The Deprivatization of Art: Dan Graham as an Art Worker

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INTRODUCTION

The American Conceptual and Minimalist artist Dan Graham (b. 1942) is perhaps best known for his two-way mirror pavilions that reference commercial store windows and consumer culture in the form of Conceptual language. A generation younger than Dan Flavin (American, 1933-1996), Donald Judd (American, 1928-1994), and Sol LeWitt (American, 1928-2007), Graham became directly involved with Minimalism in 1964 as the director for the newly founded John Daniels Gallery, New York. Here Graham organized one-person and group exhibitions that included works by Flavin, Judd and LeWitt. He began to develop his artistic practice that involved serial photographs of houses, associating him with Minimalism’s use of industrial materials and multiple forms. It was not, however, until Graham’s political involvement with the Art Workers’ Coalition (AWC) that he began to develop his characteristic sculptural forms and two-sided mirror pavilions.¹ This thesis provides an analysis of Graham’s artistic methodology through the lens of an “art worker” as defined by the AWC. Joining the AWC was a critical juncture that influenced Graham’s thought process and artistic approach.

¹ The most significant antiwar protest of the AWC was the creation of the And Babies poster published in the December 1969 issue of Life magazine depicting an image from the My Lai Massacre taking place during the Vietnam War where hundreds of unarmed civilians were killed by U.S. Army soldiers. Text overlapping the image of dead bodies reads: “Q: And babies?” and “A: And babies,” insinuating the disregard for all human life and inhumane actions carried out by the U.S. government and army. Francis Frascina, Art, Politics and Dissent: Aspects of the Art Left in Sixties America (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), 111-12.
Minimalism and Conceptualism

In the 1960s, artists began using geometric, industrial materials to place emphasis on the materiality of an artwork, rather than focusing on its symbolic nature or emotional content. Scholar James Meyer established two groups of Minimalists – the first including Flavin, Judd and Carl Andre (American, b. 1935) followed by a younger generation of artists such as Graham and Robert Smithson (American, 1938-1973). Minimalists incorporated the ideologies of Phenomenology into their art works. This philosophical movement was founded by French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) and focuses on ideas such as perception and the individual experience. Minimalists drew influence from Merleau-Ponty’s findings since they were concerned with the perspective and interaction of the viewer with their art work.

Conceptualism developed shortly after Minimalism, producing artwork that expanded the boundaries of art in order to focus on the idea, rather than on a physical component of an artwork. In 1967, LeWitt defined Conceptual art, stating that, “…the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair.”

In the summer of 1970, the Museum of Modern Art encompassed Conceptualism with the exhibition “Information.” This show contained work by more than 150 men and women from 15 countries, including the young artist Dan Graham. The intention behind “Information” was to

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force viewers to reassess their conditioned aesthetic response to art. The works exhibited revealed an art form that surpassed traditional categories of painting and sculpture. For example, Haacke presented *MoMA Poll* [Figure 1], a work that relied on viewer participation to answer a socio-political question about Nelson Rockefeller, a MoMA trustee and New York governor in 1970. Haacke wanted to establish that MoMA was connected to a wealthy, political figure, such as Rockefeller, who was implicated in the government and the ongoing Vietnam War. The artist set up two transparent ballot boxes in which museum guests could deposit their “yes” or “no” answer. Subsequently, the ballots were counted photo-electronically. Haacke’s Conceptual installation may be seen as an institutional critique commenting on the connection between politics and art. Similar to AWC member Haacke, Graham’s works were influenced by the socio-political context of the 1970s and he, too, critiqued the institution.

**Founding of John Daniels Gallery**

Before the emergence of the AWC, Graham co-founded and directed the John Daniels Gallery in New York City with David Herbert in June 1965. The gallery closed its doors due to financial troubles after eight months. During Graham’s brief tenure, the gallery highlighted the work of Minimal and Conceptual artists. Their works incorporated industrial materials to

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6 The question asked was, “Would the fact that Governor Rockefeller has not denounced President Nixon’s Indochina policy be a reason for you not to vote for him in November?” Hans Haacke, *MoMA Poll*, “Information,” 1970, Museum of Modern Art.


promote art that was devoid of symbolism and expression. This intentionally departed from the emotional works of the Abstract Expressionist painters of the 1950s. Graham’s gallery held an exhibition entitled “Plastics,” featuring works by artists such as Judd and Smithson. An example of work exhibited during “Plastics” is Judd’s red fluorescent plexiglass and stainless steel box arranged on the gallery floor, labeled Untitled (1965) [Figure 2]. LeWitt had his first solo exhibition at the John Daniels Gallery. One work featured during this show is Double Floor Structure (1964) [Figure 3], made up of two, hard-edged structures coated with commercial spray lacquers. They are arranged as self-contained pieces facing inwards towards each other on the floor of the gallery. By showing the work of emergent artists such as Smithson, Judd, and LeWitt, Graham solidified his connection with prominent figures of the AWC. These figures would go on to take affirmative steps to control their own artwork under the guise of an “art worker.”

The Kidnapping

The AWC was started by artists who shared a common interest in targeting the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). They criticized MoMA for denying artists control of the modes in which their work was exhibited within the museum. The formation of the AWC was prompted by the kidnapping of Greek Kinetic and Conceptual sculptor Vassilakis Takis’ (b. 1925) own

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work from the premises of the museum, on January 3, 1969. Takis asserted his discontent with MoMA by unplugging his kinetic sculpture, *Tele-sculpture* (1960-62) [Figure 4]. He proceeded to remove the sculpture from the exhibition “The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age,” a show which he claimed that he did not agree to exhibit in. This action was the signifying moment for artists to reclaim their artwork from the institution.

Takis released a flyer to fellow artists explaining his action as, “the first in a series of acts against the stagnant policies of art museums all over the world. Let us unite, artists with scientists, students with workers, to change these anachronistic situations into information centers for all artistic activities.”

Takis’ efforts brought about an awareness of artists’ work in regards to ownership, as well as political protests focusing on institutional exclusion of artists of Black and Puerto Rican race and gender. As momentum built, Takis’ reclamation of his artwork from MoMA garnered the attention of artists and critics such as Carl Andre and Max Kozloff (American art historian, critic and photographer, b. 1933). Together the three formed the Art Workers’ Coalition.

**The Art Workers’ Coalition is Born**

The AWC was officially founded in New York in 1969 and spearheaded by Andre, Haacke, Kozloff, Lucy Lippard (American feminist art historian and Conceptual art theorist, b. 1937), among others. The AWC’s primary ambition was to revolutionize the exclusionary gallery system and to pressure New York institutions, such as MoMA, into changing their

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exhibition policy to include women artists and artists of color. The AWC was also created with the common goal of transforming the definition of artist to art worker in order to expand beyond the role of artist as “maker.” As an art worker, the artist became a laborer who controlled how his or her art should be utilized as it entered an institution — both economically and in exhibitions.\textsuperscript{14} In an effort to speak out against the museum as institution and publicize their formation, the AWC circulated an anonymously published letter. Their literature stated: “We must support the Revolution by bringing down our part of the system and clearing the way for change. This action implies total dissociation of art making from capitalism,” and was signed by “an art worker.”\textsuperscript{15}

An art worker is defined by art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson, an art historian specializing in feminist theory and questions of artistic labor, as a person who produces work that distances itself from traditional acts of making, reimagines the art object, and creates a new identity and artistic practice for the artist.\textsuperscript{16} Graham, along with Andre, Haacke, LeWitt, Lippard, and many others, became members of the AWC. They attended and participated in the open hearing where artists announced their demands for artistic rights.\textsuperscript{17} At the hearing, Andre delivered a speech

\textsuperscript{14} The AWC also splintered into action-based groups such as the Guerrilla Art Action Group (GAAG), the Art Strike, and Women Artists in Revolution, among others. Bryan-Wilson, \textit{Art Workers}, 13-26.

\textsuperscript{15} On Thursday, April 10, 1969, an open public hearing was held in New York City in order to establish what the art workers’ mission should be regarding museum reform. This forum encouraged each art worker to make a statement of his or her laments about all art institutions and conditions, with the purpose of being documented and delivered to all artists and art institutions. An example of demands is made by Barnett Newman’s petition for “…a new society of independents, where anybody, black or white…can show his work…” and that respecting the artist “…would not only create a living relation between the museum and the artist, but the museum would become an exemplar to others and show them how they should behave to those who make the works.” Art Workers’ Coalition, \textit{An open public hearing on the subject: What should be the program of the art workers regarding museum reform, and to establish the program of an open Art Workers Coalition} (Museum of Modern Art: c.3 Political Art Documentation & Distribution Archive, Art Workers Coalition folder, 1969), 37.

\textsuperscript{16} Bryan-Wilson, \textit{Art Workers}, 1-2.

\textsuperscript{17} Bryan-Wilson, 16.
entitled “A Reasonable and Practical Proposal for Artists Who Wish to Remain Free Men in These Terrible Times.” He criticized art institutions that offered free admission to artists who had been protesting their exhibiting policies. Andre called for a more radical approach than free admission by “getting rid of the art world.” He explained that this can be executed in several ways, such as withdrawing from all commercial gallery exhibitions and enforcing conditions for the sale of their work.  

Haacke targeted MoMA and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in his speech as well. He admonished both institutions for selling their “classical” artworks with the intent to acquire modern art. This transaction consequently increased the commercial value of the few contemporary artworks that were purchased in addition to these modern pieces. Instead of buying modern art, Haacke suggested that museums should use funds to buy contemporary pieces from lesser-known artists, encouraging them financially and disregarding any connections with commercial galleries. Haacke hoped that this approach would “…relieve the artist from thinking in terms of saleability of his works in the profit-oriented art market.”

