and Celina Hex, "A Couple of *BUST* Chicks Sitting Around, Typing," *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 2.

<sup>852</sup> Celina Hex, "Exile in Guyville," *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 4.

<sup>853</sup> Cathie Glassby, "The Importance of Being Ian," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 46-47.

<sup>854</sup> Tori Galore, "Sex and the Married Girl," *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 8-9, 127.

<sup>855</sup> Nancy E. Young, "A Visit to the Museum of Menstruation," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 16-19.

<sup>856</sup> "Dear *BUST*," *BUST* no.2 (Fall/Winter 1993): 3.

<sup>857</sup> Edward, "The Brady Generation," *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 52.

“stupid things men always do.”<sup>858</sup> And Spike Gillespie writes about her challenges in raising a boy child to be well-adjusted, socially skilled, and feminist.<sup>859</sup>

Several *BUST* articles addressing men and women’s experiences with men express fury, irritation, and distress. *BUST*’s first issue reproduces Portia’s “Menstrual Print,” which, in black and white, seems to be a dark, angry smear across a stream-of-consciousness poem with words such as “magic power,” “sexual potency,” and “pacifiers, lipsticks, stiff cocks, and lollipops.”<sup>860</sup> And, the editors take full-page joy in a photograph of the musicians of the band Crotch mooning and flipping off the camera.<sup>861</sup> Satori Linga’s poem, “The Day I Grew a Penis,” is a bitter perspective on the male mentality, spitting the threat, “I’m big and hard and I’ll stick it to you good.”<sup>862</sup> Jennee Gill gives a jaded edge to her essay on breaking out of preordained social patterns of dating and romance.<sup>863</sup> And Mata Hari Repunzel suggests men might be more respectful and gentle if women would stop putting up with immature, selfish behavior.<sup>864</sup>

At times, *BUST* contributors get angry at one another, truly fitting one of *BUST*’s tag line: “The Magazine for Women with Something to Get Off Their Chests.”<sup>865</sup> Such as in a 1996 advice column where Girlbaum bites back at one of her girlfriends who calls her every other week to moan about her juvenile boyfriend; Girlbaum says, “it makes me *une petite* cranky with women” who insist on having “the redundant-est melodrama with [a] significant smother.”<sup>866</sup> Sometimes *BUST* readers are just angry at the world, as described in the

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<sup>858</sup> Ana Ease, “Women Who Hate Too Much,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 72.

<sup>859</sup> Spike Gillespie, “You’ve Got Male,” *BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 35.

<sup>860</sup> Portia, “Menstrual Print,” *BUST* no.1 (July 1993): 12-13.

<sup>861</sup> Lauren Oliver, “Crotch Shots,” *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 58-59.

<sup>862</sup> Satori Linga, “The Day I Grew a Penis,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 44.

<sup>863</sup> Jennee Gill, “Love, Pavlovian Style,” *BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1997): 23-24.

<sup>864</sup> Mata Hari Repunzel, “Boycotting the Boys,” *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 45.

<sup>865</sup> Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, eds., *The BUST Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin, 1999), cover.

<sup>866</sup> Girlbaum, “Female Trouble,” *BUST* no.7 (Spring/Summer 1996): 11.

feminist-themed issue: “a Fuck-You Feminist” is “a direct-action type of gal, and you don’t care about being inclusive, sensitive or politically correct – just so long as people stay out of your fierce fucking way when you’re doing your thing.”<sup>867</sup> And, other *BUST* pieces express a defiant call to feminist arms in an irate response to patterns of patriarchal subjugation, as in the inspiring rant about sexual freedom and feminist revolution, “Power to the Pussy!”<sup>868</sup>

While this palpable sense of anger and agitation does not contribute a groundbreaking theoretical insight to either the understanding of the magazine or Third Wave feminism, it does add an element of passion and human emotion to both. Although livid reactions to sexual oppression are not unique to feminism in general, the raw energy and fierce impatience of many aspects of *BUST* is characteristic of the Third Wave of feminism. And, *BUST*’s fresh approaches to supporting the men and boys of this feminist generation stand out as a defiant Third Wave action. Overall, I found the seven original categories of Third Wave feminism to be equally and substantially represented throughout the pages of *BUST* nos. 1-17, further supporting the claim that *BUST* is a member of Third Wave feminist movement.

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<sup>867</sup> “Are You a Card-Carrying Feminist,” Janice “La Girlbomb” Erlbaum, *BUST* no.16: 37.

<sup>868</sup> Miss Eona and Princess Noelle Pitter-Patter, “Power to the Pussy!,” *BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 56.

## CHAPTER VII CONCLUSIONS

To further explicate the pivotal research question for this study – What can be learned about Third Wave feminism from the study of *BUST* magazine? – I will build upon the central Third Wave feminist philosophies expressed within the pages of *BUST* magazine demonstrated in the previous three chapters. I believe the reports of data obtained during this case study express the seven underlying theoretical patterns in *BUST*'s Third Wave feminism: 1) reaction to, or adoption of, Second Wave feminist theory; 2) multiculturalism; 3) alternative and diverse sexualities; 4) anti-essentialism; 5) individualism; 6) contradiction or contrast; and 7) pastiche<sup>869</sup> and camp.<sup>870</sup> As demonstrated in the previous chapter, I found *BUST* examples fit into all seven of these categories, save for the two new theoretical patterns observed in the content analysis.<sup>871</sup> In this chapter, I will offer further reflections on the implications of these theoretical elements, my own perspectives on and critiques of *BUST*, and suggestions for further research.

*BUST* magazine is one voice among many Third Wave feminisms, thereby exemplifying some fundamental structures and patterns of Third Wave feminist theory. *BUST* defines its feisty, postmodern perspective as “The Voice of the New Girl Order.”<sup>872</sup> This mantra represents the rebellious and revisionist spirit of Third Wave feminism with an ironic, contradictory edge. To be precise, this phrase should sport a plural “Voices,” given that *BUST*'s Third Wave expression incorporates many diverse beliefs and perspectives.

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<sup>869</sup> An as element of postmodern theory, *pastiche* can be defined as “the wild, wanton, creative (depending on your attitude) opposition of styles, often ripped – like collage cut-outs – from their original contexts.” [Richard Campbell and Roseanne Freed, “We Know It When We See It’: Postmodernism and Television,” *Television Quarterly* 26, no.3 (Winter 1993): 79.]

<sup>870</sup> For purposes of this discussion, *camp* as a verb is “to use exaggerated movements, gestures, etc., to over-act” and, as an adjective, *camp* refers to that which is “ostentatious, exaggerated, affected, theatrical.” [*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “camp.”]

<sup>871</sup> See Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings.

<sup>872</sup> *BUST* no. 13 (Fall 1999): cover.

“New” implies a fresh start or clean slate for innovative feminist growth, “Girl” demonstrates the reclaimed aesthetic of youthful feminine identity, and “Order” is a sarcastically cynical reference to extremist political movements. *BUST* satisfies its claim to be a sassy and sophisticated mouthpiece for this first decade of Third Wave feminism.

