# American Dream, American Nightmare

Capitalist Realism: Images of Ideology

# TENSION

“Il mattino ha l’oro in bocca”



Annie Leibovitz - Donald and Melania Trump (Vogue, 2006)

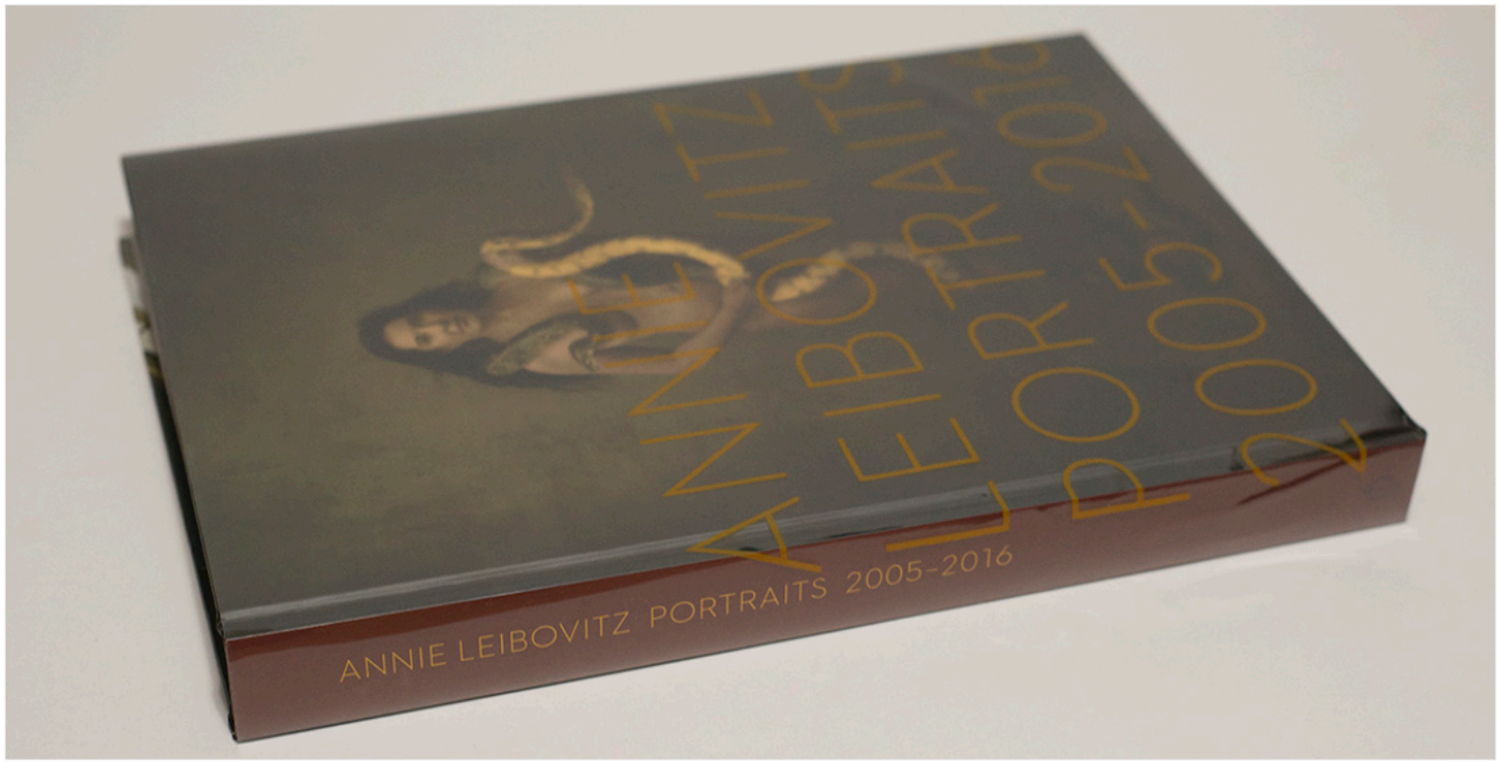
“The Chances of factual truth surviving the onslaught of power are very slim indeed …. Facts and events are infinitely more fragile things than axioms, discoveries, theories - even the most widely speculative ones - produced by the human mind”.

