# CURATING DEVIANCE

## PROGRAMMING THE QUEER FILM CANON


DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS

MARC FRANCIS

Curating Deviance

A CAMERA OBSCURA BOOK

# *Curating Deviance*

## Programming the Queer Film Canon

MARC FRANCIS

**Duke University Press**
*Durham and London*

2026

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Project Editor: Bird Williams
Designed by A. Mattson Gallagher
Typeset in Arno Pro by Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Francis, Marc, [date] author.
Title: Curating deviance : programming the queer film canon / Marc Francis.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2026. | Series: A camera obscura book | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2025024295 (print)
LCCN 2025024296 (ebook)
ISBN 9781478033080 (paperback)
ISBN 9781478029632 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781478061847 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Homosexuality in motion pictures. | Motion picture theaters—Curatorship. | Deviant behavior in motion pictures.
Classification: LCC PN1995.9.H55 F73 2026 (print) | LCC PN1995.9. H55 (ebook)
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2025024295
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2025024296

Cover art: Ben Davis Collection, Bleecker Street Cinema calendar from June/July 1980 (detail). The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film Special Collections, New York.

*To Nilo (and Melba)*
*Ruby*
*And my parents,*
*My rotating triple bill*

# Contents

# Acknowledgments

*Curating Deviance* was written during a time of prolonged crisis taking place on personal, national, and global registers. I considered leaving this project behind multiple times due to the strained conditions of sparse research funding and precarious academic employment. Combine that with widespread environmental calamity, ongoing state violence, global currents of fascism, proliferating wars abroad, and a global pandemic. Through these rough waters, friends and loved ones helped champion this project's ongoing relevance. Conversations about cultural contradictions and sticking points in contemporary systems of gender and sexuality allowed me to see the ways this book is more than a historical study; it aims to push against today's righteous and individualistic politics coming from the right and the left, from religious conservatives to trans and queer communities. This book longs for profound and patient forms of coalition that seem inconceivable today.

This yearning is a joint product of my personal experience and professional training, the latter of which places me forever in the debt of my mentor B. Ruby Rich. In 2013, Ruby took me under her tutelage, teaching me more than I have admitted to her—and perhaps myself, too. We have grown so close in part because we share many of the same values, worldviews, and viewing tastes. (*Many*, but not all!) I was granted the

rare opportunity few mentees in the field get when my time with Ruby was extended at *Film Quarterly* for four years beyond my PhD program. I cherished her guidance at UC Santa Cruz and *Film Quarterly*, and our relationship continues to grow and deepen with the years. (And we now tend to be film festival buddies.) I have over the years referred to her as my lifelong *Doktormutter*, the German feminine for a doctoral adviser; I can find no more suitable term. Ruby's incomparable mentorship and spirit are reflected in the pages that follow.

There persist several myths about humanities scholars, that (a) they work in a vacuum of their own research and thinking and (b) even when they don't, they tend to only be influenced by and in dialogue with other scholars. This project is a testament to scholarship's expansiveness, from the collaborative settings of conferences and extended long-distance phone conversations, to its more casual contexts of post-screening conversations at the bar with queer elders and age peers, theorizing and historicizing together. This book, years in the making, is only possible through both these disciplined and spontaneous encounters and teachings.

The line between scholarship and friendship has become wonderfully blurred by the people I am honored to call both friends and colleagues: Linnéa Hussein (dare I say my *Doktorfrau*?), Annie Berke, Harris Kornstein ("Lil' Miss Hot Mess"), Damon Young, Ramzi Fawaz, Dolores McElroy, Francesca Romeo, Topiary Landberg, Neta Alexander, Kartik Nair, Ron Gregg, Alece Oxendine, Rachel Schaff, and Vika Paranyuk. I am especially indebted to film and media scholars who read drafts of chapters, or encouraged me to press on: Besides Dolores and Linnéa, Rebecca Prime, Peter Limbrick, Elena Gorfinkel, Rosalind Galt, Jack Halberstam, Jane Gaines, John Paul Stadler, Kiki Loveday, Janet Staiger, Amy Villarejo, Regina Longo, Yiman Wang, Jenny Horne, Carla Marcantonio, as well as the late Jonathan Kahana and Patricia Zimmerman. A special and effusive thank you to Patricia White, my editor at the *Camera Obscura* book series. Patty offered detailed feedback and line editing for a chapter that is significantly stronger because of her precise and generous insights. Thank you to the entire *Camera Obscura* Editorial Board for welcoming this book into their brilliant series. I stand among giants.

Teeming in these chapters is the collective energy and inspiration of queer friends with whom I watch movies and TV shows, discuss and analyze ad nauseum, and then repeat: Haroon Adalat, Federico Emiliano, Nick Austin, Erik Kenneth Staalberg, Gabriel Blanco, Michael Bednar, Robert Harter, BB Gunn, Sindri Galvan, JD Stuntebeck, Iggy Martinez, Zack

Oleson, Ernest Martin, and Jonathan Dalin. They remind me that camp is nothing without community. And to my other West Coast loves: Vanessa Peña, Lindsay Armstrong Vance, Lynora Valdez, Farron Feiner, Alexis Payne, Nikki Czech, Art and Gabby O'Leary, all anchors in precarious times. My Aunt Ruth and sister, Stacey Coleman, have supported my eccentric trajectory and work from early on. My best friend Mariam Kassem models great curiosity and reflection; rigorous conversation with her always makes my heart flutter with excitement. My brilliant colleagues at HBO, Warner Bros, and later, Paramount offered deep levels of encouragement over the years: Miriam Hobbs, Randall Luckow, Eric Lane, Max Sanchez, Natalie de Almeida, Graham Marshall, and Trisha Lendo, thank you for your generosity.

Programmers, past and present, who agreed to be interviewed by me provided a wealth of information coupled with idiosyncrasy. Fabiano Canosa, Edith Kramer, Richard Peña, Marcus Hu, Kim Jorgensen, Jane Giles, and Stephen Soba all took chunks of their time to teach me about their programming sensibilities. Mark Valen deserves distinct credit for all that he has offered me in interviews and conversations over the years. He has been more than a curatorial informant and mentor; he has been a giving and patient friend. At Pacific Film Archive's (PFA) Film Library and Study Center, Jason Sanders and Nancy Goldman provided me with stack upon stack of programs. Jim Nicola gave me access to the Nuart's archive and provided reproductions of calendars for the book. Ashley Swinnerton and the MoMA Film Study Center staff took time to organize program materials that had—to the best of their knowledge—never been requested or even cataloged; Collection Specialist Cara Shatzman helped with images. Vishnu Dass, who oversees the Steven Arnold Collection, illuminated a major part of neglected queer film history for me by showing me the Nocturnal Dream Show's posters and other materials.

At Yale, I am grateful for colleagues Diane Berrett Brown, Oksana Chefranova, Jennifer Newman, Brian Mecham, Marc Robinson, Moira Fradinger, Daisy Abreu, and Joe Fischel. I thank the committee at Yale who granted me the Fund for Lesbian and Gay Studies (FLAGS) Research Award to carry this book over the finish line. Haroon Adalat, a cherished cinephile friend and graphic designer extraordinaire, worked his Photoshop magic on a number of images in this book. At Duke, Senior Editor Elizabeth Ault and Assistant Editor Benjamin Kossak, the rest of the editorial staff, my two anonymous reviewers, and the Duke University Press Editorial Advisory Board all deserve esteemed recognition for helping shepherd this project to its current form.

This book is in part dedicated to my partner, Nilo Couret, for the laughs, the meals, and the intellectual rabbit holes. We challenge and influence each other every day; I couldn't imagine a better companion with whom to talk movies and TV, from the most obscure indie film to *RuPaul's Drag Race*. Our life together has been built on a love of travel and film, fitting given that it all started in Buenos Aires with a quote from *After Sunset*: "Baby, you're gonna miss that plane." And to our girl, Melba, who patiently waited to be walked while I wrote just another paragraph or two.

Last, this book is for my parents, Carol and Jerry Newman, who have supported me throughout this wild scholarly and professional journey. They might not have foreseen a future in which their names would appear in a book with "deviance" in the title, but I sense they will nevertheless recognize (and perhaps even identify with) aspects of the world described in these pages from the years they lived in NYC in their twenties. I am especially indebted to my mother, who watches and reads with delight, eagerness, and sensitivity; any attempt on my part to read reparatively and openly can likely be traced back to her.

