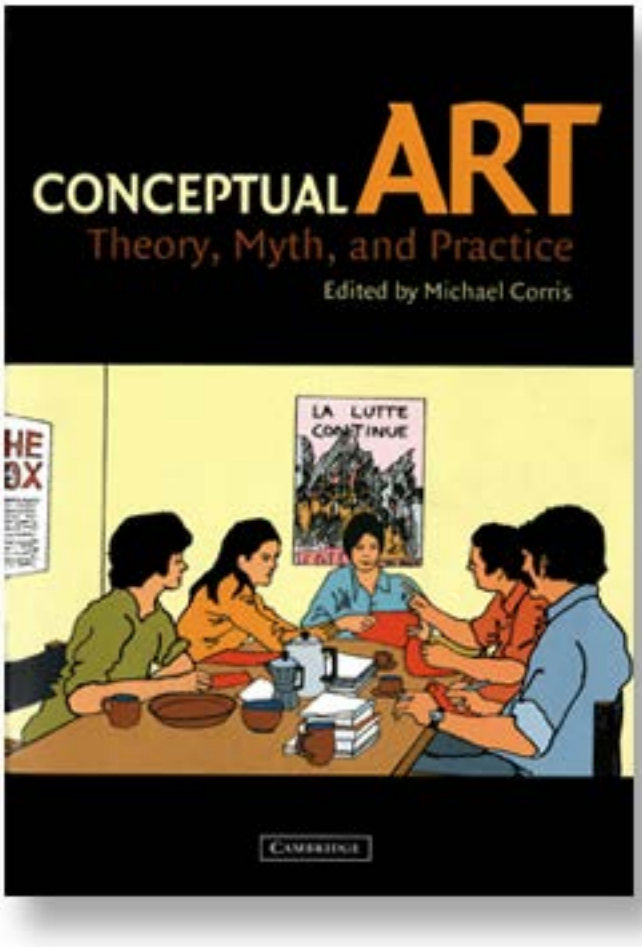


"Affluence, Taste, and the Brokering of Knowledge: Notes on the Social Context of Early Conceptual Art." In Michael Corris, ed., *Conceptual Art: Theory Myth, and Practice*, pp. 200-222. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

9 Affluence, Taste, and the Brokering of Knowledge

Robert Hobbs

Notes on the Social Context of Early Conceptual Art

> *"Of all* liaisons dangereuses *none has the reputation of being more perilous to the artist than living with ideas. In that alliance, passion is diluted by argument, sensibility by examinations of purpose; the quiet exercise of talent is out of the question; and one may wake up any morning to discover that the conceptual bitch has run off with every thing."*
>
> **– Harold Rosenberg, 1957**[1]

The literature on Conceptual art has exhibited a desire to ground this art in vanguard and philosophic practices. By showing how Conceptual art has deflected the course of Minimalism by relating it to such philosophers as A. J. Ayers and Immanual Kant and such systems of thought as logical positivism, art historians have provided important ways to assess its key strategies. In this essay, however, I wish to cast a wider and frankly more plebian net for investigating the ideology of an expendable culture formative to this style. What I will survey is a range of reponses to postwar American affluence as they were manifested in fields as diverse as public policy on the arts and sciences, economic theory, higher education, and contemporary approaches to interior design and domestic organization. Obviously, my interest here is not to rehearse an account of Conceptual art that presupposes the autonomy of subject and which begins, predictably, with the precedent of a reductive Minimal art and ends with the obligatory "dematerialized" object of art. Recognizing that Conceptual art was not a monolithic style but a contested field of artistic practice, I focus on its broad outlines in relation to the cultural milieu in which it developed in the United States. In so doing, I suggest a hitherto unremarked parallel between the aesthetic ideology that informed the display and reception of some Conceptual art and a wider public interest, voiced mainly by the Establishment liberal intelligentsia and expressing the moral and pragmatic values of a culture of austerity, restraint, and intellectual achievement that could moderate the pernicious moral effects of a burgeoning consumer culture. It is this anxious intersection of art with a particularly influential vision of postwar American society which, in my opinion, may serve to explain why Conceptual art's critique of Modernism was frequently expressed in terms of a desire for art to emulate the intellectual rigor of academic disciplines and took the form of fetishized modes of the scientific display of knowledge.

Conceptual art's appearance of insularity from the culture in which it is derived does not stand up to even superficial scrutiny, since such work relied on a host of ubiquitous 1960s visual processes and ephemera for its production and display, such as Xerox copies, low-grade photography similar to that found in the daily news media, functional typography, graphs, charts, and maps. Despite the presumed radicality of Conceptual art, its self-absorption into art's means and limits, its rejection of Minimalism's industrial affiliations and phenomenological orientation, and its appearance of removal from the world, it in fact represents a compromized means of cultural critique. Conceptual art in the 1960s and early 1970s can be considered an inversion of the proverbial "Emperor's new clothes": instead of feigning an elaborate costume when actually undressed, this new art assumed the camouflage of the commonplace, which made it appear dematerialized.

The Affluent Society

The publication of John Kenneth Galbraith's *The Affluent Society* in 1958 inaugurated a new post-Keynesian ideology through its analysis of an economics of plenty.[2] In his book Galbraith declared that economists no longer needed to focus on the Keynesian problems of scarcity and mass unemployment because post–World War II America had demonstrated that production could reliably meet and even exceed demands for material goods. In the course of surmounting past problems, this society had become so successful and wealthy that it initiated a new set of challenges. Galbraith's book was a call to the new values these challenges entailed; it encouraged a general stocktaking of the tyranny of mere things. The Dependence Effect, as Galbraith termed it, accounted for the fact that "as a society becomes increasingly affluent, wants are increasingly created by the process by which they are satisfied," with the net result being the greater the production of goods the greater the need to stimulate consumer desires for them. Galbraith cryptically summed up the circularity of this situation by stating, "[p]roduction induces more wants and the need for more production." Instead of worrying about total output of goods, Galbraith concluded that this postwar culture needed to concern itself with their constituency, making sure that a social balance was maintained between private and public spheres. In the future, Galbraith warned, society's goals must be qualitative as well as quantitative. Such concerns as public thoroughfares, clean air, and scientific knowledge for the enhancement of the entire citizenry must be met. While Galbraith's outlook was optimistic and socially oriented, he wondered if this culture of affluence would be able to cope with the new social challenges facing it.[3]

Galbraith's book struck a responsive chord and precipitated a widespread debate on abundance. *The Affluent Society* served as the occasion for millions of thoughtful Americans in the 1960s to question the basis of industrial capitalist society with its overriding emphasis on production and unjust distribution of wealth and power. It managed to prick the conscience of a nation that had been able to convert almost overnight its military production capability into

consumer-oriented output, a nation with far more cars than any other in the world, one that was then consuming the vast majority of the world's fossil fuels, that enjoyed a far greater distribution of electricity than any country in the world, and was so caught up in its orgy of consumption that the strategy of planned obsolescence was routinely part of the design of household appliances and other consumer products. In short, the United States had become a nation whose working class had the greatest discretionary income in the history of humankind. As Galbraith pointed out, "the ordinary individual [in the United States] has access to amenities . . . in which not even the rich rejoiced a century ago."[4]

In some quarters a pervading sense of embarrassment was felt about America's extended shopping spree, coupled with a genuine desire to turn the country into something grander and more meaningful. During the preceding three decades at least two generations of Americans had waged war on the Great Depression and then fought fascism in World War II. The long aftermath of prosperity coupled with tensions arising from a prolonged Cold War made a number of these people and their progeny anxious to undertake new challenges and to rid themselves of the complacency and selfish insularity that typified the 1950s. They were ready to accept John F. Kennedy's challenge, highlighted in his inaugural address, to "ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country." Galbraith's own role as an advisor to Kennedy, before and after the presidential campaign, as well as his ambassadorial appointment during the latter's presidency, helped to set in relief a remarkable study and the demands it made on the American people.

