

Concepts made for war don't need to be unanimous. And it's only natural that they'd be reproached for those aspects of them in which they are slanderous of the realities that they make visible. And as for those who have successfully blinded themselves to the nonetheless massive fact of the YoungGirl, that's not all they're blind to. It's not the theory of the YoungGirl that is the product of misogyny, but the YoungGirl herself. Open any women's magazine and you'll see. The YoungGirl's not always young, and she's not always a girl; she is but the figure of total integration into a social totality that's disintegrating. When fools protest against the evidence that "the world isn't a commodity" and, by the way, that they aren't either, they're feigning a virginity that only justifies their powerlessness. We want none of that virginity nor of that powerlessness. We propose a different emotional education.

## THE FIRST OF ELEVEN INSTALLMENTS



Made in Downtown L.A.  
Sewalshop Free  
[www.americanapparel.com.au](http://www.americanapparel.com.au)

# RAW MATERIALS FOR A THEORY OF THE YOUNG GIRL

Faye wears the new Floral Lace Bodysuit and Micro-Mesh Two-Sided Leggings.

Retail Locations:

Adelaide  
Rundle Street  
211 Rundle St.  
Tel +61 (0) 8 8223 2239

Melbourne  
Chapel Street  
202 Chapel St.  
Tel +61 (0) 3 9629 6862

Sydney  
Gatford Street  
82 Oxford St.  
Tel +61 (0) 2 9398 2666

**American Apparel®**

To learn more about our company,  
to shop online, and to find all store  
locations, visit our web site.

**I did love  
you once.**

**-Hamlet**

## **VI**

Except incorrectly speaking - which may be our intention - the jumble of fragments that follows in no way comprise a theory. they are materials accumulated randomly in encounters with, visits with, and observation of YoungGirls; pearls extracted from their newspapers and magazines; expressions gleaned in sometimes dubious circumstances, arranged into no particular order. They are gathered here under approximate headings, as they were published in Tiqqun 1; a bit of order had to be given them. The decision to put them out like this, in all their incompleteness, their contingent origins, with all the ordinary excess of elements that would have comprised a nicely presentable theory if they were polished, cleaned out, and whittled down, means choosing trash theory for once. The cardinal ruse of theoreticians in general is that they present the result of their elaborations in such a way as to make the elaboration process itself no longer appear in them. In our estimation, this ruse doesn't work any more in the face of today's bloom-esque attention span fragmentation. We've chosen a different one. minds looking for moral comfort or for vice to condemn will find in these scattered pages but roads that will lead them nowhere. in fact we're not so much trying to convert YoungGirls as we are trying to trace out all the corners of a fractalized battlefield of YoungGirlization. And to supply the weapons for a hand to hand, blow by blow fight, wherever you may find yourself.

# V

It's not by chance that the theory of the YoungGirl has come into being at the moment when the genesis of the imperial order is being completed, and when it has begun to be understood as such. all things come to their end. and the party of the YoungGirls will have to split up as well, in turn.

To the extent that YoungGirlist formatting becomes generalized, competition will get tougher and the satisfaction tied to conformity will decrease. got to take some qualitative leap; got to take on new and unexpected attributes; got to get away to some still-virgin space. a hollywood despair, a t.v. journal political consciousness, a vague spirituality of a neo-buddhist character, an engagement in whatever collective conscience cleaning enterprise gets the job done. and so, feature by feature, the eco-YoungGirl is hatched. the YoungGirls' struggle to survive is then connected to the need to transcend the industrial YoungGirl, and the need to pass over to the eco YoungGirl. contrary to its ancestor, the eco YoungGirl no longer displays a surge of some emancipation or other, but a security-crazed obsession with conservation. The Empire's been fundamentally undermined and it's got to defend itself from entropy. having arrived at full hegemony, it can't do anything but crumble any more. the eco-YoungGirl will therefore be responsible, "in solidarity," ecological, maternal, reasonable, "natural," respectful, more self-controlled than falsely liberated, in brief: biopolitical as hell. she'll no longer be miming excess, but, on the contrary, moderation, in everything.

