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## Preface and Contents

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# disClosure

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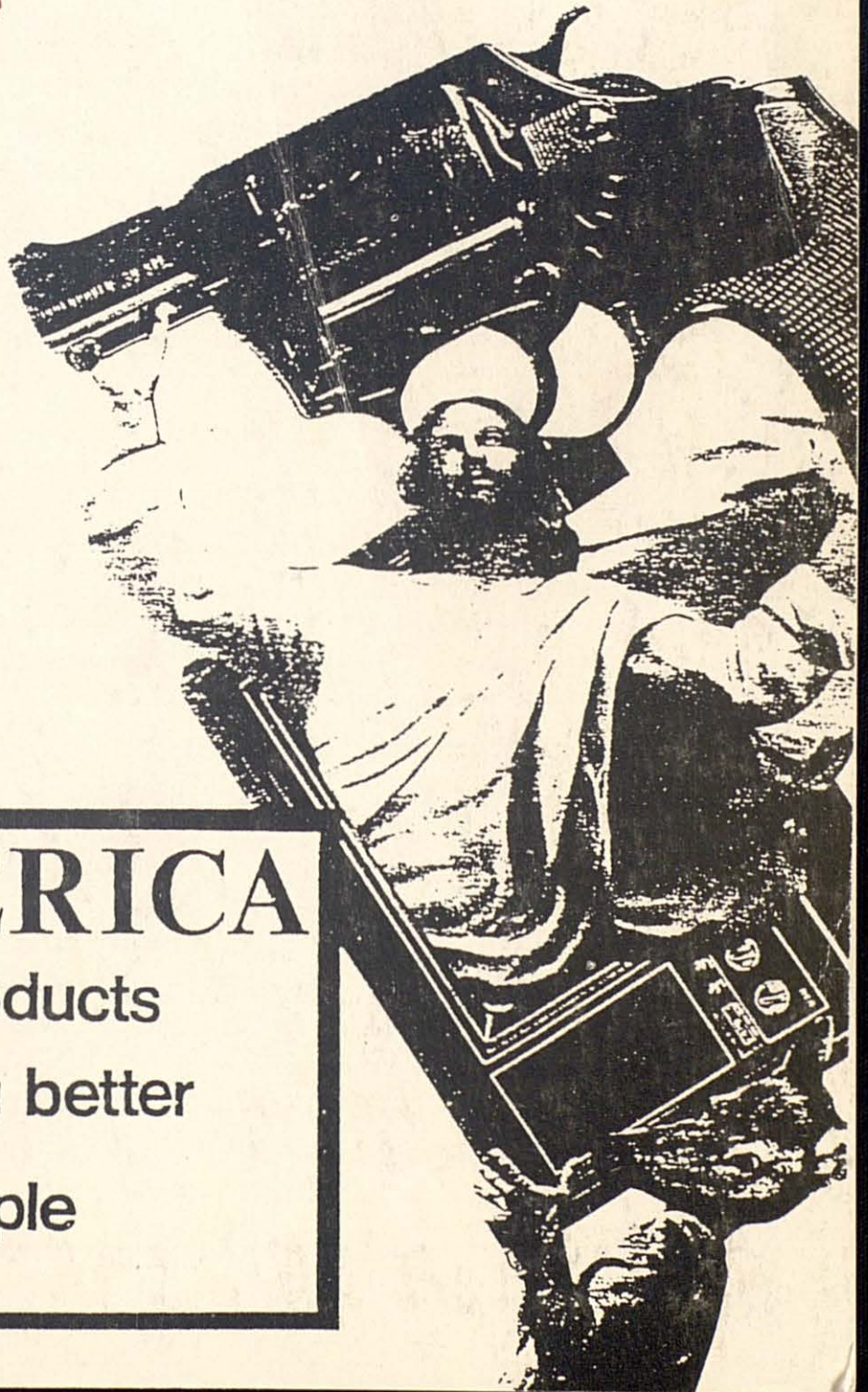
Autumn 1992

“the buying and selling  
of culture”

CONSUME

AMERICA

is products  
making better  
people



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#### disClosure #2: The Buying and Selling of Culture

It is with great pleasure that we deliver this edition of *disClosure* to you, hot off the proverbial press! Following an enthusiastic reception of our inaugural edition, devoted to the theme of "Rethinking Contemporary Mythologies", we received a large number of excellent and creative submissions for this second edition, on "The Buying and Selling of Culture". We are also pleased to be already be receiving queries and outlines of material being prepared for our next edition, which will examine "Fin de Siecle Democracy" - See the inside of the back cover for more details!