For the children of the baby-boomers, raised with the political, academic, and social changes created by the U.S. feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the fight for gender equality is a hotly contested ground of debate and theory. Third Wave feminists have rarely questioned their opportunities for higher education, have begun careers expecting equal pay in the workplace, and have never known a time when abortion was illegal. Plainly, we believe that many ideologies of our feminist mothers do not fully apply to our experiences. Just as each generation struggles to define itself anew, to differentiate from the canons of belief with which they were fostered, young adults of today are redirecting and revising feminist dialogues and politics to address our concerns and suit our postmodern era.

#### *BUST & Third Wave Feminism*

For better or worse, Third Wave feminism both echoes and reacts to the political and social milieu of preceding decades. Saturated by a postmodern culture, this new generation of feminists is compelled to update and shape the rhetoric and approaches to the fight for gender equity to suit this new era. Each element of Third Wave theory discussed in this study is a product of these postmodern revisions to Second Wave feminist theory and action. For example, Second Wave feminist struggles to increase female representation and liberation within major areas of public and private life have led to a generation of feminists who view individual progress as feminist progress, which has resulted in the Third Wave feminist focus on individualism.

Critiques of the movement from feminists of color over the last two decades have inspired Third Wave feminism to insist on a broader engagement with multiculturalism.<sup>873</sup> This same drive to celebrate difference and diversity, as well as rebellion against a perceived Second Wave stigma against sex and pleasure, has led the Third Wave to embrace alternative sexualities, or pomosexualities,<sup>874</sup> and the chaotic, often contradictory, nature of traversing gender politics in a postmodern age. Third Wave rejections of essentialistic notions, both political and personal, follow this generation's reliance on fluid boundaries, fear of restrictive labels, and determination to question modern conceptions of gender. And, expressions of pastiche and camp further punctuate these postmodern revisions of feminism and offer a marked contrast to and segregation from previous waves of feminism.

As a member of the Third Wave, I believe *BUST* is undoubtedly and inescapably part of the Second Wave feminism that paved its way. Often, what appears to be *BUST*'s Third Wave feminist rejections of or distancing from Second Wave feminism are no more than knee-jerk reactions to media-driven stereotypes of feminism. Rather than being seen as outright dismissals of Second Wave ideology or praxis, I hope feminists of all ages recognize that the Third Wave came of age during a powerful cultural backlash against feminists specifically and women in general,<sup>875</sup> and thus suspicion of feminism is a natural part of growing up in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>876</sup> The majority of history books either ignore or

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<sup>873</sup> bell hooks, *Ain't I A Woman?: Black Women and Feminism* (Boston: South End Press, 1981). Chela Sandoval, "Feminism and Racism: A Report on the 1981 National Women's Studies Association Conference," in *Making Face/Making Soul: Haciendo Caras*, ed. Gloria Anzaldúa (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990): 67. Rosemarie P. Tong, ed., *Feminist Thought, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998).

<sup>874</sup> In an effort to break free of the restrictive labels of sexual orientation such as "gay" or "lesbian," "'pomosexual' references homosexuality even as it describes the community's outsiders, the *queer* queers who can't seem to stay put within a nice simple identity... Pomosexuality lives in the space in which all other non-binary forms of sexual and gender identity reside." Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, *PoMoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997), 20, 23.

<sup>875</sup> Susan Faludi, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women* (New York: Dial/Doubleday Press, 1981).

<sup>876</sup> Paula Kamen, *Feminist Fatale: Voices from the "Twentysomething" Generation Explore the Future of the Women's Movement* (New York: Fine, 1991).

misinterpret the advances of Second Wave feminism,<sup>877</sup> newspapers rarely discuss feminism unless to proclaim its death, and television offers us camera-ready sound bites about the movement from photogenic postfeminists<sup>878</sup> eager to criticize feminism within universities, nonprofit organizations, and grassroots movements alike. This leaves my generation with a fear of the 'feminist' label<sup>879</sup> and personal confusion about the politics of sexuality, identity, and women's history.

In her second *BUST* interview, riot grrrl matron and Third Wave feminist musician Kathleen Hanna explains how, in her teenaged feminist development, she found strength in her defiance against what she understood to be Second Wave feminism; for instance, Hanna wanted to be a *sexy* feminist in resistance to the perceived puritanical, anti-sex rhetoric of her mother's feminism. "Instead, I needed to learn from it and grow from it and seek out mentors and a continuation of things that had happened before," Hanna said, "as opposed to positing myself as the new hip feminist product to be consumed."<sup>880</sup> Notably, Gloria Steinem admits to her own youthful rejections of similarly misguided stereotypes about the views on sexuality within First Wave feminism.<sup>881</sup>

Yet, each new feminist generation has included those who marched with "cunt power" buttons to promote liberated female sexuality as well as those who advocated for abstinence and purity. Understanding the history and continuity among waves of feminist action, and the expansive diversity of opinion and focus within each swell of feminist

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<sup>877</sup> Exceptions to this, among others: Pamela J. Creedon, *Women in Mass Communication*, second edition (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993).

<sup>878</sup> For purposes of this study, I will align myself with Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake's definition: "'postfeminism' characterizes a group of young, conservative feminists who explicitly define themselves against and criticize feminists of the second wave." Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 1.

<sup>879</sup> Several studies in the 1990s recorded the low number of young women who identify as feminist, the most popular of which appeared in a 1998 cover article in *Time* magazine questioning this new phase of feminism: Ginia Bellafonte, "Feminism: It's All About Me!" *Time* 151 no.25 (June 29, 1998): 54-62.

<sup>880</sup> Celina Hex, "Fierce, Funny, Feminists," *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 52.

<sup>881</sup> *Ibid.*

struggle, is vital to society's progression in achieving justice in matters of gender, race, and class. Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, authors of a Third Wave *Manifesta*, remind us that the waves of feminism are more cyclic than we realize: "As historian Gerda Lerner has said, the only constant thread in women's history is that it is lost and rediscovered, lost and rediscovered."<sup>882</sup>

*BUST* gives voice to both those Third Wave feminists who dismiss Second Wave feminism equally with those who believe there are lessons to be learned from the feminist successes and failures of previous waves. *BUST* neither speaks for all Third Wave feminists nor makes any universal statements about this generation's perspectives on the Second Wave. *BUST* is simply offering this postmodern generation of feminists a sounding board and open forum for the exploration of feminist thought, allowing for the natural fluctuations of individual opinions, perceptions, and goals. *BUST* encourages Third Wavers to reserve the right to be wrong, to change our minds, to continually examine ourselves, and to revise our feminist messages with each new day. With articles such as "I Might Like You Better If We Swept Together"<sup>883</sup> and "The Creation of a Cyber Porn Star,"<sup>884</sup> *BUST* represents those Third Wave feminists that need to take a step away from Second Wave principles; and pieces such as "My Teenage Mom"<sup>885</sup> and "A Broom of One's Own"<sup>886</sup> remind this generation that we have much to be grateful for and to learn from the feminist wheels invented before our birth.

