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Bradford R. Collins

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Dick Tracy and the Case of Warhol's Closet

A Psychoanalytic Detective Story

Bradford R. Collins

When I set myself the task of bringing to light what human beings keep hidden within them . . . by observing what they say and what they show, I thought the task was a harder one than it really is. He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his finger tips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore.

—Sigmund Freud, “Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria” (1905)

Andy Warhol (1928–1987) was homosexual and Catholic. Until recently such facts seemed peripheral to an understanding of his art, which was thought to mirror American popular culture and explore the issue of celebrity. But a new generation of scholars has lately found evidence of another dimension of his work. Warhol often chose his subjects not only because of their public meanings but because of their subcultural connotations as well, which he neither expected nor wished the general public to discern. Warhol's images of Marlon Brando as motorcyclist (fig. 1) and Elvis Presley as gunslinger, for example, carried two meanings, one of which was unavailable to heterosexuals. Because the “macho” cyclist and the cowboy with gun and holster were standard characters in gay erotica at the time, Warhol knew that readers of such materials would see in his works both an homage to Hollywood and its star system and objects of desire. Scholars have concluded that Warhol

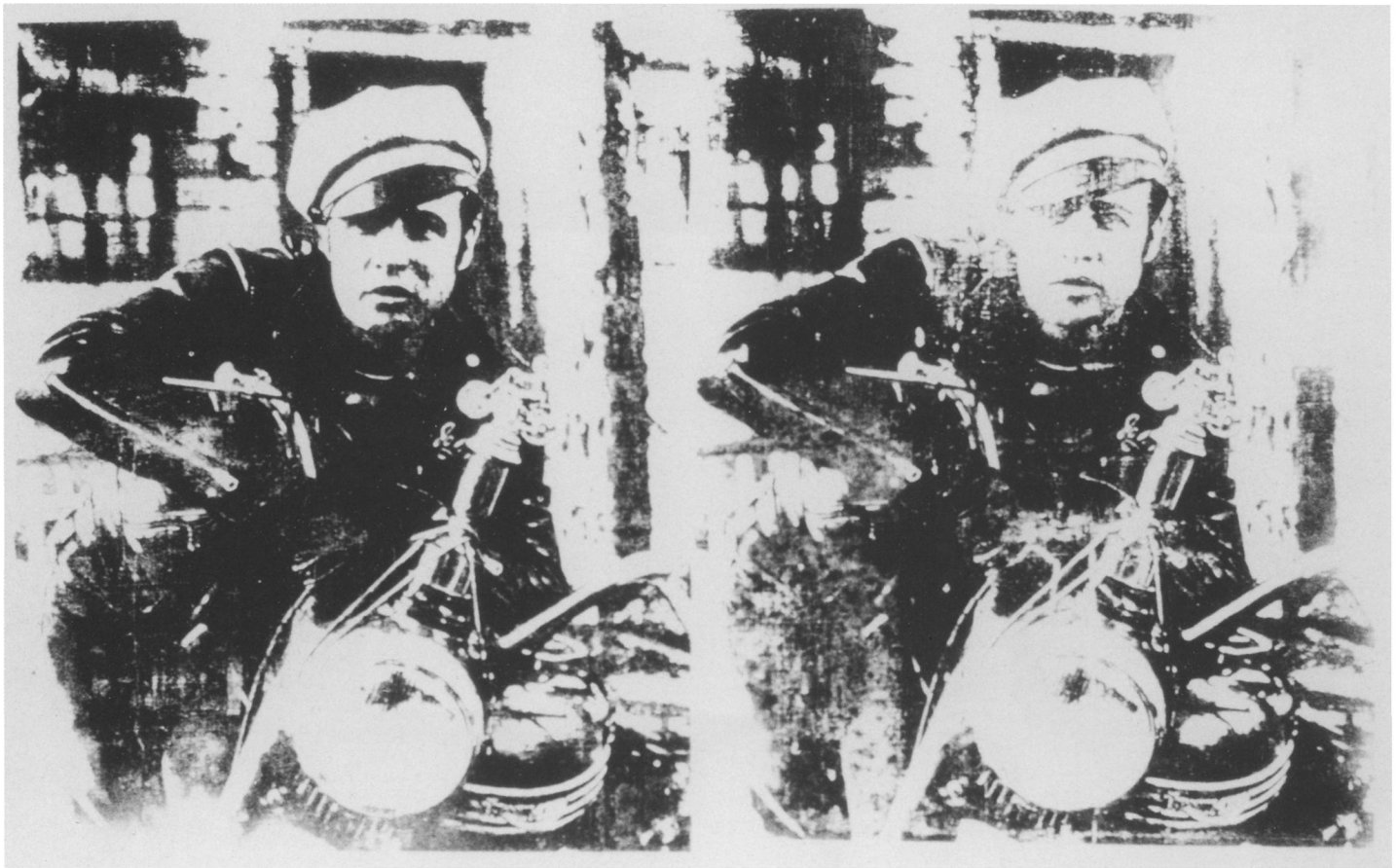
meant not merely to circumvent the pervasive homophobia in the American art world and service his outlaw desires, but also, by refusing to behave, to combat the prejudice, thus participating in the early stage of the cultural resistance that would culminate in the 1969 Stonewall riots.¹

Another of Warhol's paintings used as evidence of a “fey but ferocious . . . war against the exclusion of swishiness and fagginess from the repertory of visual art” is *Dick Tracy* (frontispiece), which the artist appropriated from a comic book (fig. 2). The author of these remarks, literary critic Michael Moon, suggests that Tracy was more than a culturally acceptable stand-in for the square-jawed Adonises whom Warhol had drawn in the 1950s. A conversation between the artist and one of his 1960s superstars, Ultra Violet, as reported in her memoir, implies that Tracy may have been the prototype for these “beautiful boys.” “Who were your heroes?” she asked Warhol. “Dick Tracy. I [S]cotch-taped his photograph on the

Andy Warhol, *Dick Tracy*, 1961. Synthetic polymer paint, 201 x 114.3 cm (79 x 45 in.). David Geffen Collection

W P. SAM EYE
ALL THREE.





1 Andy Warhol, *Silver Marlon*, 1963. Silk-screen ink and synthetic polymer paint, 178 x 203.2 cm (70 x 80 in.). Private Collection

bedroom wall.” “Why Dick Tracy?” “Sex appeal.” “You just stared at him?” “I fantasized about Dick’s dick.”²

The unpublished photostat that Warhol used to translate the original image onto canvas (fig. 3) further substantiates Moon’s thesis. At the time, Warhol typically photostated his materials, then with the aid of an opaque projector outlined the basic design onto his canvas. Before taking the photostat for *Dick Tracy*, Warhol attached an advertisement for a male girdle that features a punning invitation to homosexuality—“Try Man Power.”³

Additional investigation of the painting and related art works reveals a deeper, more private level of meaning—iconographic elements apparently meant neither for the public nor a subculture, but for himself alone. A psychoanalytic analysis of *Dick Tracy* and associated works

suggests that Warhol waged his struggle against societal homophobia as part of a more urgent effort to resist the most insidious form of the prejudice—one that has been internalized.

Fantasy of Repair

Moon also perceptively speculates that Warhol’s early infatuation with Tracy’s ruggedly conventional good looks contributed significantly to the artist’s well-documented self-hatred. By the late 1950s, Warhol had become a rather homely man, not unlike Tracy’s sidekick in the painting, Sam Catchem, especially with regard to his large, unattractive nose. If Tracy is a surrogate for the type of man whom Warhol fancied, it might follow that Catchem, the kind of man Warhol was, may figure here. The painting, which

eschews plot and action, turns on a contrast between the appearance of the two men, the ill-favored profile of one emphasizing the attractiveness of the other. Dick Tracy's creator, Chester Gould, had introduced Catchem—whom he modeled after the television puppet Howdy Doody—into the comic strip in 1948 to provide an expressive foil for his handsome and unsmiling boss. Taking his cue from Gould, Warhol heightened the physical disparity between the two men by altering Catchem's features. Instead of making

to the photostat of Tracy and Catchem. Warhol based the *Before and After* paintings on a small ad that appeared regularly in the *National Enquirer* (fig. 5), which promised surgical resolutions to a litany of facial problems in addition to the one illustrated. Solutions to hair problems recur in the series. Both *Wigs* (fig. 6) and *Bald?* (fig. 7), for example, promise answers to hair loss. Warhol used the same before-and-after format for *Bald?* that he employed in the paintings highlighting surgery of the nose. A different