Reacting to Galbraith's book, a number of social forecasters, including David Riesman and Robert Theobald, thought the craze for consumer spending that had most visibly obsessed blue-collar, postwar workers was holding little allure for the professional middle classes in the early 1960s.[5] They believed that these people were exhibiting a new contempt for material goods and cited the popularity of the Volkswagen "bug" as a particularly apposite example since it represented functionality over status and departed from the hugh scale of the current Detroit designs.[6]

The existence of a class of people willing to promote ideas over material culture – a *New Class* as Galbraith called it[7] – might explain the commercial reception of Conceptual art in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as artists were taken up during this time by esteemed galleries in both the United States and Europe. In 1968, for instance, Sol LeWitt had one-person exhibitions at Konrad Fischer in Düsseldorf, Bruno Bischofberger in Zurich, and Ace Gallery in Los Angeles. Two years later, both Dwan Gallery in New York and Lisson Gallery in London showed his work. Joseph Kosuth was featured in solo shows at Castelli Gallery in 1969 and 1972. This same gallery picked up Douglas Huebler in 1971, a year after his one-person exhibition at Konrad Fischer. In 1970, Galerie Yvon Lambert in Paris featured Lawrence Weiner's work in a one-person exhibition; five years later Castelli picked up this artist. Beginning in 1971, Galerie Daniel Templon in Paris and Galleria Sperone in Turin exhibited Art & Language; the following year

Galerie Paul Maenz in Cologne showed this work. Although Conceptual artists were no doubt surprised that their art readily found such a prominent audience, in retrospect it is easy to imagine how their attitudes dovetailed with Galbraith's economic philosophy and how the two reflected aspects of a shift in ideology that became dominant in the late 1960s. Of course, the irony is that Conceptual art, with its mystique of dematerialization, was enshrined in an abstract system of value similar to that which defines money and credit.

Conceptual art's struggle with and against its own forms of realization and display may be viewed metaphorically as a reworking of tensions formed in this time of prosperity between people and their efforts to wrest themselves from an ever increasing onslaught of commodities and from merchandizers' concomitant need to turn them into inordinate consumers of them. Herbert Marcuse focused on this dilemma in another context when he pointed out in his highly acclaimed book, *One-Dimensional Man,* the dangers of commodity fetishism: "[T]he extent to which this civilization transforms the object world into an extension of man's mind and body makes the very notion of alienation questionable. The people recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. The very mechanism, which ties the individual to his society, has changed, and social control is anchored in the new needs, which it has produced."[8]

Although Marcuse, a Marxist, does not refer to Galbraith's study in his book, both formed important aspects of a larger social dialogue. Critics such as Gregory Battcock and Jack Burnham both wrote during the 1960s on Marcuse's thinking on art and society and attempted to integrate it into an avant-garde practice.

Affluence and Democracy in the 1960s

Galbraith was concerned that economic theories dealing only with issues of scarcity would continue the already well-ensconced trend of increasing production and private wealth to the detriment of the public good. His most memorable example used to highlight this problem is his image of the polluted environment facing a middle-class family on an outing. Since this passage indicates both the accessibility and fascination of his prose for a broad readership, it is worth citing at length:

> The family which takes its mauve and cerise, air-conditioned, power-steered, and power-braked automobile out for a tour passes through cities that are badly paved, made hideous by litter, blighted buildings, billboards, and posts for wires that should long since have been put underground. . . . They picnic on exquisitely packaged food from a portable icebox by a polluted stream and go on to spend the night at a park which is a menace to public health and morals. Just before dozing off on an air mattress, beneath a nylon tent, amid the stench of decaying refuse, they may reflect vaguely on the curious unevenness of their blessings. Is this, indeed, the American genius?"[9]

Galbraith's book effectively sounded the alarm for greater social services and less emphasis on production, and partially in response to his ideas, the 1960s in the United States became a time remarkable for its idealistic shibboleths and pragmatically timed liberal legislation. Although Kennedy's inspirational New Frontier rhetoric managed to justify a number of effective programs such as the Peace Corps, his successor Lyndon Johnson, with a Democratic majority backing in both houses of Congress, was able to secure the enactment of far more crucial programs. These include the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as Johnson's administrative and legislative package aggregated under the heading of the Great Society. In 1965, Johnson took significant steps to alleviate some of poverty's ills through the passage of such bills as the Economic Opportunity Act which provided a domestic peace corps and vocational training, the Appalachian Regional Development Act, the Housing and Urban Development Act, the Medicare bill granting health care for the elderly, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Higher Education Act that furnished more than 140,000 scholarships based on need and initiated a National Teachers Corps, the Voting Rights Act that helped the Civil Rights movement by getting rid of literacy tests and other obstacles for voters, and the Immigration Act which invalidated the national-origins quota system.[10]

Although Johnson never regarded his arts' programs as equal to his social programs, the same eventful year of 1965 he signed a bill establishing the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Building on the prestige of the National Council on the Arts whose board was composed of such luminaries as sculptor David Smith, violinist Isaac Stern, Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) director René d'Harnoncourt, New York Philharmonic conductor Leonard Bernstein, composer Richard Rogers, author Ralph Ellison, actor Gregory Peck, and news reporter David Brinkley, the NEA was promised $2.5 million for its first nine months and $4 million the following year. Although these dollar amounts were small in relation to Johnson's two education acts that provided more than $50 million alone for art programs in the schools, the NEA played a pivotal symbolic role since it lent enormous dignity to the arts and supplied seed money and federal government validation that helped when nonprofit organizations were fundraising in the private and corporate sectors. More importantly the NEA demonstrated that the arts were for everyone, an idea already familiar to New Yorkers who benefited, beginning in the late 1950s, from both Joseph Papp's free Shakespeare performances in the parks and Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, which made classical music fun and enlightening.[11] This interest in popularizing the arts was paralleled by Conceptual art's democratizing gestures in the form of Ray Johnson's mail art, Seth Siegelaub's exhibitions as low-cost catalogues, Joseph Kosuth's billboards, and the use of magazines as spaces for art, including Dan Graham's and Stephen J. Kaltenbach's insertions into mass-circulation periodicals and art magazines.

Simultaneous with both New Frontier and Great Society initiatives in the arts was the drive to build impressive municipal arts centers throughout the country: sixty-nine cities across the nation were constructing such centers in 1962, while in 1969 when 170 such centers were completed, an equal number were undergoing construction. During the 1960s the concept of public support for the arts as well as their widespread appreciation had definitely come of age.