What can be seen as an extension of these stereotypes of feminism, some Third Wave feminists believe that 'victim feminism,' equated with Second Wave feminism,

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<sup>882</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 151.

<sup>883</sup> Mikki Halpin, "I Might Like You Better If We Swept Together" *BUST* no.15 (Fall 200): 18.

<sup>884</sup> Gina Velour, "The Creation of a Cyber Porn Star," *BUST* no.4 (Fall 1994): 16.

<sup>885</sup> Poonteesha, "My Teenage Mom," *BUST* no.8 (Fall/Winter 1996): 96.

<sup>886</sup> Jean Railla, "A Broom of One's Own," *BUST* no. 17 (Spring 2001): 40-45.

concludes that female oppression and subjugation are patriarchal forces. For this camp of Third Wavers, 'power feminism' is the antidote to this victim mentality with rhetoric meant to empower women to look beyond such oppression to take a proactive approach to gaining social and political control. *BUST* does not shy away from engaging this popular Third Wave debate, with articles such as "Ms.ery,"<sup>887</sup> 'Gloria Stymied' observes *Ms.* magazine's staff to be suffering from "Battered Women's Movement Syndrome" and advocates the direct action of 'power feminism' to combat sexist marketing policies and manipulative advertising tactics. This *BUST* contributor says her generation is avoiding feminist identity because this "commitment to an abstract ideal – 'Feminism' or 'Keeping the Ad-Free *Ms.* Alive' – in lieu of living honestly or bravely, is a fatal flaw."<sup>888</sup>

I agree with what Carolyn Sorisio reasons to be a kind of black and white reasoning between 'power' and 'victim' feminism, a result of Third Wave feminist misunderstandings and backlash stereotypes minimizing the Second Wave of feminism.<sup>889</sup> Without the observations about gender inequities from the 'victim' camp, the 'power' feminists would be without a focal point for their efforts. As an apparent Third Wave attempt at understanding the divergent approaches feminists take in their personal and political struggles for gender equity, these theories draw a contrast between Second and Third Wave feminisms and are an example of the contradiction – or what may appear to be contradiction – that characterizes the impulses and tactics of Third Wave feminism. *BUST* offers evidence of these seemingly

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<sup>887</sup> Gloria Stymied, "Ms.ery," *BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 15-16.

<sup>888</sup> Ibid, 16.

<sup>889</sup> Carolyn Sorisio, "A Tale of Two Feminisms: Power and Victimization in Contemporary Feminist Debate," chap. in *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*, Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 134-149.

contradictory elements in the magazine's support of diverse, unconventional influences<sup>890</sup> and the staff's own chaotic distinctions among one another.<sup>891</sup>

In our process of working through these histories and traditions of feminist theory, we must come to terms with the multiple, variant modes of oppression within the realms of gender, race, and class. The Third Wave generation must come to terms with the fact that we do not experience exploitation by the same cultural or political structures and that we have differing perspectives on what constitutes oppression. This generation's contradictory phenomena are compounded by many Third Wave feminist reclamations of elements of popular culture that our mother's feminism deemed forbidding to women's liberation (e.g.: high-heeled shoes or "control top" stockings), which are common throughout each issue of *BUST*.<sup>892</sup>

Additionally, Third Wave feminist approaches to activism clash with Second Wave traditions (e.g.: riot grrrl practices of writing the words 'slut' or 'bitch' on their bodies during a punk rock concert), many of which are employed within the pages of *BUST*.<sup>893</sup> This anti-essentialistic terrain of political reality has the potential of rendering grassroots movements such as feminism to silent and immovable crisis. "We are products of all the contradictory definitions of and differences within feminism, beasts of such a hybrid kind that perhaps we need a different name altogether."<sup>894</sup> The Third Wave of feminism must remember that, despite our individual differences, we are united in the goal of equality. We must make it possible to simultaneously "recognize that there can be no single representative subject of feminism," while continuing to "speak in a collective voice that articulates political demands

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<sup>890</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>891</sup> See Chapter IV: Observation Findings.

<sup>892</sup> See Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings.

<sup>893</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>894</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 3.

on behalf of a group called ‘women.’<sup>895</sup> The balance and cooperation of contrasting and sometimes conflicting movements lead the Third Wave into the tricky world of coalition politics.

To achieve real feminist momentum, the Third Wave blurs the boundaries of political discourse and redefines the rhetoric of individualism that is so pervasive within the United States at the turn of this new century. Third Wave feminism has become reliant on “lived theory,”<sup>896</sup> or learning to understand patterns of oppression from individual realities. *BUST*'s revival of the *Sassy*-style confessional tone is a prime example of this Third Wave feminist concentration on subjective truths. It is this focus on personal experience and emotion that has been a popular criticism of the Third Wave movement.<sup>897</sup> The authors of *Manifesta* push the Third Wave to shift their faith in individualism to adopt a theory of *autokeonomy*, or ‘self in community.’<sup>898</sup> Instead of feeling forced to choose between caring for one’s self or caring for one’s community, the Third Wave should strive to balance the two and understand their symbioses.

This Third Wave goal of coalition feminism has evolved from the racist critiques levied against the Second Wave by women of color, later coalesced with U.S. *third world feminism*.<sup>899</sup> Often relying on racial power and class privilege, liberal feminism has been the visible strain of feminist discourse promoted, and stereotyped, by a white-dominated culture. Many of the essentializing trends of the Second Wave rejected by the Third Wave are the

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<sup>895</sup> Deborah L. Siegel, “Reading Between the Waves: Feminist Historiography in a ‘Postmodern’ Moment,” chap. in *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*, Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 55-82.

<sup>896</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>897</sup> Ginia Bellafonte, “Feminism: It’s All About Me!” *Time* 151 no.25 (June 29, 1998): 54-62.

<sup>898</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 280.

<sup>899</sup> Chela Sandoval, “U.S. Third World Feminism: The Theory and method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World,” *Genders* 10 (Spring 1991): 1-24. Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga, eds. *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Lathan, N.Y.: Kitchen Table, 1983). hooks, bell *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Boston: South End Press, 1984.

same exclusive concepts that have silenced and disregarded of feminists of color in recent women's history. The work of feminists such as Chela Sandoval and bell hooks offer the Third Wave a model of "hybrid and intersecting feminist discourses,"<sup>900</sup> that instead of promoting one political vision to apply to all people, would instead posit "a shifting tactical and strategic subjectivity."<sup>901</sup>

Third world feminism's multiperspectival language navigates the contradictory and anti-essential political landscape in a similar postmodern manner as the Third Wave. Exemplified by *BUST*'s attempts to portray the rainbow of feminist races, classes, and backgrounds,<sup>902</sup> with varying degrees of success, the Third Wave endeavors toward a true multicultural feminist theory. The Third Wave's complex and diverse approaches to feminist theory and praxis to be reinvigorating for the health of U.S. gender equity movements.<sup>903</sup> Third Waver Melissa Klein embraces her generation's engagement with difference to be a rebellious "assertion that girls can have the best of both worlds."<sup>904</sup> From the cacophonous Razorfish office environment<sup>905</sup> to the magazine's changeable and unclassifiable ideologies,<sup>906</sup> *BUST* is a rich exemplar of Third Wave feminist contrast, anti-essentialism, and multiculturalism.