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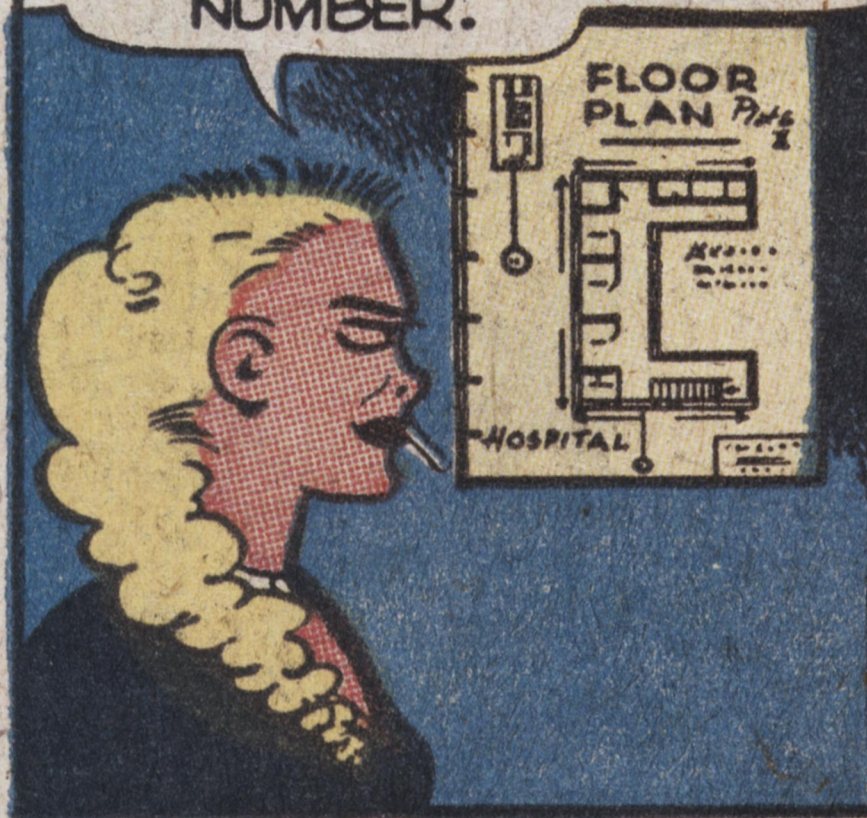
Catchem's chin strong, as Gould had done, Warhol shortened it with a broken and indecisive line. Warhol also changed Catchem's nose. Whereas in the original it is cut off by Tracy's hat, Warhol deliberately scalloped it, producing an even more unsightly alternative to Tracy's chiseled counterpart.

Warhol could have made these changes simply to clarify what he found attractive in the detective, but the blatant disfigurement of Catchem's nose draws as much attention to itself as it does to Tracy's. To grasp the full implications of this comparison, we begin by noting the striking structural and thematic similarities between *Dick Tracy* and a trio of *Before and After* paintings that Warhol produced in 1961–62 (fig. 4). These works, too, turn on a contrast between an attractive and an unattractive profile, as determined in each case by the nose. The three versions of *Before and After* belong to a series of approximately a dozen paintings and drawings inspired by cheap classified ads offering solutions to physical defects—just the kind of ad that Warhol attached

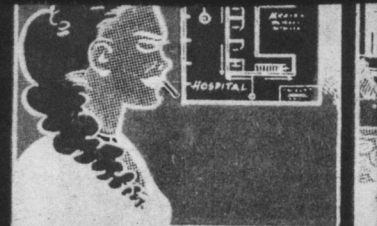
hair problem, graying, and its treatment is featured at the top of *Advertisements* (fig. 8). The man's head is from an ad for jet-black hair tint that Warhol cut from a newspaper classified section, collaged with six other ads, and photostated to use in his paintings (fig. 9).

Four other ads in the photostat offer solutions to physical imperfections. Two of these, one for a "perfected invention" designed to relieve the suffering and worry caused by "most forms of reducible rupture" and one for a bodybuilding course, also appear in *Advertisements*, along with the Pepsi Cola logo. Although the Pepsi ad might have had some related, private significance for the artist, we can probably explain its appearance in the painting on compositional grounds. The oval of the logo complements and balances the large rectangular elements on the right. A study of the painting suggests that it was laid out in a classic pyramid. The two torsos echo one another, thematically as well as formally. Whereas crude, rudimentary forms define the flawed female body, a linear grace and elegance

THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO
KNOW—JUST HIS ROOM
NUMBER.



THAT MAKES IT A CLEAN
SWEEP, SAM. WE'VE GOT
ALL THREE.



TRY **MAN
POWER**

TODAY— money
back in ten days
if you are not
DELIGHTED and
AMAZED!
ORDER TODAY.
Give waist size!

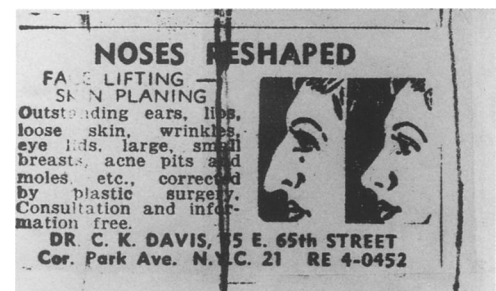
2 Chester Gould, two panels from
"Dick Tracy and the Case of the
Fiendish Photographers," Part
One, *Dick Tracy* 1 (St. Louis:
Harvey Publications, April 1961),
p. 145

3 Andy Warhol, photostat for *Dick
Tracy*, 1961. Archives of the Andy
Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh,
Founding Collection Contribu-
tion, Thomas Ammann Fine
Art AG



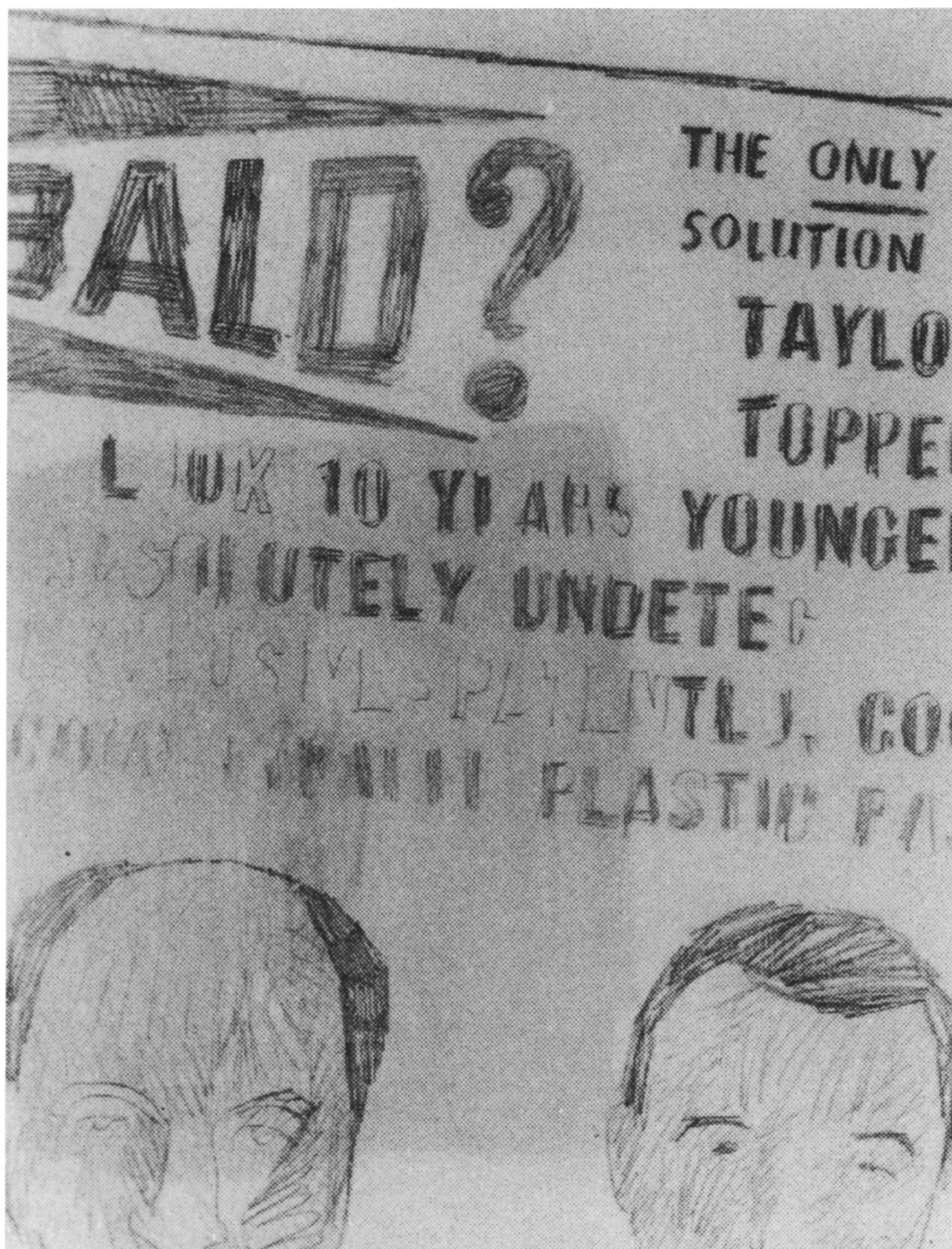
- 4 Andy Warhol, *Before and After 3*, 1962. Synthetic polymer paint, 182.9 x 255 cm (72 x 100 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Purchased with funds from Charles Simon
- 5 Andy Warhol, photostat for *Before and After 3*, ca. 1960. Archives of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Founding Collection Contribution, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

determine the ideal male. We are tempted to wonder if Warhol thought of the two figures as a variation on the before-and-after theme, not just because of the ad for nose reshaping that appears at the lower right in *Advertisements*, but because the notion is implicit in the figure of the bodybuilder. Muscle development ads usually illustrated the story of the miraculous transformation of a skinny young man in a matter of weeks (fig. 10). For the viewer raised on such ads (as Warhol himself was), it was difficult not to visualize the underdeveloped “before” figure when he was confronted with an image of the “HERO of MEN” he longed to become.