Bryan-Wilson acknowledges that among the speeches given at the open hearing, Graham “emphasized that Conceptualism might be one way out of the relentless marketing of art…and authorship raised by Minimalism and Conceptualism emboldened the antiestablishment ethos of the AWC.” Graham straddled the line between both Minimal and Conceptual art. He participated in Lippard’s 1969 curatorial exhibition, “Number 7,” to showcase the

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18 Carl Andre, “A Reasonable and Practical Proposal for Artists Who Wish to Remain Free Men in These Terrible Times,” in An open public hearing on the subject: What should be the program of the art workers regarding museum reform, and to establish the program of an open Art Workers Coalition, 30-34.
19 Hans Haacke, An open public hearing on the subject: What should be the program of the art workers regarding museum reform, and to establish the program of an open Art Workers Coalition, 46-47.
20 Bryan-Wilson, 16.
dematerialization of the art object. Exhibiting in “Number 7” fortified his involvement with the AWC movement, specifically highlighting exclusionary practices of curating due to race or gender.21

Anti-war Artist Protests of the 1960s

In order to grasp the socio-political atmosphere of artists living and working in the United States (U.S.) during the 1960s, it is essential to survey artist protests to the Vietnam War, preceding the AWC. In 1965, the New York-based group Artists and Writers Protest—also referred to as AWP—organized the first artistic anti-war protest in response to the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. AWP’s contribution manifested in the form of two full-page newspaper advertisements, labeled “END YOUR SILENCE,” [Figure 5] published in the New York Times on April 18 and then June 27. Aesthetically, each advertisement displayed the mission of the AWP, followed by a totemic list of artists and writers who were supporters of the movement against the Vietnam War. The April 18th advertisement read: “We are grieved by American policies in Vietnam. We are opposed to American policies in Vietnam. We will not remain silent before the world. We call on all those who wish to speak in a crucial and tragic moment in our history, to demand an immediate turning of the American policy in Vietnam to the methods of peace.”22 To bolster their call for action against the American government’s involvement in Vietnam, the June advertisement compared the United States’ actions during the Vietnam War to France’s during the Algerian War for Independence, which took place between

21 Bryan-Wilson, 146.
1954 and 1962. These advertisements, signed by over four hundred critics, artists, and novelists, were just the beginning of artists working to produce protest art against the Vietnam War.

Another group worth acknowledging is the Artists’ Protest Committee (APC), founded in 1966. The APC was based in Los Angeles, had over one hundred supporters, and created the Artists’ Tower of Protest, also known as the Peace Tower [Figure 6]. The Peace Tower was designed by Mark di Suvero (Abstract Expressionist sculptor, b. 1933) and Canadian-American architect Kenneth H. Dillon. It was sixty feet tall and made of a steel pole and vertical tetrahedron in order to support more than four hundred two-by-two foot panel artworks installed around the tower on a one-hundred-foot-long wall. Suvero’s sculpture stood on display for three months at the La Cienega and Sunset Boulevard juncture, a heavily populated and trafficked intersection that gave the tower maximum exposure. Bryan-Wilson explains that, “The Peace Tower presented a visually pluralistic response to the U.S. military conflict in Vietnam: any artist who wanted to submit a panel was able to, and the panels were later sold anonymously in a lottery organized by a local peace center.” The artworks were installed democratically to mirror the mission statement of the APC, naming the participating artists in a fundraising letter.

On the afternoon of Saturday, February 26, 1966, the Peace Tower was dedicated in Los Angeles with speeches by Irving Petlin (American painter, b. 1934), ex-Green-Beret Master

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23 A tetrahedron is a geometric structure composed of four triangular faces, six straight edges, and four vertex corners.
24 Bryan-Wilson, 5.
25 Participating artists were listed as: Elaine de Kooning, Herbert Ferber, Sam Francis, Judy Gerowitz, Lloyd Hamrol, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Motherwell, Lee Mullican, Ad Reinhardt, Larry Rivers, Jim Rosenquist, Mark Rothko, Frank Stella, George Segal, Jack Zajac, Philip Evergood, George Sugarman, Claus Oldenberg, Cesar, Karel Appel, Jean Helion, and Leon Golub. Letter, undated, “Artist’s Tower”, written by Arnold Mesches, Chairman, Fund Raising Committee, inviting financial contributions (University of California, Department of Special Collections, Collection 50, “A Collection of Underground, Alternative and Extremist Literature”, Box 36, Folder “Artist’s Tower Los Angeles”) from Frascina, Art, Politics and Dissent, 17.
Standing atop a flower-clad wooden podium, Sontag stated, “We’ve signed petitions and written our congressman. Today we’re doing something else—establishing a big thing to stand here, to remind other people and ourselves that we feel the way that we do.” In this speech, Sontag elucidates the symbolic nature of the tower itself. Through Peace Tower, the artist became a figure working to inform the public regarding the socio-political happenings of their country, rather than working for an institution to turn their paintings or sculptures into values and commodities.

In Art, Politics and Dissent: Aspects of the Art Left in Sixties America, Francis Frascina (b. 1950) examines the historical events in Los Angeles and New York in the 1960s in conjunction with American Art. “For many participants, the production and duration of display of the Artists’ Tower of Protest was an ‘event’, with the Tower and all of the 418 panels representing the antithesis of conventional notions of ‘art’ and its commodification.” The tower represented a form of labor that exposed corporate conglomerates that supported the American government and the presence of the United States in Vietnam. This exercise of labor was carried out by organized anti-war art events that established a new role for the artist as worker. The artwork surrounding the tower informed the public about the artist’s role against the privatization of government and art during the Vietnam War, rather than hanging art on a wall in a museum. Peace Tower symbolizes artists’ freedom to exhibit their work without relying on the institution. The tower, or general art object, represents the artists’ voice, free of control.

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28 Frascina, “We Dissent,” in Art, Politics and Dissent, 17.
How the AWC Influenced Graham’s Art

As the ACP’s *Peace Tower* and the AWP’s anti-war newspaper advertisements were speaking out against companies and art institutions funding the Vietnam War, artists continued to form new anti-war groups and repurposed artwork. As Graham entered the New York art scene of Minimalist and Conceptual artists of the 1960s, he produced work in conjunction with the socio-political birth of the AWC. Considering the influence of the AWC on Graham’s artistic production, the first chapter will analyze Graham’s photographic *Homes for America* (1966-67) [Figure 7]. After establishing a connection with prominent members of the AWC at the John Daniels Gallery, Graham began experimenting with photography as medium and its relationship to the social context of suburban housing during the late 1960s. I will establish that by relocating his photographs to the magazine, Graham aimed to redefine the art object through a socio-political context while simultaneously redirecting the viewer to a new, mass-produced exhibition space. Furthermore, Graham’s photography will be examined as a laborious effort according to the role of an AWC art worker. This is executed by the act of going outside — abandoning the confined artist studio — and capturing the 1960s American suburban experience.

The second chapter will ascertain that Graham’s architectural works were influenced by his participation in the AWC. In this study, Graham has reimagined the object by reconstructing a typical 1960s home with transparent glass and mirrors inserted into the building’s foundation. Shaped by the AWC, Graham developed his architectural works as a “maker” who exercised labor through the idea of reconstructing the suburban home. This reconstruction was executed by the reflection of the viewer in the home’s mirror. This symbolized the deprivatization of the

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suburban household, which is now subject to intrusion by the public. The focus of this chapter will be on Graham’s *Alteration to a Suburban House* (1978) [Figure 8].

The final chapter will argue that Graham’s adaptation of the role of an art worker influenced him when reimagining Minimalism’s artistic elitism to address socio-political issues through the creation of his pavilions. With an emphasis on viewer participation, it is imperative to contemplate his work’s implied critique of consumerism, voyeurism, and surveillance. Graham’s assembled pavilions with two-way mirrors allow public and private codes to interchange. As a result, his pavilions generate a new environment to include both subjects.\(^\text{29}\)

The pavilions that will be analyzed are *Two Adjacent Pavilions* (1978-82) [Figure 9], *Octagon for Münster* (1987) [Figure 10], and the *Rooftop Urban Park Project* (1981/1991) [Figure 11].

Despite Graham’s personal connections with the artists of the AWC during the Vietnam War Era, he is largely excluded from the existing literature that supports how his role as an art worker influenced his artistic practices and approach. This thesis will corroborate that art and labor are synonymous with Graham’s artistic production, ranging from photographic magazine pieces to his architectural pavilions. Not only will this study validate Graham as a political art worker, but it will link his thoughts on consumerism with his socio-political awareness and contribution to the AWC.

CHAPTER 1

Before the emergence of the Art Workers’ Coalition, Graham opened the John Daniels Gallery in New York. Graham met and supported prominent members of Minimal and Conceptual art who would later participate in the AWC. When the gallery closed, Graham relocated to New Jersey and embodied the role of photographer. In this chapter, the photographic series *Homes for America* (documenting New Jersey tract homes in the 1960s) reflects how these experiences shaped his photography. At his gallery, Graham encountered artists who wanted looser exhibiting policies. This was a crucial point for what would later become a focus of the AWC. Graham’s laborious efforts while photographing suburban New Jersey was his first act as an art worker.

**Connections Established at John Daniels Gallery**

In order to dissect *Homes for America* [Figure 7], it is imperative to explore Graham’s entrance into the New York art scene with the opening reception of the John Daniels Gallery. He co-founded and directed the gallery with David Herbert, inserting himself into the society of Minimal and Conceptual artists. Preceding, and unknowingly foreshadowing the demands of the AWC regarding loosening the restrictions of who could exhibit their work at major institutions, Graham and Herbert encouraged and permitted anyone to exhibit in their short-lived gallery. The first artist to exhibit in the John Daniels Gallery was LeWitt. His show featured reliefs and

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30 At the John Daniels Gallery, Graham and Herbert allowed anyone to exhibit their artwork, exposing the basis of one of the AWC missions.
31 Institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.
free standing sculptures, such as *Floor/Wall Structure (Telephone Booth)* (1964) [Figure 12]. In 1965, Flavin and Judd participated in a group exhibition, situating Graham amongst the emerging Conceptual and Minimalist artists of the 1960s. However, the gallery closed due to their inability to sell artwork. This proved to be the catalyst that prompted Graham to escape the criticism of his gallery failure and return to the suburban space of his hometown New Jersey. This is where he would document American tract housing of *Homes for America*.

