digital age. You can use anything to make a film. In the days of silent film, I never could aptly appreciate for running because I never knew what my film was going to be about or how it was to advance.

SP: Outside the market what mattered was the work. It was a cultural event. It had a kind of expertise about it. Particularly it was the time and race. If film all things change. [laughter]. Coming out of emphasis on feminism, there was a focus on different subjectivities that had not had equal representation in art history - film history. So, the cultural politics were different. It was a part of the art of film. A politics of identity was challenging historical privileged voices, and feminism was a huge part of this.

There was an insistence to learn new voices and new ways of seeing, of talking about what had been considered important, in new ways and with new languages. It was exciting because it was led by artists, not by critics or editors. It didn’t mean there wasn’t conflict and negotiating but there was a sense that the artists were leading something. We could access films, practices and ideas coming from different Co-op that weren’t to a degree shared through institutions. It felt so important now that we can’t find that space outside of the market.

MPG: Do you not regard the Co-op as being an institution? Those films were filtered through the institution of the Co-op.

ASS: I think that because we were inside that culture, so we didn’t see it as present then as being an institution but at the time we didn’t experience it as being an institution all of it. It was constantly changing.

SP: Do you regard the Co-op as a space that you outside the market?

ASS: Definitely. We created our own market. There were jobs within the organization such as running the woodstock cinema, organizing distribution. The Art Council funded the films Co-op and we also generated a certain amount of money through the distribution of films, screening and equipment hire. It was a self-sustaining thing that existed outside of the mainstream market.

The Co-op came out of all those different revolutions involving black film makers, people from India, queer cinema, feminism. And, as I said, they’re not cited they all disappear. So we keep going back to the same white male idea of structure, of films. When people talk about the past, they are talking about the past in relation to mainstreaming their own career.

SP: Are you saying that you talk about the past in order to advance your career? So is that the case with no now, talking about it?

ASS: No. I’m not talking about how it’s cited by people who necessarily need them. They’re picking up on the Nicky Haselton and Gay Metzker, but they’ve forgotten that there were other people who were involved and that it changed our time. My path through the films Co-op making film festival led to other people becoming involved. And I think it was important and for me too. It was a turning point for all of the people whose initial route was not necessarily motivated by a feminist film per se.

MPG: The historical work that has been done around the Co-op up until now coordinates mostly on its foundation, such as the research and interviews that were conducted around Show Show Show. Similar research has yet to be done in relation to what came afterwards. In 2011, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Co-op at LUX and it is important for this celebration to be as inclusive and broad as possible, looking at the 50 years of its history, and not just structural/canonical between 1966 and 1970.

SP: Engaging with film as a big part of feminist theory. Film is the carrier of ideology. Experimental film makers who were thinking through critical feminist debates were at the forefront of feminist thinking. Yet, this work wasn’t picked up very much in experimental film, critical writing, nor in feminist critical writing. Experimental film was to invent marginalised practices and most of the writing on the history of avant-garde film has focused on questions of form and style and process from perspectives that ignore the large proportion of men relative to women. I do have the argument that the press circulation for experimental film was so low that if feminist film writers had spent the same researching and writing about obscure, unknown film makers it would have been career suicide. So this important work was written out of history at least in terms of the wider circulation of feminist critical film study. More recently, the feminist work of the 1970s of the artists who began their careers in this period, to an extent, have been histrionically but not the works and output.

ND: Maybe this was obvious for film academics, but there was critical writing on experimental film. Throughout the 1970s, Ovidine covered this a wealth of work. It was profoundly artists writing about other artists and their films. As Jane (Matthews) said, the write about my films Bachelor Babies and there are recent anti-feminist as what is now called anti-feminist moving image.

MPG: Can we talk about camera obscura and feminism? How do you think women move with contemporary feminism discourse? [Silence followed by collective laughter.]

SP: Feminism is coming back on the agenda, which I think is a good thing.

RN: Feminism for someone like me who rarely reads a completely different than the one person in the film or to women who are dealing with anger and politics.