The Third Wave feminist theoretical components such as contradiction and anti-essentialism are representations of this new generation's inescapable postmodernism,

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<sup>900</sup> Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1997), 9.

<sup>901</sup> Chela Sandoval, "Feminism and Racism: A Report on the 1981 National Women's Studies Association Conference," chap. in *Making Face/Making Soul: Haciendo Caras*, ed. Gloria Anzaldúa (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990): 67.

<sup>902</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>903</sup> Cathryn Bailey, "Making Waves and Drawing Lines: The Politics of Defining the Vicissitudes of Feminism," in *Hypatia* 12 no.3 (Summer 1997): 17-28.

<sup>904</sup> Melissa Klein, "Duality and Redefinition: Young Feminism and the Alternative Music Community," chap. in *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*, Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., 208.

<sup>905</sup> See Chapter IV: Observation Findings.

<sup>906</sup> See Chapter VI: Content Analysis Findings.

another body of theory embraced by third world feminism.<sup>907</sup> Further smearing the rigid, modern conceptions of gender, sexuality, and identity, Third Wave feminist postmodernism can be seen in *BUST*'s visual and ideological juxtaposition of contrasting elements and stereotypes. Whether the founding *BUST* editors embrace the postmodern label or not, the magazine's use of pastiche (e.g.: retro soft porn imagery accompanying a series of how-to articles about the joy of housecleaning<sup>908</sup>) and camp (e.g.: exaggerated obsession with fashion and glamour<sup>909</sup>) is aligned with a postmodern defiance of capitalistic homogeneity and heterosexism. Third Wave negotiations among seemingly contradictory realities and feminist discourses feeds directly into the movement's celebration of postmodern culture and theory. Third Wave feminism can be seen as a postmodern hybrid of myriad theoretical movements.

Third Wave and third world feminisms are some of the first to meld feminist and postmodern theories. Linda Nicholson, editor of *Feminism/Postmodernism*,<sup>910</sup> presents a range of feminist responses of postmodernism. For example, scholars such as Susan Bordo and Sandra Harding question the move towards relativism, fearing the abandonment of theory and the impotence of feminist activism. Christine DiStefano warns against the apathy of the postmodern de-centered self, which she says is an inherently patriarchal luxury. With an opposing perspective, Judith Butler, known as a poststructuralist feminist, supports the disruptive politics of postmodern constructions of gender and sexuality, directly challenging modern heterosexist orientations. And, Nicholson surmises that Second Wave feminism is vulnerable to postmodern social theory, given that one major focus of feminist theory is to discern the essential cause of female oppression. She says, "Postmodernism offers feminism

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<sup>907</sup> bell hooks, "Postmodern Blackness," in *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South End, 1990): 27.

<sup>908</sup> Various authors, "Bad Girl's Guide to Good Housekeeping: *BUST*ier Home and Gardens," *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 71-84. See Appendix X.

<sup>909</sup> Fashionette, "On Fashion," *BUST* no.3 (Spring 1994): 39.

<sup>910</sup> Linda J. Nicholson, ed., *Feminism/Postmodernism*, (New York: Routledge, 1990).

some useful ideas about method, particularly a wariness toward generalizations which transcend the boundaries of culture and region.<sup>911</sup> It is these uses the Third Wave, as seen in *BUST*, are working toward applying to the coalition politics of this new millennium.

The postmodern expressions of sexuality and gender within Third Wave feminism can be epitomized by *BUST*'s pro-sex feminist stance. Their first sex-themed issue<sup>912</sup> declared a Third Wave belief in prioritizing female pleasure and sexual empowerment, and included sex-toy product reviews and discussions about pornography that became staples of each subsequent edition. Refusing to rule out any possible behavior or gender identity that may lead to self-discovery and satisfaction, *BUST* regularly voices Third Wave pomosexuality,<sup>913</sup> agreeing, "gender is as much a mental and spiritual phenomenon as a physical one."<sup>914</sup> Bisexual zine-maker Melissa Klein writes, "[Third Wave] politics reflects a postmodern focus on contradiction and duality, on the reclamation of terms."<sup>915</sup> In her reflections on Third Wave feminist alternative music and zine networks, Klein observes that her generation has joined in the revision and reexamination of the "words *cunt* and *queer* and *pussy* and *girl*."<sup>916</sup> By building a community of people allowed to embody diverse genders, races, and identities, Third Wave feminists tweak theory, language, and society to suit their lives.

This thesis was noted to be confusing the data about *BUST* magazine seemed with statements about the Third Wave feminist movement. I believe this is both true and correct. When asked to separate those aspects of *BUST* that related to its existence as a magazine

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<sup>911</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>912</sup> *BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994). See Appendix XIII.

<sup>913</sup> Carol Queen and Lawrence Schimel, *PoMoSexuals: Challenging Assumptions About Gender and Sexuality* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997).

<sup>914</sup> Ibid, 127.

<sup>915</sup> Melissa Klein, "Duality and Redefinition: Young Feminism and the Alternative Music Community," chap. in *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*, Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, eds., 208.

<sup>916</sup> Ibid.

from those political and social feminist values on which it is founded, the editors and writers of *BUST* could not provide an easy answer. *BUST* is both a magazine and a vehicle of feminist movement. The commercial success of the magazine was important to the editors and publisher, but they were unwilling to separate the magazine from the Third Wave feminist movement.

For the most part, editors and staff feel that *BUST* includes strong Third Wave feminist voices, but that ‘*BUST*-feminism’ is the best way to describe the magazine’s feminist stance.<sup>917</sup> This allows ‘*BUST*-feminism’ to be different for each contributor and reader, altered with the turn of each page, impatient with labels, and defiant of simplistic classification – which means ‘*BUST*-feminism’ is multiperspectival, postmodern, individualistic, anti-essential, and diverse, all key factors of Third Wave feminism. *BUST* refuses to be pigeonholed by the Third Wave brand of emerging feminism, but time will tell where this millennium will lead the movement and the magazine. We may look back at this period and wonder what happened to the Third Wave, or we may be using this term to refer to the next fifty years of postmodern feminist revolutions. Regardless of the outcome, this study serves to preserve the theory and culture of *BUST* magazine.