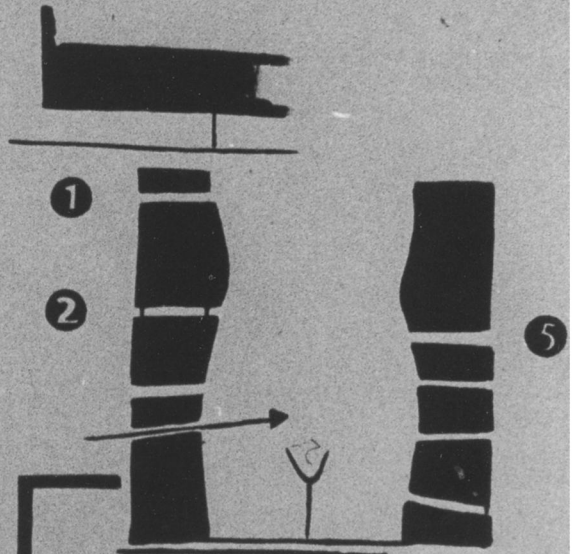
Though not as refined in line as his beautiful boy drawings (fig.11), the bodybuilder nonetheless calls to mind an approach as well as a subject that Warhol had supposedly renounced several months earlier. The similarities between this figure

- 7 Andy Warhol, *Bald?*, 1960. Pencil and gouache, 73 x 57.2 cm (28 5/8 x 22 1/2 in.). Dia Center for the Arts, New York



and the drawings suggest that in addition to being a figure of envy, as advertisers intended, he may also have been, for his appropriator and a particular segment of his audience, an object of desire. The character was another of the homoerotic “clones” Warhol turned to in the early 1960s. Like Elvis as gunslinger and Brando as motorcyclist, the shirtless muscleman

triggered very different meanings for the gay, as opposed to the straight, viewer. Warhol’s slyly erotic use of the character is most evident in a painting devoted entirely to him, *Strong Arms and Broads* (fig. 12). The suggestive placement of his hands and the words “Hands and Fingers”—which to the casual observer appears randomly rescued from the text



Wber Y
Rupture?

1
5

ST G ARMS



NOSES RESHAPI

25¢



- 8 Andy Warhol, *Advertisements*, 1960. Synthetic polymer paint, 183 x 137.2 cm (72 x 54 in.). Private Collection, Berlin, on extended loan to the Stadische Museum Abteibergh, Monchengladbach
- 9 Andy Warhol, photostat for *Advertisements*, 1961. Archives of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Founding Collection Contribution, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

of the original ad—further emphasizes the issue of what he is holding, or what the viewer himself might like to hold.

Warhol's personal investment in the homosexual connotations of the body-builder seems evident and suggests that his interest in the other aspect of the subject, physical fitness, explored in *Advertisements*, might also depend on private associations. The most obvious of these pertain to the artist's well-known dissatisfaction with his own physique. Warhol suffered all the ills seen in *Advertisements* except "ruptures," which means that even the ad might have had a strong resonance for him. He could well have chosen it because it expressed his image of himself as severely flawed, and the suffering he thereby endured.

As for the other ads in *Advertisements*, the personal parallels are more obvious, not simply by virtue of the problems cited but also because of the solutions recommended. With respect to his appearance, Warhol was most distressed about the rapid thinning of his hair and the veiny enlargement of his nose. We may judge both his anguish over these imperfections and his desire to correct them from a pair of before-and-after passport photographs taken in 1956 (fig. 13). By slimming his nose and adding hair in the right-hand photo, Warhol imaginatively rectified his perceived faults. Later that year, he purchased the first of the wigs for which he would later become famous. And in 1956, Warhol addressed the other complaint by having his nose surgically scraped, or "planed," a procedure mentioned in the source ad for his *Before and After* series (see fig. 5). Charles Lisanby, a close friend at the time, attests to Warhol's high hopes that the operation might alter his entire appearance, and thus his life. "He had very definitely the idea that if he had an operation on his nose, which was kind of bulbous, then, suddenly, that would change his life . . . that he would become an Adonis," Lisanby said. "[A]nd that I and other people would suddenly



think that he [was] as physically attractive as many of the people that he admired."⁴

In *Advertisements* Warhol alludes to two other obstacles to his ardent wish to be beautiful. Sometime in the 1950s, Warhol's hair began to thin and, simultaneously, go gray. He dealt with the latter problem, like the man at the top of the painting, by dyeing it. And, Warhol had always been physically underdeveloped, the classic weakling addressed in body-builder ads. One of his friends observed that Warhol had "no shoulders." In 1954, as part of his program of physical self-improvement, he began a muscle-building program at the YMCA. According to his trainer, he was able to do fifty pushups by 1956, and for most of the remainder of his life was committed to the pursuit of just the kind of "strong arms and broad shoulders" that he illustrated in *Advertisements*.⁵

The relationship between Warhol's art and life was dynamic and complex. By featuring in his works a number of veiled references to this troubling dimension of

- 10 Detail of an advertisement from *Dick Tracy* 1 (St. Louis: Harvey Publications, April 1961), p. 145
- 11 Andy Warhol, *Untitled*, ca. 1957. Pen, 42.5 x 35.2 cm (16 3/4 x 13 7/8 in.). Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh

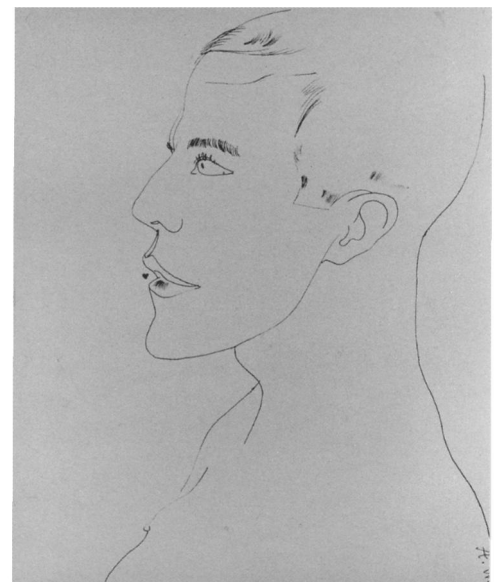


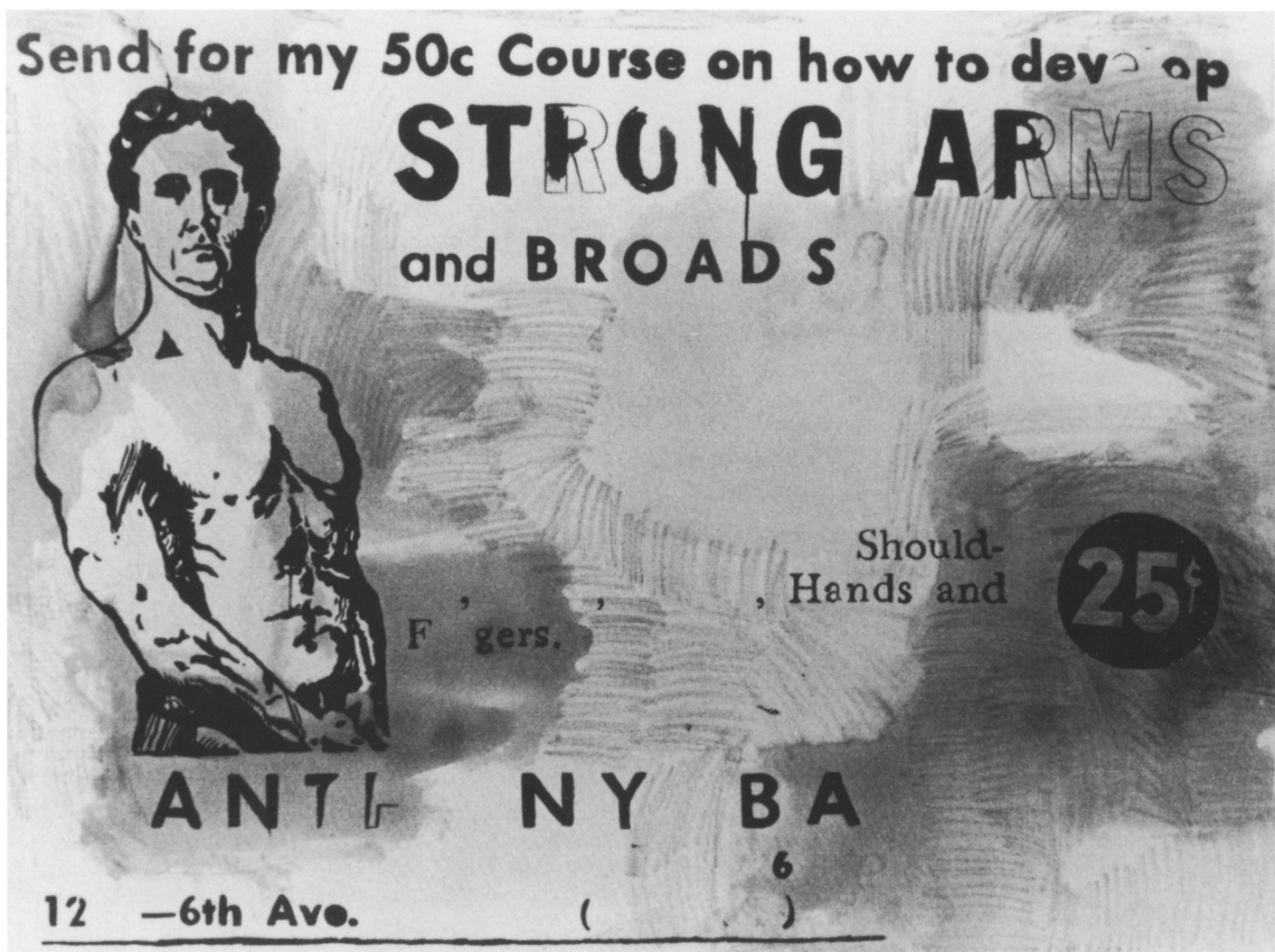
his private life, Warhol was not simply creating a kind of diary. Just as the body-builder and other gay clones served Warhol's desires, so too did the corrective images of the classifieds. The issue of personal transformation was on Warhol's mind at the beginning of the 1960s as a result of his decision to pursue a career in the fine arts, a refocusing of his ambitions that required him to alter his image both as a commercial artist and a gay man. Warhol later reported that discussions with one of his mentors, Emile de Antonio, had convinced him that if he wanted to succeed in the New York art world—then both antibourgeois and homophobic—he would not only have to hide his commercial activities to conform to the profile of the avant-garde artist, but would also have to follow the example of Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns and give up his “swish” behavior and “try to look straight.” The transformations in physical appearance featured in the classifieds might embody the radical changes in his professional appearance that he was attempting to negotiate in the eyes of the New York art world. He used the material of those ads to create scenarios of self-transformation in his art, even as he was attempting to achieve the same *through* it.⁶

The changes referred to in the paintings and drawings, however stereotypical, also replicate those that Warhol had earlier hoped to make in himself. The fundamental fantasy on which these

works depend is evident in the thematic and structural similarities between the pair of passport photos and the group of paintings and drawings under discussion. Like the photographs, these works focus on a simple dynamic of change, from “before” to “after.” If we can determine that Warhol continued to be “consumed by his own unattractiveness” and to harbor his youthful dream of rectifying his problems, then we will have to admit that through the classifieds he probably continued to indulge the transformative fantasy that we see in the passport photographs.⁷

In fact, a sizable body of circumstantial evidence suggests that throughout his adult life, Warhol sought ways to compensate for his looks. Art dealer Ivan Karp recalled that when he brought collectors to Warhol's studio in 1961 the artist often wore theatrical masks, apparently to hide his skin problems. “I don't think he was comfortable with the way he looked, because he had a terrible complexion at the time,” Karp said. Warhol's chief art adviser Henry Geldzahler was also aware of the artist's unhappiness on this score and was convinced that his close relationship with Edie Sedgwick in the mid-1960s—marked by their habit of dressing





12 Andy Warhol, *Strong Arms and Broads*, 1960. Synthetic polymer paint and crayon, 114.3 x 155 cm (45 x 61 in.). Private Collection

alike (she even dyed her hair silver to match his wig)—helped the artist to cope by identifying with her. “Andy had always felt himself to be unattractive, and to be with Edie was to be Edie for a season. He loved running around with her, *appearing* [italics mine] in public. She was one of his ego images,” Geldzahler explained.⁸

His observation also touches on Warhol’s well-known pursuit of fame, which, according to the reminiscences of Lisanby, was his chief motive for switching from commercial to fine art.⁹ Warhol saw what it had done for Rauschenberg and Johns and was determined to share in the esteem that they enjoyed. Although Warhol’s ambition has often been viewed as evidence of a shallow value system, it

might also have been generated by an astute understanding that fame transforms a subject in the public eye, making even a physically unimpressive specimen seem attractive. Finally, the artist appears surprisingly handsome in several self-portraits that he produced in the early to mid-1960s (fig. 14). The discrepancy between what we see in these works and what we know of his looks from contemporary photographs and descriptions suggests that such portraits, too, may indicate a quest for self-reinvention.

The likelihood that the classifieds surreptitiously embodied Warhol’s unhappy self-image and fed his ongoing fantasy of repair provides a useful perspective for my initial speculations about *Dick Tracy*. If

Warhol encoded his perceived deficiencies in certain of his early 1960s paintings and if, moreover, the problems featured in the *Before and After* series refer to his own, we would be justified in reading Sam Catchem, with his disfigured nose, as another Warhol surrogate. On this basis, we might be tempted to see in *Dick Tracy* a clever encapsulation of the romantic



13 Passport photographs of Andy Warhol, ca. 1956. Archives of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Founding Collection Contribution, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

scenario that he endured around 1960: the unattractive Warhol in desirous proximity to a handsome man, like Charles Lisanby, who rejected him or, according to the painting, gave him the cold shoulder.¹⁰ Whether or not we are willing to read the painting this strictly, the situation to which Warhol seems to refer has an added dimension, as Lisanby informs us. Warhol not only desired such “Adonis” figures, he also envied them and hoped that as a result of his nose surgery, exercise regime, and related undertakings to *become* one of them. The ad for a male girdle that Warhol added to the comic-book frames in his photostat (see fig. 3) intimates that he secretly alluded to this daydream in the painting. Although Warhol eliminated the girdle from the final painting, its presence at the generative stage is suggestive. But unlike the ads in the classifieds, which are open to a variety of interpretations, the example

here specifically refers to the two profiles. Thus, while the punning text in the photostat confirms Moon’s contention that, for Warhol, Tracy was an object of desire, the inclusion of the slimming device in the picture implies that Tracy also represented the kind of good looks that Warhol fantasized he could attain—with the help of a cosmetic device.

This makeover dream had a purely romantic dimension: the artist’s conviction that improved looks would translate into considerably better chances of erotic success with the beautiful young men he desired and who rejected or pitied him. But the positive impact that such a change would also have had on his notoriously low physical self-esteem indicates that the fantasy had even deeper roots in a frustrated narcissism. In his introductory lecture on the subject, Sigmund Freud posited a “primary narcissism,” a developmental stage in infancy characterized by feelings of “perfection,” which he considered part of “the instinct of self-preservation.” While accepting Freud’s general description of the nature and timing of such feelings, his heirs have, on the whole, rejected his supposition that its origins were biologically determined. The majority of psychoanalysts now understand narcissism as the product of environmental factors, most notably the effect of the mother’s adoring love, what Freudian D. W. Winnicott, for example, called her “mirror role.” As the child matures, however, he or she soon experiences “narcissistic frustrations,” or “injuries,” as they are now termed, rude reminders of his or her insufficiencies and imperfections. But “as always where the libido is concerned,” Freud noted, “man has here again shown himself incapable of giving up a satisfaction he had once enjoyed. He is not willing to forego the narcissistic perfection of his childhood.” He therefore sets up defenses against such injury, seeks the love and adoration of others to raise his feelings of self-regard, and maintains this illusion through the



14 Andy Warhol, *Self-Portrait*, 1964. Silk-screen ink and synthetic polymer paint, each panel, 50.8 x 40.6 cm (20 x 16 in.). Collection of Gerald S. Fineberg

formation of ego ideals with which he identifies. As Freud surmises, “What he projects before him as his ideal is the substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood in which he was his own ideal.”¹¹

The facets of this psychological dynamic can be observed in the circumstances that ultimately gave rise to *Dick Tracy*. For Warhol the painting embraced two childhood memories, one of which, recorded by Ultra Violet, concerned the first signs of his homosexual disposition, which may have emerged as early as age ten. The other, presumably earlier, memory entailed the events surrounding a debilitating bout of Sydenham’s chorea, or Saint Vitus’s dance, which Warhol suffered when he was eight. This disorder of the central nervous system is characterized by uncontrollable, purposeless, and nonrepetitive movements. Ordinary activities, particularly those at school, became

a terrible ordeal for him. As a result of his nervous shake, he was taunted and teased by his classmates. When finally diagnosed, he was ordered to bed. For about a month his mother showered him with candy, coloring books, paper dolls, movie magazines, stills of his favorite stars, and comics. After returning to school prematurely, he suffered a relapse. His mother spoiled him for another month while he “dream[ed] about being a movie star.” When he emerged from his sickroom, he was both physically and psychologically changed. The illness left him with large reddish-brown blotches on his face and upper body that periodically plagued him for a number of years. And, according to Warhol biographer Victor Bockris, “He appeared more frail and became like a clinging vine, rarely leaving [his mother’s] side. [Julia], for her part, became more protective of him than ever.”¹²

Warhol frequently recalled the period of his convalescence. In *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*, for example, he stretched the two months into three glorious summers:

I had three nervous breakdowns when I was a child, spaced a year apart. One when I was eight, one at nine, and one at ten. The attacks—St. Vitus Dance—always started on the first day of summer vacation. I don't know what this meant. I would spend all summer listening to the radio and lying in bed with my Charlie McCarthy doll and my uncut-out cut-out paper dolls all over the spread and under the pillow. . . . My mother would read to me in her thick Czechoslovakian accent as best she could and I would always say, "Thanks, Mom," after she finished with Dick Tracy, even if I hadn't understood a word.¹³

The blurred, sometimes indecipherable texts of both *Dick Tracy* and *Superman* (1961) seem a fair transcription of one facet of that memory, his mother's muffled reading, and therefore suggest a nostalgic connection between such paintings and that "golden time."