At the moment when the evidence for the YoungGirl is so obvious it becomes a cliché, the YoungGirl is already transcended, at least in its primitive, crudely sophisticated mass production aspect. It is this critical transitional situation we are going to leverage ourselves on.

# I

Under the hypnotic grimaces of official pacification, a war is being waged. A war that can no longer be called simply economic, social, or humanitarian, because it is total. And though each of us senses that our existence has become a battlefield where neuroses, phobias, somatizations, depression, and anguish are but a kind of defeated retreat, no one can grasp the trajectory of the battle or understand what's at stake in it. Paradoxically, it's because of the total character of this war - total in its means no less than in its ends - that it could be invisible in the first place.

To open force the empire prefers underhanded methods, chronic prevention, and the spread of molecules of constraint through everyday life. Its internal (endo) cop-ization clearly relays the general cop-ization, as individual self-control does social control. The new police are imperceptible because they're omnipresent.



What's at stake in the ongoing war are "forms of life," which, for the Empire, means the selection, management, and attenuation of those forms of life. The spectacle's grip on the state of the public expression of desires, the bio-political monopoly on all medical knowledge-power, the containment of all deviance by an ever more psychiatrist-laden army, "coaches," and other "facilitators" and counselors, the aesthetic-policelike filing away of everyone's biological data, the ever more imperative and closer surveillance of behavior, the plebiscites' proscriptions against "violence": it's all part of the Empire's anthropological, or rather, anthropotechnical project. It's about profiling the citizens.

Obviously, a pure politics of repression can't do away with people's expression of their "forms of life" (lifestyles) - not in the sense of a form of life as something molding a certain material, from the outside, without which it would be formless "bare life," but on the contrary, a form of life in the sense of what gives rise to a particular penchant, an intimate movement in a given body in a given situation. There's a whole imperial project to divert, fog, and polarize bodies with absences and impossibilities. Its reach is not so immediate, but it's durable. With time and by so many combined effects, the desired disarmament of bodies is obtained, in particular in terms of their immunities.

Citizens are less the vanquished in this war than are those who, denying its reality, give up in it right off the bat; what is left to them in the guise of an "existence" is no longer anything but a life long effort to make oneself compatible with the Empire. But for the others, for us, each gesture, each desire, each affect eventually boils down to the need to annihilate the Empire and its citizens. It's a matter of breathing, of the amplitude of passions. We have time to go down this criminal road; nothing's rushing us to seek out direct confrontations. Rushing would even be a proof of our weakness. Assaults will

except as a value, and all of whose activity, in all of its details, will finally come down to self-valuation. At each instant, she affirms herself as the sovereign subject of her reification. All the unquestionable character of her power, all the crushing self-confidence of this blueprint-person, comprised exclusively of the conventions, codes, and representations fleetingly in force, all the authority that the least of her gestures contains -- all that is immediately cross-indexed to her absolute transparency to "society."

And precisely because of her nothingness, each of her judgements has the imperative weight of the whole organization of society -- and she knows it.

# IV

Now, humanity, reformatted in the spectacle and biopolitically neutralized, thinks it's defying someone by proclaiming itself to be made up of "citizens." The women's magazines correct a nearly hundred-year-old mistake by finally making equivalent magazines available to men. all the past patriarchal authority figures, from politicians to the boss by way of the cop, are YoungGirlized, even the last of them, the pope.

There are many signs that the new physiognomy of Capital, merely sketched out in the interbellum period, has now been perfected. "The 'anthropomorphosis' of Capital is complete when its fictitious character is generalized. Then the mysterious spell is cast thanks to which generalized credit, ruling all exchange (from the bank check to the bill, from the work or marriage contract to 'human' and family relationships, the schooling, diplomas, and careers following the promises of all ideologies: all exchanges are now mere exchanges of dilatory appearances), hammers out, in the image of its own uniform emptiness, the 'heart of darkness' of all 'personalities' and all 'characters.' that's how Capital's people grow up, with all ancestral distinctions, all class and ethnic specificity seemingly gone. that fact endlessly fascinates many naive people who still 'think' with their eyes lost in the past." (Giorgio Cesarano, chronicle of a masked ball). The YoungGirl emerges as the culmination point of this anthropomorphosis of Capital. The valuation process, in the imperial phase, is no longer just capitalist: IT COINCIDES WITH THE SOCIAL. The integration of that process, which is no longer distinct from integration into imperial "society," and which no longer rests on any "objective" basis, demands of each person that she self-valorize endlessly.