Since *disClosure* was inaugurated a year and a half ago, we have endeavoured to produce a journal which is interdisciplinary and even experimental in nature. We are aware that standard academic modes of discourse delimit that scope of what *can* be said, often in unhelpful, and disciplining, ways. In this we recognise the exercise of power implicit in Pierre Macherey's observation that "For some things to be said, there are others which must not be said".

In this edition of *disClosure* you will find poems by Micheal Palmer and Eileen Myles as well as letters from Myles outlining the platform for her U.S. presidential candidacy. In different ways these pieces are concerned with the complex constitution of discourses about the body and national politics (Myles), and about the relationship between aesthetics and the commodity form (Palmer).

Douglas Kellner's essay, excerpted from his newly published book *The Persian Gulf TV War*, examines the subtle and not so subtle ways in which the Pentagon and the Oval Office manipulated media coverage of the US military build-up in the Persian Gulf. In ways which resonate with Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent*, Kellner implies not just that overt manipulation of the press took place, but that the very modalities of contemporary media seem predisposed towards such systematic distortion.

Gary Weismann's essay on conservative interpretations of the "politically correct" takes up some of these same issues. Looking at a number of recent discussions of PC in the popular press, Weismann argues that conservative ideologues have created a hegemonic discourse about PC which portrays it as a profoundly totalising and fanatical social moment - "a radical cant". By reducing the debate to such arcana as "do I say 'pet' instead of 'animal companion'?", this conservative discourse seeks to derail any constructive attempt to broaden the human conversation.

T.S. McMillin detects a different sort of interpretive impulse in the remarkable popularity of advice and 'how-to' guides aimed at human relationships.

Taking Leo Buscaglia's commercially successful *Love* (1972) as an archetype, he analyses the ways in which Buscaglia renders love as "a commodity equivalent in status to frozen peas, floor wax, and vine ripe tomatoes" (p.46).

Two more essays, by Trey Strecker and Amy Weissman, examine the ways in which cultural boundaries are manipulated to criticise orthodox, main-stream ideas. Weismann deconstructs aspects of the complex intersection of race and sexuality as they are represented in Jennie Livingston's *Paris is Burning*. Strecker examines Don DeLillo's recent forays in *White Noise* into the notion that the process of commodification has at last achieved the complete colonisation of the (post)modern subject. The difference between the two essays though, is that in the latter the protagonist assimilates himself into the "white noise" of the atopic "hyperreal", while in the former, the men of The Ball carefully negotiate the nihilisms of both total assimilation and total marginalisation.

Micheal Pinsky contributes an essay examining the Disney Corporation's recent venture, *Pleasure Island*, where happy consumer drones can obtain, for a price of course, the anaesthetic effects of participation in a completely artificial historical narrative.

Some of the art which is included in this edition was commissioned especially for *disClosure*. Lexington artists Jim Shambu and those at the PELCE and dadata collectives have contributed several creations which use popular images in a critical and, even, counter hegemonic fashion. The editorial collective is especially pleased to be able to publish such excellent and thematically appropriate art works.

All the volumes selected for review deal with some aspect of commodification and popular culture. We have tried to move more towards the publication of review essays, which by treating several texts in conjunction with one another, reveal much more about each text than would a more standard sort of review.

Again, we are very pleased to present our latest edition of *disClosure*. We invite any and all interested persons to consider submitting work for publication in our next edition, which will be on the theme of "Fin de Siecle Democracy".

For assistance in the preparation of this issue special thanks go out to Virginia Blum, Peter Mortensen, Jim Wilkinson, Janet Hayes, Michael Palmer, John Pickles and Ernie Yanarella. Thanks also to Chris Carneal and PELCE for the art used on the cover of this issue.

Cædmon Staddon and Greg Howard,  
Editors for Issue #2

*disClosure #2 - "The Buying and Selling of Culture"*

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