Upon his relocation to Westfield, New Jersey, Graham began experimenting with photography and its relationship to the social context of suburban housing. In regards to developing an interest in photography, Graham has said that while inserting himself within the circle of New York artists:

> … I bought an Instamatic, the cheapest fixed-focus camera… [and] was always interested in ‘upper-‘ and ‘lower-class’ housing, because I grew up in a similar situation. When I was thirteen my parents moved to upper middle-class suburbia…I totally identified with the poorer community, so I was downward identified.

To me, Robert Mangold’s relief paintings of the early 1960s resembled facades of suburban houses, as did the materials Judd used. And I thought, why do people have to make things for galleries? Wouldn’t it be easier just to take photographs or slides?\(^\text{32}\)

This statement reiterates Graham’s decision to reinsert himself within the suburbs of New Jersey. Not only is this done through his move home in the 1960s, but also through the fact that Graham spent his adolescence in the suburbs. Now he returned to physically capture its solidarity and reprieve from urban landscapes through photography. The artist’s home state resonated with him through adulthood, acting as a site of retreat after his gallery closed. Graham explored the developing New Jersey suburbs through the artistic ideologies of 1960s Minimalism and Conceptual language. New Jersey played a vital role in Graham’s artistic production, specifically

the artist’s desire for a studio space in nature, the fruition of post-World War II housing developments such as Levittown, and reimagining the art object.

New Jersey

In the 1950s and 1960s New York City was following the art system setup by the New York School of the 1940s. The New York School spurred collectives where artists would meet at each other’s studios. However, this new space that benefited the Abstract Expressionists of the 1940s and 1950s posed as a barrier for artists of the 1960s. For the latter, the studio had similarities to the gallery or “white cube” due to its isolation from nature and suburbia. Fellow artist Robert Smithson relocated to New Jersey in the 1960s in order to make art outside of New York City, claiming that, “The major issue now in art is what are the boundaries…For too long artists have taken the canvas and stretchers as given, the limits.” Like Smithson, Graham relocated to New Jersey in pursuit of a clean artistic slate following the closing of the John Daniels Gallery. New Jersey symbolized an alternative to traditional studio practice by providing artists with an outlet to disassociate themselves from the confinement of a studio and become reacquainted with nature or post-studio practice.

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33 The collective emerged as a result of artists’ shared sentiments of World War II, such as questioning human nature. Michael Leija, “Introduction,” in Framing Abstract Expressionism: Subjectivity and Painting in the 1940s (New Haven and London: Yale University Press), 3.
Graham yearned to escape the “white cube” of his own New York gallery. He retreated back to a place of comfort and nostalgia for his childhood home in order to “cultivate a sense of marginality and displacement” no longer available to him in New York City.37 Scholar and playwright Svetlana Boym (Russian-American, 1966-2015) defined the term nostalgia “as a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed…” and as “…a sentiment of loss and displacement, but [also] a romance with one’s own fantasy.”38 Closing the gallery—his own artistic vision and project—possibly created sentiments of loss and displacement, as his business was not able to survive. It could be said that as the John Daniels Gallery failed, an opportunity undoubtedly presented itself to utilize New Jersey as a nostalgic outlet to mourn and cope with feelings of discontent. Nostalgia allowed Graham to explore alternate exhibiting spaces that ultimately took the form of New Jersey suburbia.

New Jersey suburbia was shaped by the emergence and rapid expansion of Post-World War II suburban landscapes. These developments in the 1950s and 1960s U.S. are central to the realization of Graham’s Homes for America. From an idealization standpoint, these settlement plans indicated a burgeoning society that desired to reclaim their commitment to family in a new space. Newly constructed suburban settlements represented an undoing of the dislocated soldiers from their families, and a solution to the social destruction created by deployment. According to David L. Ames, Professor of Urban Affairs and Public Policy and Geography at the University of Delaware, tract homes were “a landscape in which the free market attempted to meld the

37 Baum, 13.
attributes of the city and the country into a home environment sought by many Americans.”

Post-war settlements outside of city limits provided a sense of community conducive to raising a family. Each consisted of single-family homes grouped into their own hub with other identical homes, laid out on a curvilinear street pattern.

Most notable in the development of the suburban landscape found in Graham’s New Jersey photographs was the apparent influence of cookie-cutter, mass-produced homes [Figure 13]. The Levitt brothers constructed such homes in the years following the conclusion of World War II. The suburban development of Levittown in Long Island, New York emerged on the basis of loans from bankers via the Federal Housing Administration. Proposed loans would make it easier for families to buy homes and pay their mortgages. From this point, real estate developers Levitt & Sons profited from the vast farmlands on Long Island to create a haven for post-war families, made visible in the monotony of architecture. Uniformity stemmed from newly constructed homes identically lined up on winding streets with manicured lawns, as if they were reproductions of each other. Not only was tract housing a drastic departure from the overcrowded, urban grid of Manhattan, they were built so that the process of construction closely resembled their façade. The labor behind the assemblage of the Levittown tract homes was divided into twenty-six steps. Identical steps of construction were completed at each tract

home. This process emphasized the seriality and lack of individuality belonging to tract housing that is continually portrayed in Graham’s photographs.

Homes for America: Becoming an Art Worker

The way in which Graham first exhibited the photographs of *Homes for America* strengthened his ties to Minimalism and a Conceptual language that turn his photographs into art objects. Perhaps just as vital was how the work emphasizes a critique of the New York gallery system. Graham’s documentation of 1960s tract housing and suburbia was first presented as a collection of photographic slides under the title *Homes for America* in the “Projected Art” exhibition at the Finch College Museum of Art in New York in 1966. This show was executed through slides as projection because Graham “liked the transparency they had, like the Plexiglas in Donald Judd’s sculpture, and the fact that they could be thrown away and had no value.”

This comparison of slides to an object such as Judd’s plexiglass that can be thrown away, challenges the art object. The slide projection of *Homes for America* displayed about twenty 35 mm slides of color images of suburban New Jersey, New York City, and Staten Island, through the use of a carousel projector.

Graham’s images illustrated the mass-produced suburban houses that could be ordered by catalogue. Developments during this time were part of an emergency plan to house workers and

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veterans displaced by World War II. Images such as these exploit the seriality and systematic nature found in Minimalists work. This is done through the repetitive sequence of each slide and the previously mentioned depicted arrangement of types of buildings, building materials, paint colors, and even placement of windows. Each slide captured an aspect of the interior or exterior of suburban housing and architecture in the 1960s, found in images such as Row of New Track Houses, Bayonne, New Jersey, 1966 (1966) [Figure 14] or Back of Housing Project, Jersey City, New Jersey, 1966 (1966) [Figure 15]. It is their arrangement in a magazine with text that embodies the Conceptual language.

The photographs and slides of Homes for America reflect the socio-political climate of the 1960s by reshaping symbolic perceptions of the home in 1960s, post-war America. Row of New Track Houses, Bayonne, New Jersey, is a depiction of six homes in a row. These homes display the same four or five square windows, trapezoidal roofs and off-white painted exterior, supporting characteristics of cookie-cutter, mass-produced homes. Capturing the linearity of the homes under a clear blue sky compliments a “rootless” aspect next to the accompanying text in Arts Magazine—although the homes are in the foreground of the photograph, the viewer is uncertain of what lies beyond the edge of the frame. Similarly, Back of Housing Project, Jersey City, New Jersey, 1966, features a housing project consisting of identical windowpanes on the first and second floors. Windowpanes are accompanied by matching back entryways, although the viewer is not shown where those doors lead. Rather than the sky acting as a disjointing element, the intersecting telephone lines and the edge of the

neighboring project’s rooftop create a stifling space that negates the idea of an inviting family home.

A New Exhibiting Space: The Magazine

Before the AWC, *Homes for America* symbolized the socio-political change of anti-war art movements that denounced the dominance of art institutions in favor of exhibiting the art object outside the gallery walls. First published as a two-page magazine article in the December 1966 issue of *Arts Magazine*, *Homes for America* conceptualizes the visual moniker of the photograph. This is accomplished through a Conceptual language where Graham inserts text as a vehicle to mimic the post-war suburban homes of New Jersey. Visually, the layout of the article highlights the seriality of the Minimalist aesthetic, such as the repetition found in LeWitt’s *Serial Project, I (ABCD)* (1966) [Figure 16]. LeWitt organizes varying aluminum squares and cubes throughout a grid as a way to catalogue the given information for the viewer. In the case of *Homes for America*, Graham exercises seriality through its paragraphs and photographs. Information is presented in a grid-like structure, turning the reader’s focus to the actual magazine pages and the idea of American tract housing rather than the art object. The text dissects the construction of the large-scale tract housing developments, similar to the ones established in Levittown, New York. Graham notes the types of homes that were available to the consumer and the speed at which they were built due to mass-production techniques. An excerpt explains that, “With mass buying, greater use of machines and factory-produced parts, and assembly-line standardization, multiple units were easily fabricated.”45

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Similar to LeWitt’s organization of squares and rectangles within a grid, Graham treats *Homes for America*’s photographs and texts as an art object. He does this by arranging the varying types of tract housing available in Cape Coral, Florida, vertically listing the eight available models followed by a list of the eight exterior color options. Graham continues with this format to explore the possible arrangements of homes within the suburban development – this order emphasizes their structural monotony. Furthermore, Graham’s reimagining of the art object, in this case the suburban home, is demonstrated within the *Homes for America* text: “There is no organic unity connecting the land site and the home. Both are without roots—separate parts in a larger, pre-determined, synthetic order.”  

The home translates into a disjointed, “rootless” object that exists as a photograph within a magazine.

Graham uses a magazine format as an exhibiting vehicle, rather than the gallery space. This speaks to his use of a Conceptual language that reimagined the art object before his involvement with the AWC. In the 1960s, magazines played a vital role in promoting the arts by advertising the work of artists exhibiting in galleries and museums. In a 1994 interview with Mike Metz for *BOMB* magazine, Graham reflects on his time as director of the John Daniels Gallery. The artist recalls that he relied heavily on magazine publications to communicate with consumers outside of the art world to visit the galleries. The concept of exhibiting directly onto the magazine pages as a “non-gallery art” came to fruition while Graham was at his New York gallery.

