

2017

Network Analysis and Feminist Artists

Michelle Moravec

Rosemont College, mmoravec@rosemont.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/artlas>

 Part of the [Contemporary Art Commons](#), [Digital Humanities Commons](#), and the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Moravec, Michelle. "Network Analysis and Feminist Artists." *Artl@s Bulletin* 6, no. 3 (2017): Article 5.

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

This is an Open Access journal. This means that it uses a funding model that does not charge readers or their institutions for access. Readers may freely read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of articles. This journal is covered under the [CC BY-NC-ND license](#).

Network Analysis and Feminist Artists

Michelle Moravec *

Rosemont College

Abstract

This article, based on two of the author's digital humanities projects, explores the systemic and structural barriers that limit the utility of social network analysis for feminist artists. The first project analyzed the artist Carolee Schneemann's female circles through a correspondence network. The second project traced the circulation of feminist art manifestos in the US. Three factors are identified as constraining network analysis: lack of feminist artists' archives, an insufficient amount of machine-readable material, and the limited availability of metadata pertaining to them. Network analysis therefore is best viewed as supplemental to other digital approaches for studying this group.

Résumé

S'appuyant sur deux projets numériques de l'auteur, cet article examine les problèmes systémiques et structurels qui limitent l'utilité de l'analyse de réseaux sociaux pour l'étude des artistes féministes. Le premier projet consistait à analyser les réseaux féminins de l'artiste Carolee Schneemann à travers sa correspondance. Le deuxième projet retraçait la circulation des manifestes d'art féministe aux États-Unis. Trois facteurs viennent limiter ces analyses des réseaux : le manque d'archives d'artistes féministes, une quantité insuffisante de documents pouvant être automatiquement analysés, et le manque de métadonnées concernant ce matériel. L'analyse de réseau ne peut donc servir que de complément à d'autres approches numériques pour l'étude de ce groupe.

** Michelle Moravec is an Associate Professor of History at Rosemont College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Moravec sits on the American Historical Association's Digital History Standards committee and serves as the digital history editor for Women and Social Movements. She also writes about the methodological implications of doing humanities research digitally.*

So this network fine webbery how concentratedly inwardly can I be pulling in following tug filaments of what or who arrives from without?
—Carolee Schneemann to Margaret Fisher
17 July 1974¹

Networks, even when invoked metaphorically, offer an appealing way to characterize connections between people. The artist Carolee Schneemann's poetic reference to a "fine webbery" captures the conceptual resonance that led many digital humanities scholars to adopt social network analysis, a method of modeling relationships between individuals.² In this brief research note, I share the difficulties I confronted when using network analysis to study marginalized artists.³ Ultimately, I relied on alternative methods, abandoning anything that could be termed a rigorous use of network analysis.

Since the 1980s, art historians and critics have thoroughly documented the significance of the feminist art movement. Craig Owens's early essay credited the movement with playing a leading role in the transition from modernism to post-modernism, a point later amplified by Brodsky and Olin.⁴ Broude and Garrard's *The Power of Feminist Art* not only "celebrated" the feminist art

movement of the 1970s, but also argued that it had "transformed the art world."⁵ In the early twenty-first century, several influential anthologies collected and disseminated feminist art movement texts to a wide audience.^{6,7} Dedicated scholars also offered much-needed correctives that more thoroughly incorporated the contributions of black feminist artists to our understanding of movements for women's liberation.⁸ The first decade of the twenty-first century saw a spate of international feminist art exhibits.⁹ *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution* offered a sweeping re-assessment of the impact of feminism on the art world that connected the US movement internationally.¹⁰ The exhibition catalog included Marsha Meskimmon's challenge to feminist cartographies that envisioned feminism as emanating outward from North America and Europe.¹¹ That same year *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art* looked "beyond the borders of North America and Europe" to the transnational future of feminist art.¹²

The two projects I share here contribute to this revised feminist art historiography using digital approaches. The first, "Visualizing Schneemann," explores the artist's world through an edited volume of her correspondence.¹³ A subsequent

¹ Kristine Stiles, ed., *Correspondence Course: An Epistolary History of Carolee Schneemann and Her Circle*, annotated edition (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 361.

² For an excellent explanation of how network analysis works in practice see Laura Mandell, "How to Read a Literary Visualisation: Network Effects in the Lake School of Romantic Poetry," *Digital Studies / Le Champ Numérique* 3, no. 2 (2013), https://www.digitalstudies.org/ojs/index.php/digital_studies/article/view/236. A very early effort at visualizing feminist art networks focused on the art world center of New York and only secondarily Los Angeles. [Meredith A. Brown, "The Enemies of Women's Liberation in the Arts Will Be Crushed": A.L.R. Gallery's Role in the American Feminist Art Movement," Text, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 2, (2012), <http://www.aaa.si.edu/essay/meredith-brown.1>] Nancy Ross created an innovative pedagogical project that visualized relationships between twentieth-century women artists. [Nancy Ross, "Teaching Twentieth Century Art History with Gender and Data Visualizations," *Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy*, no. 4 (2013), <https://jitp.commons.gc.cuny.edu/teaching-twentieth-century-art-history-with-gender-and-data-visualizations/>.]

More recent approaches involve spatial networks as reflected in the panel "Mapping Feminist Art Networks" organizing by Joanna Gardner-Huggett, which offered a broad range of temporal and topical approaches including Amy Tobin's efforts to map international feminist connections. ["Mapping Feminist Art Networks," *College Art Association*, February 4, 2016, <http://conference2016.collegeart.org/programs/mapping-feminist-art-networks/>] Gardner-Huggett is working to visualize hundreds of contributors to a single exhibition "What is Feminist Art," which holds intriguing possibilities for moving beyond the New York/Los Angeles axis that has dominated US art historical research and may reveal international participants as well.

³ See for example the fine overview by Drucker et al, which describes many projects including networks of art markets in nineteenth-century London and Gothic France, and individual artists like James McNeill Whistler and Theodore Roussel. The sole female exceptions are Sonia Delaunay and Natalia Goncharova, who appear in a network predictably dominated by Picasso. [Johanna Drucker et al., "Digital Art History: The American Scene," *Perspective. Actualité En Histoire de L'art*, no. 2 (2015), <http://perspective.revues.org/6021>].

⁴ Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminism and Post-Modernism," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (Port Townsend, WA:

Bay Press, 1983), 57–82; Judith K. Brodsky and Ferris Olin, "Stepping out of the Beaten Path: Reassessing the Feminist Art Movement," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 33, no. 2 (2008): 329–42.

⁵ Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, "Preface," in *Power of Feminist Art*, ed. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard (Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 8.

⁶ Lisa Gail Collins, *The Art of History: African American Women Artists Engage the Past* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Lisa E. Farrington, *Creating Their Own Image: The History of African-American Women Artists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); Uri McMillan, *Embodied Avatars: Genealogies of Black Feminist Art and Performance* (New York: NYU Press, 2015); Catherine Morris and Rujeko Hockley, eds., *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-85* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

⁷ Hilary Robinson, ed., *Feminism Art Theory: An Anthology 1968-2000* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001); Helena Reckitt and Peggy Phelan, eds., *Art and Feminism* (London: Phaidon Press, 2012).

⁸ Collins, *The Art of History*; Farrington, *Creating Their Own Image*.

⁹ Deepwell has compiled an invaluable comprehensive list of such exhibitions. Katy Deepwell, "Feminist Exhibition Catalogues, List by N.paradoxa : International Feminist Art Journal (ISSN: 1461_0434), KT Press," accessed September 4, 2017, <http://www.ktpress.co.uk/feminist-art-exhibitions.asp>.