Understanding the childhood circumstances that precipitated the paintings helps us to analyze their content more richly. Warhol's nervous breakdown must have involved severe narcissistic injury. His self-image had to have been badly damaged by both his condition and the bullying he endured at school. It would therefore be surprising if the time he spent to repair his nerves did not entail cultivating activities that might also help restore his ego. Surely his mother's love would have played an important part in this process, providing him with the kind of admiring mirror that established his narcissistic thirst in the first place. In addition, when he was ill, he began to collect movie magazines and stills. Hollywood stars such as Shirley Temple, his favorite, provided him an imaginative escape into a better life, and the material for erecting a compensative, idealized self.

Finally, the comic-book paintings suggest that its heroes, too, offered important ego ideals, which were perhaps even more important than the movie stars in view of Warhol's recent victimization at school. Dick Tracy, Superman, and Popeye (the subject of two paintings from 1961) have one common trait: their consummate ability to conquer all enemies, all grown-up schoolyard bullies. If the ordinary child discovers psychological comfort in such heroes, then a sickly, nervous, and beleaguered one must find them irresistible. Tracy demonstrates another, related quality that doubtless would have attracted the emotionally fragile boy, a kind of narcissistic self-sufficiency that Freud ascribed to a variety of animals and human beings, including beautiful women:

Women, especially if they grow up with good looks [may] develop a certain self-contentment. . . . Strictly speaking, it is only themselves that such women love with an intensity comparable to that of the man's love for them. Nor does their need lie in the direction of loving, but of being loved. The charm of the child lies to a great extent in his narcissism, his self-contentment and inaccessibility, just as does the charm of certain animals which seem not to concern themselves about us, such as cats and the large beasts of prey. Indeed, even great criminals and humorists, as they are represented in literature, compel our interest by narcissistic consistency with which they manage to keep away from their ego anything that would diminish it.¹⁴

To Freud's list of fictional characters we could easily add a number of crime fighters, including Tracy. I am suggesting that even before Tracy was Warhol's amorous ideal, he was his ego ideal because of his psychological strength, which, of course, is so nicely inscribed in his profile. The mature Warhol may have longed for Tracyesque good looks not simply to compensate for his own Catchemesque appearance, but also to

possess the emotional stability that he imagined such looks could provide. This possibility is intriguing in relation not only to the impassive tone of the works under discussion, but also to the equally cool artistic persona Warhol was presently to assume: black leather jacket, tight black jeans, T-shirt, boots, dark glasses, and silver wig.¹⁵

For its maker, *Dick Tracy* combined primal childhood fantasies that complemented and intensified one another. In this respect the painting illustrates the central thesis of Freud's view of the artistic process in "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" (1908). "The creative writer [or artist] does the same as the child at play," said Freud: "He creates a phantasy which he takes very seriously—that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion." Creativity, "like a day-dream, is the continuation of, and a substitute for, what was once the play of childhood." The triggering mechanism, Freud contends, is usually some intense recent event. Warhol's painting appears to be a case in point with regard to the fantasies related to his early nervous breakdown. We can even identify a precipitating experience that closely paralleled his childhood crisis. Warhol had taken a considerable financial risk in the early 1960s by shifting his focus from commercial to fine art. Constantly frustrated in his attempts to find a suitable gallery to represent him, he faced the terrible prospect that his gamble might end in ruin. His fears of financial disaster and personal failure—his successful Pop colleagues Roy Lichtenstein and Claes Oldenburg *had* found galleries—seem to have culminated in a nervous breakdown in the summer of 1961.¹⁶

Warhol's case deviates significantly from Freud's model, however, on the issue of public access to the meaning of the work. The writer (or artist) may, according to Freud, "soften the character of his egoistic daydream by altering and disguising it," partly to make it more palatable for us so that we can "enjoy our own day-dreams

without self-reproach or shame." The dream will be aestheticized as art to "bribe us by the purely formal," but will always remain recognizable as one.¹⁷ In *Dick Tracy*, on the other hand, Warhol seems to have been intent on refusing the general public its pleasures on both counts. The painting contains significant personal fantasies, but it cannot be said to publicize them. To its various publics, including its professional viewers, the painting has appeared superficial, if not inane, the record of a shallow attachment or interest.

Crewy Lou and the Fall

We can verify that Warhol meant to prevent others from discerning the substantial personal content of *Dick Tracy* by the presence of the third figure in the painting. In the middle of what appears to be the oddly shaped speech balloon above Dick Tracy and Sam Catchem, Warhol drew a black line across the painting (see frontispiece). A comparison of the work with its comic-book source (see fig. 2) reveals not only that the line substitutes for the two used in the original to separate panels, but that the apparently meaningless shape above it—which cannot be explained on compositional grounds—is the silhouette of a female torso, the curve that of a breast. Warhol chose not to eliminate the female above Tracy and Catchem in the original panel, as he had done with the male at the bottom of the photostat (see fig. 3), but to hide her, to make it impossible for the viewer to *see* her.

The woman is Crewy Lou, the leader of the pair of criminals referred to in the title of the episode, "Dick Tracy and the Case of the Fiendish Photographers." In the frame she is contemplating the floor plan of the hospital where the police are holding one of her competitors, the syndicate boss whom she plans to kill. Her nickname derives from her haircut, which features a man's crew cut, or "butch," on

top. Her gender confusion—Tracy called her “screwy”—is also indicated by the name Lou, which is short for both Louis and Louise.

Warhol seems to have intuited the psychosexual associations between Crewy Lou and the male pair beneath her. In the first place, Crewy Lou was another figure with whom Warhol could identify. The gender twisting in both her hairstyle and name would have suggested to Warhol that she, like he, was homosexual. Then, as now, “butch” was slang for a lesbian type. Perhaps Warhol saw in her another alter ego, either the cool, attractive female like Edie, whom he had always wanted to be, or the manly female counterpart to his feminine “swishy” male. Warhol signaled his identification with her and with the two males by keeping “ALL THREE” in the last line, the only phrase from the caption he left whole.

Another fortuitous element that Warhol discovered in the middle line of the caption was the name of *her* alter ego, the biblical Eve. The name is clearly readable in the painting, although it often fails to register in reproductions because Warhol painted out the first letter and the apostrophe of *WE’VE*, but left a ghostly letter *E* in front of the last two letters, a move that subtly identifies her with the spectral figure above the line and further mitigates against the possibility of the name being read as intentional. Close inspection reveals the care that Warhol took to create this impression. He first painted the *E* in black and then carefully over-painted it with two separate white washes, thus making it appear as meaningless as the rest of the letters in the line. That other lettering (the lone *P*, for example) is not purposeless, however, but misdirects the viewer’s attention away from the possibility that the name could be other than accidental—a device he used, for example, in *Strong Arms and Broads* (see fig. 12). Until the discovery of the female at the top, Warhol’s efforts at preventing us from noticing the name had been successful.

By linking the “fiendish” Crewy Lou with Eve, Warhol was making explicit in the painting what had been implicit in Gould’s narrative. The grandson of a Methodist minister, Gould did not write entertaining “cops ‘n robbers” stories; he wrote morality plays grounded in a conservative Christian vision of the world as sinful and corrupt. The fictive secular society that Gould created ultimately derives less from 1930s Chicago than from Calvin and the evangelical Protestant tradition. Tracy, an agent of a stern, judgmental God, does not solve mysteries—he roots out evil. Gould rejected the popular view that crime had social origins, especially poverty. That his convictions were founded, instead, on the story of Creation is evident in many of his tales. In “The Case of the Fiendish Photographers,” it is apparent in his handling of Crewy Lou. Perhaps the most telling incident follows her escape from jail, an event engineered without her knowledge by her brother, a respectable doctor, to prevent what would be for her disgraced family a long and painful trial. Convinced they both must perish, he rephrases the justification for Christ’s death: “Yes—we will die together! That’s the price I must pay for *your* sins” (fig. 15), thus playing Christ to her Eve.¹⁸

A reader of the Warhol literature may wonder at this point if he were capable of the complicated and highly intellectualized generative process I am describing. My account of his sophisticated use of Crewy Lou contradicts the accepted notion of him as an essentially indifferent devotee of surfaces. But as many of his associates have long claimed and his scholars are beginning to discover, Warhol was not the lazy, fatuous artist he feigned to be. He was college educated, well read, visually sensitive and astute, and bright enough as a well-trained Catholic to have discerned the conservative religious content of “The Case of the Fiendish Photographers” when he reread it in the early 1960s.