During this time Graham was working with Conceptual and Minimalist artists as a way to alter the use-value of the artwork. For instance, Flavin’s fluorescent sculptures were dismantled at the conclusion of each art show without sale, prompting Graham to find a space to preserve

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46 Ibid., 22.
the artwork. However, while preserving the artwork in mass circulation magazines, he was also disposing of the artwork as new magazine additions were published, replacing the current issue and its contents—in this case the work of the artist. During this interview, Graham explained that when transitioning to the physicality of the magazine as the non-gallery, “…you have the fact that this physicality would only have a short life. It would fade away as the magazines were discarded, and go back into the time and place. But they were geared to the present time publication situation.”47 Perhaps complicating Graham’s newly found, site-specific artworks, was the fact that he was reproducing a reproduction—he was photographing, or reproducing, the finished construction of tract homes.

Magazines strip the suburban house of its advertised, escape-from-the-city frame. Tract homes are thereby transformed into a disposable magazine article. Thinking of *Homes for America* as a disposable object, as well as the process of the article, Graham stated:

> First it is important that the photos are not alone, but part of a magazine layout. They are illustrations of the text or (inversely), the text functions in relation to/modifying the meaning of the photos. The photos and the text are separate parts of a schematic two-dimensional grid. The photos correlate [to] the lists and columns of serial information and both “represent” the serial logic of the housing developments whose subject matter the article discusses. Despite the fact that the idea of using the “real” outdoor environments as a “site” on which to construct “conceptual” or “earth works”…I think the fact that “Homes for America” was, in the end, only a magazine article, and made no claims for itself as “art,” is its most important aspect.48

By addressing *Homes for America* as a magazine layout and “only a magazine article,” Graham is devaluing the suburban home as an object and instead highlights the magazine as the only art vessel. Simultaneously, he transforms the economic value of the magazine by redirecting his role

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of being a Minimal and Conceptual artist from someone who exhibits to the public within a white cube, to someone who exhibits according to socio-economic concerns. This can be interpreted as Graham searching for a way to apply the new social implications of magazines to Minimal and Conceptual art work by devaluing, reimagining, and disposing of the art object.

In a letter to German art historian Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, Graham elaborates on the idea of the magazine and the value of art, saying:

…Aesthetically (but not functionally, that is, in material, economic terms) some of the Minimal Art seemed to refer to the gallery interior space as the ultimate frame or structural support/context and that some “Pop” Art referred to the surrounding media-world of cultural information as framework. But the frame (specific media-form or gallery/museum as economic entity concerned with value) was never made structurally apparent… I wanted to make an art-form which could not be reproduced or exhibited in a gallery/museum, and I wanted to make a further reduction of the “Minimal” object to a not necessarily aesthetic two-dimensional form (which was not painting, or drawing): printing matter which is mass reproduced and mass disposable information. Putting it in magazine pages meant that is also could be “read” in juxtaposition to the usual second-hand art criticism, reviews, reproductions in the rest of the magazine and would form a critique of the functioning of the magazine (in relation to the gallery structure).  

In order to understand Graham’s relationship and intention with the magazine, it is crucial to consider this statement that removes him from the circle of Minimalist and Conceptualist artists that he socially associated himself with starting at the John Daniels Gallery. Graham acknowledges that although he was reducing the Minimal object past a fine art painting or sculpture—in line with the formal associations of Minimalist and Conceptualist ideals—he strove to go further by using the magazine as an art object. In *Homes for America*, Graham is reducing and disposing of the art object, in this case the suburban American tract home, two-fold—first by becoming a photographer in order to capture and document the structures and systems, and then using the magazine as his exhibition space.

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Thinking of the idea of disposability in regards to photography, it is necessary to look to a 2008 interview between Graham and Rodney Graham (Canadian photographer, painter and musician, b. 1949), Chrissie Iles (curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York) and Gary Carrion-Murayari (curator at the New Museum, New York.) Here, Graham compares his foray into photography to “a passionate hobby” that surfaced because all he could afford was “a cheap camera” after the downward financial spiral spurred by the demise of the John Daniels Gallery and his thoughts on leisure time.\(^5^0\) When considering the parameters of a hobby, perhaps viewed as a non-concrete role, and how that translated into the role of amateur photographer for Graham, it is possible to uncover the origin of how Graham formulated, and arrived at, creating a disposable art object amid a sea of formal art objects. The realization is that a hobby itself is disposable. When photographing the tract housing cul-de-sacs of New Jersey and existing outside of the urban city, Graham hones in on the hobby executed through leisure time.

In the same interview, Graham explained that, “… leisure time is very important to me… I was influenced by the notion of the edge of the city… T.J. Clark talks about how revolutionary the emerging petit bourgeois class was and about how Van Gogh’s best work was on the edge of the city: in other words, the edge of the suburbs, near to the city. My *Homes for America* are about this.”\(^5^1\) It is clear from this statement that the labor behind *Homes for America* emerged through the indeterminate act of fleeing the city that rejected Graham and his gallery. This change allowed Graham to assume an informal role of suburban photographer that would be disposed of as he continued on a career path that would reject photography and move

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\(^{5^0}\) Dan Graham and Rodney Graham with Chrissie Iles and Gary Carrion-Murayari, “Interview with Dan Graham,” in *Dan Graham: Beyond*, 98.

\(^{5^1}\) Ibid., 98.
towards video, performance, and sculptural pavilions, merging with his involvement with the AWC.
CHAPTER 2

Graham has reimagined the art object by reconstructing a typical 1960s home with transparent glass and mirrors inserted into the building’s foundation. Shaped by the AWC, Graham developed his architectural works as a “maker” who exercised labor through the idea of reassembling the suburban home. The focus of this chapter will be on Graham’s *Alteration to a Suburban House* [Figure 8]. In *Alteration*, Graham surpassed the formal elements of Minimalism by using a Conceptual language. This methodology is characterized by art objects fabricated from industrial materials and devoid of symbolism or personal expression, dematerializing the art. Graham incorporates rectangular panels of plexiglass and two-way mirrors into his sculptures to exploit the socio-political agenda of the AWC. Graham’s artistic approach confronts institutionalism while simultaneously bolstering the role of the art worker. He transformed the status of the suburban, tract home that represented privatization and escape from the urban landscape into a public, autonomous space. The second chapter of this thesis explores how Graham’s architectural works were influenced by his participation in the AWC.

*Alteration to a Suburban House*

In 1978, Graham shifted his artistic production to architecture by combining his interests in documenting the suburban home and exhibiting control over art museums. These ideas culminated in his piece *Alteration to a Suburban House*, which re-imagines the object through the process of construction found in the art worker. Graham manufactured a miniature suburbia consisting of three nearly identical tract homes composed of painted wood, and industrial synthetic materials and plastic all situated on a faux-grass oasis. Two of the homes are erected
side-by-side, while the third home sits on the other side of the dividing street. The construction of the third home differs from its neighbors due to Graham’s employment of the Minimalist geometric form – the entire façade of the home is removed and replaced by a full sheet of transparent glass. The interior of the home is exposed to public examination. The second step of construction to the cookie-cutter tract home is placing a mirror midway back and parallel to the sheet of plexiglass, dividing the structure in half. While the contents of the home are exposed via plexiglass, the mirror serves as a vehicle that permits the public to access the home through their reflection.

The home realized by Graham is no longer traditional. The final result depicts a home that has been altered into a Conceptual art object. At first glance, we are confronted with the physical representation of a home. In actuality, the home has been dematerialized into the idea of an object that exposed privatization and institutionalism. Reimagining an art object in this way, seen with the home in *Alteration*, is a vital art worker characteristic. *Alteration* exercised the mission of the art worker participating in the AWC by reimagining the art object through the geometric form and the installers. This was completed to aid in exposing the art workers’ socio-political agenda.

**Impact of Robert Morris and the Geometric Form**

Although Graham was using both a Conceptual language with Minimalist forms, it is crucial to align him with prominent artists of the 1960s who shared the same mode of artistic production. In order to understand the significance of the geometric form and role of the installer in Graham’s work, it is worth delving into the work of Robert Morris (American, b. 1931), one
of the central figures of Minimalism. In the early 1960s, Morris’s sculpture emphasized the relationship between the art object and how it was perceived and experienced by its audience.\textsuperscript{52} Later that decade, Morris turned to Post-Minimalism.\textsuperscript{53} He dissolved the art object even further by using nontraditional materials paired with unconventional modes of construction to create sculptures. In April 1968, Morris wrote the article “Anti-Form” for \textit{Artforum} examining Process Art, a movement that dematerialized the art object.\textsuperscript{54} In it he stated:

The use of the rectangle has a long history. The right angle has been in use since the first post and lintel construction. Its efficiency is unparalleled in building with rigid materials, stretching a piece of canvas, etc. This generalized usefulness has moved the rectangle through architecture, painting, sculpture, objects. But only in the case of object-type art have the forms of the cubic and the rectangular been brought so far forward into the final definition of the work. That is, it stands as a self-sufficient whole shape rather than as a relational element. To achieve a cubic or rectangular form is to build in the simplest, most reasonable way, but it is also to build well….

…In object-type art process is not visible. Materials often are. When they are, their reasonableness is usually apparent. Rigid industrial materials go together at right angles with great ease. But it is the a priori valuation of the well-built that dictates the materials. The well-built form of objects preceded any consideration of means. Materials themselves have been limited to those which efficiently make the general object form.\textsuperscript{55}

For the artist, these materials varied from rigid, industrial items such as plexiglass, stainless steel and wood, found in his earlier Minimalist works such as \textit{Untitled (L-Beams)} (1965) [Figure 17], as well as formless felt that Morris haphazardly distributed onto the floor. The latter is

\textsuperscript{52} Robert Morris, “Notes on Sculpture,” \textit{Artforum} (April 1969), 233-235.
\textsuperscript{54} Morris theorized Process Art, or the “anti-form,” a movement that favored the process of making art, such as improvisation and using unconventional materials, rather than a fully executed composition or plan. “Anti-form,” \textit{Artforum} 6:8 (April 1968); reprinted in James Meyer, \textit{Minimalism} (London and New York: Phaidon, 2000).
exemplified in the process-oriented *Untitled (Pink Felt)* (1970) [Figure 18]. In the case of *Untitled (L-Beams)*, Morris arranged three identical L-shaped stainless steel beams so that none are in the same position. The presence of Morris’s hand is omitted in order to prompt a unique viewing experience for the audience by means of the geometric form. Although *Untitled (Pink Felt)* does not contain geometric, hard-angled objects, it shares the same desire to provide the audience with a varying, individual experience with each interaction.