¹⁰ Cornelia H. Butler, *WACK!: Art and the Feminist Revolution* (Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007).

¹¹ Marsha Meskimmon, "Chronology through Cartography: Mapping 1970s Feminist Art Globally," in *WACK!: Art and the Feminist Revolution*, ed. Cornelia Butler and Lisa Gabrielle Mark (Los Angeles : Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 2007), 326–29.

¹² Maura Reilly, "Introduction," in *Global Feminisms: New Directions in Contemporary Art*, ed. Maura Reilly and Linda Nochlin (London; New York : Brooklyn, NY: Merrell Publishers, 2007), 15.

¹³ Stiles, *Correspondence Course*; Michelle Moravec, "Visualizing Schneemann," *History in the City*, accessed January 14, 2017,

<http://historyinthecity.blogspot.com/2013/11/before-i-start-i-want-to-thank-people.html>; "Mapping the Republic of Letters," accessed January 14, 2017, <http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/casestudies/index.html>; Dan Edelstein et al., "Historical Research in a Digital Age: Reflections from the Mapping the Republic of

project, “A Digital Analysis of Feminist Art Manifestos,” traces documents included in a recent anthology through US activists’ print networks in an effort to document the interaction between feminist artists and a broader community of feminists.

Visualizing Schneemann

Carolee Schneemann, a central figure in the feminist art movement, is a multidisciplinary artist who has explored gender and sexuality in her work since the 1950s. Schneemann was also part of “the international avant-garde of happenings, Fluxus, performance and conceptual art, film, photography, literature, and experimental music and poetry,” making her a fascinating candidate for network analysis.¹⁴ “Visualizing Schneemann” explored the artist’s relationships to other women as represented by *Correspondence Course*, an edited volume of about one third of Schneemann’s extant letters.¹⁵

Using the annotations of the letters provided by the editor, Kristine Stiles, attributes of her correspondents were compiled. This data revealed that almost twice as many letters by Schneemann are included in *Correspondence* as compared to those written to her. The 169 unique correspondents split 55% male and 45% female. However, by the number of letters, the volume tilts heavily male, with 70% of the letters written to or received from men.¹⁶ As seen in Figure 1, only four women are found among Schneemann’s most voluminous correspondences; the majority of the women are quite literally rendered illegible by their negligible presence in the collection. The dominance of men in *Correspondence Course* occurs in part because letters between Schneemann and

her first husband, composer James Tenney, and her long-time friends, poet Clayton Eshleman and filmmaker Stan Brakhage, comprise twenty percent of the total correspondence.

Only one woman comes close to the presence of these men in the network: Naomi Levinson, identified by Stiles only as a writer.¹⁷ No letters by Levinson appear in the edited volume, but Schneemann’s fourteen letters to her reveal ongoing struggles to maintain her identity as an artist during her first marriage. Just visible in figure 1 are feminist scholars, such as Stiles and Illeana Sonnabend, a gallerist Schneemann met in Paris. A series of letters from the summer of 1997 with former student Suloni Robertson, a Kenyan born artist, demonstrates the important role Schneemann played in encouraging younger female artists who often turned to her for advice and support.

The predominance of male correspondents hampered my ability to explore Schneemann’s female connections via a correspondence network; unwilling to give up the project, I shifted methodological approaches. Schneemann often wrote long letters in which she referenced many individuals over forty people in one extraordinary letter.¹⁸ I extracted the names of women she mentioned in all the letters included in *Correspondence Course*.¹⁹ Figure 2 shows the combined number of times selected female correspondents appear as authors or recipients of letters, as well as the number of times they were mentioned by name in Schneemann’s letters. The results of this analysis offer insights into the individuals who Schneemann considered important members of her circle.

Letters Project Historical Research in a Digital Age,” *The American Historical Review* 122, no. 2 (2017): 400–424.

¹⁴ Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, xii.

¹⁵ Duke University Press provided me with a PDF of this book, which I converted to a format that could be read by the software I used to conduct my analysis. The procedures used are described in my initial blog post. [Moravec, Visualizing Schneemann].

¹⁶ Because the correspondence involved couples as well as individuals, I have counted some letters twice to include male and female recipients. Three letters sent to organizations have been excluded. Stiles’ goal is to secure a place for Schneemann within art history by connecting her to already established artists, which may account for the preponderance of men. [Kristine Stiles, “At Last! A Great Woman

Artist: Writing About Carolee Schneemann’s Epistolary Practice,” in *Singular Women: Writing the Artist*, ed. Kristen Frederickson and Sarah E. Webb (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 230–1.]

¹⁷ Schneemann indicates in one letter that she is staying in Levinson’s apartment in New York City and that Leo Steinberg acknowledges having met Levinson in Paris. It seems possible then that Naomi Levinson is the daughter of philosopher Rachel Bespaloff, who immigrated from France to the US in 1942.

¹⁸ Carolee Schneemann to Daryl Chin, October 17, 1974, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 222–225.

¹⁹ “This approach is modeled after The Diplomatic Correspondence of Thomas Bodley, 1585–1597,” accessed January 17, 2017, <http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/bodley/methodology.html>.