### Thoughts on *BUST*

According to the editorial team, the goal of *BUST* was to offer an antidote to *Cosmopolitan*-like women’s magazines and a feminist arena for diverse revolutionary writing and art.<sup>918</sup> Looking at the last eight years of the magazine, I’d say they are achieving these objectives. Since their Razorfish buy-out, the *BUST* crew has focused on competing with

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<sup>917</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation. Kat McAndrew of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>918</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation. Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

other glossy lifestyle publications with easier to read stories, less chaotic layouts, and lucrative commercial advertising. Again, looking at *BUST*'s progression since its inception, these three ambitions are slowly being satisfied. The writing and graphic design of each edition improves noticeably and the thematic unity is more skillfully portrayed with every year. The marked maturation between *BUST* no.1's cut-and-pasted 20 pages<sup>919</sup> and no.17's stylized, error-free precision is impressive.<sup>920</sup>

Given the current media marketplace with its increased mega-corporation ownership<sup>921</sup> and struggling female quotas in editorial and management positions with magazines,<sup>922</sup> *BUST* is a feisty feminist quarterly growing and surviving within a stark publications industry. (Of course, considering the current economic crises, I wager that *BUST*'s fate will be determined in the near future.) *BUST* is a living antidote to narrow, oppressive images of women and men in the media, helping to tip the byline-imbalance to white men within journalism,<sup>923</sup> and maintaining a strong feminist presence on the Internet.<sup>924</sup>

These positive aspects of *BUST* do not insulate the magazine from the occasional pitfall. True to the Third Wave reliance on individualism, *BUST* expresses primarily white, middle-class perspectives in accordance with the individual white, middle-class experiences of the editors and staff. In response to this observation, the crew asks that greater multicultural audiences contribute essays and art so as to increase *BUST*'s multiracial

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<sup>919</sup> *BUST* no.1 (July 1993). See Appendix XI.

<sup>920</sup> *BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001).

<sup>921</sup> "Who Owns What," Columbia Journalism Review [journal online]; available from <http://www.cjr.org/owners>.

<sup>922</sup> Sammie Johnson, "Magazines: Women's Employment and Status in the Magazine Industry," chap. in *Women in Mass Communication*, ed. Pamela Creedon, (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1993), 134.

<sup>923</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 100-102.

<sup>924</sup> *BUST* established its Web site ([www.bust.com](http://www.bust.com)) in 1995.

quotas.<sup>925</sup> Regardless of their effort, *BUST* appeals to a particular type of U.S. feminist, sometimes young or old, sometimes African-American or Jewish-American, sometimes rich or poor. While making strides to include a diverse community, *BUST* prioritizes pleasing a defiant, urban aesthetic within educated and fashion-conscious boundaries.

The subjective realities of the magazine's editorial directors have already determined the tone and viewpoint of the magazine, which does not seem to attract overwhelming numbers of African-American or Latina feminists, for example. Additionally, the volume of reader-generated articles and artistic contributions has decreased over these eight years. *BUST* has published a greater percentage of reader submissions in years past; the last few editions have used the same amount of pages but fewer donated articles.<sup>926</sup> Ultimately, these trends, and other forthcoming changes, are made to satisfy the financial mandates of their publisher, Razorfish. I expect these alterations will deter some readers while drawing new ones. And, I expect these changes will show a marked transition in the magazine's tone and style in the years to come. What future negotiations between feminist content and business acumen will proffer is harder to predict.

So far, *BUST*'s history has deviated from that of *Ms.*, the Second Wave's gallant attempt at a prosperous feminist magazine. *BUST* began as a self-produced zine and did not start off vying for commercial advertisers. Still, the struggles involving revolutionary feminist thought and the status-quo of corporate investors will be similar. While their paths to becoming mass-distributed feminist magazines differ, *BUST* has much to learn from the history of *Ms.* magazine. *BUST*'s increased commercial pages may change the type and amount of readership, as loyal feminist subscribers stay loyal to the underground,

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<sup>925</sup> Debbie Stoller of *BUST* magazine, interviewed by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation. Janice Erlbaum of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation.

<sup>926</sup> Marcelle Karp formerly of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation.

noncommercial feminist press. Recent issues have already revealed a sneaky form of ‘advertorializing,’<sup>927</sup> as *BUST* learns how the ropes of magazine advertisement. For example, an ad for Wacky Jac brand women’s panties<sup>928</sup> appears in the same issue with a positive review of the garments less than fifteen pages away.<sup>929</sup> Similarly, *BUST* gives upbeat plugs for products that they both run ads for as well as sell in their online retail store.<sup>930</sup> There are probably understandable reasons for these crossovers, including the fact that these are products *BUST* supports regardless of their contributing advertising dollars. However, these elements of mainstream magazine business will alter, and have already changed, the nature of *BUST* as a Third Wave feminist publication.

The Third Wave has suffered as many misinterpretations as its Second Wave foremothers. Just as they did in the 1970s, the media has made the Third Wave all about ‘girl power’ obsessions with individualism, fashion, and fame. Akin to media trends of 30 years prior, the Third Wave has also been reduced to a few celebrity-infused extremes of this new phase of feminist reality. Likewise, *BUST* is misconstrued by advertisers as pornography, misread by feminists as anti-feminist, and ignored by much of the mainstream as a fringe publication. Try as they might, *BUST* cannot be all things to all women, nor can they satisfy the feminist demands of the diverse communities of U.S. gender equity movements. And, their ability to reach and change the minds of millions of Americans remains to be seen.

Of the myriad criticisms of *BUST* and Third Wave feminism, the most myopic has been the equation of one media entity with the entire movement. As in *Time* magazine’s faulty treatise on this generation’s “me feminism” features a line-up of feminist icons,

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<sup>927</sup> ‘Advertorials’ refers to the inclusion of positive reviews in editorial text for products that appear in paid advertisements.

<sup>928</sup> Advertisement by Wacky Jac Clothing and Accessories, *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 29.

<sup>929</sup> Lenora Gim, “Read My Lips,” *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000): 45.

<sup>930</sup> *BUST*’s Boobtique can be found on their Web site: [www.bust.com](http://www.bust.com).

representing a comparison between Susan B. Anthony, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and the Fox television character Ally McBeal.<sup>931</sup> If the self-obsessed, sometimes whiny title character on Fox's TV program was at the forefront of the political and social movements known as feminism, I would worry, too. Luckily, Ally McBeal is not "the only party in town,"<sup>932</sup> and neither is *BUST* nor the Spice Girls nor any other pop cultural icons of Third Wave feminism. Not one of the four women *Time* haphazardly equated on its 1998 cover represents the entire cannon of feminist belief and ideology. Conversely, *BUST* does not represent the entire cannon of Third Wave feminist thought and action.

Third Wave feminism is a coalition of political and theoretical movements that are still emerging and defining themselves. We can see the promise of the Third Wave as a strong, powerful movement, but there is still much work to be done. As I've mentioned earlier, a comprehensive digestion of Third Wave feminism was not my goal. Following a feminist tradition of theorizing from a native space based on personal experience, I present *BUST* as one voice among many within the Third Wave feminist order. One element of postmodern feminism is the understanding that political and intellectual structures are constantly in flux, leaving wide spaces to redefine the universe to suit each generation. In this spirit, I hope that this paper is the first of many to address Third Wave feminism and its representations in *BUST* magazine.