Graham’s artistic practice transitioned towards dematerializing the art object, much like Morris. Morris is brought into this investigation to exemplify how leading Minimalist artists and participants in the AWC responded to institutionalism. By exhibiting the same methodology in his artwork, Graham was exploring the same aims in his sculpture, particularly with *Alteration to a Suburban House*, by using plexiglass and mirrors to comment on public and private spaces. In order to link these two artists who belonged to the AWC, it is important to study Morris’s first solo exhibition from 1970.

Eights years prior to *Alteration*, Morris exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art. “Robert Morris: Recent Works” featured massive installations of industrial materials, constructed by hydraulic machinery. Paving a path for artists like Graham, this show featured sculpture that depended on, as well as highlighted the individual experience of the viewer in conjunction with the spontaneity of how the structures are displayed. Morris created process pieces, or “spills” of concrete, timber, and steel that were scattered around the museum floor by installers. The individual experience is provoked through the audience’s participation in viewing the day-to-day construction of the six pieces included in the exhibition. Construction consisted of four steel-plate sculptures and two new site-specific installations.56 For instance, *Untitled

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56 Bryan-Wilson, “Robert Morris’s Art Strike,” in *Art Workers*, 83-85.
[Timbers] (1970) [Figure 19] consisted of wood beams twelve to sixteen feet in length, stacked in groups up to seven feet tall, and extending almost fifty-five feet along the museum floor.\(^57\) The sheer size of Morris’s six installations at the Whitney eliminated the stereotypical idea of the isolated, white cube gallery space as well as the relationship between artist and institution. His artistic direction bypassed the museum gallery walls almost entirely. Graham too constructed *Alteration* as a sculpture that could exist beyond the contextual confinement of a museum or gallery.

To better understand and define the white cube in the 1960s and 70s, we should examine Brian O’Doherty’s (Irish art critic, writer, artist, b. 1928) publication, *Inside the White Cube: Ideology of the Gallery Space*. Originally published as articles in *Artforum*, these texts are a historical critique of the gallery space, and how socio-political context played a vital role in its evolution. In “Notes on the Gallery Space,” O’Doherty examines the gallery space throughout the history of modernism. He traces how exhibiting art within the gallery was problematic due to competition for wall space. For example, O’Doherty describes the paintings exhibited at the Paris Salon in the 19\(^{th}\) century as “masterpieces as wallpaper.”\(^58\) In O’Doherty’s next essay, “The Eye of the Spectator,” he discusses how the perennial nature of the gallery separates the viewer from his or her body, creating a Spectator and an Eye. The Eye understands the flat modernist painting on display, while the Spectator can understand the artwork that exists in a three-dimensional space.\(^59\)

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In the final essay, “Context as Content,” O’Doherty explains that the white cube is a gallery space that shapes the artwork exhibited inside it. O’Doherty analyzes Marcel Duchamp’s (French-American sculptor, painter and writer, 1887-1968) installations 1,200 Coal Bags (1983) and Mile of String (1942) as examples of how an artist can alter the gallery space with art. He explicates that, “with postmodernism, the gallery space is no longer ‘neutral.’” Typically, the gallery space is thought of as a place where socio-political context and viewer experience are separate. However, O’Doherty conveys that these two constructs cannot be separated within the white gallery walls. The white cube should establish an environment that comingles historical context and the value of art. During the time Graham was producing Homes for America and Alteration he exhibited alongside O’Doherty, and would have been exposed to his Artforum articles, influencing his work. Graham reimagined his art objects by removing them from a timeless exhibiting space, and instead installed his works with the intention to explore socio-political contexts of the AWC.

Morris’s beams, the 1970 Whitney exhibition, and the concept of the industrial, geometric rectangle (a component paramount to the Minimalist formal aesthetic) exemplify an artist controlling how his art is displayed within the institution walls. For Morris, his sculptures are dismantled after one day and randomly resembled the next – all at the will of the artist at work. This particular exhibiting method allows Morris’s work to rely on the audience as installers of the sculptures, as they build new perceptions of the works with each assemblage. Graham attended and participated in the same AWC hearing as Morris, sharing similar anti-institutional ideologies. This vital link between Morris and Graham’s artistic production

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validates the significance of Graham’s use of the geometric form – executed through a
Conceptual language— and the viewer as installer, specifically seen in *Alteration*.

**Removing the Institution from Artistic Production**

During the 1969 AWC open hearing, Graham expressed his distaste for the institution’s
tendency to label and treat the artist as a machine. He stated that, “The artist is not a machine; the
artist shares in mankind’s various media of expression having no better ‘secrets’ or necessarily
going more inside or outside of things than any other person…”61 This proclamation can be
interpreted as Graham’s desire for the artist and audience to exist synonymously, rather than as
separate entities. More specifically, Graham signifies a call for the removal of any object, in this
case the privatized institution, which stands between the artist and his audience.

Viewing Graham’s statement from the AWC hearing in relation to *Alteration*, Graham
subtly transformed the architectural tract home into an artwork that successfully obliterated a
pillar of a traditional space. Just as he called for the removal of the institution from in between
the artist and public, he removed a wall of the home and replaced it with a two-way mirror, using
a formal Minimalist and Conceptual element in the form of industrial material and applying it
under the guise of AWC motives. This unorthodox idea was first exhibited in “Dan Graham:
Installations/ Photographs/ Videotapes/ Performances/ Publications /Films / Architectural
Models” at the Museum of Modern Art Oxford in 1978. The architectural model of *Alteration* is

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61 Dan Graham, *An open public hearing on the subject: What should be the program of
the art workers regarding museum reform, and to establish the program of an open Art Workers
Coalition*, 93-94
composed of painted wood, synthetic material, and plastic, all constructed by the artist. Graham described this artwork:

The entire façade of a typical suburban house has been removed and replaced by a full sheet of transparent glass. Midway back and parallel to the front glass façade, a mirror divides the house in two areas. The front section is revealed to the public, while the rear, private section is not disclosed. As the mirror faces the glass façade and the street, it reflects not only the house’s interior but also the street and the environment outside the house. The reflected images of the facades of the two houses opposite the cut-away “fill-in” the missing façade.  

He has re-imagined the object, in this case the suburban house, through the reconstruction of the typical 1960s tract home. This was done by inserting transparent glass and mirrors, as well as including the viewer to complete this process. With the participation of the viewer, the traditional private space of the suburban household is exposed to the public, while simultaneously reflecting the viewer and environment into the home, and vice versa. The audience and the artist are interacting without the aid of the privatized art institution, reflecting the ideas of the AWC. A new public and private space emerge according to the traditional private confines of the suburban household, which are now juxtaposed against exposure to the public through the glass sheet.

Similar to *Alteration to a Suburban House*, Graham produced *Picture Window Piece* (1974) [Figure 20] and *Video Projection Outside Home* (1978) [Figure 21] that also employed characteristics of Graham’s deprivatization of artwork through the AWC mission. *Video Projection Outside Home* situates a large television monitor on a front lawn, televising what the family was watching inside of the home. A private act of watching television is now made public, inviting an audience into the domestic, secluded space of the home. Graham capitalized

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on the idea of the television set as an object that unified the family who watched the events of pop culture and news broadcasts on the television screen. Graham re-imagined the symbolic nature of the television set from an entity belonging to the interior of the home, to an event that could be open to outsiders, just by placing the monitor on the lawn. Graham removed the opaque walls of the home with the installation of the television monitor outside, joining the private and public spaces. This particular construction imitates the concept of deprivatization of the gallery space, the mission of the AWC.

*Picture Window Piece* includes two sets of video cameras and monitors, one set inside the suburban home and the other placed outside looking into the house. Two people are placed on either side of the picture window to establish the private interior and the public outside of the home. The picture window shares characteristics with the white cube, as they both create barriers. The white cube separates the artist from governing his artwork and consequently from controlling the viewer. The picture window protects the interior from nature. Architectural Historian and Theoretician Charissa Terranova investigates the significance of the picture window. She explains that the object “emerged in the 1930s as an amenity offering ‘broader vistas’ and clear expanses of transparency, opening the interior of the home to the exterior world of nature with the invisible protection of a large pane of glass,” signifying the privatization that the picture window enforced.\(^6^3\) The placement of the video cameras and monitors allow the outside viewer to invade the private suburban space, while also reflecting the occupants of the home into a public space.

The addition of the video camera and video/television monitors serve as another layer equivalent to the two-way mirror and glass inserted in the home. These components allow the public to become the private, and vice versa. The exclusive privatization of the two environments is dismantled. Graham’s use of construction as the video equipment and glass windows “function as mirror-like self-reflective surfaces” interchange the placement of the subject.  

To develop his ideas a step further, Picture Window Piece and Video Projection Outside Home should be examined through the installer characteristic of the art worker developed alongside the AWC. Bryan-Wilson clarifies her definition of the art worker to include the installer, or viewer, using Carl Andre as an example. She states that, “If a lasting legacy of Minimalism was that it handed over much of the ‘work’ to viewers by activating them in their perceptual space, Andre’s Minimalism also nominates installers as part of the act of making, inviting them to contribute to the art’s experiential gestalt.”

Similar to Morris’s 1970 Whitney exhibition where he relies on the audience to complete the construction of his beams and haphazard felt sculptures, Andre looks to the viewer to complete the installation. In 1966, Andre exhibited Lever at the “Primary Structures” show at the Jewish Museum in New York, made up of 137 units of firebricks positioned thin side up along the floor of the gallery. Placing firebricks on the floor suggests the act of backbreaking labor executed by the bricklayers or workers installing the structure. However, what activates the art worker and inevitably the audience as installer in this piece, is the fact that the “installers, spectators, and artist are on equal ground doing the work that actualizes the art.” The spectator is required to work double-duty, taking on the roles of artist and workers, resulting in the

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64 Terranova, Automotive Prosthetic: Technological Mediation and the Car in Conceptual Art, 179.
65 Bryan-Wilson, 69.
66 Ibid., 70.
responsibility of completing the artwork. Returning to *Picture Window Piece* and *Video Projection Outside Home*, the installer activates the invasion of the public’s gaze into the private space of the home by simply watching the television monitor.

