POP ART AND THE CONTEST OVER AMERICAN CULTURE

Pop Art and the Contest over American Culture examines the socially and aesthetically subversive character of the movement that transformed American art and culture in the 1960s. Providing a historically contextualized reading of American pop art, Sara Doris locates the movement within the larger framework of the social, cultural, and political transformations of that decade. Pop’s use of discredited mass-cultural imagery and its affinities with marginalized forms of taste – gay camp and youth culture – worked to challenge established social and cultural hierarchies. What was really at stake, Doris argues, was not so much the definition of culture, but rather who would be permitted to define it. By analyzing pop art within the context of the broader social upheavals of the 1960s, this study establishes that it was not only a significant catalyst of those transformations, but that it profoundly shaped the postmodern culture in which we now live.

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Sara Doris
University of Memphis
To my father
and the memory of my mother
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No project of this scope is possible without the ongoing support and encouragement of others. This book began as a dissertation, and I am indebted first of all to my committee, whose guidance was crucial to the development of this project. Stephen Eisenman graciously assumed the responsibility of chairing that committee and provided valuable suggestions as to how I might expand the theoretical engagement of my analysis. Whitney Davis provided a thorough and scrupulous reading of draft material, raising questions that helped me clarify my thinking on matters both theoretical and contextual. Nancy Maclean was an invaluable resource for the development of the historical contextualization of my thesis, providing numerous thoughtful suggestions for expansion of that dimension of my research. I began my thesis under the direction of Michael Leja, whose guidance was crucially important in defining the scope of this study; he continued to provide advice long after his formal obligation to do so ended. Mike Sherry was also an important resource in the early stages of this project, challenging me to ask historical questions engaging the larger significance of the art historical issues I was investigating. Northwestern University provided several crucial sources of funding for the early stages of my research, including a Shanley Graduate Travel Fund Scholarship, a research grant from the Alice Berline Kaplan Center for the Humanities, and a Graduate Fellowship from the Graduate School of Northwestern.

Part of Chapter 5 was previously published as “Your Fifteen Minutes Are Up: Fame, Obsolescence and Camp in Warhol’s Star Portraits 1962–1967” in Reframing Andy Warhol: Constructing American Myths, Heroes and Cultural Icons. I am grateful to its editor, my friend Wendy Grossman, for encouraging me to take my research in a new direction, and to The Art Gallery at the University of Maryland for its gracious permission to reprint this material in revised form.

In the lengthy process of converting a dissertation into a book, I was assisted by numerous people. I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my editors at Cambridge University Press: to Beatrice Rehl, for her infinite patience and continued faith in this project, and to Eric Crahan for his assistance concerning logistical matters both large and small. My reviewers at Cambridge, Sylvia Harrison and David McCarthy, both provided numerous insightful suggestions for the improvement of this text. Erika Doss likewise provided thoughtful feedback and early on encouraged me to turn my manuscript into a book. I also profited, at various stages, from the editorial suggestions of John L. Doris, Margaret Doris–Pierce, and John M. Doris; their feedback was of enormous assistance in helping me clarify my thinking.

I am doubly indebted to the generosity of the Sara Roby Foundation and to the Fellowship program at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. This project received crucial early support through a Sara Roby Predoctoral Fellowship at SAAM; fittingly, as it was
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

drawing to a close, I was a Sara Roby Postdoctoral Fellow there. Both the incomparable research resources of that institution and the Smithsonian community itself made an important contribution to the development of this book. Virginia Mecklenberg, both friend and mentor, generously provided enthusiastic support of my work as well as helpful advice, both professional and scholarly. The curatorial staffs of the Museum of American Art, the National Portrait Gallery, and the National Museum of American History welcomed me into their scholarly community; I am particularly grateful to Pete Daniel, Anne Collins Goodyear, Charlie McGovern, and Anne Wagner for stimulating conversation generally as well as for their contributions to my thinking about my research. Cecelia Chin, Pat Lynagh, and the entire staff of the SAAM/NPG library went out of their way to facilitate my research there; I owe them many thanks. The staff of the Washington, D.C., facility of the Archives of American Art likewise made a point of being helpful; I am particularly grateful to Liza Kerwin for calling my attention to materials relevant to my project. The staffs of the libraries of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum also went out of their way to provide assistance on my visits to their collections.


I am indebted to more people, in more ways, than I can fully acknowledge here. For their support of and contributions to my project, both direct and indirect, I would like to thank: Fred Albertson, Andrea Bagdy, Matthew Baigell, John Belton, Jobyl Boone, Evan Brownstein, Jo Buffalo, Amelia Goerlitz, Mike Hathaway, Helen Langa, Byron Lewis, Doreen Maloney, Kevin Melchionne, Cynthia Mills, Monji Pendakur, Robert Swanson, Stephanie Taylor, Steven Todd, Lee Vedder, and Barbara Walthall. I would also like to thank the Fellows at SAAM, the National Portrait Gallery, and the National Museum of American History both for the intellectual stimulation and the collegiality they provided. Above all, I offer heartfelt thanks to my family: to my father and mother, John L. and Marjorie Fouts Doris, as well as my sisters and brother, Margaret, Ellen, Joan, and John. Without their love and support this work would not have been possible.