

## Looking for Lyotard, Beyond the Genre of the Feminist Manifestos

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### *Abstract*

In a 2009 article that surveyed three decades of writing about manifesto, the author concluded that the genre of manifesto has become so stretched as to have no conventions any more, but then offered quite a few. Drawing from these I explore the notion of manifestos that go beyond the expected articulation of beliefs and demands to instead *assert revolutionary knowledge as an act of discovery by rupturing and reproducing history*. I explore the manifestos of a relatively unknown, outside of art history at least, group of Los Angeles based feminist artists who took their inspiration, strategy and motivation from the women's liberation movement and far better known group, the Chicago Women's Liberation Union. I reading various documents from these groups with Lyotard, rather than following Habermas. I highlight the ways that feminisms rest on both meta-narrative and a suspicion of such narratives, which creates a constant ambiguity and tension in movement manifestos. Ultimately, I conclude that the genre-busting conventions of Lyotardian manifestos has led to their exclusion in histories of the women's movement, which tend instead to privilege those in the Habermasian tradition.

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