### Suggestions for Further Research

My recommendations for future studies are divided between thoughts on case studies in general and reflections on the study of Third Wave feminism in specific. This case

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<sup>931</sup> Ginia Bellafonte, "Feminism: It's All About Me!" *Time* 151 no.25 (June 29, 1998): 54-62.

<sup>932</sup> Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism and The Future* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 120.

study of *BUST* magazine involved the use of participant-observation, in-depth interviewing, and content analysis. Hindsight, of course, is clear upon completion of this research and I see that my choice to observe *BUST* during their most busy week before the production of *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000) was not the most beneficial to my understanding of the procedures and messages of the magazine. The troop's pre-press pressures did not allow editors and staff to engage with me in-person, robbing my observation of simultaneous informant reflections on the process and meaning of the magazine.

For future magazine observations, I would strongly advise researchers to choose a period during which the crew would have time for in-person interviews, preferably for a two or more weeks. While the telephone interviews conducted for this study were sufficient for the contextual understandings of *BUST*, conversations in the flesh offer the additional data of body language, gesture, facial expression, and physical nuance to enhance this understanding.

Finally, I strongly support any future investigation of Third Wave feminism and its media exemplars. Riot grrrl zines are still an under-examined source of rich Third Wave history, as is the punk-rock music that was a driving force in this early form of postmodern feminism. Other alternative forms of media, such as pornography, fashion, and Internet sites, are ignored areas of Third Wave feminist expression. As the Third Wave stakes its claim in the ranks of feminist academia, the expressions of Third Wave theory are bound to expand. Further scrutiny of the third world connections to emerging Third Wave feminist theories are also sorely needed. Third Wave feminism perspectives are as diverse as the number of feminists who claim to be part of this wave; there are countless options for future study on the Third Wave feminism of various racial and cultural communities. As the Third

Wave develops, its feminist history will be preserved in the pages of future research, as well as in the glossy pages of *BUST* magazine.

### Afterward

The financial status and staff structure of *BUST* magazine fluctuated during the process of this case study. Originally, *BUST* was independently produced by founding editors Debbie Stoller, Marcelle Karp, and Laurie Henzel. *BUST* was a labor of love, created and distributed with the efforts of unpaid editors, contributing writers, and interns. However, in the spring of 2000, *BUST* was sold to Razorfish Studios during the semester before this research was scheduled to begin. Although neither *BUST* nor Razorfish divulged contractual details about their partnership, it was clear that *BUST*'s new publisher had no intentions of changing the tone, style, or content of this feminist lifestyle magazine. Karp resigned during this time and *BUST* took on five new full-time staff members. The interview segment of this study was filled with optimistic determination and an aggressive, five-year business plans.

Alas, these plans appear to have come to a screeching halt, just weeks before this thesis was completed. In September 2000, the editors indicated that Janice Erlbaum and Jeff Canzona had quit *BUST*. In late October, the magazine's Web site, [www.bust.com](http://www.bust.com), carried a note announcing a two-week staff vacation. But, on November 9, 2001, the online technology magazine *Silicon Alley Daily* reported that Razorfish had laid off the entire *BUST* staff, including founding editors Stoller and Henzel.<sup>933</sup> According to this source, Razorfish had been unsuccessfully searching for a new *BUST* publisher. The executive contacts at

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<sup>933</sup> Dakota Smith, "BUST Magazine's Future in Question," *Silicon Alley Daily*, November 9, 200 [magazine online]; available from, <http://www.siliconalleydaily.com/issues/sar11092001.html>.

Razorfish declined to comment for the story, and the former editors and staff members of *BUST* were unreachable.

At the time of this study, it was not clear whether *BUST* would rise from the ashes of financial failure to be produced again. The financial status of Razorfish Studios, and its parent company Razorfish, Inc., was also uncertain. It is possible that the publisher could re-launch the magazine in another format under new management, or the founding editors could continue to pursue additional funding for *BUST*. Editors Stoller and Henzel did suggest during telephone interviews, however, that if *BUST* folded, they would not return to their original mode of self-publication.

When initially proposed as the subject of this thesis, *BUST*'s underground production held meaning and significance, as it sharpened its definition as both a magazine and a vehicle of political and social feminist change. When *BUST* was sold to Razorfish, I worried that financial mandates from this new publisher would change the content and feminist thrust of the magazine. When it became obvious that Razorfish had no intentions of changing the tone or subject matter of *BUST*, I could see the staff wrestle to balance commercial success with their uncompromising feminist ideals. *BUST*'s challenges in finding substantial fiscal support for their sexy feminist magazine are not unique. Even a cursory glance at the history of *Ms.* magazine reveals a pattern of corporate trepidation toward any variation of outspoken feminist media. While finding "girl-power" products such as the Spice Girls and Britney Spears safe and lucrative, most major commercial powers are unwilling to support those entertainment products that voice specific feminist concerns and advocate for social and political change. Admirably, *BUST* never compromised its feminist vision for business success in their year and a half of work with Razorfish.

Regardless of the social or political explanations, I believe that *BUST* simply partnered with an Internet-based company that could not remain financially viable during a economic recession. Razorfish and *BUST* were not wrong in identifying their target audience, but reaching such a group requires a longer duration of the kind of funded marketing Razorfish offered. The re-launch planned for January 2002 may have achieved this goal, however it appears that this plan will not be realized. Given the rocky road of most feminist publications, I am not shocked, but I am nonetheless saddened, by *BUST*'s apparent demise. I have faith that, given the history of *Ms.* and other enduring feminist magazines, *BUST* could be born again with new editors and publishers in a more stable economic and political period.

The eighteen total issues of *BUST* magazine were achieved by the unwavering dedication of its founding editors and their support staff, as well as a raucous Third Wave feminist community of writers, artists, and readers. I believe this community still exists in large numbers and is, in fact, growing and maturing as this study goes to press. My hopes for this community is that we will continue to voice our thoughts, question our assumptions, and challenge each other to speak louder, organize better, and dream bigger. My hopes, specifically, for the community of *BUST* readers and contributors is that we will maintain the Third Wave feminist press, by either helping to re-launch *BUST* or by creating new feminist media. Either way, it is important to understand the history and messages of *BUST*, so that we may build upon their legacy and assert “voice of the new girl order.”

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### *BUST Staff & Razorfish Studios Interviews*

(Note: All interviews listed below were conducted by Lettie Conrad.)