ND: The subject is strange that we described earlier that a certain identity - the registry in those films of the feminine subject, has disappeared. Contemporary art narratizes the subject, and of production in post-modern, (not) knowing, including strategies to drown sound of heard stories through drawing or deliberate noise, while in themselves contain this knowing subject. Much contemporary art is concerned with the game of the sentience of art itself as a language and commodity cut off from social issues or conditions. For me, this is not a bad thing if it is essentially a discourse of alienation. Our work that this period is unique to the global art explosion and the pressures of mass consumption, branding, social media and pornography.

Womenhood as a space for reflection in moving image or art as a productive space of inquiry or speculation doesn’t exist in the same way as it did. The dominant masculine of femininity is the one as a pure, puffy-skinned pink, which is pertinent in advertising and pornography. A film Jean Bucher’s Maquillage accepts this time, it is a masquerade of femininity rather than womanizing. The woman in Ovidine’s Bachelor Babies is real but wondrously the housewife in Jeanne Szarkowska’s (1970) has a young sexy to take care of and the film is entirely concerned with them. That space of the woman is not being explored by the same extent today. The art world encourages a highly individual, internalized kind of subject. It is the modern fat woman of being neutral, which is the very space that we were talking about earlier, which feminism helped to identify and to resist.

SP: The problem as Naomi Klein talks about in her No Logo (1999) is that identities have been fragmented, commodified. It is a woman film-maker, you make work about a particular subject, it is a particular way, and another if you are a black film maker. The experimental continues from these categories.

MPG: I would be interested to hear some thoughts on what experimental film now, and how vision shapes ourselves as women engaged with experimental films.

SP: In the same, only a minority of artists were working in moving image. Since then, technology has taken a gigantic leap. Moving image is everywhere and can be produced so easily. Suddenly, our relationship to photography has changed, when the difference between still and moving is just one option on the menu bar. Moving
Digital age. You can use anything to make a film. In the days of sulphur, I never could afford any equipment for making because I never knew when my film was going to be about or when it is advanced.

SP: Outside the market what mattered was the work. It was a cultural event. It had a kind of impenetrable sense about it. Particularly in the '50s and '60s, it felt as if things might change [laughter]. Coming out of a context of feminism, there was a sense on different substrata that had not had equal representation in the art history-in film history. So the cultural politics of difference were permeated at least in art history and in film-making. A politics of identity was challenging different privileged voices, and feminism was a huge part of this.

There was an antithesis to learning new voices and new ways of seeing, of talking about what hadn't been considered important, in new ways and with new languages. It was exciting because it was led by artists, not by curators or dealers. It didn't mean there wasn't conflict and irritation but there was a sense that the artists were leading something. We could access films, practices and ideas coming from different Co-op that weren't a degree or through institutions. It was so important now that we can't think of space outside of the market.

MPG: Do you not regard the Co-op as being an institution? Those films were also filtered through the institution of the Co-op.

AS: I think that because we were inside that culture, so we didn't see it— it's present now as an institution but at the time we didn't experience it as being an institution all. It was constantly changing.

SP: Do you use the Co-op as a space that you outside the market?

AS: Definitely. We created our own market. There were jobs within the organisation such as running the workshop, cinema, organizing distributions. The Arts Council funded the films Co-op and we also generated a certain amount of money through the distribution of films, screenings and equipment hire. It was a self-prettifying thing that existed outside of the mainstream market.

The Co-op came out of all those different revolutions involving Black film makers, people from India, queer cinema, feminism, and, as I said, they're not cited that all disappear. So we keep going back to the visual mode of structural films. When people talk about the past, they're talking about the past in relation to manoeuvring their own careers.

SP: Are you saying that you talk about the past in order to advance your career? Is it the case with a new idea, talking about it?

AS: No. I'm talking about how it's cited by people who weren't necessarily there. They're picking up on the Nicky Hartley and Gay Metcalf, but they've forgotten that there were other people who were involved and that it changed our time. My path through the film Co-op making festival letter led to other people becoming involved. Gary Grunin introduced me for my Ph.D. at LSE, Paul Saffy and Khalil Halib and Alida Deева became involved. This is not mentioned in the narratives of the film Co-op. It's a training ground for all sorts of people whose initial route was not necessarily motivated by experimental film per se.