# Introduction

This book was conceived by way of a rather basic question: How were canonical queer films programmed and exhibited in the two decades following sexual liberation? While illuminating scholarship exists on the exhibition of New York underground films in the 1960s and on LGBT film festivals in the 1990s and beyond, I wondered about the intervening years, particularly 1968 to 1989, and those less exclusive screening spaces—that is, the art house and repertory cinemas common in cities throughout North America and Europe during the better part of the twentieth century. How peripheral were queer films in the larger filmgoing cultures of the time? What blends of queerness might everyday people have been encountering at their repertory and independent cinemas?

*Curating Deviance* attempts to recenter queer cinema in the history of art house exhibition by studying its programming and curation. Monthly calendars for urban art houses testify to the fact that queer films were far from marginal at this time; in fact, they were so prevalent that they wielded a gravitational pull that altered theaters' entire curatorial frameworks and their spatio-affective conventions. Programming, the practice of selecting and grouping films to be exhibited for a specific venue and expected audience, assembles disparate texts into a network of interrelations. I argue that post-1968 film programming marshaled together what have been deemed

deviant subjectivities, animating insatiable publics who hungered for nonnormative perspectives on gender and sexuality. Additionally, the programmatic records of urban repertory and art cinemas, I contend, offer wormholes into queer and deviant imaginaries that traverse bizarre, disturbing, fantastical, and perverse sites of pleasure and embodiment. This book commits to unearthing these utopian remnants that break from the "respectable" gender and sexual paradigms of puritanical morality that still, in many ways, frustrate American culture and politics.

*Curating Deviance* uses post-1968 film programming to open a portal into an alternate sexual and gender politics of radical utopian inclusion, one that very much anticipates queer theory and politics but, crucially, also exceeds it in more perverse and deviant ways. A range of deviant practices that include but are not delimited by LGBT identities were regularly on the menu at urban repertory and art house cinemas: sex work, intergenerational desire, interracial desire, fetishism or paraphilia, swinging or nonmonogamy, bondage, domination, and sadomasochism (BDSM), and what Heather Love calls "other yet-to-be-specified experiences of stigma" filled the screens.

Films such as *Funeral Parade of Roses* (dir. Toshio Matsumoto, 1969), *Maîtresse* (dir. Barbet Schroeder, 1975), *The Night Porter* (dir. Liliana Cavani, 1974), *Cabaret* (dir. Bob Fosse, 1972), and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (dir. Jim Sharman, 1975), among many others in this book, covered a lot of ground in terms of gender and sexuality in a short time span—nearly the "whole repertory of human sexuality," as critic Parker Tyler observed in his landmark 1972 book *Screening the Sexes*.[1] His reference to *repertory* here seems far from coincidental; revival house programmers made use of the whole arsenal of film history, not just those films made in the 1970s and 1980s, to enact and visualize for viewers the wild range and variety of sexuality and gender.

Filmmakers John Waters, Bernardo Bertolucci, Liliana Cavani, Radley Metzger, Russ Meyer, Luchino Visconti, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Ulrike Ottinger, Andy Warhol, Paul Morrissey, Kenneth Anger, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Oshima Nagisa, and a bevy of others brought to the big screen renderings of sexual and gender outsiders and perverts perceived as anomic within a bourgeois sensibility. These makers deployed divergent stylistic, narrative, and tonal strategies in their deviant politics, yet together they made up a panoply of voices calling attention to or attempting to extinguish the persistent forces of erotophobia. Through schedule configurations such as double or triple bills, thematic series, or proximate screenings days or

weeks apart, curating clustered these outsiders into networks and revealed intersections in their stigma and oppression, as well as sources of "*outré*" pleasures.

What might studying the history of art house film programming do for queer film studies? What might it do for queer theory?[2] Queer theory has certainly confronted and opposed the exaltation of white hetero- and homonormative and binary gender logics. In addition to exposing larger structures of sexual and gender oppression and repression, queer theory has accented and celebrated the experiences, identities, communities, and imaginaries that break from those systems. Historically situated in cultural studies, it has also scrutinized highly ambivalent sites and modes of cultural production. That said, over the years, I have struggled to find in queer theory and queer film studies deep and sustained analytical engagement with the staggering range of gender and sexual subjectivities and imaginaries in the world. For instance, queer theory has taught its readers a multitude about fetishes, especially in relation to LGBT desire, but rarely are "straight" fetishes fully integrated into queer theory's web of kinships.[3] Queer film and media studies in particular tends to stay within the boundaries of LGBT readability/legibility, even if it manifests in coded or complex formal ways.[4]

As a response, this book joins other scholarly efforts in queer theory to recover the language and lessons of postwar deviance studies in sociology and its cognates in sexology. Following Gayle Rubin and Heather Love in particular, I seek to widen the criteria for queerness, including but not circumscribed by LGBT presence, to find a politics that might better account for expansive systems and structures of social alienation and stigma that are linked to sexuality and gender. Studies in queer visual culture might profit from this different set of criteria for studying the workings of gender and sexual alterity on film.[5] Thus this research, which benefits from many of the lessons of queer theory and queer film studies, has been driven by the following questions: Could art house film programming of the 1970s and 1980s be retrofitted to a new queer or, better yet, *deviant* thought? Might programming—an organizational tool that stimulates intertextual connection—rekindle or reorganize queer utopian imaginaries that feel lost or static?

This book endeavors to see what happens when "queer" reaches its analytical limits in the intertextual space of historical programming and begs for a new conceptual framework. Plunging into the film calendars from theaters in New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago, *Curating Deviance* historicizes, by way of years of archival research, curation's

power to signify and resignify texts, to create affective matrixes for cultural and political disruption, and to provide templates for deviant affinities and pleasures to take shape.

Take as an example the Canadian film *Outrageous!* (dir. Richard Benner, 1977), now virtually forgotten but programmed over and over in San Francisco Bay Area repertory cinemas between 1978 and 1980. This low-budget film stars real-life female impersonator Craig Russell (playing himself in many ways) as Robin, a drag queen whose best friend Liza is schizophrenic (fig. I.1). The film depicts the vicissitudinous affinity between these two social pariahs in scenes of mutual struggle and uplift. It was programmed in double features with popular films such as *Boys in the Band* (dir. William Friedkin, 1970) (at the Strand Theatre, the Castro, and the UC Theater), *Grey Gardens* (dir. Albert Maysles, David Maysles, Ellen Hovde, Muffie Meyer, 1975) (at the Roxie), and later *Harold and Maude* (dir. Hal Ashby, 1971) (also at the Castro). The clinical historical linkages between sexual and gender nonconformity and mental illness subtend all these films, both intratextually and intertextually; these themes then branch out into the difficulties and (offbeat) joys of other "degenerate" experiences: complicated gay male friendship, class descent into poverty and dispossession, and intergenerational romance, respectively. *Outrageous!* finds its queer kinships by way of its roaming signification, in individual double bills and in theaters around the Bay Area region, evincing deviant resonances over time in a sequential unfolding. This programming tells a diffuse story of the pains of ostracism and the ameliorative measures downtrodden subjects take to cultivate sources and sites of collective levity and support.