- Erlbaum, Janice, Senior Editor of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 24 October 2000, New York.
- Canzona, Jeff, Marketing & Ad Sales Manager of *BUST* Magazine, Razorfish Studios. Interview by author, 24 October 2000, New York.
- McAndrew, Kat, Editorial Assistant of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 25 October 2000, New York.
- Simms, Molly, Publishing Assistant of *BUST* magazine. Interview by author, 25 October 2000, New York.
- Canzona, Jeff, Marketing & Ad Sales Manager of *BUST* Magazine, Razorfish Studios. Interview by author, 15 November 2000, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Canzona, Jeff, Marketing & Ad Sales Manager of *BUST* Magazine, Razorfish Studios. Interview by author, 20 November 2000, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Canzona, Jeff, Marketing & Ad Sales Manager of *BUST* Magazine, Razorfish Studios. Interview by author, 6 December 2000, email correspondence.
- Simms, Molly, Publishing Assistant of *BUST* magazine. Interview by author, 2 February 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Erlbaum, Janice, Senior Editor of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 6 February 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Erlbaum, Janice, Senior Editor of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 8 February 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- McAndrew, Kat, Editorial Assistant of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 20 February 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Gilbert, Kate, Associate Art Director of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 13 March 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Henzel, Laurie, Art Director of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 30 March 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Stoller, Debbie, Co-founder and Editor-in-Chief of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 13 April 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.

- Stoller, Debbie, Co-founder and Editor-in-Chief of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Karp, Marcelle, Co-founder and former Executive Editor of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 17 April 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Karp, Marcelle, Co-founder and former Executive Editor of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 18 April 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Karp, Marcelle, Co-founder and former Executive Editor of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 22 April 2001, telephone conversation. Tape recording.
- Windrow, Laurie, Senior Vice President, Distribution, Sales & Marketing, Razorfish Studios. Interview by author, 25 July 2001, email correspondence.
- Stoller, Debbie, Co-founder and Editor-in-Chief of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 26 July 2001, email correspondence.
- Simms, Molly, Publishing Assistant of *BUST* magazine. Interview by author, 17 September 2001, email correspondence.
- McAndrew, Kat, Editorial Assistant of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 20 September 2001, email correspondence.
- Henzel, Laurie, Art Director of *BUST* Magazine. Interview by author, 25 September 2001, email correspondence.

**APPENDIX I**

Interview Protocol Worksheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Zine: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Descriptive Notes:

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Reflective Notes:

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## APPENDIX II

### Preliminary Interview Questions

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Zine: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your birthday and birthplace?
2. What is your racial makeup?
3. What is your highest level of education? Field(s)? Institutions?
4. What is your professional experience?
5. What is your current annual income?
6. What is your political party?
7. What is your mother's highest level of education? Father's?
8. Do you identify as a feminist? (define terms)
9. Tell me about when you first accepted feminism.
10. Were you raised by a parent that identified as feminist?
11. Do you have anyone in your immediate or extended family that identifies as feminist?
12. Tell me about when you began working on your zine.
13. What year did publication begin? – describe your publication.
14. What are the future objectives of your publication?
15. What is the greatest challenge of producing/writing for \_\_\_\_?
16. What is the greatest reward of producing/writing for \_\_\_\_?
17. What writers or publications have influenced your style of journalism?
18. Who has inspired your political beliefs?
19. How have your opinions differentiated from that person/group? your parents?
20. What magazines do you read? Books? Movies/TV? Music/Radio?
21. Are you comfortable with the term *third wave feminism*? What does it mean to you?
22. What other publications do you suggest I look at?

### APPENDIX III

#### Content Analysis Protocol Worksheet

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Author(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

Categories of analysis:

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Reaction to/adoption of second wave theory    | code: 2 <sup>nd</sup> |
| 2. Evidence of contradiction/contrast            | code: CC              |
| 3. Evidence of pastiche/camp                     | code: CP              |
| 4. Expression of alternative/diverse sexualities | code: SX              |
| 5. Evidence on anti-essentialism                 | code: AE              |
| 6. Focus on individualism                        | code: IN              |
| 7. Focus on multiculturalism                     | code: MC              |
| 8. _____   | code:                 |
| 9. _____   | code:                 |

Notes:

## **APPENDIX IV**

### *BUST* Content Analysis Summary Worksheet

Date/issue #:

Theme:

Spine slogan:

Number of pages:

Contributors:

Print/paper quality:

Observations:

    General:

    Visual communication:

    Buzzwords:

    News items:

    Celebrities:

    Advertisements:

## APPENDIX V

### *BUST* Staff List: October 2000\*

- ◆ Debbie “Celina Hex” Stoller, Editorial Director
- ◆ Laurie “Areola” Henzel, Creative Director
- ◆ Marcelle “Betty Boob” Karp, Executive Editor
- ◆ Janice “Girl Bomb” Erlbaum, Senior Editor
- ◆ Kat McAndrew, Editorial Assistant
- ◆ Molly Simms, Publishing Assistant
- ◆ Jeff “Adboy” Canzona, Ad Sales and Marketing Director (Razorfish)
- ◆ Laurie Windrow, Senior Vice President, Distribution, Sales & Marketing (Razorfish)
- ◆ Kate Gilbert, Assistant Art Director
- ◆ Interns: Erika Lofstedt, Tracie Egan and Shannon Ziemba

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\* The *BUST* staff fluctuated quite a bit during the completion of this thesis. Most notably, Karp resigned her editorial post in the spring of 2001. Other changes left *BUST* with five full time employees (Stoller, Henzel, Simms, McAndrew, and Windrow) in the Fall of 2001, at which point *BUST* and Razorfish were planning to hire three new staff members in the near future. Laurie Henzel of *BUST* magazine, interview by author, 25, September 2001, email correspondence. However, according to Media Life online magazine, Razorfish had laid off all *BUST* employees by early November 2001. Dakota Smith, “*BUST* Magazine’s Future in Question,” *Silicon Alley Daily*, November 9, 200 [magazine online]; available from, <http://www.siliconalleydaily.com/issues/sar11092001.html>.

## **APPENDIX VI**





## **APPENDIX VII**

Logo for Razorfish Studios  
In *BUST* no.16 (Winter 2000)

## APPENDIX VIII

### Interview questionnaire and telephone interview questions

November 8, 2000

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your gracious hospitality during my week of observation last month. *BUST* is a fierce and fabulous zine, created by righteous people, and I am thrilled to have a chance to get to know you and your publication better.

Before I returned to California shores, I arranged to conduct a few telephone interviews this month to answer the multitude of questions that have been tumbling around in my brain. In an effort to streamline this process – and save your busy staff precious time – I humbly request that you take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed pre-interview questionnaire.

Hey, it's only one page and shouldn't take longer than five minutes! I'll be your best friend... It would be swell if you could fax this back to me at 818-677-5935 or email me your responses to [lettieconrad@yahoo.com](mailto:lettieconrad@yahoo.com). I'd love to kick out these interviews between November 15-21 and November 27-December 1.

Y'all are the best – thanks for your help!!!

Bustily,

Lettie Conrad  
California State University, Northridge

## *BUST* Questionnaire

Name:

Pseudonym (if any):

Current job title:

Total time working with *BUST*:

Brief job description:

1. Birth date:  
Birth place:
2. What is your racial makeup?
3. Brief educational background – please give degrees, dates and institutions:
4. Brief professional background – where were you prior to working with *BUST*?
5. What is your current annual income?
6. Are you registered to vote?  
Which political party do you identify with most frequently?
7. What is your mother's highest level of education?
8. What is your father's highest level of education?
9. Do you identify as a feminist? Briefly, why or why not?