- 15 Chester Gould, panel from "Dick Tracy and the Case of the Fiendish Photographers," Part Two, *Dick Tracy* 1 (St. Louis: Harvey Publications, May 1961), p. 145



Warhol probably obscured the biblical name Eve to shield from public view another of his professionally embarrassing personal attachments. Homosexuality was not the only pursuit that invited censure. Equally damnable were his conservative religious practices. According to John Giorno, one of Warhol's friends and sometime lovers in the early 1960s, "In New York at that time, being religious was worse than being a fag." And Warhol, Giorno knew, had good reason to be sensitive to this prejudice. The artist had been raised as a committed member of the Greek Rite Catholic Church. He was so pious as a child that his brother thought he would grow up to be a priest. Unlike many young provincials who move to the big city and, under the influence of cosmopolitan skepticism, drift away from their religious roots, Warhol remained, according to biographer Bockris, "a devout Catholic all his life." He attended Mass regularly

and prayed on an almost daily basis. During an interview with a French journalist in the early 1980s, Warhol gave a revealing testament of his piety. Ronnie Cutrone, his studio assistant, relates the episode:

I was just being his walking stick, sitting next to him during the interview. And she said to him, "You were once quoted as saying you don't believe in anything?" Andy was the coolest man on earth, at least during interviews . . . But he took this as a threat. . . . And he turned totally red in the face. I was shocked. Andy said, "I never said that." The journalist was taken aback because nobody expected Warhol to have such strong emotions. She said, "Well what do you mean?" He knew he was hemmed in. But he just straightforwardly said, "I believe in God." And then he realized what he had said, and it was almost, like, "Man, he just shattered the whole image." So he added, "And I believe in Ronnie."



their consequences, all of which were embodied in the figure of Eve, always considered the more blameworthy of our ancestors. Moreover, according to the *Baltimore Catechism* (the official manual for all Catholics in Warhol's era): "Our nature was corrupted by the sin of our parents, which darkened our understanding, weakened our will, and left in us a strong inclination to evil." The battle against this tendency therefore became central to the church's mission. In Warhol's case, it meant that, according to one of his two brothers, John, the sermons they heard on Sundays "emphasized sin. The message was, 'live a clean life or face hell.'" From the perspective of Greek and Roman Catholicism, one of the most egregious consequences of the Fall was homosexuality. Although it is not mentioned in the catechism, which proscribes only lust, the issue is addressed in the *Heavenly Manna*, the standard prayer book of Greek Rite Catholics. Under the topic of "Sins That Cry to Heaven for Vengeance," sodomy is listed second to willful murder. Anal intercourse is also practiced among heterosexuals, of course, but the severity of the punishment is meant to indict homosexuals, with whom the act has become synonymous.²⁰

Warhol's ongoing commitment to Catholicism does not guarantee his subscription to all of its tenets, of course, but the linkage in *Dick Tracy* between the Fall and homosexuality would seem to indicate a level of acceptance of the church's harsh view of that sexual proclivity. As suggested by his extreme treatment of Catchem's nose, Warhol, at some profound level of consciousness, accepted the church's censure (which should hardly surprise us). In the adventures of Dick Tracy an unsightly or peculiar exterior proves a reliable index of a corrupt nature. Gould is famous for his rogues' gallery of deformed criminals, including Mole, the Brow, B-B Eyes, and Pruneface (fig. 16). Gould caricatured Tracy's antagonists "so that there would be no mistake who the

16 Chester Gould, *Dick Tracy's Rogues Gallery*, n.d. Reproduced from *The Celebrated Cases of Dick Tracy, 1931-1951*, Herb Galewitz, ed. (New York: Chelsea House, 1970), p. 287

The incident confirms the image of Warhol the artist being argued here—one who masked strong feelings and convictions behind a trifling and insouciant cool. It also suggests the sincere basis of his continuing allegiance to Catholic forms and, by extension, dogma. This is relevant to our investigation because homosexuality, physical imperfection, and Original Sin, which Warhol surreptitiously brought together in *Dick Tracy*, are central to this belief system.¹⁹

The Greek Rite Catholic Church in which Warhol was raised was an interesting hybrid of Greek Orthodox ceremony and Roman Catholic doctrine. Warhol's church was preoccupied with the events in the Garden of Eden and

17 Andy Warhol, photostat for *Wigs*, 1960. Archives of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Founding Collection Contribution, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

villain was." The idea that sin manifests itself in physical disfigurement is consistent with a long Christian tradition dating at least from the Middle Ages. Whether Warhol understood Gould's misshapen miscreants as the modern counterparts to the satanic crews of Romanesque doorways or the prints of Hieronymus Bosch is besides the point. What matters is that he seems to have embraced the fundamental logic of Gould's incarnations of sin in his treatment of Catchem. Under the sign of Eve and in the context of the comic strip, the physical difference between Tracy and Warhol's stand-in becomes the metaphor of an absolute moral distinction. In addition to Warhol's private expression of longing for beautiful men and his frustrated desire to resemble them, the work seems to encode his confession of sin, his acknowledgment of what he as a good Catholic would have been taught to consider a fundamental moral fault.²¹

Such an inference has important ramifications for our consideration of other works, such as *Advertisements* (see fig. 8), which also combines references to homosexual desire and physical defect. The latter could perhaps be read as a private double entendre reflecting the artist's disappointment with both his physical appearance and moral character. Even paintings such as *Wigs* (see fig. 6) that appear to point to Warhol's physical problems may refer synecdochically to all those deficiencies that gave evidence of the Fall from perfection.

The photostat that Warhol used for *Wigs* (fig. 17) supports this prospect. The image documents materials from classified ads that he cut out and assembled to use in his paintings. The collage contains three types of ads. In addition to those for physical problems (hair loss and excessive thinness) and ones with homoerotic connotations (from phallic symbols to ways to "make him want you") are ads for two kinds of prayer aids. What is suggestive about the collage is not simply that



Warhol was thinking about all three subjects as materials for his art, but that he considered them to belong together. The care he took in formally integrating the three, which at first glance seem to have been printed together, indicates that Warhol thought of religion, corporeal blemish, and homosexuality as related parts of some greater whole. In the final painting, of course, neither homosexuality nor religion is evident. Was this because Warhol decided that these subjects were inappropriate or because he suppressed them? The resurfacing in *Dick Tracy* of the triad of concerns evident in the photostat might indicate that Warhol had, for some time, been seeking a safer, more comprehensive, and thus personally satisfying way to articulate his situation.

A stylistic analysis supports the view that Warhol privately acknowledged some larger notion of fault in the classified ad paintings. The drips and brush marks scattered throughout these paintings (see figs. 6 and 8) have always been understood as the artist's acquiescence—after the example of his unofficial mentors, Rauschenberg and Johns—to what he understood to be the requirements of abstract expressionism and action painting. As the critic Arthur Danto notes, “You could not be a [legitimate] artist in New York in the late 1950s, whatever your impulses, if you were not prepared to pay tribute to paint as paint.” Warhol understood this obligation perfectly, and for a while, at least, was willing to observe it.²²

In the spring or summer of 1961, however, he began to wonder if he could eliminate the painterly elements in favor of the impersonal approach to form that his subject matter suggested. He painted two versions of a number of themes, one “with gestures and drips” and one in the “cold, ‘no comment’” style that he said he preferred. In a classic piece of market research he showed these pairs to his advisers “to goad them into commenting on the differences, because,” he said, “I still wasn't sure if you could completely remove all the hand gesture from art and become noncommittal, anonymous.” The remark suggests that the awkward “gestures and drips” in these works were a grudging accommodation to period taste, to the expansive and emotional gestures of action painting. While opportunism may well have prompted Warhol to adopt a painterly approach, it does not explain why he chose this idiosyncratic style.²³

Warhol's peculiar smudges and smears have little in common with either the passionate and sensual elegance of late 1950s gesturalism or the ironic, though still respectful, versions that Rauschenberg and Johns practiced. When used in conjunction with drips, which are synonymous with action painting, Warhol's crude,

painterly technique seems pointedly and none-too-humorously to parody it. What had been a hint of generational hostility in paintings by Rauschenberg and Johns (for example, the former's *Erased de Kooning* [1953] and the latter's *Painting with Two Balls* [1960]) became more bitter and pervasive in Warhol's willful misuse of what his predecessors had considered a pure, transcendent style. Warhol only sharpened the insult by using what one historian called his “mock-expressive style” to describe precisely what the abstract expressionists had meant to oppose, the tainted stuff of bourgeois culture.²⁴