House Beautiful's Reaction to *The Affluent Society*

Surprisingly, Galbraith's critiques of prosperity directly affected American taste as can be seen most clearly in the sustained reactions of Elizabeth Gordon, editor of the upscale decorating magazine *House Beautiful.*[12] An analysis of her reactions and her magazine's subsequent focus will enable us to comprehend the varied reactions that Galbraith's book evoked among affluent Americans. This analysis will help to set the stage for the ideology of selective consumption and an antimaterialist lifestyle that characterizes *collectors* of Conceptual art. In an editorial of November 1958 (Fig. 38), Gordon assumes a middle-ground position when she acknowledges, only a few months after its publication, Galbraith's landmark study while simultaneously defending the taste and perspicacity of her readers.[13] Gordon takes note of Galbraith's implication "that perhaps we have too much affluence, and that more goods for more people should not be the path of the future."[14] She misconstrues his "thesis . . . [however as stating] basically that the individual cannot be trusted to spend his money wisely and that more of the decisions on how to spend the national income must be made for the individual by government officials."[15] Then she politely but firmly rails against his social democratic politics by remarking, "[t]he editors of this magazine move continuously among people of all incomes, and we see what they do with their money. . . . And we say emphatically that there is no basis for Professor Galbraith's pessimism. Out there in the homes of America, things are not what he implies. . . . Whether we take him literally or figuratively does not matter. This is not happening. Taste, discrimination, and a maturing sense of appropriateness are more prevalent than Mr. Galbraith has any idea."[16]

To reinforce her editorial, Gordon included in this same issue an article by an obscure philosopher, T. V. Smith, titled "When Men Discriminate Wealth Is a Maturing Influence." In this piece, Smith concedes the relevancy of Galbraith's thesis even though he relegates it to the realm of the supermarket and department store. Then fully in agreement with Gordon, he writes the following aphoristic statement: "Wealth requires only discrimination in order to produce men. It is by having more than we 'want' but less than we 'need,' that we come to refine our taste. . . . There is poverty that vulgarizes. There is wealth that vulgarizes. Only discrimination can stop the vulgarization. . . . Where men are not decadent, wealth does not decay; it matures.[17]

Smith's prose which genders discernment as masculine might appear out of place in a magazine intended primarily for female readers, but its message is clear:

House Beautiful
NOVEMBER • 1958

A new thing in the history of man:

Palatial Living for High or Low Incomes

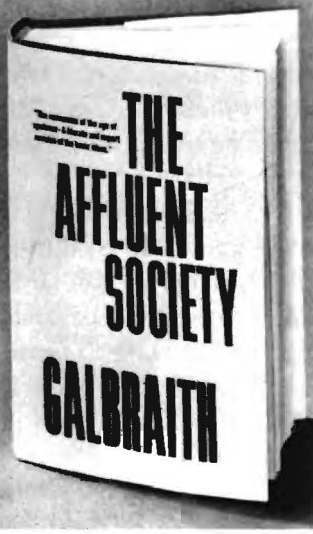
• No one will argue that for nearly two decades we have enjoyed a prosperity unparalleled in the history of man. A new book by John Kenneth Galbraith, a noted economist, confirms this pleasant state of being. But then he proceeds to imply that perhaps we have too much affluence, and that more goods for more people should not be the path of the future. Professor Galbraith's thesis, as I understand it, is basically that the individual cannot be trusted to spend his money wisely, and that more of the decisions on how to spend the national income must be made for the individual by government officials.

This seems to imply an essential disrespect for the potential of individual human beings and a pessimism about the enormous growth that one individual can make in one lifetime, given reasonable opportunities for education and experience.

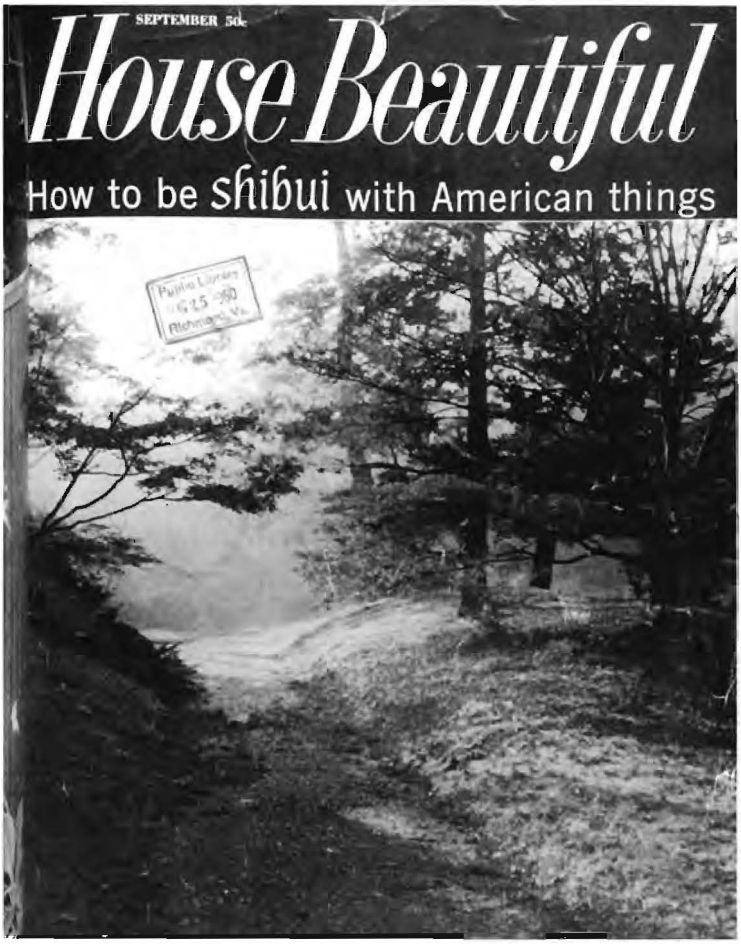
The editors of this magazine move continuously among people of all incomes, and we see what they do with their money. We also know what industry sells, and what kinds of merchandise become the best sellers. And we say emphatically that there is no basis for Professor Galbraith's pessimism. Out there in the homes of America, things are not what he implies. In closing he says, "to furnish a barren room is one thing; to continue to crowd in furniture until the foundation buckles is quite another."

Whether we take him literally or figuratively does not matter. This is not happening. Taste, discrimination, and a maturing sense of appropriateness are more prevalent than Mr. Galbraith has any idea. This issue gives a very, very small sampling of what he would find if he went looking.

ELIZABETH GORDON, *Editor*



38. *House Beautiful,* November 1958, page 193. Reproduced by permission from *House Beautiful,* copyright © 1958. The Hearst Corporation. All Rights Reserved.



39. *House Beautiful,* September 1960, cover. Reproduced by permission from *House Beautiful,* copyright © 1960. The Hearst Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

if women intend to be respected in the postmaterialist era in which Smith writes, they will have to buckle down and discriminate like men.