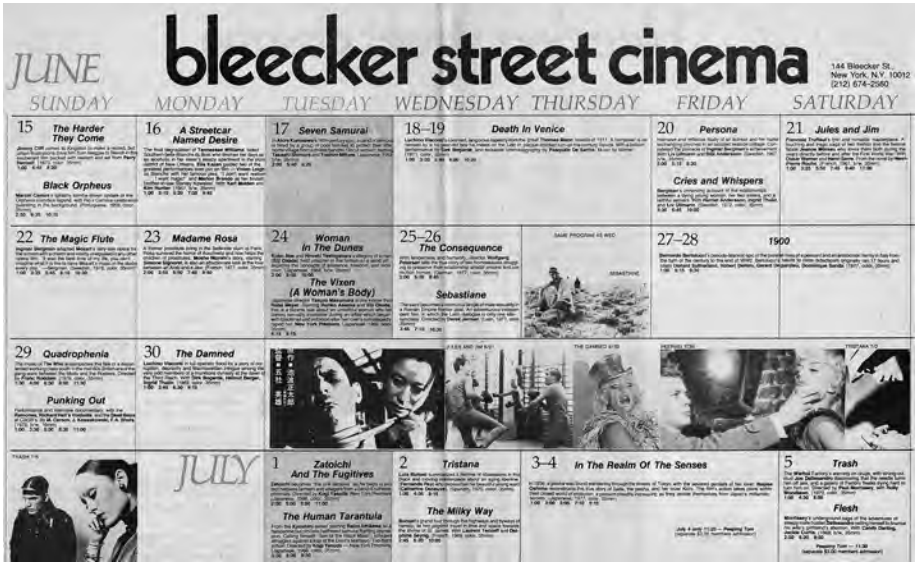
*Curating Deviance* engages with the programming of a wide range of canonical queer films frequently exhibited in the years between 1968 and 1989, including *Portrait of Jason* (dir. Shirley Clarke, 1967), *Satyricon* (dir. Federico Fellini, 1969), *Daughters of Darkness* (dir. Harry Kümel, 1971), *Les Biches* (dir. Claude Chabrol, 1968), *The Killing of Sister George* (dir. Robert Aldrich, 1968), and *Boys in the Band*, as well as curious examples of queer films such as *Multiple Maniacs* (dir. John Waters, 1970), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, and *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* (dir. Russ Meyer, 1970), titles claimed more by straight cult fans at first and then later canonized as queer classics. This book also analyzes the intertextual implications of important "straight" films such as *Harold and Maude*, *In the Realm of the Senses* (dir. Oshima Nagisa, 1976), and *The Devils* (dir. Ken Russell, 1971), among others, that position taboo and abject forms of heterosexual desire queerly as representational scandal

I.1 Two outcast best friends in *Outrageous!* (dir. Richard Benner, 1977) with their guardian angel Marlene Dietrich in the middle.

(fig. I.2). These texts loiter awkwardly on the periphery of queer cinema, their deviant interventions about structures of repression and desire going undervalued, forgotten, or without a proper queer analytical framework. Here I recover them, placing them back in their viewing contexts within a nexus of films indicting sexual and gender persecution, or providing imaginative outlets for "abnormal" romance, desire, and gender identity to surface.

### Situating Curation

Film programming or curation, as this book argues, is always working within textual constellations known as *intertextuality*.[6] Programming is intertextuality put into practice—in real time—forging authorial, formal, ideological, aesthetic, tonal, temporal, geographical, and cultural relations that emerge across the span of one sitting (such as at a festival, or a double or triple bill) or a longer period, such as an exhibition venue's monthly calendar. Although they have received scant mention in film studies, programmers have for the better part of film history mediated textual understandings through their assembled intertexts, steering how




1.2 A 1980 Bleecker Street Cinema calendar offers such perverse classics as *Death in Venice* (dir. Luchino Visconti, 1971), *Sebastiane* (dir. Derek Jarman and Paul Humfress, 1976), *The Damned* (dir. Luchino Visconti, 1969), *Tristana* (dir. Luis Buñuel, 1970), *Trash* (dir. Paul Morrissey, 1970), *In the Realm of the Senses* (dir. Oshima Nagisa, 1976), and many more. Ben Davis Collection, Bleecker Street Cinema calendar from June/July 1980. The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film Special Collections, New York.

audiences might read films' cultural and aesthetic relevance.[7] Programmers have played a pivotal role in the unique epistemic and affective work of the cinema, puzzling together films along syntagmatic lines to create coherent sign systems such as genres, as well as paradigmatic lines that alter the narrative and aesthetic meanings of texts based on their shifting arrangements.

Curatorial studies have underscored that *curate* comes from the Latin *cura*, meaning to care. Curators in this sense are caretakers or custodians of historical objects, taking responsibility not just for the material objects themselves but also for how they are presented to the public. David Balzer explains that in joining care and connoisseurship, curators lend "stylized independence to the act of caring for and assembling."[8] At the same time that curators, or in this case, film programmers, assert their unique

visions of visual art, they are also in roles of subservience, as Balzer writes, "to institutions, objects, artists, audiences, markets."[9] In the process of balancing a distinguishing programmatic perspective with a subordinate position to the work and its makers, film programmers have used their unique tools of collecting, culling, and collating to both canonize certain films and filmmakers and resignify the work with each distinct screening and calendar arrangement.

Programming has played a central role in the histories of film reception, and it has done so in part through the process of classification. Programming can reinforce already existing cinematic taxonomies, which might coalesce around such themes or topics as nation, period, genre, wave, or movement (just to name the major ones), or it can initiate or establish a new classification. This might occur at a festival exhibiting new content, a film center identifying recent trends or patterns, or a repertory house reappraising and reclassifying older films. Whichever shape it takes, film curating is a robust classificatory tool that can further lodge established knowledge into place or bring about new knowledge to the film discourses shared by critics, cinephiles, and scholars. Programmers of the late 1960s to late 1980s did not fully jettison existing filmic categories, but many were also experimenters—laboratory scientists of sorts—mixing intertextual compounds that could reveal taxonomic congruencies and homologies among deviant depictions and their formal illustrations. Constellating texts into intertexts, programmers drew up provisional and idiosyncratic categories or schema befitting of outcasts such as fetishists or sex workers, types often left on the fringes of decency, political visibility, and thus political class membership.

Film curators from 1968 to 1989 may not have been held to the deity-like status of auteur that their cinephile patrons worshipped (with the exception, perhaps, of preservationist-curator Henri Langlois of the Cinémathèque Française), but they were known by cineastes and critics for making their stamp on a particular screening venue's personality, politics, and vision. Think here of Jewish-Austrian emigré Amos Vogel of Cinema 16, gay and black programmer Albert Johnson of the San Francisco International Film Festival, Richard Peña of first the Chicago Art Institute and then the Film Society of Lincoln Center, and Dan Talbot and Toby Talbot of the New York Theater, all programming cinemas frequented by contemporaneously or soon-to-be influential critics, artists, filmmakers, intellectuals, and cultural producers in their debt.[10] Even if they identified as heterosexual, some of these esteemed programmers were outsiders in

other ways, their selections suggesting they latched onto representations of other social pariahs.

Scholarship and histories of film programming provide many useful analogies for the figure of the curator or programmer, which appear across the following chapters: the programmer is at once a cultural gatekeeper, presenter, tastemaker, intermediary, educator, showman, ambassador, culler, herder, and bricoleur. *Curating Deviance* treats the film programmer or curator above all else as a discursive formation, a role that directs politics, aesthetics, sensibilities, and tastes. For this reason, rather than track biographical, anecdotal, or institutional histories of important programmers, or provide historical insights into the ins and outs of exhibition (e.g., print availability, budgets, etc.), I remain attentive to the queer political stakes and possibilities that are located in the post-1968 film program.[11] To this end, I am less interested in the programmer as a person, even as part of a decision-making team, than as a *force,* more a cultural sculptor or bricoleur, that offers the public new ways to see, hear, know, and feel.

When particularly illuminating, some curators make repeated appearances, such as Richard Schwarz, the gay programmer and owner of the Thalia Theater in Manhattan; the aforementioned Amos Vogel, whose insights extend into the 1970s with his book on "subversive" cinema; Brazilian gay programmer Fabiano Canosa of the First Avenue Screening Room and Papp Theater; as do certain exemplary cinemas such as the Nuart Theatre in West Los Angeles, which began Gary Meyer, Steve Gilula, and Kim Jorgensen's Landmark Theatres chain venture; Sid Geffen and Jackie Raynal's Carnegie Hall and Bleecker Street Cinemas in Manhattan; and the Roxie in San Francisco. *Curating Deviance* pays critical attention to their historical, geographical, demographical, and architectural particularities.[12]

Longtime Pacific Film Archive (PFA) curator Edith Kramer describes a film series as a "journey" with peaks, valleys, and tangents that guide the audience toward interpreting how the films "relate to each other."[13] Similarly, Peter Bosma writes, "A film curator is a storyteller, telling a story about the value of films," asking critical questions like, "'Why is this particular film important,' or 'Why is this specific combination of films interesting?'"[14] *Curating Deviance* dwells on this second question because it pinpoints why programming merits distinct intertextual study. I insist programming is more than a practice of selecting, booking, and arranging a group of films. And in the context of queer film history post-1968, it did more than expose publics—LGBT and "straight"—to evidence of queer existence. Programming *built* deviant worlds and generated out of its dialogic