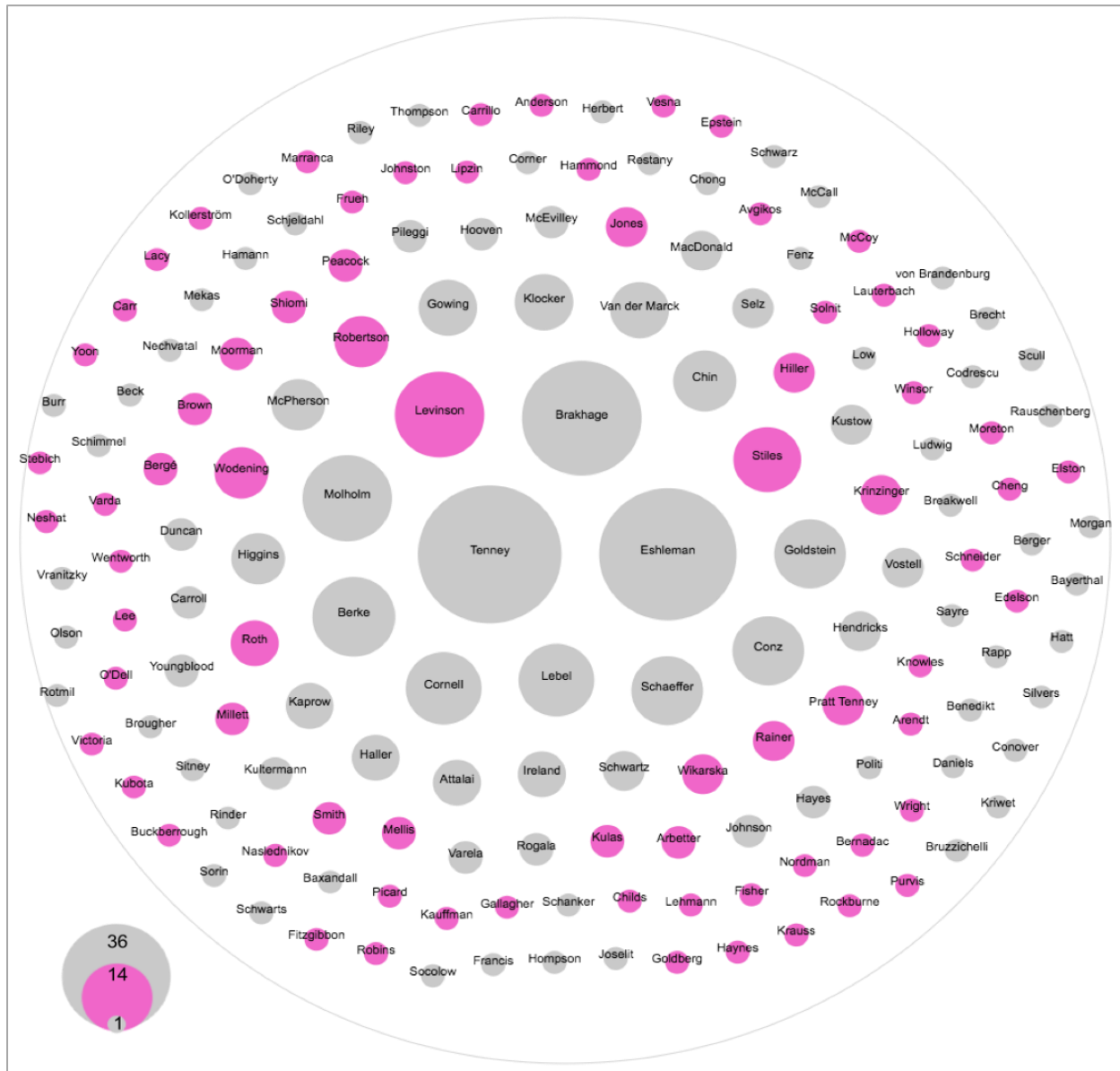


Figure 1. Carolee Schneemann’s unique correspondents by sex.

Legend: 169 Individuals are weighted by the number of letters sent to Schneemann or received from her and coded by sex with women indicated in pink and men in grey. Data created from *Correspondence Course* ed. Kristine Stiles. Circle Packing visualization was created using Raw by Density Design.

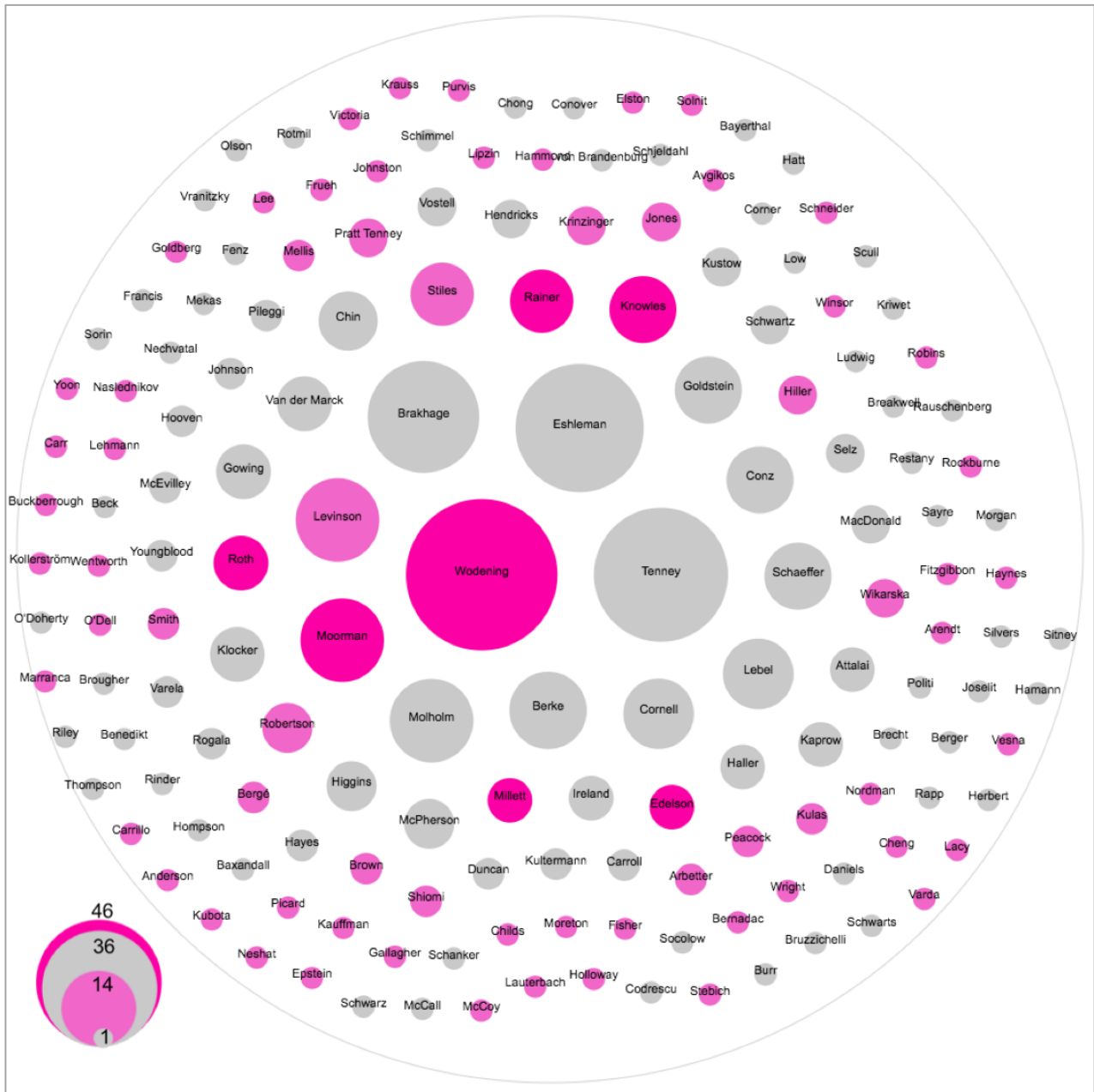


Figure 2. Carolee Schneemann’s unique correspondents with selected female correspondents’ mentions in Schneemann’s letters.

Legend: 161 Individuals are weighted by the number of letters sent to Schneemann or received from her and coded by sex with women indicated in pink and men in grey. The total for seven female correspondents, shown in hot pink, has been augmented with the number of times Schneemann mentioned them in her letters. Data created from *Correspondence Course* ed. Kristine Stiles. Circle Packing visualization was created using Raw by Density Design.

This analysis confirms the singular position that Jane Brakhage Wodening, who appeared as the third most significant female correspondent in my initial visualizations, holds within Schneemann's circles. Wodening is mentioned over forty times in letters written by Schneemann. As Stiles notes, Schneemann often expressed her frustrations as a female artist to her close male friends. In these letters, Wodening and other artists' wives figure as foils. In 1975, for example, Schneemann wrote "living within the light and shadow of a distinguished man—this is a "choice" for creative, innovative women who did not find that structure of life and work for themselves. ... Women live within the light and shadow of distinguished men when those parallel paths HAVE BEEN CLOSED TO THEM."²⁰ After Wodening, an author, separated from filmmaker Stan Brakhage, the women continued to correspond, offering encouragement and support as they pursued their creative work.