Despite Gordon's statements to the contrary, she apparently was not fully convinced that her readers would be able to withstand the temptations of prosperity as portrayed by Galbraith, hence the need to reinforce the argument in future issues. Over the next few years, her magazine embarked on an educational campaign to teach its readership to discern differences between ostentation and true value. A special July 1959 issue introduced *House Beautiful* readers to the prudent austerities of "The Scandinavian Look in U.S. Homes." Then in June 1960, Gordon commissioned a special article by Marva P. Shearer titled "Do You Know the Difference between 'Costly' and 'Priceless'?" in which parents are advised on ways to overcome their children's misplaced concern with money and instill in them proper values. At one point in the article, Shearer's polemic is directed

as much to the parents as their children when she pointedly asks, "[d]o we equate extravagance with good taste? Does a display of opulence appeal to us more than selectivity? Is amassing possessions the only life goal we can set for ourselves?"[18]

Shibui and *Wabi:* Aesthetic Strategies for Coping with the Excesses of Affluence

In August and September 1960 (Figs. 39 and 40), Gordon followed the success of her Scandinavian coverage with two *House Beautiful* issues devoted in their entirety to the restraint of Japanese *shibui.*[19] The first segment was intended to be an introduction to Japanese aesthetics and in her editorial for this issue, Gordon defines the Japanese term *shibui* as "the deepest beauty word in the world" that "applies to a severe exquisiteness that is way beyond mere prettiness."[20] She points out that the literal definition of *shibui* is puckery and astringency, and she connects this taste with the act of biting into a persimmon or grapefruit. A number of her suggested meanings for *shibui* can be directly related to the dryness and stringency of Conceptual art, particularly its emphasis on unobtrusiveness, unostentatiousness, simplicity, economy of means, understatement, avoidance of stylishness, and somber austerity – terms that are equally applicable to certain forms of Minimal art.[21]

In addition, this issue of *House Beautiful* links the *shibui* aesthetic to *wabi,* a Zen-related term important to teahouse culture that can also be applied to Conceptual art's unassuming formal mode because it refers to poverty or lack of fashion. As D. T. Suzuki, the foremost popularizer of Japanese theories of Zen in the United States,[22] notes, "To be poor, that is, not to be dependent on things worldly – wealth, power, and reputation – and yet to feel inwardly the presence of something of the highest value, above time and social position: this is what essentially constitutes *wabi.* . . . It is in truth the worshiping of poverty."[23] Significantly, for Conceptual art and its patrons, Suzuki follows his definition of *wabi* with the observation that "[d]espite the modern Western luxuries and comforts of life which have invaded us, there is still an ineradicable longing in us for the cult of *wabi.* Even in the intellectual life, no richness of ideas, not brilliancy or solemnity in marshaling thoughts and building up a philosophical system, is sought, but just to stay quietly content with the mystical contemplation of Nature and to feel at home with the world is more inspiring to us, at least to some of us."[24] Although Suzuki's definition is intended to clarify difficult aspects of Zen for a Western audience, his discussion of *wabi* would have struck responsive chords with people acquainted with the ongoing discourse on affluence as well as those familiar with the decorative aesthetic *shibui.*

In case Gordon's readers were unable to connect *shibui* with their own lives, the second *House Beautiful* issue devoted to this theory takes up the challenge of assimilation. Essentially a "how-to" issue for the members of Galbraith's New Class and Russell Lynes's "upper middlebrow" (see note 7), this September volume

ew home furnishings with
e Shibui Concept of Beauty

By ELIZABETH GORDON
Editor

Fine American manufacturers have co-operated with House Beautiful in creating home furnishings that are endowed with the deep and subtle kind of beauty known as *shibui*. These furnishings have been styled to go together, color-wise and texturally. The Baker Furniture Company has created eleven pieces. Schumacher has created a large group of fabrics. Color-related rugs and carpets are made by Wanda Weve. Wall paints with *shibui* textures and colors are offered by Martin Senour

One of the characteristics of a thing that is *shibui* is that at first glance it looks plain and simple but on subsequent examinations it reveals more and still more. This lamp table has these depths. At a distance it looks plain but interesting. But up close, and in the right light, cross-hatched textured patterns is to be found on the fluted legs. The fact that the plain parts of the table are not flat planes lets it reflect interesting highlights.

This big coffee table was inspired by a shibui lacquer tray that had similar interesting curled legs. It combines lacquer with natural wood, with a carved beading around the outer edge. Such a combination of contrasting materials is characteristic of shibui objects. It is made with American dimensions, of course, so it would combine with your sofa and chair heights. Table is 21" high and 56" in diameter. The eleven shibui pieces of Baker Furniture may be ordered through decorators or the decorating departments of department stores.

40. *House Beautiful*, September 1960; pages 150–1. Reproduced by permission from *House Beautiful*, copyright © 1960. The Hearst Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

investigated differences between assimilation and imitation and included in addition discussions of "How to Be *Shibui* with American Things" and presented "New Home Furnishings with the *Shibui* Concept of Beauty" that showed how fabrics and furniture could be tastefully adapted.[25]

Only two years after its publication, then, Galbraith's book initiated a concerted battle against the excesses of prosperity that took the form of a sustained investigation of the quiet, unostentatious, and remarkably reserved decorating style termed *shibui*. Both his book and this design aesthetic, as well as Conceptual art, represented significant aspects of the ideology of underconsumption. While the *House Beautiful* staff waxed poetic about unaffected simplicity, Joseph Kosuth simply noted several years later, "Art *is boring*" and then proceeded to use this ennui as a modus operandi for tautological objects that in his opinion point to his far more important analytic propositions without replacing them. Kosuth's and other Conceptual artists' devaluation of the art object can be considered

resonant with the fetishing of underconsumption promulgated by the upper middle class, because they, too, believed that serious art must necessarily be restrained and eschew the merely spectacular, the vulgar, the entertaining, and even the pictorial.

Ad Reinhardt, Joseph Kosuth, and East Asian Aesthetics

The argument here is based on the fact that both a predilection for Japanese taste and the development of Conceptual art both participate in an ideology prizing underconsumption, discretion, and thought; a direct connection between the two can be found in Joseph Kosuth's close study and appreciation of Ad Reinhardt's art and writings. Since Reinhardt was steeped in Eastern thought, we can assume Kosuth's knowledge of this interest and his incorporation of aspects of it in the assumptions formative to his own work.

Therefore, an understanding of the debt that Kosuth owes Reinhardt for his black paintings and theories about art necessitates a brief look at Reinhardt's studies of Asian culture in general and Chinese literati painting in particular. Beginning in 1946, Reinhardt studied Asian art history for a period of six years with Alfred Salmony at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Reinhardt's study with Salmony is of crucial significance in understanding his desire to create an updated art for art's sake–type of painting predicated on emptiness, an idea that is a central aspect of his 1954 *ARTnews* review of Sherman Lee's major exhibition of 117 Chinese landscape paintings at the Cleveland Museum of Art. In this review, Reinhardt singled out the importance of the literati painters, whom he describes as "aloof contemplatives." In particular, he praises them for preconceiving their works before lifting their brushes to paint: "The forms of art [in the East] are always preformed and premeditated. The creative process is always an academic routine and sacred procedure. Everything is prescribed and proscribed." Written at the height of Abstract Expressionism, when improvisation and openendedness were unquestioned truisms, and published in a periodical that regularly championed this type of art, Reinhardt's statement was not just a historical assessment, it was a manifesto in the making.

In this piece, Reinhardt also praised the Chinese literati painters – scholar, amateur artists – whose contributions were beginning to be reevaluated and appreciated in the postwar era. Literati art, similar to *shibui*, correlates well with the discourse on the problems of affluence since it emphasized simplicity and astringency, a quality shared by the painters' cohorts who were often poets – ideally the two skills were joined together in the same person. Small groups of these scholar artists and scholar poets would meet at social gatherings, usually drinking parties, where paintings and poems were composed on the spot. The artist's friends and guests might elect to contribute a colophon to a particular painting, praising it and its creator and recalling aspects of when it was conceived, thus placing criticism within the work's parameters by making it an inextricable yet collaborative aspect of the art. Reinhardt may have been thinking of these colophons when he

later composed the contradictory and elliptical prose poem:

> Words in art are words.
> Letters in art are letters.
> Writing in art is writing.
> Messages in art are not messages.
> Explanation in art is not explanation.