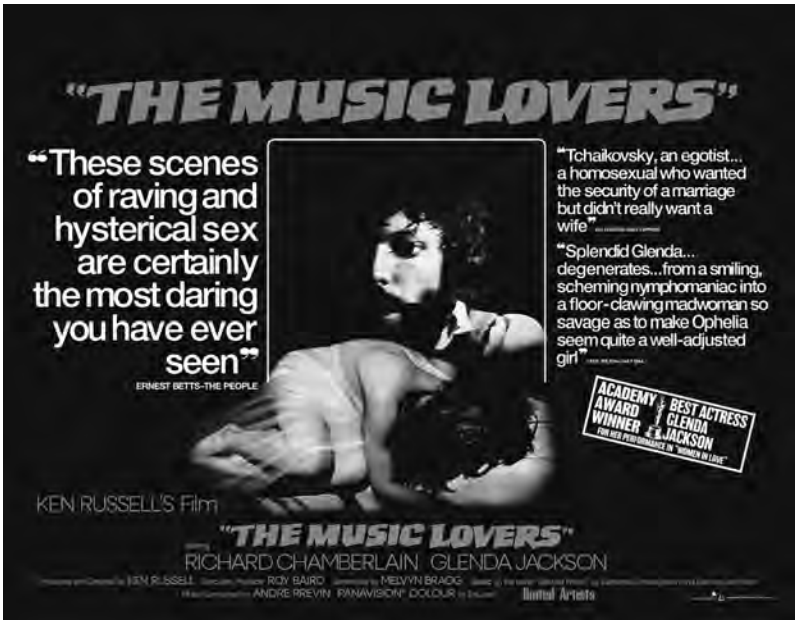
structure new ethical strategies of pleasure and care for those belonging to the lower castes of the sexual and gender hierarchy.

### Deviance Terms, Deviant Times

*Curating Deviance* begins in 1968, a year that approximates the inauguration of monumental change in the United States' public sphere.[15] The legalization of the birth control pill and then abortion, along with women's liberation, gay liberation, race empowerment, and anti-colonial movements set the scene for what became known as the era of sexual liberation or revolution. Cinema reflected and inspired these sea changes, marked by the end of the then-declining Hays Code, to be replaced with the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) ratings system in 1968. Art and graphic sex had merged several years before in the New York Underground and Warhol Factory in what Ara Osterweil calls the "corporeal turn" of art cinema, a "participatory realm of assault and seduction"; by the early 1970s this corporeality had become an integral part of art cinema.[16] Various sex acts—homo-, hetero-, and bisexual—were now regularly viewable in art and porn theaters that even middleclass couples would visit together, enticed perhaps by the "X" rating given by the newly minted MPAA.

Film scholars Linda Williams, Elena Gorfinkel, Eric Schaefer, and Damon Young have discussed this flood of sexually explicit content in grindhouses, exploitation houses, art houses, and even mainstream cinemas as an expression of excitement as well as anxiety around sexuality's new auditory and visual accessibility. Far from being simple celebrations of bodies and desires, these new films delivered irresolvable and befuddling ideological antinomies, articulating the contradictions of "making sex public," as Young phrases it.[17]

Fraught or messy as they were in their depictions, the sheer range of blatant acts, desires, identities, and practices displayed "on/scene," as Williams puts it (in contrast to what had been deemed "obscene"), was unprecedented. No longer relegated to subtext, themes of hustling or sex work could be found in a mainstream sensation such as *Midnight Cowboy* (dir. John Schlesinger, 1969), or in art house successes *Belle de Jour* (dir. Luis Buñuel, 1967) and Paul Morrissey's trilogy of films starring underground Warhol Factory hunk Joe Dallesandro. Ken Russell's hit art films *The Devils* (1971) and *The Music Lovers* (1970) allegorized the effects of sexual repression by featuring characters driven mad and tortured by their buried lust.




I.3 Poster underscoring sexual depravity in Ken Russell's *The Music Lovers* (1970).

Russell's films strangely delighted in a maddening repression that only intensified abject perversions, turning "the straight into the kinky," as critic Parker Tyler rightfully noted.[18] Although it often employed sensationalizing qualifiers (such as "bizarre," "strange," and "outrageous") in marketing materials, post-1968 programming assembled these "degenerate" characterizations into comparative schemata, inciting opportunities to witness and feel the alienation and pleasure of ostensibly disparate experiences of sexual and gender outcasts (fig. I.3).

*Deviance* is the most apposite social concept for capturing these objects. My usage of *deviance* carries with it broad queer epistemologies, but I simultaneously attempt to leave behind the centralizing of LGBT in the demarcation of sexual otherness, stressing instead the interdependence of social categories by which we might adopt an inclusive ethical framework.[19] Defined by the negative, that is, what is *not* normal, *deviance* risks covering too much ground, perhaps even more so than the intentionally amorphous *queer*. The capaciousness and elasticity of *deviance* is both an asset and risk. *Deviance* unifies as it limits; it brings together the array of perverse and unthinkable depictions of sexuality and gender in art films of this era while

underscoring the difficulty of advancing a unified political front of sexual liberation that can (or sometimes even should) accommodate such varied difference. *Deviance*, then, can be seen as an amalgamation of social alterity that helps train the political and ethical imagination for radical inclusion.

The image of the deviant invokes flashes of a history replete with demonized and feared archetypes: sideshow freaks like the bearded lady, dwarf, or limbless man; in the United States, the Cold War–era pervert (e.g., the homosexual-pedophile); the "welfare queen"; the sociopathic convict; the communist; the oversexed, nymphomaniac-fetishist; and the "cripple" subject to endless stares. (Note how many of these bogeymen persist to this day.) Photographic and cinematic technologies have from their beginnings played a vital role in assigning and codifying physical difference as deviance. Allan Sekula explains that "photography came to establish and delimit the terrain of the *other*, to define both the generalized look—the *typology*—and the *contingent instance* of deviance and social pathology."[20] Studies in disability (especially crip theory), sexuality, and race have documented these intersectional histories, attesting to how distinct forms of deviance have an interlocking character because their classificatory origins are grounded in moral panic about visual markers of social difference.[21]

This troubling (if not violent) history leads Dana Seitler to a potent articulation of *sexual deviance*, one that I want to underscore and adopt in defining deviance within the context of film programming. She writes, "Sexual deviance . . . specifies an affiliation—an intricate, nonfamilial kinship web of human aberration in which an assortment of anomalous characteristics exist within a larger schema of human variation."[22] Seitler here observes that the dispositif of sexual deviance produces bound subjectivities, a skein of difference that ties one deviant type or form to another as a modern condition that is a priori baked into conceptions of "aberrant" subjectivities.

Moreover, Seitler notes (as she reads sexologist Havelock Ellis's 1900 study of homosexuality as gender inversion) that sexual deviance "could only be cognized relationally, or more to the point, *serially*."[23] This early twentieth century (re)cognizing of deviance might indeed live on in the structuring of the deviant film *series*, a word that shares its etymological root with "serial." If, as Edith Kramer and Peter Bosma suggest, curation tells a kind of story, programming is serial in structure—even with loose, nonlinear, or tangential tendencies. We might say then that post-1968 film curating made legible and even fortified deviance's relational basis through

the time-based method of sequentiality. In this sense, deviance operates as its own sign system, relying on accumulating and interconnected representational codes and formal motifs of nonnormative erotic jouissance as well as distressing moments of persecution. Over time, programming can reveal narrative, typological, and aesthetic connections across a sign-system omnibus of taboos.

For some, *deviance* is an irredeemably charged term that cannot be isolated from its violent clinical, medical, academic, and legal historiographies. Although it is thorny work, I recuperate and repurpose the beneficial aspects of some social scientific deployments of the term, specifically in the invaluable work of anthropologist Gayle Rubin and sociologist Erving Goffman, as well as controversial sexologist John Money's crucial (if not ambivalent) thinking on paraphilia. My use of *deviant*, which draws on but is distinct from *queer*, maintains an uncomfortable yet productive distance from the social sciences; in keeping with Heather Love's recent work on queer theory's disavowed entwinement with 1960s deviance studies, *deviance* seeks to remind us of the ways that scientific inquiry has kept nonconforming identities, bodies, practices, and experiences enmeshed with one another, even as queer theory assures its readers to have "moved on" and distanced itself from those outmoded prejudicial groupings and analyses. The positivistic shaping of those social associations, I will go on to argue especially in chapter 2, is not an entirely bad thing.