In *Alteration to a Suburban House*, Graham eliminated all video equipment from his artistic production. Instead, he established a reliance on the participation of an audience to complete the piece and inserted sheets of transparent glass. By incorporating the industrial object, Graham successfully exercised the term art worker with the addition of and dependence on the installer or participant to create alternate spaces. The tract homes in *Alteration* are arranged by placing two homes next to each other, four walls opaque and in tact; the third home is positioned on an elevated plane, with the front of the house exposed to the other homes and community. In addition to the street that divides the homes, the hilltop itself adds another layer of separation between the two tract homes and the house with the glass and mirrors. This suggests a physical exertion to move up the hill to invade the space of the private home.

On the other hand, the visual cue of the pathways that lead to and from each home indicate a collision of the public and private, inviting outsiders into the private domestic space, a central characteristic of the tract home. According to Spanish architecture historian, Beatriz Colomina, the removal of the façade creates an additional window that covers the entire wall, creating an enlarged picture window. The suburban house repeatedly configured by Graham represents a post-war American house with picture window that promotes a display of domesticity. Colomina believes that the picture window turns against the outside spectator, so
that they are exposed to the domestic Americana figures hiding behind the curtain within the four walls of their home.\(^\text{67}\)

Graham was able to encapsulate the emotions of distrust towards the United States government during a post-Vietnam War era. He executed this by portraying the home as a fake commodity.\(^\text{68}\) Graham constructed a home—typically portrayed as a private space—that is invaded by the public eye through the artist’s hand using plexiglass and mirrors. Inclusion of the public with the once secluded artist shatters the privatization of the home, exposing the individuality and privacy of the home as commodity. The home can no longer be bought and sold due to its seriality. It is consequently given new meaning and function because of Graham’s reconstruction with plexiglass and mirrors.

Glass creates another dimension of seriality, reflecting the surrounding building developments that are comprised of the same building materials and architectural shapes. Colomina examines the double exposure established by Graham’s transparent glass by looking to the 860-880 Lake Shore Drive apartments in Chicago that Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (German-American architect, 1886-1969) and Herb Greenwald (American rabbinical scholar and real-estate developer, 1915-1959) built between the years 1948 and 1951 [Figure 22]. The finished product of this project was two twenty-five-story glass and steel buildings containing 275 glass apartments. Colomina explores how these structures create a collision between suburbia and the city. The glass walls cause the buildings to mirror each other while subjecting neighbors to the

\(^{67}\) Beatriz Colomina “Double Exposure: Alteration to a Suburban House (1978),” in Dan Graham, 82.

\(^{68}\) For the purposes of this thesis, a fake commodity is something that is typically bought and sold. However, the insertion of plexiglass and mirrors strips the home of its reality, altering its face value.
gaze of voyeurs. Looking at glass architecture through this lens allows an additional way to explore the duality of a post-war American suburbia.

Graham’s post-AWC production of sculpture drew influence from the glass houses of Mies van der Rohe. In the essay “Beyond Pavilions: Architecture as a Machine to See,” Colomina, explores the link between Mies van der Rohe’s architecture and Graham’s Alteration by considering the notion that for both artists, “architecture was used to undermine the gallery system, with its systematic separation of viewer and work.” Instead of using magazine pages to sever all associations with the gallery or museum space, Graham used the basis of architecture through the construction of a home with four walls to express his concern of institutionalism. His decision to insert a glass wall mimicked the glass buildings constructed by Mies van der Rohe that reflected the pedestrians walking by, while inhabitants of the building watched the public actions from the interior.

Suburban Home as Fake Commodity

There are varying contributing components to Graham’s architectural works influenced by his participation in the AWC. It becomes apparent that the artist relies on the geometric form of glass or mirrors not only to reconstruct the suburban home, but to reshape the home into a fake commodity. In the 1950s and onwards, the suburban tract home signified a space belonging to the family unit, documented in Graham’s photographic series, Homes for America. The completion of these housing complexes served as an answer for post-war nuclear families that

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70 Dan Graham, “Mark Francis in conversation with Dan Graham,” in Dan Graham, 14.
desired to escape New York City in exchange for the isolation of suburbia. However, during this
time, the make-up of the home revolved around the living room and television, a clashing of
private and public symbols. Alteration dismantles the initial commodity of the tract home – an
advertisement of retreat and solitude – with the insertion of the plexiglass and mirror. What was
once a four-walled, private space transformed into a three-walled environment exposed to the
public.

CHAPTER 3

The final chapter concentrates on the lasting influence that the ideologies of the AWC had on the construction of Graham’s mature body of works. I will argue that Graham’s adaptation of the role of an art worker influenced him when reimagining Minimalism’s artistic elitism to address socio-political issues during the time he was creating his pavilions. With an emphasis on viewer participation, he invites us to contemplate his work’s implied critique of consumerism, voyeurism, and surveillance. Graham’s assembled pavilions with two-way mirrors allow public and private codes to interchange, and as a result generate a new environment to include both subjects.\textsuperscript{73}

Realization of the Pavilion

Graham’s architectural works of the late 1970s to the present day, known as pavilions, continue Bryan-Wilson’s idea of audience participation and “construction-based process pieces” as applicable terms to define the art worker.\textsuperscript{74} Graham’s pavilions are human scale structures that characteristically consist of transparent, reflective mirrors and an occasional landscape element, such as foliage or grassy turf. He explains that the creation of his pavilions came from the desire to understand how Minimalist art objects – consisting of impassive, industrial parts – could be penetrated by an audience.\textsuperscript{75} Similar to the process of including plexiglass in Alteration to a Suburban House, Graham regularly incorporated a two-way mirror into his pavilions. He

\textsuperscript{73} Graham, \textit{Two-Way Mirror Power: Selected Writings by Dan Graham on His Art}, 57.
\textsuperscript{74} Bryan-Wilson, “Introduction,” in \textit{Art Workers}, 4.
\textsuperscript{75} Graham, “Mark Francis in conversation with Dan Graham,” in \textit{Dan Graham}, 19.
expounded that his pavilions are “always a kind of two-way mirror, which is both transparent and reflective simultaneously, and it changes as the sunlight changes…people on the inside and on the outside have views of each other superimposed, as each gazes at the other…”\textsuperscript{76} Although Graham supported the AWC movement in creating greater exhibiting opportunities for fellow artists, it seems that his pavilions convey a greater concern with creating a new space.\textsuperscript{77} For Graham, inserting the two-way mirror in an arena such as a museum eliminates its elitist, private space, and re-imagines it as a utopian social environment.

Considering the impact of the AWC on art objects and the reimagining of the artist as worker, industrial materials, such as glass and mirrors, emerge as objects that are essential to the viewer’s reception of Graham’s pavilions. For the artist, his own thoughts on glass as a commodity can be analyzed as fitting the ethos of the art worker. This is suggesting that public and private codes created by industrial materials interchanges the viewer with the commodity, creating a new entity that includes both subjects.\textsuperscript{78} Predating the production of pavilions, Graham’s \textit{Video Piece for Showcase Windows in Shopping Arcade} from 1976 [Figure 23] represents this process of taking commodities, such as a film monitors and two-way glass mirrors, and reimaging them to comment on the consumerism through a shopping arcade site. \textit{Video Piece} displays two parallel shop windows that have mirrors installed to replace their back walls. As people walk between the two shop windows, the mirrors reflect the commodities within them, along with the consumer. Regarding construction of glass windows in shop windows in relation to commodities, Graham explains that:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 21.
  \item \textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 20-21.
  \item \textsuperscript{78} Graham, \textit{Two-Way Mirror}, 57.
\end{itemize}
The glass used for the showcase displaying products, isolates the consumer from the product at the same time as it superimposes the mirror-reflection of his own image onto the goods displayed. This alienation, paradoxically, helps arouse the desire to possess the commodity. The goods are often displayed as part of a human mannequin—an idealized image of the consumer. Glass isolates (draws attention to) the product’s surface appeal, “glamour,” or superficial appearance alone (attributes of “workmanship” that link craftsmen to a specific product being lost), while denying access to what is tangible or immediately useful. It idealizes the product…Glass is helpful in socially alienating buyer from producer, thereby concealing the product’s connection to another’s real labor and allowing it to acquire exchange value over and above its use value.  

Graham’s mirror is no longer just a reflective, mass-produced object, but a comment on American consumerism in the 1970s. The people walking within the arcade are completely devoured by retail commodities repeated through reflections. A space of interchangeability is created as the private, desired item of consumption and the public consumer’s desire to purchase, merge. These separate entities can either unite through a purchase by the consumer, or remain isolated from each other through desire for said item. Graham explains this concept by referencing literal separation of public and private by means of the architectural structure of a home, saying that, “…By social convention, a window mediates between private (inside) and public (outside) space. The interior scene defines or is defined by the publicly accepted notion of privacy. An architectural division, “the house,” separates the “private” person from the “public” person and sanctions certain kinds of behavior for each…”

Just as the homes in *Homes for America* and *Alteration to a Suburban House* use the construction of the home to separate public from private, Graham’s pavilions use mirrors and glass to display the conjunction of these two realms.

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79 Ibid., 57.
80 Ibid., 53.
Two Adjacent Pavilions

Executed between the years 1978-1982, *Two Adjacent Pavilions* [Figure 9] bolsters Graham’s goal of eliminating the divide between public and private methods of viewing art objects. These two particular structures are identical in scale and shape—both free standing rectangular objects fitted with one accessible door that closes from the inside and standing just above eight-feet tall and six-feet wide—specifically designed to fit approximately five to ten people inside. Permanently installed near the front entrance of the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, Netherlands, this structure embodies Bryan-Wilson’s terms of audience participation and “construction-based process pieces” when considering the art worker during the Vietnam War Era.  