Other female correspondents also became more prominent when viewed through Schneemann's own words. She frequently invoked artists as peers. As seen in Figure 2, this included women associated with Fluxus, such as Charlotte Moorman, Alison Knowles, Yvonne Rainer, and Kate Millett, among others. She referenced these women when reflecting on her place within art history, reminiscing about "inter-connections with the women artists ... our lived interaction in that historical moment ... (Kubota's performance in "Snows" ... undressing Charlotte for her first nude appearance at Judson Hall; exhibits with Kate, Alison, appearance for Yoko."²¹

Considering women who appeared in Schneemann's letters but who are not included as correspondents broadens our view of her circles considerably. In Figure 3, thirty-nine women who

were mentioned by Schneemann in her letters more than once are added to the circle comprised of her correspondents. Here the influence of authors like Simone de Beauvoir and Virginia Woolf on Schneemann's feminist thought becomes noticeable. She once referred to them as survivors of patriarchy: "the young Woolf, de Beauvoir, Morisot . . . those women not totally buried alive."²²

In her letters, Schneemann also frequently names artists she considered peers or influences. Responding to Dick Higgins' sexist observation that she had become "less a Hollywood desire-object fetish as a physical entity," and thus might consider hiring a younger artist to perform in her stead, Schneemann asks "Who should take surrogates as you suggest besides me? Joan Jonas? Simone Forti? ... Barbara Smith? ... Hannah Wilke? Eleanor Antin?"²³

Finally, artists whose work is frequently linked to Schneemann's also became visible only through the content of her letters.²⁴ For example, *Correspondence Course* includes no letters to or from Austrian performance artist and filmmaker, Valie Export, although the two artists met in 1970, but Export is mentioned several times by Schneemann.²⁵ Schneemann's friendship with Export is significant as it indicates the role she played in connecting disparate feminist artistic communities. In a letter about editing the Goddess issue of *Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art and Politics*, Schneemann noted in surprise, "none of the women had ever heard of Valie Export."²⁶

Schneemann's circles beyond the US became apparent via a final method used to visualize her connections: computationally extracting locations from her letters. This analysis revealed that in addition to New York, Schneemann frequently referred to London.²⁷ Schneemann performed *Meat*

²⁰ Carolee Schneemann to Clayton Eshleman, September 12, 1975, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 259.

²¹ Carolee Schneemann to Kristine Stiles, June 11, 1992, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 414.

²² Carolee Schneemann to Daryl Chin, February 25, 1971, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 237.

²³ Dick Higgins to Carolee Schneemann, March 10, 1981, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 326-328; Carolee Schneemann to Dick Higgins, March 10, 1981, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 329-330.

²⁴ Roswitha Mueller, *Valie Export: Fragments of the Imagination* (Indiana University Press, 1994), 207; Meiling Cheng, *In Other Los Angeleses: Multiethnic Performance Art* (University of California Press, 2002), 77; Kathleen Wentrack, *The Female Body in*

Conflict: U.S. and European Feminist Performance Art 1963-1979, Carolee Schneemann, Valie Export, and Ulrike Rosenbach, 2006; Claudia Mesch, *Art and Politics: A Small History of Art for Social Change Since 1955* (I.B.Tauris, 2014), 112.

²⁵ Carolee Schneemann, *Imaging Her Erotics: Essays, Interviews, Projects* (MIT Press, 2003), 97. My perusal of the unpublished letters in her archived papers revealed one undated postcard from Export.

²⁶ Carolee Schneemann to Susan Hiller, February 15, 1978, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 297.

²⁷ Many considerations of Schneemann's London connections focus on the 1967 International Congress on the Dialectics of Liberation. See James M. Harding, *Cutting*

Joy, the work that gained her international fame, there in 1964, returned to the city in 1967 as a participant in the of Congress of the Dialectics of Liberation, and resided in the city from 1970-1973. Schneemann, who found life difficult without the “stability of place, time, intention,” considered London a second home.²⁸ She repeatedly invoked her time spent there in her letters, particularly as she framed her own history.²⁹ She recalled life in London as a “radiant productive” time.³⁰ She pondered “Why was London HOME BASE for a vast number of usa radicals.”³¹ She pointed to London as a pivotal site in the development of her nascent feminism, describing, “those years when I was in London, trying to understand the contradictions I experienced as an artist friend among these socially transgressive young patriarchs.”³² Charlotte Victoria, a British photographer Schneemann met in London, documented much of Schneemann’s early work. Years later she located a long-lost trove of Schneemann’s possessions from her flat and shipped them back to her. Schneemann described the return of her mementos a decade later as “a lovely gift, return, re-run...”³³

Carolee Schneemann’s correspondence, once explored for its content rather than for connections between authors, pointed to female circles around “proto-feminist” art movements in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as well the US feminist artist movement of the 1970s and 1980s.³⁴ It also highlighted particular female correspondences that are helpful for understanding the evolution of Schneemann’s ideas about the relationship

between art and feminism. Yet this analysis also raised significant questions about the utility of network analysis that I consider further in my conclusion.

A Digital Analysis of Feminist Art Manifestos

My next project was a digital take on a subject I had visited in earlier research, exploring the genre of manifesto through feminist art.³⁵ This project envisioned manifestos not only as calls to action, but also as a means for circulating feminist ideas.³⁶ I explored digitized US women’s liberation movement periodicals (Table 1) to discover which feminist art manifestos (Table 2) had been reprinted.³⁷ Katy Deepwell’s anthology *Feminist Art Manifestos* provided thirty-five manifestos dating from 1969 to 2013.³⁸ As the map in Figure 4 illustrates, manifesto authors were born in 20 different countries, with the majority coming from Europe and the US.³⁹

Only two of the documents I sought appeared fully reprinted, as indicated in Figure 5.⁴⁰ “A Manifesto for the Feminist Artist” by Rita Mae Brown, noted novelist and lesbian feminist theorist, was first published by *The Furies* in 1972.⁴¹ Brown declared female artists were “in deep revolt against this rotting art just as we are in revolt against the syphilitic political structures that damage us and endanger world peace.”⁴² *Media Report to Women*

Performances: Collage Events, Feminist Artists, and the American Avant-Garde (University of Michigan Press, 2012).

²⁸ Carolee Schneemann to Mitsou Naslednikov, June 5, 1969, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 143.

²⁹ Carolee Schneemann to Kristine Stiles, January 20, 1980, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 317.

³⁰ Carolee Schneemann to Anthony McCall, July 22, 1985 in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 368.

³¹ Carolee Schneemann to Kristine Stiles, January 20, 1980, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 318.

³² CS to Beth Anderson, 30 June 1999, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 484.

³³ CS to Charlotte Victoria, 21 July 1986, in Stiles, *Correspondence Course*, 484.

³⁴ Amelia Jones, “Lost Bodies: Early 1970s Performance Art in Art History”, in ed. Peggy Phelan *Live Art in LA: Performance in Southern California, 1970-1993*, (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 140

³⁵ Michelle Moravec, “Looking for Lyotard, Beyond the Genre of Feminist Manifestos,” *Trespassing*, no. 2 (2013): 70–84; See also Felicity Colman, “Notes on the Feminist Manifesto: The Strategic Use of Hope,” *Journal for Cultural Research* 14, no. 4 (2010): 375–92; Caroline Gausden, “Introduction,” *Feminist Manifesto and Social Art Practice Archive*, accessed August 31, 2017, <http://feministmanifesto.co.uk/content/introduction>.

³⁶ “Viral Texts – Mapping Networks of Reprinting in 19th-Century Newspapers and Magazines,” accessed September 4, 2017, <http://viraltxts.org/>.

³⁷ On the role of feminist periodicals in disseminating ideology see Jaime Harker and Cecilia Konchar Farr, eds., *This Book Is an Action: Feminist Print Culture and Activist Aesthetics* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2016), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/j.ctt17t75xc>; Agatha Beins, *Liberation in Print: Feminist Periodicals and Social Movement Identity* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2017).

³⁸ Katy Deepwell, “Introduction,” in *Feminist Art Manifestos: An Anthology*, ed. Katy Deepwell (London: KT press, 2014). While the documents span 1969 to 2013, they are not evenly distributed. Almost half of the forty-four years contain no documents, and a prolonged gap exists from 1987 to 1991.