Some of these sociological and sexological concepts rippled out into the wider public sphere beyond academia, influencing critics, filmmakers, cinephiles, and film programmers in their encounters with deviant film texts. Historical correlations exist between this era's art house film programming and the public's interest in the sociology of deviance (a.k.a. deviance studies), both in its pseudo-scientific forms in exploitation films and "shockumentaries" (such as *Mondo Freudo* [dir. Lee Frost, 1966]), and by "legitimate" institutional means such as Erving Goffman's research, and that of popular postwar sexologists Alfred Kinsey, Wilheim Reich, and John Money.[24] In many ways this complicated research better suits the historical articulation of outliers who are not easily slotted into queer theory's imagined vanguard. We might then see deviance here as a useful *analytic category*, in Joan W. Scott's usage of the term, with potential for ethical reconfiguration along manifold axes of age, labor, gender variation, and communal practice, employing an array of archetypes, from the chronophile to trans person to sex worker to sadist and masochist (or some mixture thereof!), to populate its representative motley.[25]

This book takes the position that sexual and gender deviance binds subjects to one another through their failure to meet ideologically entrenched standards of propriety, and that art house programming from 1968 to 1989 guided curious audiences through profound meditations on these interrelated histories of both queer (i.e., primarily LGBT) and other "deviant" subjectivities. Intertextual analyses in the pages that follow intend to drastically revise orthodoxies in the study of queer visual culture, to incorporate widely unthinkable outlier pleasures that lurk in the margins of queer discourse. This is precisely why I read for deviant typologies overlooked in queer theory (chapter 2) or for erotic forms that confound tidy demarcations between straight and queer desires (chapter 3). *Curating Deviance* ventures to traverse other critical modalities for the study of sexual and gender alterity and the moving image in the hopes of bringing hitherto neglected deviant exiles into the queer fold.

### From Text to Intertext

My reading practice for film exhibition in this book deviates from the usual protocols of intertextual analysis. Literary and film scholars tend to focus on instances of intertextuality that take the shape of quotation, reference, allusion, parody, adaptation, revision, remaking, plagiarism, metafiction, and parallelism in the ramified genealogies of artistic work. These studies attend to how a text becomes present and known within the body of another text, whether by the author's intent or uncovered by the reader. In *Curating Deviance*, however, intertextuality figures the embodied real time of film viewing within the concentrated comparative textual conditions of the cinema.

Studying the film calendars I found in archives at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), and even the theaters themselves, with deteriorating calendars stacked in cardboard boxes, I read for homologous as well as clashing textual forms, narrative schemata (including standout indicators such as sex scenes, fantasy sequences, and endings), tones or sensibilities, and star and director filmographies that might connect films with otherwise vague shared intertextual properties. At times, I find it more useful and specific to refer to the *interdiegetic* rather than the *intertextual* because of the ways programming forges, if not fuses, together the narrative, stylistic, and tonal qualities of distinct film worlds.[26] The *interdiegetic* gets us inside the shared and overlapping textual (il)logics and sensibilities that

make films programmed together sudden siblings when they would in other viewing contexts be perceived as distant cousins or perhaps even completely unrelated.

My version of intertextual analysis rejects wholesale monotextual assumptions about spectatorship; the intertextual praxis of film curating means that no text or object within its viewing context can rest on its own production of meaning. Programs are contact zones of signification that amplify the kinds of textual multivalence and elasticity that literary theorists such as Laurent Jenny, Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, and Umberto Eco, among others, have advanced. Following their theories of intertextuality, I contend that curating enacts textual *contingence* that magnifies hermeneutic *contingency*, in which textual meaning depends on webs of relationality.

Repertory or revival house programs are paragons of concepts in semiotics such as Eco's unlimited semiosis or Derrida's *différance*, both describing the proliferating flows of meaning and shifting hermeneutic relays or chains that stretch onward in time. Commercial repertory cinemas, along with museums such as MoMA, programmed films from the past in altering configurations that maximized potential for their resignification. Performance scholar Diana Taylor nicely illustrates how notions of revision and regeneration are embedded in the word *repertoire* itself. *Repertoire* etymologically means "'a treasury, an inventory,' . . . referring also to 'the finder, discoverer,' and meaning 'to find out.'"[27] Counterposed to the *archive*, the *repertoire* lends itself to impermanence and ephemerality, living in a community or culture's "embodied memory" in ways that can create meaningful resonances that are dynamic and historically contingent. Repertory and revival cinemas thus frustrate notions of crystalized knowledge, wielding *rep*etition with variation, recycling films while recasting signification through protean thematic framings, as well as by geographic and temporal viewing contexts. These heterotopic sites hold the utopian promise not only of rediscovery in a nostalgic or historical sense but also of reframing texts within the shifting temporalities of past, present, and future that recalibrate how audiences think and feel.

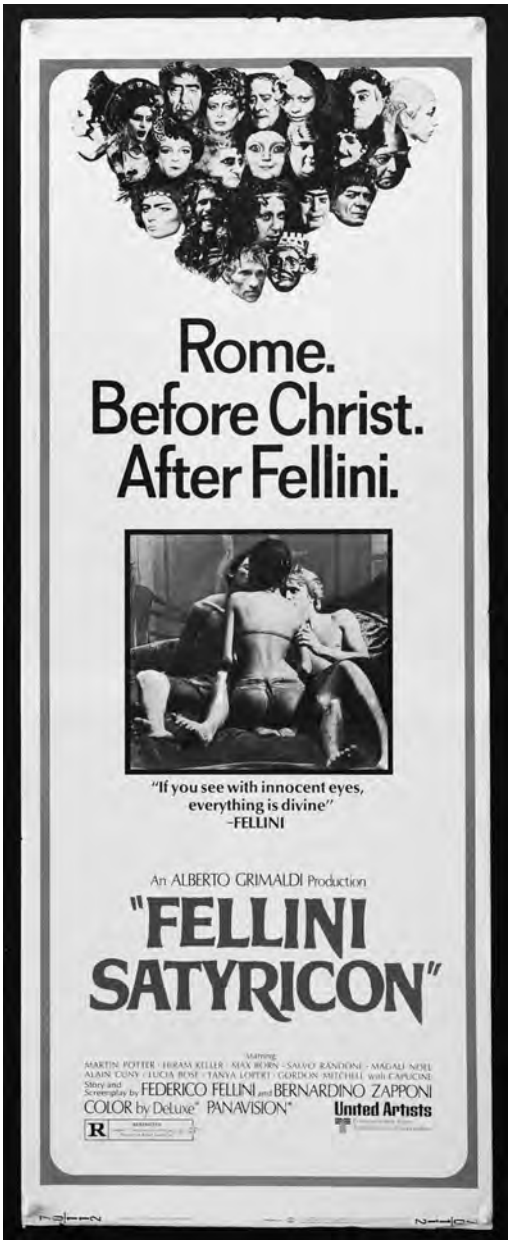
As I suggested earlier, programming provides a wormhole into historical spectatorship as well as a different political imaginary for needed sexual and gender inclusion. I base these theories in the viewing practices of spectators at the time, grounding my readings in the intertexts on offer at local cinemas. Speaking with baby boomers who frequented art and repertory houses in the 1970s and 1980s, I learned that it was common for urbanites

to go to the cinema weekly, sometimes daily, and stay for entire double features, even if they had seen one or both films before.[28]

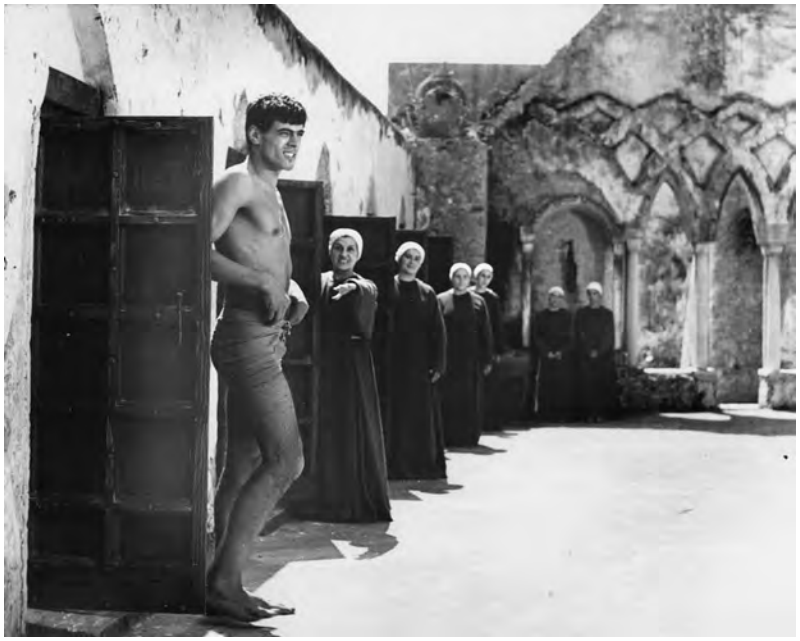
That devout communities of cinephiles attended many of these urban cinemas on a regular basis fortifies my intertextual analyses, yet this fact does not fully undergird my readings. As BAMPFA's programmer Kathy Geritz has noted, "Nobody comes to every [screening] . . . so [the programmer is] making connections for history, for when people go back and look at the programs."[29] Geritz, echoing her mentor Edith Kramer's equation of programs to journeys, suggests that even without total consistent attendance, the film program maps the conscious and unconscious life of a given historical moment; the film calendar is a compendium of assorted desires, fantasies, hopes, questions, curiosities, grievances, propositions, and provocations that structure and chronicle the public's complex emotional and political life. More than a mere reflection, programs and calendars provide the building blocks for unmaking and remaking the world through the public fantasy that is cinema.