On the other hand, if we consider Warhol's inelegant execution in relation to the private content of *Wigs* and *Advertisements*, it suddenly appears legitimately expressive, not only a parody of the ubiquitous de Kooning style but also, ironically, an authentic and confessional variation. Smudges, smears, and drips seem the ideal formal vehicles for an iconography of physical and perhaps moral fault, the perfect expression of imperfection. Ivan Karp noted the negative quality of the style when he first viewed the paintings in Warhol's studio, but assumed it was aimed at the subjects of the works, the commercial goods and services. As a good modernist, Karp thought that “Andy had to apologize in his mind for [having been] involved” in “the towering blandness” of commercial advertising. But given what is now known of Warhol's admiration for “all the great modern things the Abstract Expressionists tried not to notice” and, more importantly, of the way he used some of these goods and services to actualize his private concerns, we are led to conclude that the style of these works referred, instead, to their author.²⁵

The faulty style belongs not to what is advertised but to the *service* that the graphic designer provided. Warhol hid his ongoing commercial work from collectors and dealers, including Karp, but his continuing commitment to the field, his

persistent identity as a commercial artist, is mischievously alluded to in the ultimate subject of these paintings, which is not wigs and cosmetic surgery, but advertisements for them. Warhol the commercial artist is still evident in the role that Warhol the avant-garde painter slyly assumed in these works. From the point of view of fine art, paint drips and brush marks may reflect abstract expressionism and its lofty ethos, but from the vantage of commerce, the other context for these paintings, they are blemishes or obvious signs of deficient workmanship, the commercial artist's shortcomings. The clinching evidence in this regard is the way that Warhol sometimes handled

collectors. Compared with contemporary works by Rauschenberg and Johns, Warhol's crude, monochromatic paintings seem to have little aesthetic appeal. From this vantage, the works appear ill conceived, which they may well have been. There is another explanation, however: the victory of Warhol's convictions and inclinations over his infamous preoccupation with success. Both the literal and deeper subjects of the classified ad paintings may demonstrate how determined Warhol was not to relinquish his artistic values, how serious he was when he responded to de Antonio's advice that he change his ways if he wished to succeed in the New York art world. Warhol

*Smudges, smears, and drips seem the ideal formal vehicles
for an iconography of physical and perhaps moral fault, the perfect
expression of imperfection.*

form. He defined the accessories at the bottom of *Wigs*, for example, with unsteady, awkward contours, further substantiating the impression of faulty design, and thus designer.

The classified ad paintings seem to imply through the handling of paint, not just their iconography, that the artist, like his cheap newspaper sources, is fallen, or literally bad. This private confession might even contain what he as a practicing Catholic would have understood any sincere act of this kind to require—a penance. On the subject of these works, I wrote earlier: “For a man who had been so fond of charming and beautiful graphic effects, the paintings based on unrefined newspaper ads were undoubtedly a tortuous exercise in self-denial.” I meant to suggest a suffering that he was willing to endure for a commercial success. But I have long been troubled by my own claim. The paintings generated little interest among either dealers or

insisted that “Other people could change their attitudes, but not me.” One facet of that integrity might well have been a guilty need for penitential suffering, for a kind of aesthetic flagellation that might allay his fears of the ultimate judgment he was raised to fear.²⁶

Whatever the validity of this conjecture, it does not refer to *Dick Tracy*. Although we can read its drips, too, not only as an adoption of period style but also as a metaphor of the physical and moral faults expressed in the imagery, the work seems to lack a penitential dimension. In fact, certain aspects of the painting seem at cross purposes with its confessional ones. Ultimately intriguing is the contradiction between its blithely innocent format and the serious admission that it secretly houses. Warhol's identification with Catchem, whatever else it might signal, is nonetheless with one of the “good guys.” And is it sufficient to say that the painting records only

Warhol's youthful lust for and desire to be physically and psychologically like Tracy? Are we not equally justified in claiming that Tracy would also have been for Warhol, as he was for his other youthful readers, a moral ideal? Finally and most importantly, the nostalgic memories that Warhol metonymically inscribed in the painting would have returned him to the time of his own blameless youth. Even the memory of his sexual awakening would take him back to the first moments before he discovered his predilection was "wrong," to that brief, blissful interlude when Tracy could be both his ethical and his amorous ideal. In this respect the painting would have provided Warhol a retreat from the deeper problems of his sexuality, and, more significantly, perhaps, a way to reduce the guilt he must have experienced.²⁷ Thus, the painting offered the Catholic Warhol two kinds of satisfactions: confessions of his perceived culpability and a defensive insistence on the immaculate child within him.

Such a contradiction can be explained in terms of a divided, not simply a conflicted, or ambivalent, consciousness. Warhol's initial choice of the two detectives as a subject was almost certainly intuitive; the contrast between the characters spoke to and for Warhol's complex of private fantasies and conflicts. At some point, he also sensed that the woman in the scene above the detectives participated in and contributed to the circuitry of issues that the pair raised. Warhol's careful hiding of Crewy Lou and handling of the lettering suggest a heightened consciousness with regard to the larger issues they signal. Whether he was fully self-aware on this score, however, is doubtful. Geldzahler, who knew Warhol as well as anyone during these years, insists he was loath "to probe his own motives."²⁸ Few people are. Given the thorny problems mirrored in the works under discussion, such an unwillingness is all the more understandable. I think we have to consider Warhol's contradictory insistence on his innocence

to have been a classic unconscious wish, the manifestation of a deeply rooted and almost certainly unexamined resistance to all that he had been taught to accept and feel about his homosexuality.

Warhol's defensive voice may also be heard in Ultra Violet's account of her conversation with him about his early erotic fascination with Dick Tracy and another comic-book hero, Popeye. To her query, "Why Popeye and Tracy?" he responded: "They were stars. So was Charlie McCarthy. I wanted to make it with stars. I fantasized I was in bed with Dick and Popeye. Charlie would rub against me and seduce me."²⁹ McCarthy, apparently, was the seducer, Warhol his blameless victim.

Ultra Violet's recollection is consistent with a larger pattern in Warhol's art of the late 1950s and early 1960s. With the exception of the classified ad paintings, in the years roughly between 1955 and 1961, Warhol tended, like many of his modern predecessors, to give his homosexual themes a virtuous veneer. He de-emphasized the sexual, at times nearly erasing it in favor of childish ingenuousness, as in the fairies in *In the Bottom of My Garden* (ca. 1958), or adolescent infatuation, such as his beautiful boy drawings, which often include hearts, bows, and lipstick kisses (see fig. 11). Although the drawing sessions were sometimes erotically charged, Warhol chose to downplay any suggestion that his interest in these young men was anything but that of an emotionally chaste aesthete.³⁰

After the brief interlude of the classified ad paintings in 1960, in which innocence seems to yield to experience, Warhol returned to his comic-book paintings, all of which deal with homosexuality in one way or another.³¹ Perhaps the most obvious example is *Nancy* (fig. 18), a character Warhol took from Guy Gilchrist's comic strip of the same name. Like many of Warhol's works at the time, it turns on a pun. "Nancy" was a derogatory name used in both the gay and straight worlds

- 18 Andy Warhol, *Nancy*, 1961. Synthetic polymer paint, 101.6 x 137.2 cm (40 x 54 in.). Reproduced from Ernest Beyeler et al., *Andy Warhol Series and Singles* (Riehen/Basel: Fondation Beyeler, 2000), pl. 7



for an effeminate and presumably homosexual male. By choosing to paint her, Warhol cleverly smuggled another gay reference into the “macho” domain of high art and conflated his own state as a homosexual with that of a blameless little girl.

The incident Warhol chose to depict—Nancy’s need for additional protection against inclement weather—reveals the basis of this dual psychological satisfaction. On the obvious level, the reference is to the “chilly” homophobic climate in the New York art world that forced Warhol to “clothe,” or code, his homosexuality. But an intuitive grasp of the other, equally apt, metaphor that the scene presented may also have encouraged Warhol’s choice. Catholicism, too, provided a frosty climate, from which he also sought protection. Warhol understood, at some level, the inadequacy of his guise, that it was, in fact, a guise, a strategic

garb. He included a fragment of a caption from a subsequent scene in which Nancy admits that she is still cold, despite wearing more clothing. Such an acknowledgment on the artist’s part demonstrates the degree to which he had internalized society’s and the church’s position on his homosexuality, for it is only from *that* point of view that his defensive claims of innocence would be considered inadequate.

Both *Nancy* and *Dick Tracy* illustrate that a careful, biographical analysis of some of the apparently innocuous themes of Warhol’s early Pop production reveals a surprising network of psychologically satisfying self-projections, designed to help the artist cope with problems centered on his homosexuality. In general, my findings support the view of Warhol as an early gay-rights advocate that a number of politically engaged cultural historians have recently put forward. But whereas their work emphasizes Warhol’s

opposition to the social forces of intolerance in which he lived and worked, this account fleshes out and complicates that tale, revealing our protagonist as more conflicted. In broad outline Warhol's story is not essentially different from that of many gay men of his and other generations who waged a battle against prejudice in the social and political sphere, and also in the private psyche, wherein social and religious attitudes had become internalized.³² Warhol's particular case history is piquant not only because he instinctively struggled against the full weight of this religious and social training, but because he determinedly carried out his early work in a professional climate antagonistic to both terms of his dilemma.