*Two Adjacent Pavilions* can be observed from the outside as well as physically entered by the viewer, simultaneously blurring the lines between public and private life. This juxtaposition between public and private life was seen through Graham’s exploration of tract housing in suburban America, displayed first in *Homes for America* in 1966, and followed by *Alteration to a Suburban House* in 1978. Now, *Two Adjacent Pavilions* contributes to this investigation through the artist’s choice of materials interacting with the audience and nature.

The interior and exterior of each structure is coated with two-way mirror reflective glass, interchanging between reflective and transparent surfaces depending on the brightness of the day. Graham formed two pavilions to represent the effects of a sunny-day, aided by either a transparent or opaque ceiling, which determines if light is able to penetrate the structure. The pavilion with the opaque ceiling does not allow light into the large-scale structure; therefore its interior space is dark and produces a reflective exterior surface. The audience cannot only see

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themselves as a singular, private entity, but are submerged within the public realm of an outdoor park. On the other hand, the interior of the adjacent pavilion with a transparent ceiling becomes illuminated on a sunny day. The bright light causes its walls to become reflective, while simultaneously producing a glass window effect from the exterior. The participating audience member who enters this pavilion can only see themselves in a privatized space, completely removed from the public park. However, the audience outside of the structure is able to see the contents of the pavilion, completely obliterating a space that was momentarily private, as the participating member inside the structure, as well as the surrounding park, are exposed. The third representation of Two Adjacent Pavilions comes about during times of the day that do not provide peak, direct sunlight into the ceiling of the structures, such as dawn, dusk, and overcast weather. During these times, the interior and exteriors are equally transparent and reflective. The merging of public and private life is epitomized when the audience can see themselves reflected in the exterior within nature, as well as participants who sees themselves privately within the interior but can also view the outside happenings.

The key component that situates Two Adjacent Pavilions within the parameters of Graham’s AWC interests during the Vietnam War Era is the notion that the audience determines the process of the art object. The issue of how to transition from the elitist, privatization of the institution, art object, and audience into a public, accessible setting evokes the concept of a utopia. Graham comments on this idea of his pavilions creating a metaphoric utopia by referencing Marc-Antoine Laugier’s, mid-18th century French urban planner and theorist, idea of the “rustic hut”, saying that:

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83 Ibid., 204.
84 Ibid., 204.
Typologically, the work [reception of the pavilion by its audience] belongs to the park/garden’s pleasure pavilion, which has been an antidote to the alienating qualities of the city as well as a utopian metaphor for a more pleasurable city in the future. These pavilions are used for people at restful play—a fun-house for children and a romantic retreat for adults. They are both emblematic of the power of the corporate city and help to dissolve the city’s alienation effects. They also relate to the 18th-century notion of the Arcadian “rustic hut.” This type begins after the Enlightenment with the notion of the “elemental rustic hut” first proposed by Marc-Antoine Laugier…The “rustic hut” was supposed to be a reduction to man’s and architecture’s original nature, to its “own self-sufficiency,” when there was no oppression of man by man: Architecture and Man were closest to “Nature.”

An architectural structure such as *Two Adjacent Pavilion* spawns an environment that intertwines nature with the participator, specifically by means of the glass and two-way mirror. What this does is champion a utopian space welcoming any viewer to enter, juxtaposing the exclusionary white cube that Graham set out to abolish.

**Octagon for Münster**

*Octagon for Münster* [Figure 10], a critical pavilion executed by Graham in 1987 re-imagined the object and relies on its installer to coalesce the private and public through the glass construction of pavilions and audience participation. A contributing factor that facilitates the realization of this pavilion is its specific site of installation—a park and garden. In the essay “Garden as Theater as Museum,” Graham guides the reader through the history and importance which gardens have served for centuries. Gardens represented an outdoor theater providing allegorical, natural, and political lessons, manifesting the utopian trope linked to his pavilions. For example, the Italian Renaissance garden “symbolized the Edenic, pre-Fall of Christian man and of Arcadian (Roman) time that was associated with earthly paradise, a mythical past, or a

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future utopian time of eternal pleasure and natural harmony…The garden transported him [man] to another world…”

Graham explains that 18\textsuperscript{th} century English gardens were full of “grass lanes that terminated in buildings and obelisks, emphasizing the unresolved relationship between urban and rural.” Considering Graham’s statement regarding the “unresolved relationship between urban and rural,” this can be interpreted as a reflection of the discontent of Americans of the Vietnam War Era who retreated from city to suburbia. Preluding the construction of Graham’s pavilions, this concept was represented through the use of plexiglass and mirrors inserted into the tract home in order to create a utopian space that both blurred public and private lives.

Octagon for Münster was installed for the “Skulptur Projekte Münster” exhibition in Münster, Germany in 1987, a presentation of artworks that focus on the urban environment through sculptural practice and public installation spaces. This pavilion is situated in a park full of lush vegetation and trees surrounding an 18\textsuperscript{th} century palace of the ruling prince of Münster. In “Garden as Theater as Museum,” Graham explains that at the same time the prince of Münster inhabited the palace located within the garden, the concept of 18\textsuperscript{th} century English garden was being developed as an Arcadian landscape determined by nostalgic elements. Eighteenth-century garden pavilions were often designed to replicate and honor earlier ancient structures in cities such as China, Morocco, India and Turkey, intended to resemble Arcadian ruins.

Comparatively, a public park, such as the one being discussed, would have been full of garden pavilions. Also referred to as octagonal kiosks, pavilions reflect the nostalgia of a

\textsuperscript{86} Dan Graham, “Garden as Theater as Museum,” in \textit{Theatergarden Bestiarium: The Garden as Theater as Museum (Institute of Contemporary Art, Ps1 Museum)} (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1990), 87.
\textsuperscript{87} Graham, \textit{Theatergarden Bestiarium: The Garden as Theater as Museum}, 89.
\textsuperscript{88} Nalina Moses, “Nalina Moses on the Folly,” \textit{Artwrit} Vol. 2 (March 2010).
leisurely lifestyle led by people escaping urban living, yearning for a retreat that satisfies this desire. During the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, Baron Haussmann renovated the street plan of Paris to alleviate the overcrowded, industrial city with spacious boulevards and greenery.\textsuperscript{89} The result evoked a utopian, garden-city settlement that served as a model for escapism through nostalgic utopias that would emerge in post-war times. In order to grasp the scope of the pavilion as a vehicle of escapism and utopian ideals during a post-war era, Graham refers to suburban settlements after the First and Second World Wars. He explains that these settlements were:

…Located on the edge of a city’s boundary, adjacent to and resembling those first picturesque park cemeteries whose design had evolved from the elegiac Elysian Fields of the English garden’s monuments to the dead. Like cemeteries, suburbia’s “garden” evoked a nostalgic sense of perpetual peace in its well-manicured shrubs and green lawns. Accommodating working-class families in their own suburban homes helped to stabilize and defuse the revolutionary potential of the inner-city working class. With the growth of a more stable, lower-middle class, small nuclear family suburbs helped create a new consumer society based on home consumption.\textsuperscript{90}

Graham’s interest in the garden as a utopia evoked by nostalgia and yearning for ‘the other’ directly influenced the pavilions he created in response to the AWC. In conjunction with the AWC mission that eliminates the divide between art objects, artist and audience, the gardens and parks of \textit{Münster} paired with the pavilion rely on the audience as participant to activate the art object.

\textit{Octagon for Münster} is a human-scale, architectural sculpture composed of eight two-way mirror side panels beneath a sloped wooden roof and steel frame. There is a wooden pole in its center that connects the ground to the roof, and one of the side panels is a sliding door which grants its viewers access to the inside of the structure. This means that this site would be an arena

\textsuperscript{89} Chosen by Napoleon III in the mid to late 19\textsuperscript{th} century to renovate the public works program in Paris, constructing large boulevards and promoting gardens and parks.

\textsuperscript{90} Graham, \textit{Theatergarden Bestiarium: The Garden as Theater as Museum}, 93-94.
for public, leisure activity, juxtaposed with the private area of the Prince of Münster’s buildings. Again, Graham is conjuring feelings of nostalgia through the pavilion’s installation within the German park. In the essay “Dan Graham and the Critique of Artistic Autonomy,” Thierry de Duve (Belgian Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art Theory, b. 1944) supports the evocation of pavilion through nostalgic utopia that blurs the public and private. De Duve states that, “Their [the pavilions] location in a park and their title—Pavilions—places them in the ambiguous cultural space of an urbanized nature reserved for leisure activities and bodily pleasures, strolls or pastoral love-affairs.”

It is clear that the architecture and installation site of Octagon for Münster promotes an environment where the past and present, private and public, merge and become interchangeable—this can only be accomplished with the participation of the viewer. He or she is fully submerged within these two realms, situated in the public octagonal pavilion, while simultaneously being reflected into the private space of the royalty beyond the park. Furthermore, the inclusion of a wooden pole within the pavilion seems to create another dimension of duality. This can be seen by acknowledging that wood is a natural humble material found in a public environment, however it is installed in the private space of the octagon. The space with the two-way mirrors could be expanded to be both private and public when the viewer accesses the wooden pole in his or her private space.

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The final pavilion that exemplifies the effect of the AWC had on Graham’s artistic production is seen in *Two-Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube*, realized in 1986. This model of this work consists of a large-scale glass structure, much like the pavilions associated with Graham’s mature body of work. A square is erected from six, steel framed, two-way mirrored glass panels on each side with wooden planks laid down as the floor. In the center of the cube is a cylinder made of a two-way mirror as well. Spectators can gain access to both the cylinder and the exterior cube by sliding doors. When the spectator enters the cylindrical structure, their reflection will appear distorted, depending on the position of the sun or if the day is overcast. The audience is carrying out the laborious task of manipulating the two-way mirror.