Case in point: consider, in another Bay Area example, the manner in which these two double bills were arranged: Federico Fellini's *Satyricon* (1969) and Pier Paolo Pasolini's *The Decameron* (1971) were paired together in San Francisco Bay Area theaters over six times from 1975 to 1978, half of them at the Roxie Theater (figs. I.4 and I.5).[30] Clearly successful with audiences, this duo of popular Italian art films about unbridled premodern sexuality channeled the spirit of an emergent transnational sexual liberation by entertaining Dionysian fantasies about a sexually permissive and fluid era centuries in the past. Another popular pairing of Italian films screened twice at NYC's Carnegie Hall Cinema, first in 1974 and then in 1978, was far less euphoric: Luchino Visconti's *The Damned* (1969) was exhibited with his *Death of Venice* (1971), meditating on the quite literal lethal effects of sexual repression. *The Damned* ends with a depiction of the Night of the Long Knives and *Death in Venice* with the protagonist in an agonizing state of pederastic longing before a heart attack claims his life.[31] These antonymous programs, both representing queer Italian history, one on the side of romanticized sexual liberation and the other a brutal indictment of pathology, power, and repression, testify to the fact that art house depictions of deviant sexuality and gender were not always "freeing" or uplifting; they also carried critiques or expressed ambivalence or even confusion about how nonnormative practices and social types related to the domains of culture, politics, and history.

In this vein, I read historical programming documents such as calendars, schedules, press releases, and program notes—both in their text




1.4 Showcasing sexual decadence in publicity for Fellini's *Satyricon* (1969).



1.5 Lustful nuns take turns having sex with the new gardener in Pasolini's *The Decameron* (1971).

and design—as intertextual guides for a world envisioned otherwise. In its commitment to reenvisioning political imaginaries that have grown stale, this book takes an avowedly reparative approach to queer intertextuality, reading for critical openings that help imagine obscured forms of kinship, sex, and love. My critical reading practice can best be described by what José Esteban Muñoz calls "utopian hermeneutics," a "backwards glance that enacts a future vision."[32] In attempting to circumvent the "present's stultifying hold," Muñoz reads past cultural objects for their ecstatic longings for idealized states of queer passion and pleasure. Similarly, I suggest these utopian horizons of potentiality appear through programmed intertexts, providing inspiration for coalitional opportunities in the types and practices clustered in the program, or formally by giving shape to paraphilia or fetishes that otherwise appear as outliers or anomalies in film and cultural history.

Art houses of the time were in good company; utopian sexual and gender topographies surfaced in many 1970s LGBT and nonwhite counterpublics, reflected best in the Third World Gay Revolution, which advocated for anti-racist, anti-sexist, and anti-capitalist transformation along

with one of queer inclusion, in addition to lesbian and feminist separatist movements.[33] Independent and experimental films of the era such as Lizzie Borden's *Born in Flames* (1983) and Barbara Hammer's experimental shorts wedged open a feminist filmic space for imagining love, sex, and activism within egalitarian, liberated communal bounds.

With far less racial or geographical diversity than the Third World Gay Revolution or *Born in Flames*, post-1968 film curating still marshaled its own coalitions through comparative models of stigma or paraphilic desires, converging identities, types, and practices relegated to the depths of the social strata. Exemplary is John Waters's films, such as *Female Trouble* (1974), *Multiple Maniacs*, and *Pink Flamingos* (1972), with "maladjusted" subjects such as fetishists, genderqueer or trans characters, and antisocial queer convicts commonly mingling in the space of programs with films that have similar character typologies, namely the work of Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Pier Paolo Pasolini. (See chapter 2 on the Nuart's "Outlaw Cinema" series.) Whether these films' interventions took the form of critique or pleasure, or some mixture thereof, the film series gave these deviant forms and practices a meeting ground unavailable in the repressive status quo.

Reading for utopian aspirations in the intertext—whether it takes the form of sharing in one another's vexed status or releasing and celebrating a taboo desire—does not imply a romanticizing of the intertext or era of its programming. There is plenty of cause for casting suspicion on this tunnel-vision gleaning of the past. After all, creative treatments of social deviance were often used as metaphors or vehicles for abstracted "anti-establishment" positions, in effect diminishing their applicability in the embodied, material realms of political life. These *gestural* anti-normative politics also came at the price of personal injury, proof that sometimes behind the optics of liberation hides exploitation. Case in point: actors Maria Schneider (in *Last Tango in Paris* [dir. Bernardo Bertolucci, 1972]) and Björn Andrésen (in *Death in Venice*) were taken advantage of and assaulted by their directors, becoming casualties of a widening representational field for nonnormative desire.[34] The depiction of BDSM in *Last Tango in Paris* and chronophilia or intergenerational desire in *Death in Venice* thus came at the expense of the films' vulnerable actors. Production backstories like these forestall a comprehensive recovery of film programming history.[35] Distinct from wish fulfillment or "cherry picking" history, *Curating Deviance* invests in the reparative or utopian work of retrieving history's abandoned promises, its lost openings for "future-dawning, anticipatory illuminations of the not-yet-conscious," as Muñoz explains it, for a political moment to come.[36]

## Chapters

*Curating Deviance* is organized roughly into two parts with interrelated topics: the first half (chapters 1 and 2) tends to focus on the ideological role of the programmer as an intertextual designer of the cinematic experience; the second half (chapters 4 and 5) speculates more on the role of the historical spectator in their cognitive-affective encounter with programming; and as a kind of interlude or midpoint break, chapter 3 attends closely to questions of intertextual form. Each chapter presents its own theoretical framework for thinking about film, sexuality, and gender in novel intertextual terms, and does so by either proposing new terms (e.g., *promiscuous programming* and *repertory time*) or adapting established ones (e.g., *deviance* and *reparativity*) to elucidate the schemata and stakes of film programming's deviant ethics.

Chapter 1, "Promiscuous Programming," delineates a shift in late 1960s programming practices in which exhibitors moved away from a model confined to "sophisticated" auteurist traditions. Instead, most urban repertory and art houses in the years between 1968 and 1989 unabashedly assembled for public consumption an eclectic blend of films that ranged greatly from Classical Hollywood to exploitation films to foreign or art films to experimental shorts to blockbusters. I call this heterogeneous approach *promiscuous programming*, doubling in meaning to express the eclectic reshuffling of taste strata as well as the racy and salacious content that permeated this period's film programs. A large portion of the chapter sketches a genealogy that links the programmatic sensibilities of Iris Barry (of MoMA in the 1930s), Amos Vogel (of Cinema 16, 1947–63), Pauline Kael (of Cinema Guild, 1955–60), and other programmers and exhibitors who revised conventional taste codes and laid the groundwork for a veritably multifarious curatorial attunement. The historical concept of *promiscuous programming* also identifies a spatial relation in which film viewing and nightlife leisure practices (such as dancing, performance, and drug use) spilled into one another, infecting each other in their use and enjoyment.

Chapter 2, "Deviant Repertories," the title chapter and theoretical heart of the book, lays out *deviance* as a critical category for film history. It positions the post-1968 programmer as a kind of lay sexologist-cum-sociologist who mediated persistent structures of erotophobia. These queer and straight (mostly male) programmers classified and reclassified films via malleable deviant categories inspired by and in defiance of the ordered knowledges of sexology and sociology. These two social sciences,

I argue, are valuable because they describe phenomena that fall outside of reproductive heterosexuality and thus provide robust queer rubrics for programming's coalitional aspirations. Here I focus on a number of 1980s programs, such as a Marlene Dietrich and Josef von Sternberg retrospective at San Francisco's Roxie in 1988, a series called "Sexuality in Cinema" at Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1984, and a weekly series called "Outlaw Cinema" at the Nuart Theatre in 1981, to analyze programmers' deviant strategies for stitching together seemingly incompatible types, practices, and identities.