The final moment of society's socialization, Empire, is thus also the moment when each person is called upon to relate to herself as a value, that is, by following the central mediation of a series of controlled abstractions. The YoungGirl, thus, would be that being that has no more intimacy with itself

be launched, however, and that will be less important than the position they're launched from, since our assaults undermine the Empire's forces while our position undermines its strategy. So, the more it appears to be accumulating victories, the more deeply it will sink into defeat, and the more its defeat will become irreparable. The imperial strategy first of all consists in organizing blindness to forms of life; illiteracy to ethical differences; making the battlefront unrecognizable, if not invisible; and, in the most critical cases, disguising the real war with all kinds of false conflicts.

The retaking of the offensive from our side, then, requires us to make the battlefield clear again. The figure of the YoungGirl is a gazing machine, designed for that purpose. Certain people will use it to affirm the solidity of the hostile forces occupying our existences; others, more vigorous, will use it to decide on the speed and direction of their progress. Everyone will make of it what they deserve.



Let's be clear: the concept of the YoungGirl is obviously not a gendered concept. the nightclub-going jock conforms to it just as much as the second-generation north african girl painted up to look pornstar old. The spirited telecom retiree that splits his leisure time between the Cote d'Azur and the Parisian offices where he's kept a foot in the door, and the metropolitan single too caught up in her career in consulting to realize that she's already lost fifteen years of her life to it - both obey the concept. After all, how would it be so easy to see the secret connection linking the plugged-in, puffed-up, civil-unioned humanity from the hip neighborhood and the petty-bourgeois americanized girl in the suburbs with her plastic family, if it were a gendered concept?

In reality, the YoungGirl is only the model citizen such as commodity society has defined it since world war one, as an explicit response to revolutionary threats against it. As such, she is a polar figure, guiding becoming more than predominating in it.

At the beginning of the 20s, in effect, capitalism noticed that it couldn't maintain itself as the exploitation of human labor without also colonizing everything found beyond strictly the sphere of production. Faced with the socialists' challenge to its dominance, it too needed to socialize itself. It thus had to create its own culture, leisure, medicine, urbanism, sentimental education, and morals, and also create a disposition towards their perpetual renewal. This would become the fordist compromise, the welfare state, family planning: social-democracy capitalism. And now, submission by work, limited because the worker is still separate from his or her work, has been replaced by integration through subjective and existential conformity, meaning, at root, by consumption.

From being merely formal, Capital's domination has become little by little

real. the commodity society now seeks to find its best supports in the marginalized elements of traditional society themselves - women and youths first, then homosexuals and immigrants.

Commodity society can now give an air of emancipation to those that in the past it treated as minorities, who were the most foreign and most spontaneously hostile to commodity society, not having been folded into its dominant norms of integration. "the youth and their mothers," acknowledges Stuart Ewen, "will supply the social principles of consumer ethics to the lifestyles offered by advertising." the youth, because adolescence is "a period of life defined by a relationship of pure consumption with civil society." (Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness*). and women, because at the time it was the sphere of reproduction, over which women still held sway, that they needed to colonize. Youth and Femininity, hypostatized, abstract, and recoded into youthitude and feminitude, are then elevated to the rank of ideal regulators of empire-citizen integration. and the figure of the YoungGirl thus realizes an immediate, spontaneous, and perfectly desirable unity between those two variables.

The tomboy is indispensable as a kind of modernity, much more thrilling than all the stars and starlets so quickly invading the globalized imagination. Albertine, found on the wall around a seaside resort, exhausts the whole collapsing world of [Proust's] "in search of lost time" with her relaxed, pansexual vitality. The high school girl makes her will the law in Ferdydurke. And a new authority figure is born, one that out-classes them all.