³⁹ Because half the manifestos were written collaboratively, thirty-nine individuals could be considered as authors for the purposes of my analysis. Manifestos attributed to groups larger than named collaborators were excluded. Signatories to manifestos were not included as authors.

⁴⁰ “Conference Of Feminist Film And Video Organizations - An Ongoing Manifesto,” *Media Report to Women* 3, no. 4 (1975): 11.

⁴¹ Rita Mae Brown, “A Manifesto for the Feminist Artist,” *The Furies* 1, no. 5 (1972): 16.

⁴² Rita Mae Brown, “A Manifesto for the Feminist Artist” in Deepwell (ed), *Feminist Art Manifestos*, 58.

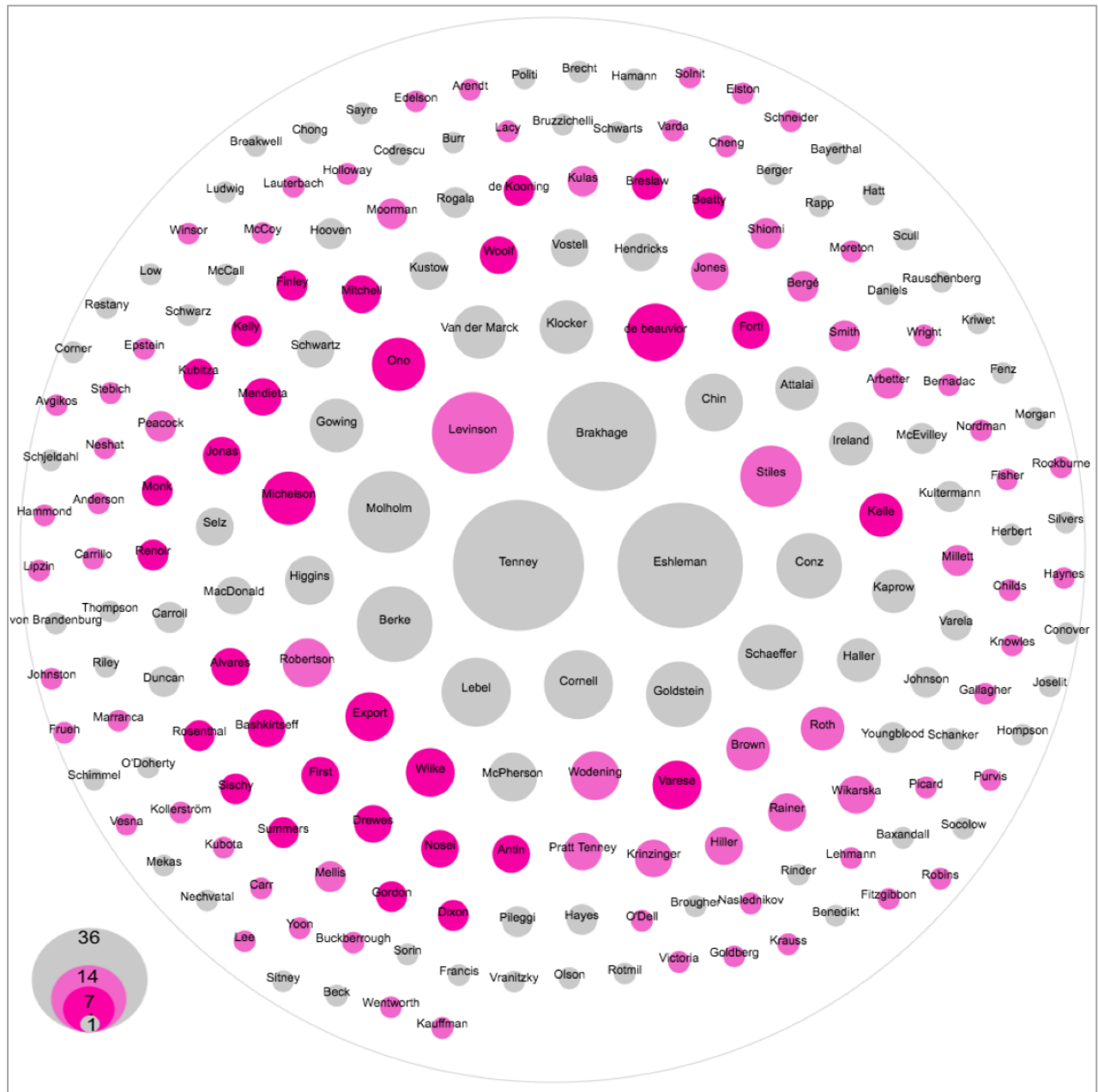


Figure 3. Carolee Schneemann's unique correspondents with selected women mentioned in Schneemann's letters.

Legend: 169 Individuals are weighted by the number of letters sent to Schneemann or received from her and coded by sex with women indicated in pink and men in grey. Thirty-nine additional non-correspondent women, shown in hot pink, are included based on the number of times Schneemann mentioned them in her letters. Women mentioned only once were excluded from this visualization. Data created from *Correspondence Course* ed. Kristine Stiles. Circle Packing visualization was created using Raw by Density Design.

reprinted *Womanifesto*, a document that emerged from a 1975 conference of feminist film and video organizations in New York. Signed by eighty women, the manifesto proclaimed an alliance with “the larger movement of women dedicated to changing society by struggling against oppression as it manifests itself in sexism, heterosexism, classism, racism, ageism, and imperialism.”⁴³

The disappointing results of my hoped-for circulation network derived from a basic incommensurability between the documents I searched for and the text in which I searched. Deepwell chose to focus on manifestos that “weren't well known or easily available” and those that reflect “the broad international dynamic” of feminist art activism. I went looking in US-based periodicals – the only ones I had digital access to.⁴⁴ The very documents Deepwell chose to exclude—the “same three or four feminist manifestos” that are so frequently reproduced—would likely also have been the most frequently circulated.⁴⁵ However, on a deeper level, the very premise that feminist periodicals circulated manifestos turned out to be flawed. Analysis of the periodicals indicated that references to manifestos made up a relatively small portion of their overall content and that appearances of the word “manifesto” decreased over time, especially after 1979.⁴⁶ Subsequent analysis was therefore restricted to manifestos included in Deepwell’s anthology that were composed before 1980.

As shown in Figure 5, in addition to the two manifestos that were reprinted in their entirety, two more manifestos were referenced. *Women: A Journal of Liberation* carried a lengthy article about protests by Women, Students, and Artists for Black Art Liberation (W.S.A.B.A.L.). Founded by painter

Faith Ringgold and her daughter, the author Michele Wallace, W.S.A.B.A.L. led protests against the exclusion of women from an exhibition being organized as an alternative to the Venice Biennale: “W.S.A.B.A.L. read its manifesto demanding that all group shows be opened and that 50% of the contributors be women, 50% of those be black women, and 25% be students, and then attacked the [organizers] as “racist pigs, ‘sexist,’ and ‘hypocrites.’”⁴⁷ A second manifesto, Mierle Laderman Ukeles’ *Manifesto for Maintenance Art* (1969), was mentioned in an article about the artist, but decades after its composition.⁴⁸

Several additional authors included in Deepwell’s anthology show up in the periodicals: Monica Sjo, Valie Export, and Z. Budapest and the Susan B. Anthony Coven. However, Sjo and Export appear in conjunction with different manifestos, while Z. Budapest and the Susan B. Anthony Coven are referenced in an article, but the manifesto to which they are connected is unclear. As both Sjo and Export were active in Europe, their presence indicates that there was at least some familiarity among editors of US feminist periodicals with European authors, although these mentions occur quite late, given the stature of the artists. Export, well-known in European art circles since the late 1960s, only shows up in 1992.⁴⁹

Five of the manifesto authors are not mentioned in the periodicals in regard to manifestos at all. As Deepwell notes, “manifestos are often considered ephemeral documents” and the careful publication histories she appends to each manifesto reveals their varying origins “as flyers, posters, press-

⁴³ Katy Deepwell, ed., “Womanifesto,” in *Feminist Art Manifestos: An Anthology* (London: KT press, 2014), 64.