Chapter 3, "Erotic Intertextuality," breaks from the dyad of programmer and spectator to traverse the perverse formal terrain of what I consider to be erotic intertexts. Programming, I argue, pushes eros askew, congealing homomorphic patterns of editing, production design, performance style, and frame composition to make form itself the object of mimetic desire. As my central case study, I select the Nuart's 1978–79 winter calendar, which included deviant cult classics *Salon Kitty* (dir. Tinto Brass, 1976), *The Night Porter*, *Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom* (dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1975), *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, *Women in Love* (dir. Ken Russell, 1969), *Maîtresse*, *Sebastiane* (dir. Derek Jarman and Paul Humfress, 1976), as well as a Marlon Brando retrospective, to do a close intertextual analysis of the calendar's erotic scales, textures, and durations.

Chapter 4, "Repertory Time," examines the phenomenon of double bills or double features once ubiquitous among repertory houses. While it is almost entirely neglected by film studies, this paradigm offers, by virtue of its dyadic nature, a constantly refreshed platform for intertextual re-readings. I suggest that double bills function as highly concentrated microcosms for the larger schemas of entire weekly schedules or monthly calendars. This chapter lays out the terms and implications of what I call *repertory time*, an elongated viewing modality in which spectators were immersed in queer worlds that rejected routine heteronormativity and endorsed carnivalesque, heterotopic transgression. As exercises in intertextual cross-pollination and juxtaposition, double features indicate how programming made critiques and pleasures affectively immediate for repertory filmgoers.

Chapter 5, "For Shame!," engages with the reclaimed "bad objects" or "guilty pleasures" of the queer canon that, once reviled by lesbian and gay liberationists, have acquired cult fandom and signal ways to liberate "contaminated" forms of enjoyment. The Frameline Film Festival's series on women-in-prison films (1990) and lesbian vampire films (1987),

as well as MoMA's program on Russ Meyer's sexploitation films, provide fascinating examples of lesbian feminists' concerns with women's representations in queer films that shift by the late 1980s. To this end, I connect the critical efforts of queer feminist thinkers such as B. Ruby Rich, Judith Mayne, and Andrea Weiss with reparative thinking in queer-of-color critique. Ultimately, I connect this criticism to diachronic programming techniques, which loosened the traumatic grips of individual texts and thereby transmuted forced viewer identification with clichés into spectators' risible recognition of the tropes.

In the chapters that follow, post-1968 programming histories hold the capacity to help redirect queer energies and to draw attention to deep structural hierarchies and systems of stigma, moralization, and infighting that sustain sex moralism and judgment on the right and left, and which beleaguer contemporary attempts at collective protection and advocacy of some of the most vulnerable to attacks of a sexual and gender nature. Post-1968 programming is uniquely positioned to revise the criteria for queer affinities yet also to discover existing tenuous ones. *Curating Deviance* reminds us that the cinema is a site of pleasure that can prompt spectators to share in each other's perverse differences, discovering the variegated oddity and waywardness of bodies and desires not their own, though somehow strangely familiar. In this vein, historical programs act as the abandoned itineraries of an unfinished sexual revolution, an undertaking burrowed in the cobwebbed recesses of the forgotten repertory and art houses, not lost forever, but certainly in need of loving repair.

# Notes

### Introduction

1. Tyler, *Screening the Sexes*, xxiii.
2. Film, video, and other media have influenced queer thought since their beginnings in the 1990s, and vice versa. Judith Butler, in the groundbreaking book *Gender Trouble*, explicitly cites the John Waters's film *Female Trouble* and its filthy heroine Divine as inspiration for their theory that all gender could be considered drag. Early volumes *Queer Looks: Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Film and Video* (edited by Martha Gever, Pratibha Parmar, and John Greyson) and *How Do I Look? Queer Film and Video* (edited by Bad Object-Choices) on the topics of porn, documentary activism, and experimental video are cited in canonical writing by José Esteban Muñoz, Michael Warner, and Jack Halberstam, among others.
3. Or picking up on another dimension of queer heterosexuality, Cathy Cohen asks of queer theory, "For instance, how would queer activists understand politically the lives of women—in particular women on color—on welfare, who fit into the category of heterosexual, but whose sexual choices are not perceived as normal, moral, or worthy of state support?" ("Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens," 442).
4. Along these lines, I further wonder: Is this a problem intractably lodged in the audiovisual medium, which is arguably dominated by linear narration? Are other art forms or media better suited to queer readings that

can eschew LGBT identity, ones that don't necessitate representational corroboration? As an exception, see David Church's excellent exegesis of *It Follows* for ways to read non-LGBT-related queerness in narrative and stylistic form in "Queer Ethics, Urban Spaces, and the Horrors of Monogamy in *It Follows*."

5. Recent queer film studies, including some trans work, has turned to questions of form and affect to move beyond reductive binaries of positive and negative representation, but this work still struggles to break from defining queer textual and spectatorial attributes in terms of LGBT identity and experience, that is, *queer lifeworld*. This book joins other recent writing, especially in Black film studies, in calls to disarticulate representational art forms from their reality effects, inviting a range of reading practices of the reparative flavor. Michael Gillespie's and Racquel Gates's scholarship in particular seek oblique lines of identification and formal openings that reveal dynamic cultural fantasies of difference. For Gates, Blackness might be thought of in its affective qualities, such as through the bad-object reception of "trashy television"; for Gillespie, "cinematic blackness" is a form that brings about insights, expansions, questions, pleasures, fantasies, and critiques that should be delineated from the Black lifeworld. I draw inspiration from these projects' methods, which tease out how cultural objects refract and diffract racial and social categories in ways that elude assignment as "good" or "bad" representations. See Gates, *Double Negative*, and Gillespie, *Film Blackness*.

6. Throughout the book, I use *programming* and *curation* interchangeably because this reflects the terms' usages in the practical field during this era of art house exhibition. More recently, scholars and practitioners have tried to separate one from the other. Laura U. Marks defines *programming* as "ongoing exhibition, such as for festivals or regular series in galleries and other venues"; *curating*, on the other hand, is the practice of "organizing thematic programs that are not necessarily linked to a regular venue" (36). See Marks, "The Ethical Presenter." One could argue that, in a contemporary context, *curation* is more appropriately applied to a museum or formal institutional space, whereas *programming* befits repertory and independent movie houses.

7. Programming has been an ongoing blind spot in the field of film studies. Even in exhibition studies, brief mention might be given to a significant film here and there as representative of a venue's general fare, but rarely do these studies survey a theater's scheduling in depth enough to speak to its programmatic vision, politics, and sensibility. Programming has been caught in a number of disciplinary splits: between textual reading and industrial/institutional analysis, text (consisting of form and content) and reception, history and theory. Studying programming in all these areas is a necessary historiographic expansion because it better

anchors cinema's intertextual history in its viewing contexts and thus engenders us to better speculate historical modes of reception. There has been a scattering of essays on the topic over the years, including one dossier coedited by Jan-Christopher Horak and Laura U. Marks, and a few important forays into the history of niche curation, such as Scott MacDonald's *Cinema 16: Documents Toward a History of Film Society*. These academic voices seem to all agree that film programming is meant to, first and foremost, as Chon Noriega puts it, "incite questions" in the audience. See Noriega, "On Curating," 297. Marks briefly describes scholar-programmers' differing approaches. Marks explains, "I could summarize them as: Scott [MacDonald], respect the work; Patty [Zimmerman], respect the audience; Robin [Curtis], use argument to respect work and audience." Marks, "The Ethical Presenter," 37. Under debate then is a rather binary opposition. The struggle appears to be between a loose educational model of programming in which spectators are allowed to heuristically explore and discover meanings on their own, and one in which they are more directly steered toward the programmer's intended meaning. For Curtis, Marks elaborates, "a curated program is an argument, a well-defined, defensible, pertinent statement. An argument needs a thesis. And a thesis needs a verb. Without these, a curated program is meaningless." Marks, "The Ethical Presenter," 39. Though helpful in parsing the pedagogical intent of some forms of cultural programming, I leave this debate to the side in the context of commercial and nonprofit art house spaces where questions of didacticism and pedagogy, if present, play out quite differently within the minds of curators and programmers.