MPG: The historiographical work that has been done around the Co-op up until now concentrates mostly on its foundation, such as the research and interviews that were conducted around 'Shoot Shoot Shave'! Similar research has yet to be done in relation to what came afterward. I think we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Co-op at LUX and it is important for this celebration to be as inclusive and broad as possible, looking at the 50 years of history, and not just structural/materialism between 1966 and 1967.

SP: Engagement with film is a big part of feminist theory. Film is the carrier of ideology. Experimental film makers who were thinking through critical feminist debates were at the forefront of feminist thinking. Yet, this work wasn't picked up very much in experimental film. Critical writing, not in feminist critical writing. Experimental films try to enter a marginalised practice and most of the writing on the history of avant-garde film has focused on questions of language and form and processes from perspectives that figure a large proportion of men relative to women. I don't like the argument that the press circulation for experimental film was so low that if feminist films writers had spent their time researching and writing about obscure, unknown films it would have been career suicide. So this important work was written out of history at least in terms of the wider circulation of feminist critical film study. More recently, the feminist work of the 70s and 80s artists who began their careers in this period, so to extent, here been historiographically but not the 70s and 80s.

ND: Maybe this area was obvious for film academics, but there was critical writing on experimental film. Throughout the 1970s, Odeon covered this amount of work. It was predominantly artist writing about other artists and their films. As Joan (Mathers) said, the write about my film Satire Maze and there were more ambitious on what is now called feminist moving image.

MPG: Can we talk about current debates around feminism? How do your work compare— women with contemporary feminist discourse? (Silence followed by collective laughter)

SP: Feminism is coming back on the agenda, which I think is a good thing.

RN: Feminism for someone like me who mostly only is completely different, it is the women who are in their teens or 20s, who are dealing with rape culture and pay everywhere.

ND: The subject is strange that we discussed earlier and a certain anxiety, which is the register in these films of the feminist subject, has disappeared. Contemporary art narratizes the subject of production as post-modern, ironic and knowing, including strategies of deconstruction of (old) modes through dismantling or deliberate reversal, which in themselves confirm this knowing subject. Much contemporary art is concerned with the game of the subversion of art itself as a language and commodity, cut off from social issues or concerns. For me, this is a bad thing because it is essentially a discourse of alienation. Our work of this period is a priori to the current art explosion and the pressures of consumerism, branding, social media and pornography.

Womankind as a space for reflection in moving image or art as a productive space of inquiry or speculation doesn't exist in the same way as it did. The dominant language of femininity is the woman as a pre-political body, which is present in advertising and pornography. An Hi-Ha Evan Ribeiro's Manmade (except this time, it is a Quixote of desire rather than womanism). The woman in Dreena Biddle's Song (1970) was safe but wondrously the housewife in Joanne Zwirn's (2011) has a young son to take care of and the film is subtly concerned with them. The space of the woman is not being explored! In the same era today. The art world encourages a highly individualistic, entitled kind of subject. It is the modernist fantasy of being neutral, which is the space that we were talking about earlier, which feminisms helped us (used to) identify and to mobilize.

AS: The problem in Nanovs (2006) talks about in No Logo (2010) that identifies how we become embedded, commercialized, if you will. A woman film-maker makes a film work, about a particular subject, it is a particular way, and another if you see a Black film maker. The experimental continues defy these categories.

SP: It would be interesting to have some thoughts on what is experimental film now and how, in your positions, yourselves as women engaged with experimental film.

RN: In the 80s, only a minority of artists were working in moving image. Since then, technology has taken a gigantic leap. Moving images are everywhere and can be produced so easily. Similarly, our relationship with pornography has changed, where the difference between static and moving is just an option on the menu bar. Moving images are everywhere and can be produced so easily. Similarly, our relationship with pornography has changed, where the difference between static and moving is just an option on the menu bar.