⁴⁴ Geographically, sixteen states and the District of Columbia are represented, but the periodicals are tilted heavily towards New York, California, and Chicago. The average length of publication is just over 7 years, but some publications appeared only once, while the longest, “Media Report for Women,” appears for 39 years.

⁴⁵ Deepwell specifically excluded The SCUM manifesto, which my results reveal was the most commonly referenced.

⁴⁶ I calculated the number of items in periodicals that contained the word “manifesto” by decade and then normalized these counts to account for the variation in the number of issues and items per title. In the titles from the 1960s, the word “manifesto” is four times more likely to appear than in the 1970s. The relative frequency of “manifesto” drops by half in the periodicals from 1980s and again by a third in the 1990s.

⁴⁷ Viana Muller, “Liberating the Artists: Black Women Take Over,” *Women: A Journal of Liberation*, no. 2 (Fall 1970): 46–47.

⁴⁸ Virginia Maksymowicz, “She Transforms Garbage,” *New Directions for Women* 17, no. 5 (1988): 12–13.

⁴⁹ Export’s films begin appearing in these periodicals in the early 1980s in ads and articles about women’s film festivals. In 1983 a *Heresies* article about *Fraun und Film* discussed Export, which is significant not only for the analysis, but also for the evidence it provides that at least some US based feminist artists were familiar with the German language periodical, which covered Export in far more detail much earlier in her career. [Miriam Hansen, “Frauen Und Film and Feminist Film Culture in West Germany,” *Heresies*, no. 16 (1983): 30–31.] On the reception of Export’s work see Hilary Robinson, “Actionmyth, Historypanic: The Entry of VALIE EXPORT’s Aktionhose: Genitalpanik into Art History,” *N.paradoxa: International Feminist Art Journal* 23 (2013): 84–89.

Aegis	Lesbian Tide
Ain't I a Woman	Lilith
Amazon Quarterly	Media Report to Women
Amazon, The	Meeting Ground
And Ain't I a Woman	National Communication Network for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
Aphra	New Directions for Women
BattleActs	New Directions for Women in New Jersey
Big Mama Rag	New Women's Times
Black Maria	New York Radical Feminists Newsletter
Blazing Star	No More Fun and Games
Bread & Roses	Notes from the [First/Second/Third] Year
Chrysalis	On Our Backs
Common Lives, Lesbian Lives	Quest/a feminist quarterly
Conditions	Second Wave: A Magazine for the New Feminism
Country Women	Secret Storm
CWLU News	Sinister Wisdom
Dandelion	SPAZM
Distaff	Spectre
Dyke	Spokeswoman, The
Dykes And Gorgons	Tell-a-Woman
Echo Of Sappho	Tooth and Nail
Everywoman	Triple Jeopardy
Feelings from Women's Liberation	Up From Under
Feminist Alliance Against Rape	Voices of the Women's Liberation Movement
Feminist Art Journal	WomaNews
Feminist Bookstore News	Woman's World
Feminist Bookstores Newsletter	WomanSpirit
Feminist Voice	Women Against Pornography Newsreport
Furies	Women and Art Quarterly
Her-self	Women Artist News
Heresies	Women Artists Newsletter
It Aint Me Babe	Women: A Journal of Liberation
Lavender Vision	Women's Press
Lavender Woman	Wree-View of Women
Lesbian Connection	

Table 1. Periodicals included in research study taken from Reveal Digital Independent Voices Collection.

Date	Title	Author
1969	Manifesto For Maintenance Art	Mierle Laderman Ukeles
1969	A Manifesto	Agnes Denes
1970	Manifesto Of Wsabal	Michele Wallace
1970	Feminist Manifesto	Nancy Spero
1971	Images On Womanpower	Monica Sjoo And Anne Berg
1972	A Manifesto For The Feminist Artist	Rita Mae Brown
1972	Women's Art: A Manifesto	Valie Export
1975	Womaniesto	Organizations
1977	Cinéma Autre	Klonaris / Thomadaki
1977	Women In The Year 2000	Carolee Schneemann
1978	Women	Z.Budapest, U.Rosenbach, S.B.A.Coven
1979	Change, My Problem Is A Problem Of A Woman	Ewa Partum
1983	Women Artists Of Pakistan Manifesto	
1986	Artists	Chila Burman
1992	The Manifesto	Eva And Co
1994	Bitch Mutant Manifesto	Vns Matrix
1995	Internationale Des Artistes Femmes	Violetta Liagatchev
1997	100 Anti	Old Boys Network
1998	Lilies Of The Valley Unite! Or Not	Lily Bea Moor (Aka Senga Nengudi)
2001	100 Impossible Artworks	Dora Garcia
2002	Zones	Subrosa
2002	Carnal Art Manifesto	Orlan
2002	The Scub Manifesto	Rhani Lee Remedés
2002	Manifesto	Factory Of Found Clothes
2003	Manifesto	Feminist Art Action Brigade
2004	Yes Manifesto	Mette Ingvarstén
2005	Arco Manifesto	Xabier Arakistain
2005	Agreement #1	Yes! Association/Föreningen Ja!
2009	Letter To Marinetti And Manifesto Of The Sceptics	Arahmaiani
2010	Guide To Behaving Badly	Guerrilla Girls
2010	Relational Filmmaking Manifesto	Julie Perini
2011	Ecosex Manifesto	Sprinkle
2011	80:20	CHISA
2013	Manifesta	Silvia Ziraneck
2013	Mundane Afrofuturist Manifesto	Martine Syms

Table 2. Manifestos included in research derived from *Feminist Art Manifestos* Katy Deepwell, ed.