To my knowledge, *Curating Deviance* is the first book to consider programming from a conceptual or theoretical angle (which tends to be viewed unfavorably in exhibition studies), and to generate from research on more than a thousand calendars a theory of programming based in intertextuality.

8. Balzer, *Curationism*, 33.

9. Balzer, *Curationism*, 33.

10. *Village Voice* film critic Melissa Anderson remembered sitting two rows in front of famous essayist Susan Sontag at a screening at the Quad in New York. See Anderson, "The Quad Relaunches," 28. A young Jonathan Demme was a regular at the Bleecker Street Cinema in the 1960s. See B. Davis, *Repertory Movie Theaters*, 47. In an interview, photographer Nan Goldin told Criterion Collection about her teenage years, "In Cambridge there was the Brattle Theatre and the Orson Welles Cinema, which showed three movies at a time." The continuation of this quote is featured in chapter 4. See Goldin, "Feeding the Appetites." On Albert Johnson, see Luckett, "The Black Film Ambassador."

11. For this reason, this book is hesitant to position the programmer as a kind of author or "auteur" in their own right, except for in chapter 1, where I use key historical figures such as Iris Barry and Amos Vogel to produce a genealogy of what I consider *promiscuous programming*.

12. Upon mentioning Jackie Raynal's filmmaking, B. Ruby Rich writes, "Sid Geffen was one of a series of men who made a huge difference in film history through their exhibition choices in New York City. Geffen, who ran the Bleecker Street Cinema in the crucial years of the late seventies and early eighties, along with Amos Vogel and Fabiano Canosa, significantly effected the course of film history." See Rich, *Chick Flicks*, 105.

13. Geritz, "Edith Kramer," 73.

14. Bosma, *Film Programming*, 44.

15. Eric Schaefer notes that "1968 marked the year in which media representations of sex were finally seen by large numbers of men and women in a public setting, the year it moved from 'under the counter' to 'over the top.'" Schaefer, "Introduction," 8.

16. Osterweil, *Flesh Cinema*, 15.

17. Young uses films such as *Barbarella* and Brigitte Bardot's oeuvre to identify the codification of the "liberal sexual subject" as fantasy of "autonomous, pleasure-seeking agent" nonetheless still moored by a "republican social contract" that universalizes compulsory normative sexuality. See Young, *Making Sex Public*, 8.

18. Tyler, *Screening the Sexes*, 314.

19. Though I tend to prefer the term *deviant* to *queer* in much of this study, I am not inclined to completely supplant *queer* with *deviant*, even in these contexts, given how much light queer theory has shed and still can shed on these intertexts. Throughout the book, these two terms will slide into one another; this is an implicit acknowledgment of their enmeshed genealogies, detailed by Love in *Underdogs*. It is worth noting that the two discourses emerge from capacious and pejorative uses, though only one has enjoyed full-scale reclamation.

20. Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 7. For more on the topic, see Adams, *Sideshow U.S.A.*

21. See Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black*; and McRuer, *Crip Theory*.

22. Seitler, "Queer Physiognomies," 83.

23. Seitler, "Queer Physiognomies," 83. Italics in original text.

24. Dušan Makavejev's 1971 documentary *W. R.: Mysteries of the Organism* explores Reich's sexual theories. The film was programmed in New York City at the Carnegie Hall Cinema in July 1974 ("Carnegie Hall Cinema," Pacific Film Archive [BAMPFA], Berkeley, CA) and Bleecker Street Cinema in

March 1978 ("Bleecker Street Cinema," Pacific Film Archive [BAMPFA], Berkeley, CA). In the Bay Area, the film screened at the Times Theater at Wheeler Auditorium in 1974 and at the Clay Theatre in April 1974 as part of the "Radical Psychiatry Film Series with Speakers" ("filmcalendar," Pacific Film Archive [BAMPFA], Berkeley, CA). Its numerous screenings attest to the filmgoing public's interest in sexology. See also Kate Bush's song "Cloudbusting," inspired by Peter Reich's memoir about his father, Wilhelm Reich.

25. Scott, "Gender," 1055.

26. See Yacavone, "Towards a Theory of Film Worlds." In zooming in on its formal and narrative features, the "interdiegetic" also temporarily and necessarily eschews analytical considerations of extradiegetic factors such as star texts, production backstories, critical and cultural reception, and so forth.

27. Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*. Taylor juxtaposes the archive's claim of stability and durability (coming from Greek *arkheia*, "public records," and *arkhē*, "government") to the changeability of the repertoire (20).

28. In chapter 4, I define this as *repertory time*, a long-duration and immersive form of spectatorship that leaves room for meanings to unfold and keep unfolding as films are encountered and reencountered in other intertextual arrangements. For example, repertory time can submerge a viewer into the carnivalesque, campy fantasies of a popular 1970s double bill like *Myra Breckinridge* and *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* or, in the case I make in chapter 5, it can make a viewer read a "bad object" such as *Dracula's Daughter* in a new, even affirming light in the context of an LGBT film festival.

29. Geritz et al., "Film Culture."

30. They were programmed over six times in a span of three years in just the Bay Area's theaters alone: Surf Theatre (September 1975); the UC Theater (November 1977); Roxie (April 1978, June 1978, November 1978); Strand Theater (October 1978). "filmcalendar" and "Roxie Theater," Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), Berkeley, CA. They were also shown together in May 1974 at the Carnegie Hall Cinema in New York City.

31. Programmed at the Carnegie Hall Cinema (Summer 1974, Winter 1978). "Carnegie Hall Cinema," Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), Berkeley, CA.

32. Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, 4. Muñoz's main target is the "political impasse that characterizes the present," namely the unimaginative domain of heteronormative and homonormative white-centered politics that dominate the public sphere (e.g., marriage rights, a hot topic at the time of his book's publication), as well as Lee Edelman and others' calls to abandon the future as a normative promise embodied in the figure of the child.

33. See Ferguson, *One-Dimensional Queer*, and Fawaz, *Queer Forms*.

34. See North, "The Disturbing Story." Regarding the *Death in Venice* allegations, see Lang, "Björn Andrésen on His Tortured Relationship."

35. Lauren Berlant writes about the "failures" of the sexual revolution: "What 'went wrong' doesn't mean everything failed in the sexual politics/structural conjuncture. A specific political project did: the ha-penis problem [in reference to *Last Tango in Paris*], which I take to refer both to the attempted release of a white masculinity from its radical sixties' aspirational armors of invulnerability and superiority, along with the problem of sustaining and remaining with unfinished revolutions whose outcomes continue genuinely to be mixed." Berlant, *On the Inconvenience of Other People*, 32.

36. Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia*, 28. This reparative and utopian reading practice comes through strongest in chapter 5, where I discuss the historical programming of queer "bad objects" such as the lesbian vampire film and women-in-prison picture.

### 1. Promiscuous Programming

1. In June 1966, the Bleecker Street Cinema in the Village was screening double features of Fellini's *8½* (1963) and Godard's *Breathless* (1960). On the Upper West Side, the Thalia was showing a Bergman double bill of *Through a Glass Darkly* (1961) and *Winter Light* (1963). *Village Voice*, June 30, 1966, 20–21.

2. *Village Voice*, May 15, 1969, 46–47.

3. On this lusty subtext, see Wilinsky, *Sure Seaters*, 99.

4. Lee, "A Never-Ending Film Festival."

5. B. Davis, *Repertory Movie Theaters*, 86–87. Davis bases his periodization on the quantitative existence of repertory houses more than on a qualitative analysis of shifts in their practices. The key New York theaters that emerged and remained in operation between 1968 and the early 1990s that Davis discusses are also key examples in this book: the Elgin, Theater 80 St. Marks, First Avenue Screening Room, Carnegie Hall Cinema, Bleecker Street Cinema, and the Thalia. Importantly, Davis notes that art theaters were in decline during this period but repertory was going strong.

6. For a more comprehensive analysis of the ontological debate around the term *art cinema*, see Galt and Schoonover, *Global Art Cinema*. They seem to embrace its "definitional impurity," calling it an "elastically hybrid category" with a "mongrel identity" (3). Expanding on this, they write, "We find in these impurities the kernel of art cinema's significance: as a category of cinema, it brings categories into question and holds the potential to open up spaces between and outside of mainstream/avant-garde,