Finally, the evidence of this study supports the swelling call to scrap our old assumptions about what lies in the mirror of Warhol's art and pay closer attention to the chain of personal associations his themes triggered. Warhol himself may have meant to encourage us along these lines in his often-quoted, but understated, claim that "If you want to know all about Andy Warhol, just look at the surface of my paintings and films . . . and there I am. There's nothing behind it."³³ Rather than an admission of superficiality, the remark could be a riddle offering the key to understanding his art: Do not look behind the surfaces of my art but *into* them, to their metonymic depths.

Notes

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- 1 See Kenneth E. Silver, "Modes of Disclosure: The Construction of Gay Identity and the Rise of Pop Art," *Hand-Painted Pop: American Art in Transition, 1955-62*, Russell Ferguson, ed. (New York: Rizzoli, International Pub., 1992), pp. 178-203, and Richard Meyer, "Warhol's Clones," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 7, no. 1 (1994): 79-109. For a discussion of the mirror as the still-reigning metaphor in Warhol studies, see Bradford R. Collins and David Cowart, "Through the Looking Glass: Reading Warhol's *Superman*," *American Imago* 53 (summer 1996): 107-8.
- 2 Michael Moon, "Screen Memories, or, Pop Comes from the Outside: Warhol and Queer Childhood," *Pop Out: Queer Warhol*, Jennifer Doyle, Jonathan Flatley, and José Esteban Muñoz, eds. (Durham, N.C.: Duke U. Press, 1996), p. 79. The claim is central to the anthology as a whole; see the introduction. The quote

from *Ultra Violet* is taken from her book, *Famous for 15 Minutes: My Years with Andy Warhol* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), p. 154.

- 3 For more on Warhol's working procedures, see Marco Livingstone, "Do It Yourself: Notes on Warhol's Techniques," *Andy Warhol: A Retrospective*, Kynaston McShine, ed. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989), pp. 66-67.
- 4 Warhol's doctor told him that unless he had surgery on his nose he would end up looking like W. C. Fields; see Victor Bockris, *The Life and Death of Andy Warhol* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989), p. 90. Charles Lisanby is interviewed in Patrick S. Smith's *Andy Warhol's Art and Film* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1986), pp. 379-80.
- 5 According to Edie Sedgwick's roommate in the early 1960s, Warhol told Edie that he began each day by doing one hundred pull-ups; see Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 166. For the other biographical facts, see Bockris, *ibid.*, pp. 59, 75, 82, 90, and 131-32.
- 6 For Warhol's conversation with de Antonio, see Andy Warhol and Pat Hackett, *POPism: The Warhol '60s* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich,

1980), pp. 11-13. On his career anxieties in the early sixties, see Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 104.

- 7 The quote is from Buddy Radisch, a friend of Warhol's in the mid-1950s; see Bob Colacello, *Holy Terror: Andy Warhol Close Up* (New York: Harper-Collins, 1990), p. 24.
- 8 Karp's remarks are recounted in David Bourdon's *Warhol* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1989), p. 84. For Geldzahler's comments, see Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 166. Truman Capote said that "Warhol would like to have been Edie Sedgwick. He would like to have been a charming, well-born debutante from Boston." See *Edie: An American Biography*, Jean Stein and George Plimpton, eds. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), p. 183.
- 9 See Smith, *Art and Film*, p. 374.
- 10 *Ibid.*, pp. 84-87. Smith recounts the story of Warhol's unrequited desire for Lisanby, who sometimes modeled for Warhol's beautiful boy drawings.
- 11 For the account of one young man who took pity on Warhol, see John Giorno, "Andy Warhol's Movie *Sleep*," *You Got to Burn to Shine: New and Selected Writings* (New York: Sleeping Serpent, 1994),

- p. 194. Freud's quotes are from "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (1914), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, v. 11, James Strachey, ed. (London: Hogarth Press, 1957), pp. 73, 74, 94, and 100. Winnicott developed his ideas in response to Jacques Lacan's theory of the mirror stage; see D. W. Winnicott, "Mirror-Role of Mother and Family in Child Development" (1967), *Playing and Reality* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1971).
- 12 Research shows that many boys and girls experience their first same-sex attraction as early as age ten; see Janis S. Bohan, *Psychology and Sexual Orientation* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 196. For both quotes, see Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 21.
- 13 Warhol, *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)*, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), p. 21–22.
- 14 Freud, "On Narcissism: An Introduction," p. 89.
- 15 Bockris in *Life and Death* (p. 148) says, "[H]e now dressed like an SS guard in a B-movie about the Second World War, with a few embellishments of his own."
- 16 Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming" (1908), Strachey, *The Standardization of Sigmund Freud*, v. 9, pp. 144, 152, and 151.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 153.
- 18 For a discussion of the religious dimension of Gould's comic strip, see Arthur A. Burger, "Dick Tracy: The Avenger—Evangelical Protestant Style," *The Comic-Stripped American* (New York: Walker and Company, 1973), pp. 112–32.
- 19 The *Giorno* quote is from an interview with the author on 13 June 1997. Information on Warhol's religious habits are from my interview with his brother, John Warhola, on 6 June 1997. See Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 403; and Zan Schuweiler Daab, "For Heaven's Sake: Warhol's Art as Religious Allegory," *Religion and the Arts* 1 (fall 1996): 18–19. The Cutrone quote is from *Unseen Warhol*, John O'Connor and Benjamin Liu, eds. (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1996), pp. 69–70.
- 20 John Warhola's reminiscence is from my 1997 interview with him. Four well-worn editions of the *Heavenly Manna* were found in Warhol's possession after his death. The earliest, dated to 1954, is in box B-179 of the Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh. His brother found two editions, one of which he buried with Warhol. A fourth edition is in the possession of the Warhol Foundation, New York. The church's continuing opposition to homosexuality is based in Scripture; see especially Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13.
- 21 According to Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 14, Warhol, like many gays of his generation, considered homosexuality a fault. During the 1950s, he had apparently visited at least one psychiatrist hoping to deal with his "sickness." The Gould quote is from Herb Galewitz's *The Celebrated Cases of Dick Tracy: 1931–1951* (New York: Chelsea House, 1970), xi.
- 22 Arthur Danto, "The Abstract Expressionist Coca-Cola Bottle," *The Wake of Art: Criticism, Philosophy, and the Ends of Taste*, Greg Horowitz and Tom Huhn, eds. (Amsterdam: G+B Arts International, 1998), p. 185.
- 23 Warhol and Hackett, *POPism*, p. 7.
- 24 The quote is from Marco Livingstone, "Warhol, Andy," *The Dictionary of Art*, Jane Turner, ed. (London: MacMillan Publishers, 1996), p. 862. In 1960, Warhol told a friend, "I hate abstract expressionism. I hate it!" See Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 97.
- 25 Karp's comment is cited in Bockris, *Life and Death*, p. 98. The Warhol quote is from Warhol and Hackett, *POPism*, p. 3.
- 26 Bradford R. Collins, "The Metaphysical Nosejob: The Remaking of Warhola, 1960–1968," *Arts Magazine* 62 (Feb. 1988): 49. Warhol and Hackett, *POPism*, p. 12.
- 27 Victor Hugo, a window-dresser, who around 1980 procured young men for Warhol to photograph while engaged in sex, says that Warhol nonetheless suffered "from that guilt thing . . . the Catholic thing." See Colacello, *Holy Terror*, p. 376.
- 28 Henry Geldzahler, "Andy Warhol: Virginal Voyeur" (1993), *Making It New: Essays, Interviews, and Talks* (New York: Turtle Point Press, 1994), p. 364.
- 29 Ultra Violet, *Famous*, p. 155.
- 30 Warhol's erotic art is the subject of my forthcoming article, "Beyond the Current Pleasure Principle: Warhol's 'Erotic' Art and Film."
- 31 For a discussion of the homosexual content of *Superman* (1961), see Collins and Cowart, "Through The Looking Glass." Even Warhol's *The Little King* (1961) had a homosexual subject; "The Little King" was his nickname for the rotund Henry Geldzahler, who was gay.
- 32 A study of gay men conducted in 1996 revealed that "an overwhelming majority (about 70%) reported some . . . level of internalized homophobia." See Ilan H. Meyer and Laura Dean, "Internalized Homophobia, Intimacy, and Sexual Behavior Among Gay and Bisexual Men," *Stigma and Sexual Orientation: Understanding Prejudice Against Lesbians, Gay Men, and Bisexuals*, Gregory M. Herek, ed. (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p. 169.
- 33 Gretchen Berg, "Nothing to Lose: Interview with Andy Warhol," *Cahiers du Cinema in English* 10 (May 1967): 40.