Referred to as the "the puckerishness of Sung poetry," the special astringency that is found in both literati painting and verse was the subject of Ou-yang Hsiu's critique of the poems of his colleague Mei Yao-ch'en (1002–60):

> His recent poems are dry and hard;
> Try chewing on some – a bitter mouthful!
> The first reading is like eating olives,
> But the longer you suck on them, the better the taste.

The reference to the dry and hard poems in this passage could easily be used to commend some early Conceptual art: in both literati painting and Conceptual art references to the works' understatement and aridness would have been taken as perceptive compliments.

The Brokering of Knowledge

Not only culture but also knowledge flourished during this period of liberalism and concern for alleviating financial and social inequities. Since knowledge constitutes both the subject and the media of much Conceptual art, we need to consider the new role assumed by the so-called knowledge industry of the 1960s and to ascertain how education and research changed dramatically during this time. Such an inquiry demonstrates the semiotic of knowledge that impacts on a number of related social meanings important for the development of Conceptual art such as the often-touted equation of Foucauldian knowledge and power. During this period, people were frequently referred to as human capital and natural resources deserving to be tapped. In the midst of unheralded change and without sufficient moorings, Americans experienced a need for direction, and education seemed to be the best way to take stock of one's world and chart its future. In the 1960s people in the United States set great store in learning as a way of gaining control of their environment; at the time they believed in the ennobling and enhancing power of thought. This attitude toward knowledge galvanized aspects of the nation's well-ensconced ideology of democracy and served as a rejoinder to Galbraith's doubts about the country's ability to channel its excess funds in useful and socially liberating areas.

Artists were not just observers of these changes but also their beneficiaries. By the 1960s many of them had received fine-arts degrees and were supporting

themselves by teaching either part or full time at professional art schools or at colleges and universities.[26] As critic Harold Rosenberg noted in 1969, "At a conference not long ago on cultural changes in the Americas since the war, I emphasized the shift of art training from professional schools and artists' studios. . . . [F]or example, only one of ten leading artists of the generation of Pollock and de Kooning had a degree (and not in art), while of "thirty artists under thirty-five" shown in "Young America 1965" at the Whitney Museum the majority had B.A.s or B.F.A.s."[27] Their years within academic settings encouraged the artist who came of age during the 1960s and early 1970s to view the arts as part of the humanities; far from being a mere accessory to thought, art seemed to them to be a form of intelligence and a site of critical inquiry. As Edgar Z. Friedenberg suggested, "[w]hatever its contribution to vocational education, the university [and we might add art] should be the society's specialized organ of critical self-scrutiny."[28] Artists' associations with institutions of higher learning also provided them ample opportunity to appreciate important differences between basic and applied research. Such understanding is formative to Conceptual art's self-image, since its goals are more in line with the former intent to direct study to the fuller understanding of a particular subject without succumbing to crude utilitarian views of knowledge. Although Conceptual art frequently appears to be conforming to a mere instrumentalization of knowledge as in Hans Haacke's *Visitor Profile,* his 1970 polls of MoMA visitors, and Douglas Huebler's *Duration Piece #15* (1969) in which prospective purchasers must comply with the work's intent to pay an agreed-upon reward for information leading to the arrest of Edmund Kite McIntyre (the subject of the piece), these works are actually epistemologically oriented since their intent is to examine unquestioned assumptions about art's audiences and its collectors.

Artists' connections with institutions of higher learning exposed them to the changing goals of education. Beginning in the 1950s the sum of available knowledge was growing at such an accelerated pace that teachers were gearing themselves to teach students "how to think" so that they could cope with the inevitable changes that faced them in the future. This situation was exacerbated by the success of the Soviet Sputnik satellite, which caused Americans to doubt the merits of their educational system, spurring the drive to turn their children into Cold Warriors and to support the tremendous increase in federal government funding for higher education. Instead of regarding education as culminating in a terminal degree, people in this period began to speak of "lifelong learning." They recognized that if college graduates did not find the means to educate themselves, they could easily become functionally uneducated in two decades.[29]

Although this increased velocity of knowledge could be exhilarating, the suspicion that a college degree could become obsolete indicates a dark side to the educational process that was rarely discussed, although deeply felt. Not so much concerned about a breakup of the self or its unreality, people in the 1960s were worried about being replaced by new technologies, as if they were no more important than the many established concepts and values that were then regularly being

debunked and retired. No doubt some people felt they were thrust on a never ending conveyor belt similar to the moving stage at the New York's World Fair that transported audiences quickly past a garishly lit *Pièta* by Michelangelo. They just couldn't keep up with the challenges new forms of automation presented them.

But the overall mood of the times was optimistic: the world had a future that would be radically different from the present, and this new world would require massive, ongoing education for people to accommodate themselves to the tremendous changes facing them. Robert Theobald implied that the new goals besetting education would be ideological ones. Being unable to teach all the available information, instructors would have to begin classifying it.[30] Although Theobald does not extend his discussion beyond this observation, such ordering of knowledge shapes and transforms it. In the process of doing so, it naturalizes its means.

Given this situation, it is not surprising that structuralism, which claimed to understand the workings of the human mind, became a preferred academic theory for coping with vast amounts of knowledge and that it found applications far beyond its original application in semiotics and anthropology. Because structuralism provided a rationale for surpassing the mere description of objects through the assumption of underlying laws governing their mode of functioning, it seemed to furnish a defense against mounting onslaughts of new information and concomitant fears of obsolescence. A parallel argument can be made for structuralism as formative to the development of Conceptual art, which coped with the proliferation of museum exhibitions, art books, and new artistic styles by systemizing art's underlying laws. Instead of being content with only proposing formal innovations or new sensibilities, Conceptual artists used structuralism as a rationale for literalizing art's functions. For them, all traditional elements are necessarily arbitrary; their meanings, similar to words, are achieved through differential relationships and an ability to manifest art's modes of operation.

So important did knowledge and its attainment through formal education become in this postwar era that parents and others regarded college degrees as the modern-day equivalent to dowries and trust funds, as privileged forms of property, as insurance policies against reversals in the future, and as certificates that could be bartered for a job.[31] It was a secularized period marked by tremendous upward mobility in which knowledge and education were perceived as class levelers. Technology required workers with skills, large businesses demanded an educated managerial class, the United States had become a meritocracy, and the easiest way for employers to begin assessing prospective workers' abilities was to demand college degrees. Because of the tremendous increase in college applications, professors were able to insist on highly qualified students. These rising standards were accompanied by more serious students and greater interest in graduate training, resulting in a new form of undergraduate program, called "the university college," which effectively transformed increasing numbers of four-year programs into intense prologues for graduate school. Christopher Jencks and

David Riesman dubbed the University College "a de facto prep school . . . [which] usually sends nearly three-quarters of its men and a third to a half of its women to graduate school."[32] They noted that out of 2,000 undergraduate programs in the country in the late 1960s, only about 100 could be called "university colleges."[33]

In addition to this new type of undergraduate program, the high-profile president of the extended University of California system, Clark Kerr, placed in high relief the overall responsibilities of the university in the early 1960s when he delivered a series of Harvard lectures that were later published under the title *The Uses of the University*.[34] Kerr pointed out the strategic role that both knowledge and universities had assumed in Kennedy's New Frontier:

> "The basic reality, for the university, is the widespread recognition that new knowledge is the most important factor in economic and social growth. We are just now perceiving that the university's invisible product, knowledge, may be the most powerful single element in our culture, affecting the rise and fall of professions and even of social classes, of regions and even of nations.
>
> Because of this fundamental reality, the university is being called upon to produce knowledge as never before – for civic and regional purposes, for national purposes, and even for no purpose at all beyond the realization that most knowledge eventually comes to serve mankind. And it is also being called upon to transmit knowledge to an unprecedented proportion of the population."[35]

The centrality of the university in 1960s culture is obvious from Kerr's statement. Its connection with both economics and Galbraith's *Age of Affluence* is evident in the metaphors "product" and "produce," terms related to both farming and factories and featured as well in Fritz Machlup's 1962 study, *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States*.[36] In his lectures, Kerr, following Machlup, makes an extraordinary assessment of the economic importance of knowledge in the early 1960s, stating that the "production, distribution, and consumption of 'knowledge' in all its forms is said to account for 29 percent of gross national product" with "'knowledge production' . . . growing at about twice the rate of the rest of the economy."[37]

Because areas of spending often indicate spheres of influence and importance, a consideration of federal dollars supporting university research is enlightening. From 1955 to 1960 federal funding for university research doubled; from 1960 to 1968, it was multiplied by almost a factor of six.[38] In the early 1960s, few questioned the modern ethic of instrumental rationality by which the goals of basic and applied research were conflated, where the latter became a means of evaluating the success of the former. Instead, most embraced the importance of applied research in its many guises. Like Kerr, they applauded the university's centrality, its collaborations with government, including research projects with

the military. During this time education was rationalized, turned into a product and made to conform to social values conditioned by affluence, despite its proclamation of disinterest and objectivity.

When Conceptual artists began plumbing knowledge as the subject and the object of their work, they drew on these many meanings that enriched their art by placing it firmly in this contested area that was neither wholly altruistic nor instrumental. Looking like production guidelines, their art assumed the authority of an already completed event, achieving at times the force of Lawrence Weiner's instructions for sculptural ideas such as *ONE QUART EXTERIOR GREEN INDUSTRIAL ENAMEL THROWN ON A BRICK WALL* (1968). But in Weiner's work the option of whether to enact these consummated statements was intentionally and ironically left open-ended through the proviso of *EACH BEING EQUAL AND CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT OF THE ARTIST/ THE DECISION AS TO CONDITION RESTS WITH/ THE RECEIVER UPON THE OCCASION OF RECEIVERSHIP.* In John Baldessari's *A Work with Only One Property* (1966–7), Weiner's arrested performative is replaced by a simple assertion of being that makes ontological estimates suspect. In both these pieces, the same type of written text that constitutes a traditional accepted medium of knowledge in our culture assumes authority as art. This text is revealed as part of a social contract dependent on individual responses in order to constitute the work of art's meaning. In this manner, information establishes itself immediately as text before revealing its pragmatic tenor and rhetorical force.

The Politics of Knowledge

When John F. Kennedy was campaigning for the presidency, he told audiences that he wished to be a "President who acts as well as reacts – who originates programs as well as study groups – who masters complex problems as well as one-page memorandums."[39] As president, Kennedy became known for attracting a new breed of "action intellectuals," as Theodore H. White would later term them.[40] His "ministry of talent" – to use a phrase coined by his White House special counsel, Theodore C. Sorensen – consisted of a greater number of academics than any president had appointed in the past, including an impressive fifteen Rhodes scholars. Among the members of this elite corps of academics were McGeorge Bundy, Robert S. McNamara, Dean Rusk, Arthur M. Schlesinger, and Sorensen himself. In his capacity as secretary of defense, McNamara extended the emphasis on keen intellectual ability when he selected a number of budget analysts, economists, and strategists from the RAND Corporation, who formed part of his cadre known as "the Whiz Kids."

The situation under Kennedy was far removed from the fears of democratic presidential hopeful Senator Adelai Stevenson, who demonstrated his own concern about a prevailing 1950s prejudice against intellectuals when he wrote Galbraith that he did not wish to be associated with "a Stevenson brain trust operation."[41] Taking a totally different tactic, Galbraith proposed that "As the party of the well-to-do, the [R]epublicans do not hesitate to use their dough. As

the party of the egg-heads, we should similarly and proudly make use of our brains and experience."[42] As Kennedy's advisor later in the decade, Galbraith no doubt voiced this same sentiment. Unlike Stevenson, Kennedy followed Galbraith's advice, a tactic that placed him at a distinct advantage.

Even when he was a senator, Kennedy had not hesitated to seek the advice of academics. He often discussed ideas with his Harvard colleagues and professors, thinking that a carefully considered approach of relying on the expertise of some of the best minds in the country would help ensure a just and reasoned solution. When he was running for the presidency, he broke new ground by availing himself of experts from RAND, who contributed ideas for some of his speeches. Once elected, Kennedy continued to remain open to professional outside advice when he depended on studies being conducted by the Brookings Institution on the role that second- and third-tier appointments might play in the creation of new policies when he selected his cabinet members and advisors. Later on, Brookings provided offices, a library, and meeting rooms for his transition team.

Both RAND and Brookings are elite policy research institutions known as "think tanks." A term originally used during World War II by the military to designate a secured area for planning and strategizing, think tanks began in the 1950s to be associated with private research groups. The importance of these private, nonprofit research institutes is that they were able in theory to provide independent and objective data on political developments, initiate and complete research projects within the severe time constraints imposed by partisan politics, and both garner and disseminate information through special seminars, books, and reports. They were particularly effective in helping legislators formulate policy options and clarify choices taken. They appealed to new kinds of politicians working in an era when there was far too much information for any one individual to secure, read, and properly digest it. Because they worked on a contractual basis, there was, however, a real danger that think tanks would be primarily responsive to their clients and that their results might be geared to the marketing of future contracts. Although the term was generally unknown in the United States before 1960, soon after Kennedy was elected president, it became a household word. Although presidents in the past had sought out the advice of experts – Franklin D. Roosevelt had his National Resources Planning Board and Harry S. Truman his Council of Economic Advisers and National Security Council – none of them relied on think tanks to the extent that Kennedy did. For the short time of his presidency and then even more briefly at the beginning of Johnson's term of office, these nonprofit organizations enjoyed enormous prestige throughout the country for their ability to advise government.

The popularity of think tanks no doubt arose in relation to the need to deal with ever-greater influxes of information, but they were also appealing because of their ability to survey large sectors of the population and consider their needs in relationship to new programs. In an essay clearly influenced by Galbraith's book, Robert E. Lane outlined differences between domains of "pure politics" and "pure knowledge," finding the former subject to the pressures of power and

party affiliation, while the latter was able to move decision making into the realm of rationality.[43] While the adjective "pure" should be kept firmly within quotation marks, policy research foundations did attempt to discover procedures capable of yielding objective results. The Stanford Research Institute termed their process "the art of systematic invention" and coupled it with "the art of systematic innovation." They understood these phrases in terms of coordinated market research both to determine needs and also to discover new products and means for producing them.[44] Viewing themselves as efficient and placing their ability to rate intricate systems on a par with engineers, mathematicians, and physicists, researchers at RAND devised a form of operations research, using quantitative means, that they called "systems analysis," which is relatable to Claude Lévi-Strauss's structuralism as well as the theories of information advanced by Norbert Weiner ("cybernectics") and Claude Shannon. Systems analysis enabled them to conceive a set of operations in terms of a governing whole. It had the distinct advantage of encouraging them to look for mathematical common denominators and to develop models and systems when seeking answers. Of course, this advantage could become a problem if the unwieldiness of the world at large was not factored into the solution.