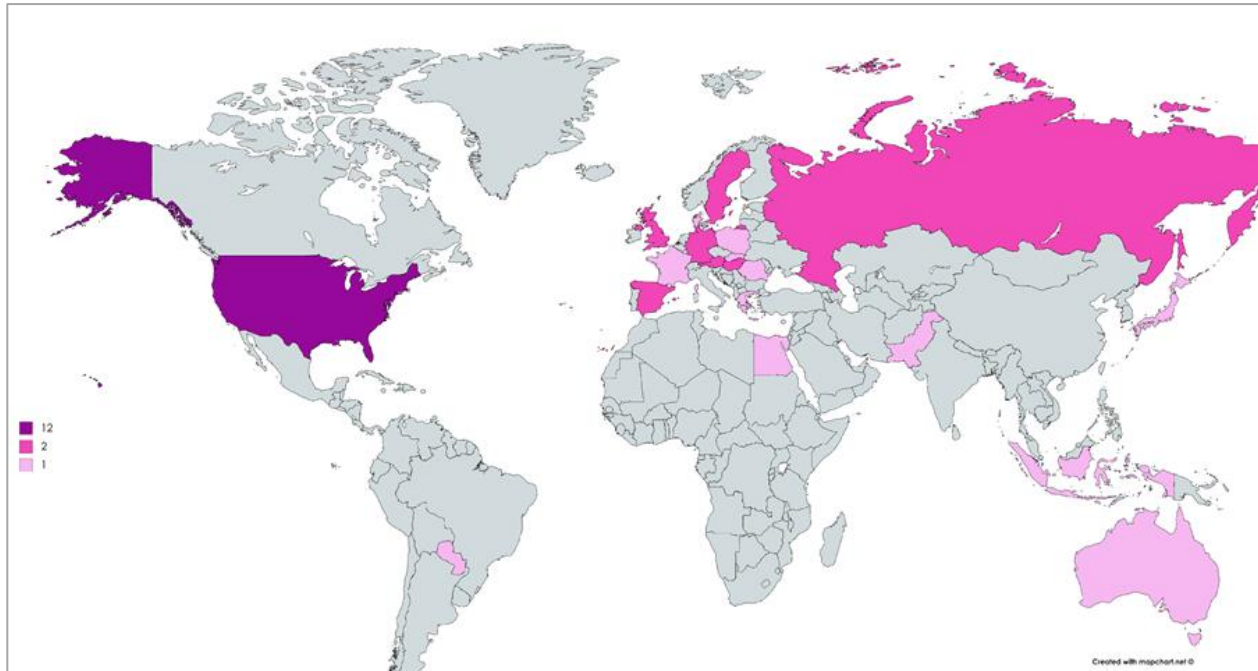


Figure 4. Birthplace of authors of manifestos included in *Feminist Art Manifestos* by country.

releases or web pages,” “as artworks,” and “as texts spoken in performances.”⁵⁰ My approach privileges those that began as texts, so it is not surprising that among the manifestos I found no mention of are two that Deepwell traces to performance origins, including one by Carolee Schneemann. Others seem to have simply been overlooked; Agnes Denes’ early manifesto was not published until 2007.⁵¹

After exhausting the initial subject of my research, I turned to computational analysis to explore to what the relatively small number of appearances of “manifesto” referred. As reflected in Figure 5, the most frequent words preceding “manifesto” were SCUM, Communist, Redstockings and Fourth World, and BITCH with SCUM is invoked twice as often as the next most common title and more times than the three feminist manifestos combined.⁵²

While these manifestos did not appear in Deepwell, three have connections to feminist art.⁵³ The New York-based radical feminist group, the Redstockings, which authored the most widely reprinted manifesto of US women’s liberation, also gave rise to a seldom discussed spinoff, the Redstocking Artists, which along with Women Student and Artists for Black Art Liberation (W.S.A.B.A.L.) published the short-lived *Women and Art Quarterly*.⁵⁴ W.S.A.B.A.L.’s manifesto appears in Deepwell’s anthology, but the Redstocking Artists also authored an unpublished manifesto.⁵⁵

The two most frequently mentioned manifestos, *SCUM* by Valerie Solanas, best known for shooting Andy Warhol, and the *Fourth World Manifesto: An Angry Response to an Imperialist Venture Against the Women’s Liberation Movement*, written by women in Detroit, contain lengthy sections about women and art, but at the time were not generally

⁵⁰ Deepwell, “Introduction,” 17.

⁵¹ Agnes Denes, “Manifesto, Mathematics in My Work & Other Essays by Agnes Denes Hyperion, Volume II, Issue 1, February 2007,” *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 2, no. 1 (2007): 1–11.

⁵² The results were obtained using Antconc, a computational linguistics software package.

⁵³ Deepwell excluded the SCUM manifesto precisely because it was among the “same three or four feminist manifestos” that are so frequently reproduced.

⁵⁴ Jacqueline Rhodes, *Radical Feminism, Writing, and Critical Agency: From Manifesto to Modern* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012), 41.

⁵⁵ Redstocking Artists Position Paper, Box 23, folder Art groups, manifestos, and reports, 1971–1972. Irene Peslikis Papers, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University.

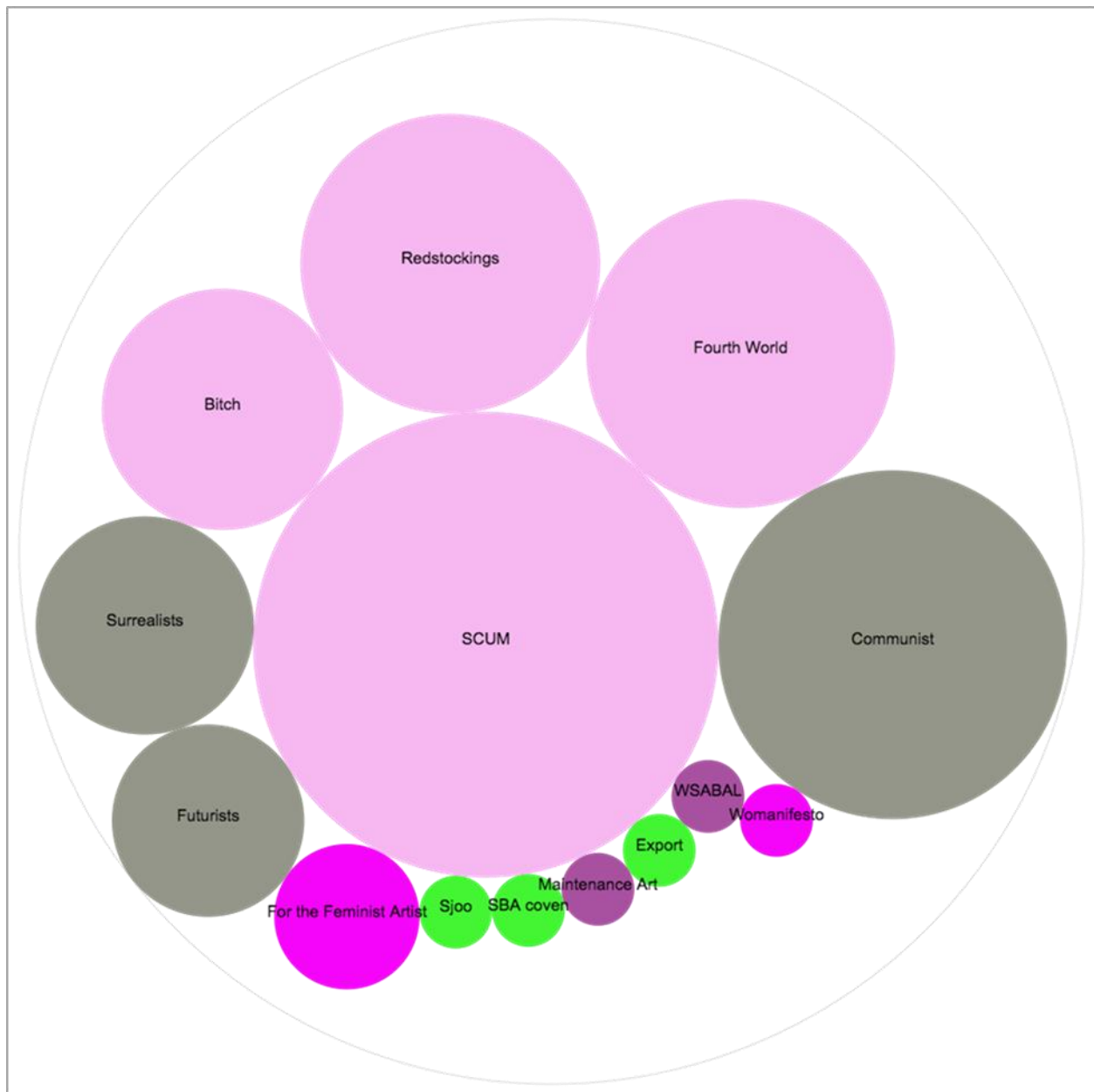


Figure 5. Presence of selected manifestos in sampled women's movement periodicals.

discussed in that context.⁵⁶ While Susan Tepper read the Solanas screed at a 1971 forum asking “are museums relevant to women,” and *Big Mama Rag*, a Denver, Colorado newspaper, included a quote on great art from SCUM in its June 1974 issue, the manifesto was far better known for its author’s infamous actions than for its analysis of the art world.⁵⁷ Similarly, the *Fourth World Manifesto* was controversial for the separatism it seemed to endorse, not for its plea to an end to sexism in the art world.