In 1991, this model was reborn as the pavilion entitled: *Two-Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube and a Video Salon: Rooftop Urban Park Project* [Figure 11]. Installed in 1991 on the roof of Dia Chelsea’s 548 West 22nd Street New York gallery space, Graham constructed a functional, small-scale urban park. Accessible to the public, it was designed in collaboration with architects Mojdeh Baratloo and Clifton Balch. Again, Graham utilizes industrial, sterile objects such as glass and steel under the guise of an art worker in order to transform sculpture into a socio-political critique of the institution. This is accomplished through the participation of the audience combined with two-way glass mirrors. It is notable to point out that Dia is an exhibition site that is considered to be a perfect space to install large scale works that require audience participation – high white walls, optimal lighting, ideal for single viewings. Fitting with his disdain for exhibiting within an institution, Graham elucidated that: “My work necessitates a large public

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audience aware of each other’s, as well as their own, gazes at the art works under continually altering outdoor solar and sky conditions.”  

Similar to *Octagon*, this pavilion relies on the daily weather to control the experience of the glass – adopting characteristics that are transparent, reflective, and obscure.

Graham’s pavilion surpasses the singular function of being an art object – he reimagines the work into an outdoor, rooftop park accompanied by a video and coffee lounge. Influence is drawn from 1980s corporate office buildings that reflect pedestrians walking by on the street, or the passing clouds in the sky. The workers inside the building can see the people passing by, however this is not reciprocated from the outside, establishing a distinction between public and private space. During Graham’s speech at the AWC open hearing in 1969, he calls for using artistic production to combat institutionalism and privatization between artists, their audience, and the exhibiting space. It is no longer necessary for Graham to rely on the artificial lighting of an office building, or the limited entry of natural light from windows. By bringing the pavilion outside, he eliminates reliance on the private, manipulated presentation.

Graham eliminates finite parameters of what it means to have a public and private space by installing a public park on the roof of a white cube institution, surrounded by New York City. What does a public park symbolize? Leisure, youthfulness, and co-existence. The structure seems to float above the rooftop space with no visible pedestals, leaving only a small set of stairs as the point of entry and exit. This artistic choice portrays the appearance of the rooftop park as an environment that has literally been removed from the ground, where a park would stereotypically be, and installing it in an unconventional, utopian space closer to the sky, such as

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95 Bryan-Wilson, *Art Workers*, 16.
an empty rooftop. Once the spectator enters the cylinder, their reflection inserts them into the skyline of the city, while they simultaneously gaze back at it, merging together.
CONCLUSION

Little is discussed of Dan Graham as an art worker who participated in the Art Workers’ Coalition. An “art worker” is defined as a person who produces work that distances itself from traditional acts of making, reimagines the art object, and creates a new identity and artistic practice for the artist. Graham and other Minimal and Conceptual artists found a distinct, powerful voice that declared that the artist was indeed a worker under the AWC. Graham’s role as an art worker and concrete connection to the AWC is found in the Museum of Modern Art’s archive of their open hearing in 1969. This document recorded Graham’s distinct voice that called for “art to go public” and be relinquished from the control of the elitist art institution. His artistic oeuvre that included photography and slide projection, video and performance, and sculptural pavilions had yet to be investigated as being shaped by this link. However, when I dissected his artistic methodology, there was a clear association between each body of Graham’s work and the socio-political attributes of an art worker.

From the start of Graham’s career in the art world, both as gallery owner and artist, his art had been influenced by socio-political circumstances within the United States. After World War II, American families were relocating to private suburbia, magnified even further by the role of the television within the home. Widespread anti-war art movements (such as the APC and creation of the Peace Tower) were occurring around the country, speaking out against the United States involvement in the Vietnam War. This study has shown that Graham established himself...

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96 Bryan-Wilson, Art Workers, 1-2.
97 Graham, An open public hearing on the subject: What should be the program of the art workers regarding museum reform, and to establish the program of an open Art Workers Coalition, 93.
as a multi-disciplined artist who exercised a Conceptual language when constructing Minimal forms to convey these current events.

After Graham closed the John Daniels Gallery in New York, he created the photographic series, *Homes for America*. It has become apparent this was the moment he aligned himself with the foundation of the AWC, even though it had yet to be formed. Graham’s gallery advertised minimal exhibiting requirements – any artist, regardless of race or gender, could show their artwork. Loosening the restrictions of who could exhibit their work at major institutions became a paramount outcry of the AWC. In conjunction with the founding members of the AWC exhibiting at his gallery, Graham’s artistic production historically portrays him to be an art worker. *Homes for America* was Graham’s way of exhibiting his photographs without relying on the white cube to introduce his work to an audience. Rather, Graham relocated to New Jersey to physically and relentlessly document the suburbs. Not only does he fulfill the laborious characteristic of the art worker who physically controls the production of their artwork, he creates a new exhibiting space. The magazine becomes the way in which Graham opposes the restrictive art institution.

In the 1950s and 1960s, television became a symbol of the suburban, family unit. During these years, working-class families worked in urban cities but lived in rural towns. The TV set became a commodity that traveled with the family, while simultaneously confining them to their household, secluded from the public. After World War II and during the Vietnam War, the suburban home, with the magnetism of the television set, established clear-cut lines between public and private spaces. *Alteration to a Suburban House* depicted this distinction through an

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art worker lens – Graham reimagined the home altering its construction. Graham’s artistic approach confronted institutionalism while simultaneously bolstering the role of the art worker. By exposing the interior of the home, a place where families gathered around the TV set, he transformed the status of the suburban, tract home that represented privatization into a public space.

The final connection I found between the AWC and Graham’s artistic production was in his pavilions. Graham’s adaptation of the role of an art worker indeed impacted him when reimagining Minimalism’s artistic elitism in order to address socio-political issues during the time he was creating his pavilions. Graham’s assembled pavilions with two-way mirrors allowed public and private codes to interchange, and as a result generate a new environment to include both subjects.\(^9\) Graham relied on the audience to complete the pavilion. These structures created a relationship between artwork, artist, and audience – dismantling any barriers such as those established by an art institution.

While Graham has floated between being considered a Minimal and Conceptual artist, I firmly believe that with the influence of the AWC, his artwork embodied both of these artistic expressions. When discussing the influences on his most recent work in New York, *Hedge Two-Way Mirror* (2014) at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Graham explains that he was exposed to not only Minimalist artist Morris, but his wife, Conceptual artist Simone Forti (Italian, b. 1935):

> Well, you know Morris was married to Simone Forti, and he took all that from her… I think dance—not as something being watched, but the idea of being the spectators, experiencing their bodies and experiencing other people’s bodies in a relaxed situation—is very much part of my work too. I never saw Simone’s work, but I took that cue from Serra.\(^10\)


Graham continues to create his work in this way, deeply rooted from his time in New York in 1965 leading up to the AWC. It is my hope that this study pushes for the investigation of other secondary artists to be investigated in a socio-political context, not to be overshadowed by the prominent figures in the same artistic movement.


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–An open public hearing on the subject: What should be the program of the art workers regarding museum reform, and to establish the program of an open Art Workers Coalition. Museum of Modern Art: e.3 Political Art Documentation & Distribution Archive, Art Workers Coalition folder, 1969.


ILLUSTRATIONS


Fig. 2. Donald Judd, *Untitled*, 1965, stainless steel, transparent fluorescent red plexiglass, wires, turnbuckles, 20 x 48 x 34 inches, private collection.
Fig. 3. Sol LeWitt, *Double Floor Structure*, 1964, installation view, painted wood, destroyed.

Fig. 4. Vassilakis Takis, *Tele-Sculpture*, 1960, electromagnet, cork and wood with magnets, steel wire, 10 5/8 inches high, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Fig. 5. Artists and Writers Protest, “End Your Silence” advertisement, printed in the *New York Times*, April 18 and June 27, 1965.

Fig. 6. Susan Sontag at the Peace Tower installation in Los Angeles, February 26, 1966, the Getty Research Institute, Charles Brittin papers, 2005.M.11.
Fig. 7. Dan Graham, *Homes for America*, *Arts Magazine*, 1966-67, print, 74 x 93 cm/29 x 37 inches, Lisson Gallery, New York.

Fig. 8. Dan Graham, *Alteration to a Suburban House*, 1978, wood, felt, plexiglass, overall 11 x 43 x 48 inches, Walker Art Center.

Fig. 10. Dan Graham, *Octagon for Münster*, 1987, two-way mirror, wood, and steel, 94 ½ x 143 ¼ inches (240 x 365 cm), Collection Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster, provenance unknown.
Fig. 11. Dan Graham, *Rooftop Urban Park Project/Two Way Mirror Cylinder*, 1981/1991, dimensions unknown, Dia Center for the Arts, New York.

Fig. 12. Sol LeWitt, *Floor/Wall Structure (Telephone Booth)*, 1964, painted wood, 96 x 32 x 42 inches (243.9 x 81.3 x 106.7 cm), Collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, Gift of Virginia Dwan.

Fig. 14. Dan Graham, *Row of New Tract Houses, Bayonne, NJ, Homes for America* (slide projection), 1966, dimensions variable according to installation, provenance unknown.
Fig. 15. Dan Graham, *Back of New Housing Project, Jersey City, NJ, Homes for America* (slide projection), 1966, dimensions variable according to installation, provenance unknown.

Fig. 16. Sol LeWitt, *Serial Project, I (ABCD)*, 1966, baked enamel on steel units over baked enamel on aluminum, 20 x 163 x 163 inches (50.8 x 398.9 x 398.9 cm), Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Agnes Gund and purchase (by exchange).


Fig. 20. Dan Graham, ‘Picture Window’ Piece, 1974, two video cameras and monitors placed across from one another on either side of picture window in family home, dimensions variable according to installation.
Fig. 21. Dan Graham, *Video Projection Outside Home*, 1978, architectural model: edition of 3, materials and dimensions may vary over edition, painted wood and plastic, 9 x 30 ½ x 20 inches (22.9 x 77 x 50.8 cm), Courtesy of Galerie Micheline Szwajcer.

Fig. 22. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 860-880 Lake Shore Apartments, Chicago, 1949-51, glass and steel, © Hagen Stier.
Fig. 23. Dan Graham, *Video Piece for Showcase Windows in Shopping Arcade*, 1976, two monitors, two cameras, two mirrors, time delay device, installed in two facing and parallel shop windows in a modern shopping arcade, dimensions variable according to installation.