Beginning with a constellation of procedures that would enable them to ask the right questions and determine the most effective way to characterize a given problem, specialists at RAND started in the 1950s to use game theory to enable them to calculate probable solutions concerning, for example, the use of missiles in a nuclear attack, given the uncertainty of the players. Game theory proved to be a particularly useful tool when providing information to the military.

Conceptual Art and the Ambiguities of Knowledge's Instrumentalization

These, then are some of the wider social and ideological determinants within which Conceptual art emerged during the 1960s: the positive reaction to action intellectuals, a widespread reliance on think tanks in the first half of the decade (as well as the negative response to them due to Johnson's escalation of the war in Southeast Asia), the rising power and prestige of universities, and the desire that affluence be used to achieve a meaningful life for all Americans. In particular, the increased emphasis on learning, the importance of structuralist theory for academic discourse and for the problem-solving techniques employed by think tanks, and the overall prestige accorded intellectuals was conducive both to the development and reception of Conceptual art. While some Conceptual art does mimic the less savory aspects of the process of the instrumentalization of knowledge, it also self-consciously assumes an ambiguous and unresolved relationship with these processes and terms.

Semiotics is formative for this art, but it does not determine its outlook: it is generative but not coercive. We might say that in Conceptual art, ideas are emptied of their meanings, so that the impoverished forms manifesting them are doubly destitute. The quest is thus revealed to be far less Kosuth's "art-as-idea-as-idea"

than its inversion, "idea-as-art," a variant on Reinhardt's "art-is-art." The difference is significant since Conceptual art reveals itself to be far less a critique of the role of thought than its apotheosis: a transformation of thought into (blank) subject matter. In this work, ideas that initially assume the form of analytic propositions lose their connections with external reality: they become abstract models, systems of high artificiality, simulations of reality devoid of the content so crucial to the think tank's success. Conceptual art proclaims a world of endless models masquerading as "knowledge."

If Conceptual art were considered only in terms of its abstruseness without an appreciation for its democratic means, then Brian O'Doherty's wry condemnation of Modern art as a social space that accommodates "the prejudices and enhance[s] the self-image of the upper middle classes" might well apply.[45] Even though Conceptual art did flirt with the mass media as a means of distribution – albeit not in a uniform manner: compare Kosuth's advertising pieces and billboards to Graham's *Homes for America* and other magazine projects – it nevertheless accommodated itself to the gallery system, as has been pointed out earlier. Certainly "highbrow" rather than "middlebrow," Conceptual art appealed to an exclusive audience well acquainted with the Byzantine rules of avant-garde priorities and exclusions. The fact that its objects of display were intended to constitute art abstracted in terms of a viewer's reception and response to it made the work even more rarified and prized, for it contradictorily attempted to transcend the status of mere things while reifying the category of experience. In addition, it made its collectors indispensable parts of the process of explicating exactly how ideas superintend lowly, yet still essential art objects.

In his early works dealing with water, part of a larger series on *Matter* in general, it is possible that Kosuth was proposing the value of ideas to counter the expense of object art. His interest in this topic parallels Galbraith's analysis of the economic doctrine of diminishing marginal utility, which attempts to account for the fact that with increasing prosperity there is a decreasing need to fulfill wants and a consequent lessening of production since consumers' desires depend on scarcity rather than necessity. As an example, Galbraith cited Adam Smith's comment in *Wealth of Nations* about the relative values of water and diamonds. "Nothing is more useful than water," Smith notes, "but it will purchase scarce anything; scarce anything can be had in exchange for it. A diamond, on the contrary, has scarce any value in use: but a very great quantity of other goods may frequently be had in exchange for it." If we substitute Kosuth's ideas for the water in Smith's statement and his art objects for diamonds in this passage, we have a clear idea of the puzzling exchange value that traditionally has been accorded art's content and its form: the former may be essential but has little value, while the latter, according to Kosuth, is expendable but often expensive.

Although Kosuth intends to offer in his art of the late 1960s only the empty formalism of analytic propositions and language games, his positivist orientation toward language and his underlying analogy of art as a language game that operates under similar constraints to the linguistic analyses of Ayer and Ludwig

Wittgenstein is altered significantly once it is placed in the real world. Despite his protests that his art is rarified and transcendent, both his art and the objects embodying it (elements that this essay demonstrates must be reunited) collude with the world in which they are presented. Once they are situated there, they assume the role of a meta-language which Marcuse has defined as an ability "to make the established language itself speak what it conceals or excludes."[46] In the world, Conceptual art de-instrumentalizes knowledge through formalization and then recommodifies it as art. It is the meeting point of opposing values, as if two vectors had backed one into the other.

NOTES

1. Harold Rosenberg, "Hans Hofmann: Nature into Action," *ARTnews* 56, no. 2 (May 1957): 35.
2. John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1958).
3. Ibid., 158, 159.
4. Ibid., 2.
5. Cf. David Riesman, *Abundance for What? And Other Essays* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964); Robert Theobald, *The Challenge of Abundance* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1961).
6. One of the most reasoned assessments of the dilemma that prosperity presented to America's middle class was articulated by Riesman, who concluded that after the standard package of desires had been met, few Americans would have either the inclination or imagination to spend substantially larger amounts of money: "Those Americans who attain, let us say, 25 per cent or even 50 per cent more income in stable dollars can quickly learn ways to spend it but if faced with 250 per cent they cannot easily and rapidly learn new wants" (303). Operating under the ideological constraints of his time, Riesman could not conceive of Americans deviating far from their original social contract. He believed that issues focusing on enhanced public services, including health, education, and welfare, would prevail as would family and community values.
7. In his book, Galbraith posited the idea of a New Class that had achieved tremendous power in the post-World War II era. Characterizing it in terms of education, Galbraith noted the dramatic increase in its numbers, its lack of exclusivity, and its desire to perpetuate itself through the inculcation of its offspring. An aristocracy of the intellect, this New Class represented Galbraith's assessment of the present as well as his hope for the future when people would not be satisfied with the meretricious fruits of affluence, which could only offer monetary rewards and an ever-decreasing workweek. Instead members of the New Class would seek the type of satisfactions that accrue from intense involvement in one's own projects.

   Galbraith's New Class represented the latest contribution to a postwar trend to go beyond the economic blinders stratifying society into lower-, middle-, and upper-class categories and view in a more realistic and appropriate fashion the dynamics dividing people into separate groups. There was a growing suspicion that the United States had outgrown its old class system based on the unequal distribution of wealth. A new scheme, according to Galbraith, needed to be formulated to account for the inequities that were still being experienced in this most democratic of all governments.