## Interview questions for *BUST* staff

1. How would you describe *BUST* to someone who had never seen it before?
2. Tell me about when you began working on *BUST*. What were you doing before?
3. Did you have a goal to work on a zine? Magazine?
4. In your mind, what are the future objectives of *BUST*?
5. How long do you imagine you will stay with *BUST*?
6. What is the greatest challenge of producing/writing for *BUST*?
7. What is the greatest reward of producing/writing for *BUST*?
8. What magazines do you read? Books? Movies/TV? Music/Radio?
9. What writers or publications have influenced your style of journalism?
10. Would you consider *BUST* a riot grrrl zine?
11. Tell me about RSCP – what affects has it had/will it have on *BUST*?
  - Has the change in advertising, etc. changed the content?
  - Has the change in production style altered your approach?
12. Will RSCP eventually muscle editorial control from *BUST* creators?
  - Will RSCP get greedy about success of *BUST*?
13. How will *BUST* stay young?
  - How will *BUST* stay connected to youth feminism?
14. Do you still consider *BUST* a zine after the changes of the last several years?
  - What is a zine to you?
  - Do (corporate) ad sales undermine the independent press?
15. What is your response to some observations that *BUST* has become like other (mainstream) women's mags rather than staying true to zine-culture beginnings?
16. -- and that *BUST* uses "teenspeak" to sell sex to young women?
17. Tell me about when you first accepted feminism.
18. Were you raised by a parent that identified as feminist?
19. Do you have anyone in your immediate or extended family that identified as feminist?
20. Who has inspired your political beliefs?
21. How have your opinions differentiated from that person/group? your parents?
22. What does the term *third wave feminism* mean to you?
23. Do you believe *BUST* presents a third wave feminist perspective? How?
24. How does the feminism of *BUST* differ from that of *Ms.?* *off our backs?* *On Our Backs?*
25. What is the feminist goal of *BUST*?
  - In what ways do you achieve these?
26. What is your response to the criticism that youth feminism or third wave feminism promotes self-centered, image-focused, sex-obsessed behavior and attitudes?
27. What other media do you consider representative of third wave feminism?

## Interview questions for Editors

1. Pseudonyms:
  - ❑ Why did you first use pseudonyms?
  - ❑ How did you first come up with “Celina Hex”?
  - ❑ Now that you’re not anonymous, why did you still use them?
2. Tell me about Razorfish:
  - ❑ How did they approach you and what was their offer?
  - ❑ Was *BUST* shopping for a buyer? Why or why not?
  - ❑ What is their level of involvement with *BUST*? Are you a partnership? What’s the deal/contract you have with Razorfish?
  - ❑ What structural changes have been made to *BUST* since the Razorfish buy-out?
  - ❑ How has production changed?
  - ❑ With so many offices all over the globe, who is at the head of Razorfish?
  - ❑ How many Razorfish employees are with *BUST* full time? Part time?
  - ❑ How did they determine your salaries/benefits? How do they decide to expand/reduce *BUST*?
  - ❑ Overall, how has Razorfish ownership changed *BUST*? What changes do you expect in the future?
3. Editorial/General:
  - ❑ Do you feel the *BUST* staff is collective-like in the sense of equanimity and cooperation?
  - ❑ How have staff changes influenced *BUST* content?
  - ❑ How is media chosen for your review section?
  - ❑ What is the hardest department to fill?
  - ❑ *BUST* went from hand-made to a printer in one issue – tell me about that. What printer was used? When did you go digital? Have you changed printers?
  - In one interview, you say that *BUST* was launched partly to offer an antidote to *Cosmopolitan*-type women’s magazines and prove that the existence of a feminist subculture.
    - ❑ Have you achieved these goals?
    - ❑ Do you ever get the feeling that *BUST* creates and maintains this subculture?
    - ❑ What is the goal of *BUST* now?
  - Reader submissions/response:
    - ❑ How have submissions changed over the years?
    - ❑ What percentages of submissions are good writing?
    - ❑ Do you read everything you receive?
    - ❑ Are all submissions unpaid, or have you struck contracts with steady contributors?
    - ❑ How many contributors are returning writers?
    - ❑ Now that *BUST* has achieved a certain level of notoriety, do you receive unsolicited celebrity submissions or interest in working with you?
    - ❑ How do most celebrities you want for the cover/feature article react to *BUST*?
    - ❑ Generally, is your reader feedback positive? Negative? What was the worst response ever?
4. Ad questions:
  - ❑ Who sets page prices?

- ❑ How did the ad sales go before Razorfish?
  - ❑ How do you determine readership?
  - ❑ How much hustling do you need to do for ad sales? How many advertisers come to you?
  - ❑ Are you still using many of the same advertisers in early issues?
  - ❑ How do you determine who to sell ads to? Who do you avoid? Rules against corporate ads?
  - ❑ Overall, how has advertising changed since Razorfish buy-out?
5. Art questions:
- ❑ The retro look is intentional, right? Why? What is the meaning?
  - ❑ How do you find these images? Copyright issues?
  - ❑ Are there groups meetings/discussions about which images to include? How are graphics decisions made?
  - ❑ Do you ever create images from scratch? How?
  - ❑ How many art contributions do you regularly receive?
  - ❑ Do you have paying contracts with any artists?
  - ❑ Do you have to solicit art to be created to fit certain articles?
  - ❑ Who is Gallery Gal?
  - ❑ What is the difference between *BUST* imagery and that found in other women's or feminist magazines? How is it different? Why?
6. Personal:
- ❑ How has working on *BUST* changed you?
  - ❑ What does the production of *BUST* mean for you? Why is it important?
  - ❑ How did it feel when you were creating *BUST* on evenings/weekends?
  - ❑ What kind of financial drain was the zine in 1993? 95? 97?
  - ❑ How has it changed for you now that you are a paid *BUST* employee rather than a partial owner?
  - ❑ How do you feel about your ability to hire/fire your staff?
  - ❑ How do you feel about Razorfish?
  - ❑ How long do you see yourself with the mag?

## **APPENDIX IX**

### *BUST* Manifesta

{Debbie Stoller and Marcelle Karp, *The Bust Guide to the New Girl Order* (New York: Penguin, 1999): x-xi}



## **APPENDIX X**

Examples of *BUST*'s Retro Imagery

*BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 1.

*BUST* no.6 (Summer/Fall 1995): 70.

*BUST* no.4 (Summer/Fall 1994): 54.

*BUST* no.17 (Spring 2001): 71.

*BUST* no.9 (Spring/Summer 1997): 16.

## **APPENDIX XI**

## **APPENDIX XII**

## **APPENDIX XIII**

## APPENDIX XIV

## **APPENDIX XV**

## **APPENDIX XVI**

**APPENDIX XVII**

*BUST* no.12 (Spring 1999): 95.

**APPENDIX XVIII**

*BUST* no.15 (Fall 2000): 43

**APPENDIX XIX**

*BUST* no.10 (Winter/Spring 1998): 63.