The number of references to *The Communist Manifesto* raised the issue of male-authored manifestos. Words that appeared in close proximity to the word “manifesto” showed that these periodicals contained references to male-authored canonical art movement manifestos, such as those of surrealism and by the futurists. These male-authored documents are less prevalent than the most commonly mentioned feminist manifestos, but more common than any of the manifestos included in Deepwell.

Finally, this analysis also highlights a very few manifestos by feminists outside the US that appeared, hinting at a transnational circulation of some texts. The first issue of *Heresies: A Feminist Publication on Art and Politics*, contained part of a manifesto written in 1971 by the Italian group Rivolta Femminile.⁵⁸ *Aphra*, a literary journal produced out of New York reprinted the play Manifesto by Dacia Maraini, an Italian feminist over three issues from 1972-1973.⁵⁹ *Big Mama Rag*, edited by a Denver, Colorado collective, published a Spanish feminist manifesto in 1979.⁶⁰ Further research into how these documents made their way to the US might provide insights into other channels that connected feminists internationally.

While my hoped-for network of circulating feminist art manifestos never emerged, manifestos produced in the 1980s and 1990s reflect generational connections that challenge the too often rigid periodization of feminist art history and raise crucial questions about how feminist ideas are transmitted historically.⁶¹ Titles indicate that later artists had at least passing familiarity with feminist predecessors. Such trans-generational and transnational exchanges can be found in “SCUB manifesto” (2002) by Rhani Lee Remedés (US), with its nod to SCUM, and the Australian “Bitch Mutant Manifesto” (1996), which echoes the “BITCH Manifesto” (1970). Additionally, “Yes Manifesto” (2002) by Mette Ingvarstsen (Sweden) may be placed alongside American Yvonne Rainer’s “No Manifesto” (1965), while Chila Kumari Burman’s (UK) “There Have Always Been Great Blackwomen Artists” (1986) riffs off Linda Nochlin’s (US) well-known polemic. Furthermore, Indonesian artist Arahmaiani’s “Letter To Marinetti” (2009) provides an example of twenty-first century feminist artists still in dialogue with male-authored art historical manifestos. Tracking the earlier manifestos through anthologies and linked internet sites may provide insights into their continued influence.⁶²

Conclusion

As Miriam Kienle points out in her consideration of the Warhol Timeweb, the artist comes to appear connected to every major event of the twentieth-century without regard to the weight of or constraints upon those connections. Networks, blunt methods for considering connections, do not provide a way to reflect on the quality of

⁵⁶ Both of these manifestos circulated in various versions over the years, first mimeographed and then as pamphlets before appearing between the covers of a book. The best-known version of the Fourth World Manifesto now appears in the popular anthology, *Dear Sisters*, which reproduced a 1971 mimeographed copy. [Jacqueline Rhodes, *Radical Feminism, Writing, and Critical Agency: From Manifesto to Modern* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012), 41.] SCUM is widely available on the web as well as in a Verso Edition. [Valerie Solanas and Avital Ronell, *Scum Manifesto* (London ; New York: Verso, 2004).] There is very little written about Redstocking Artists. See Broude, *Feminist Politics*, 90-91.

⁵⁷ Pat Mainardi, “Open Hearing at Brooklyn Museum,” *Feminist Art Journal* 1, no. 1 (1972): 6, 26. The SCUM quote appears between articles. [*Big Mama Rag* 2, no. 8 (June 1, 1974): 5.]

⁵⁸ Rivolta Femminile, “On Woman’s Refusal to Celebrate Male Creativity,” *Heresies*, no. 1 (1977): 106-7.

⁵⁹ Dacia Maraini, “Manifesto,” *Aphra* 4, no. 1 (1973 1972): 49-72; Dacia Maraini, “Manifesto,” *Aphra* 4, no. 2 (1973): 25-47; Dacia Maraini, “Manifesto,” *Aphra* 4, no. 3 (1973): 48-80.

⁶⁰ Partido Feminista de España, “A Feminist Manifesto,” *Big Mama Rag*, October 1979, 6, 20.

⁶¹ Catherine Grant, “Fans of Feminism: Re-Writing Histories of Second-Wave Feminism in Contemporary Art,” *Oxford Art Journal* 34, no. 2 (2011): 265-86; Michelle Meagher, “Telling Stories About Feminist Art,” *Feminist Theory* 12, no. 3 (2011): 297-316.

⁶² Robinson, *Feminist Art Theory*; Amelia Jones, ed., *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

interactions and may not adequately capture influence or significance. While my anticipated circulation network of feminist manifestos was a failure, its few successes reveal some of the weaknesses of network analysis. The most frequently mentioned manifesto that appears in Deepwell's anthology, Rita Mae Brown's *Manifesto for The Feminist Artist*, would hardly be considered the most significant or influential. Outside of a biography of its author, no studies of feminism appear to discuss it at all.⁶³ It may also be that the privileging of texts that circulation networks rely on is counter to the centrality of face-to-face interactions among movements for liberation. Perhaps copies of manifestos passed hand to hand, their ideas circulated via word of mouth, rather than via print networks.

I have particular qualms about the ability of network analysis to adequately conceptualize influence or significance for marginalized groups. Even in the case of Schneemann, among a handful of the most celebrated female artists of her generation, network analysis proved quite difficult. Her archived letters are less processed than her male peers, making it impossible to create a thorough correspondence network of her extant letters.⁶⁴ Schneemann's collected papers contain eight chronologically delineated boxes of correspondence and thirteen geographically labeled folders. Only forty-eight correspondences have been separated into individual folders. Compare this situation to that of artist Allan Kaprow, whose papers are held at the same

repository. His correspondence has not only been sorted by "teaching" and "professional," but has also been "[a]rranged alphabetically by the last name of the correspondent or the name of the institution or organization" and includes folder level descriptions of the contents.⁶⁵ Of the ninety-six folders of personal correspondence, only five are chronologically delineated.

Ultimately, network analysis alone proved inadequate in locating the connections I longed for. Much of Schneemann's correspondence is caught up in the patriarchal art world she has battled for so long. Including all her extant correspondence in a correspondence network would still privilege those at times combative links. Only when the content of Schneemann's letters is considered do her deeper female circles, the "tribes" she explicitly invoked, women of Fluxus, US based feminist performance artists, and feminist filmmakers, become evident.

Given the dearth of feminist artists' archival materials, the paucity of digitized corpora relating to them, and the relative lack of metadata about feminist artists, network analysis will continue to be of only limited utility until these systemic and structural problems are addressed. Even then, as I have suggested here, its greatest utility may be in conjunction with other digital approaches.

⁶³ Carol Marie Ward, *Rita Mae Brown* (New York: Twayne, 1993), 18.

⁶⁴ Lynda Bunting, "Finding Aid for the Carolee Schneemann Papers, 1959-1994," *Getty Research Institute*, January 16, 2017,

<http://archives2.getty.edu:8082/xtf/view?docId=ead/950001/950001.xml>.

⁶⁵ Annette Leddy, "Finding Aid for the Allan Kaprow Papers, 1940-1997," *Getty Research Institute*, January 16, 2017,

<http://archives2.getty.edu:8082/xtf/view?docId=ead/980063/980063.xml>.