   The best-known contribution to this genre of characterizing the dynamics of class is Russell Lynes's hierarchical grouping of people according to taste and thought that remained significant in the 1960s since his terms "highbrow,"

"middlebrow," and "lowbrow" were by this time part of the general American lexicon. In his chapter on these aesthetic groupings contained in his book *The Taste-Makers* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1949; reprinted 1983), Lynes sets out to disprove wealth's role as an indicator of taste and class by pointing out that highbrows, his term for the true nobility of the realm of taste and distinction, steep every aspect of their lives in culture and initiate trends in taste. Primarily critics rather than creators, their lives are highly intellectualized. Mostly they come from the ranks of "the ill-paid professions, notably the academic" (311). For Lynes highbrows deserve to be ranked at the apex of his schema because they are the true arbiters of taste and not merely perpetuators of trends as are upper-middlebrow publishers, educators, museum directors, movie producers, art dealers, lecturers, and editors; and they certainly are not the earnest followers of taste as are lower-middlebrow people who follow the advice of such women's magazines as *Good Housekeeping, Ladies' Home Journal,* and the more upscale *House and Garden.*

Although Galbraith's New Class is formulated as a serious category and Lynes's half in jest, both point to the need to reassess postwar U.S. society and chart its fluidity and dynamics, while accounting for a changing spectrum of values. Remarkably, both give high marks to the role of education and intelligence, suggesting that as the United States became increasingly prosperous, wealth would become less important as a criterion for status. Even though he still accepts the old categories demarcating society, Riesman points out that the upper class maintains its barriers "to the arrivistes by exercise of the strategy of conspicuous underconsumption" (133). This twin emphasis on intelligence and underconsumption might be taken as part of an ideology affecting members of Galbraith's New Class or Lynes's highbrows, an ideology that helped make them responsive to conceptual works of art exhibiting these qualities.

8. Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964; 1991): 9.
9. Galbraith, 253.
10. This impressive legislation undertaken in the name of a war on poverty became law the same year that Kosuth claims to have initiated Conceptual art and waged his own war on art's commodity status and its traditional role as the private preserve of the rich.
11. Although the NEA perpetuated the idea that the fine arts should be considered an inherently democratic pursuit and thus should be widely dispersed throughout the country, a number of artists and others were concerned that its centralization of power might have the reverse effect. In particular, cf. Michael Corris, Preston Heller, and Andrew Menard, "The Organization of Culture under Monopoly Capitalism, Part I, 'How Do You Feel about the Arts and Artifacts Indemnity Act?'" *The Fox* 3 (1976): 128–45.
12. First published in 1896 as *The House Beautiful* in Chicago, this periodical, which was devoted to houses and their owners, was recognized for its role in promoting the Arts and Crafts movement. In 1910, it moved to New York City, and in 1934 when the Hearst Corporation acquired the magazine and integrated it with *Home and Field,* the formal article "the" was dropped from its masthead and the periodical's motto became "The magazine dedicated to the business of better living," thus joining the practicality and efficiency of modern design with quality. In 1939, Gordon became its editor, a position she held for the next three decades. As head of the most innovative decorating magazine of its time, Gordon needed to balance new ideas with tradition. In the May 1956 issue, she developed the term "Romantic Realism" which sustained *House Beautiful*'s early interests in organic Arts-and-Crafts

architecture by pointing out that modern architecture was firmly enough grounded in the mid-twentieth century America to constitute a tradition.

13. Elizabeth Gordon, "Palatial Living for High or Low Incomes," *House Beautiful* 100, no. 11 (November 1958): 93.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. T. V. Smith, "When Men Discriminate Wealth Is a Maturing Influence", *House Beautiful* 100, no. 11 (November 1958): 197, 280.
18. Marva P. Shearer, "Do You Know the Difference between 'Costly and 'Priceless'?" *House Beautiful* 102, no. 6 (June 1960): 139.
19. Elizabeth Gordon, "We Invite You to Enter a New Dimension: *Shibui*" (editorial), *House Beautiful* 102, no. 9 (August 1960): 88. In her editorial for this first issue, Gordon relates that *shibui* is an adjective, while *shibusa* is a noun. In her editorial and the essays included in both issues, however, the adjectival form is used as a noun. My usage here will follow *House Beautiful* practice.
20. Ibid., 88.
21. Vance Packard, in *The Status Seekers: An Exploration of Class Behavior in America and the Hidden Barriers That Affect You, Your Community, Your Future* (New York: David McKay Company, 1959), points out "that people in the higher classes (higher income and higher education) favored muted and delicate colors, whereas the lower classes like their colors in brilliant hues and large doses" (72). While the findings of this social commentator may not have affected Gordon and her staff, they indicate an already established, class-oriented, and historically based taste that would be susceptible to the understated beauties of *shibui*.
22. Any discussion of Suzuki must recognize how far removed from traditional Buddhism is his characterization of Zen. A remarkable study that describes Suzuki's background and his ties with an elite circle of scholars and internationally oriented monks who in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wished to create a new, reconstructed Buddhism along Japanese nationalist lines is Robert H. Scharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism" in *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 107–60.
23. Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture*, Bollingen Series LXIV (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959; reprinted 1973): 23.
24. Ibid.
25. Joining *House Beautiful* in the enterprise was Baker Furniture Company, which designed eleven pieces to be used in American *shibui*-type settings, while Schumacher contributed an impressive array of fabrics, Wunda Weve coordinated rugs and carpets, and Martin Senour conceived a process for producing textures and colors that would work well in such environments.
26. Cf. Howard Singerman, *Art Subjects: Making Artists in the American University* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999), particularly Chapters 6 and 7; "Subjects of the Artist" and "Professing Postmodernism," respectively, that chronicle this development. Singerman's analysis is entirely complementary with my own since he looks specifically at pedagogical practices and curricula in the field of graduate art programs, and I examine the role of education in the broader culture.
27. Harold Rosenberg, "Educating Artists," *The New Yorker* (May 17, 1969), reprinted in *The De-Definition of Art: Action Art from Pop to Earthworks* (New York: Horizon Press, 1972): 39.

28. Edgar Z. Friedenberg, "L. A. of the Intellect," *New York Review of Books* 1, no. 6 (November 14, 1963): 12.
29. Theobald, 121. The idea is Lewis Mumford's. He expounded on it in the book *Brainpower Quest* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1957).
30. Ibid., 117.
31. Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, *The Academic Revolution* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968): 98.
32. Ibid., 24.
33. Ibid.
34. Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963; reprinted 1972).
35. Ibid., v–vi.
36. Ibid., 88. See also Fritz Machlup, *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962).
37. Ibid.
38. Howard Brick, *Age of Contradiction: American Thought and Culture in the 1960s*, Twayne's American Thought and Culture Series (New York: Twayne, 1998): 8.
39. James Allen Smith, *The Idea Brokers: Think Tanks and the Rise of the New Policy Elite* (New York: Free Press, 1991): 122. Smith's book provides an excellent overview of American planning and advisory institutions. My discussion of these think tanks is indebted to his study.
40. Ibid., 142. Smith points out that this term was originated by White in his series of articles for *Life* that were published in 1967. White discerned the appearance of "a new power system in American life . . . [a] new priesthood, unique to this country and this time, of American action intellectuals."
41. Ibid., 123.
42. Ibid.
43. Robert E. Lane, "The Politics of Consensus in an Age of Affluence," *American Political Science Review* 59 (1965): 874–95. This article is cited in Smith, 129.
44. Smith, 25.
45. Brian O'Doherty, "Inside the White Cube Part III: Context as Content," *Artforum* 15, no. 3 (November 1976): 42.
46. Marcuse, 195.