Hannah Arendt, 1967

Key Thinkers:
Antonio Gramsci
Mark Fisher
The Frankfurt School
Guy Debord

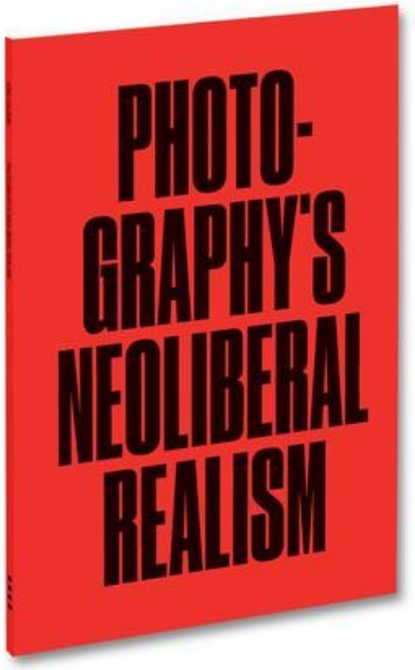
Key Words:
Capitalism and Culture
Hegemony
Capitalist Realism
Detournment
Recuperation
Image and ideology

# Annie Leibovitz's Capitalist Realism




Jorg Colberg's review of Annie Leibovitz Portraits 2006 - 2016

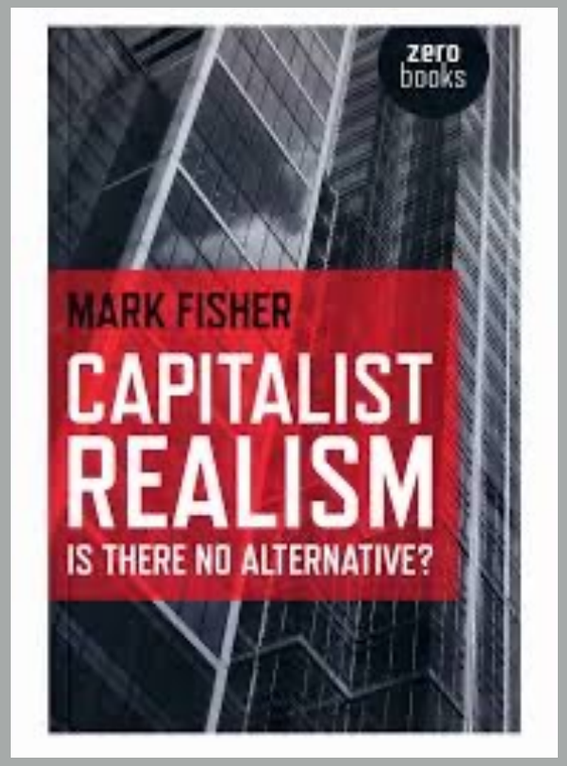
Jorg Colberg's Book, 2020
(Published by Mack)



THERE
IS
NO
ALTERNATIVE

“Watching *Children of Men,* we are inevitably reminded of the phrase attributed to Fredric Jameson and Slavoj Žižek, that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than it is to imagine the end of capitalism. That slogan captures precisely what I mean by 'capitalist realism': the widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but also that it is now impossible even to *imagine* a coherent alternative to it.”

Mark Fisher, 2009



“The entire life of societies in which modern conditions of production prevail, announces itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles.”

Guy Debord - *The Society of the Spectacle*

“The entire life of societies in which modern conditions of production prevail, announces itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles.”

Guy Debord - *The Society of the Spectacle,* (1967)

“The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as ‘an immense accumulation of commodities’…”

Karl Marx - *Das Kapital* (1867)




Annie Leibovitz



Annie Leibovitz

# Mark Zuckerberg





Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)

Cultural

Hegemony

# Predominance Obtained by Consent

# Honda Workers in Swindon






“Il mattino ha l’oro in bocca”

Crispin Odey

“The morning has gold in its mouth”







*Breaking Point* poster - Leave EU, 2016



# Socialist Realism

# “Market Stalinism”

Mark Fisher







Socialist Realism

The 1934 Soviet Congress outlined these as the prescribed elements of Socialist realism. The Principles are thought to have been sanctioned directly by Josef Stalin himself:

1. Proletarian: art relevant to the workers and understandable to them.

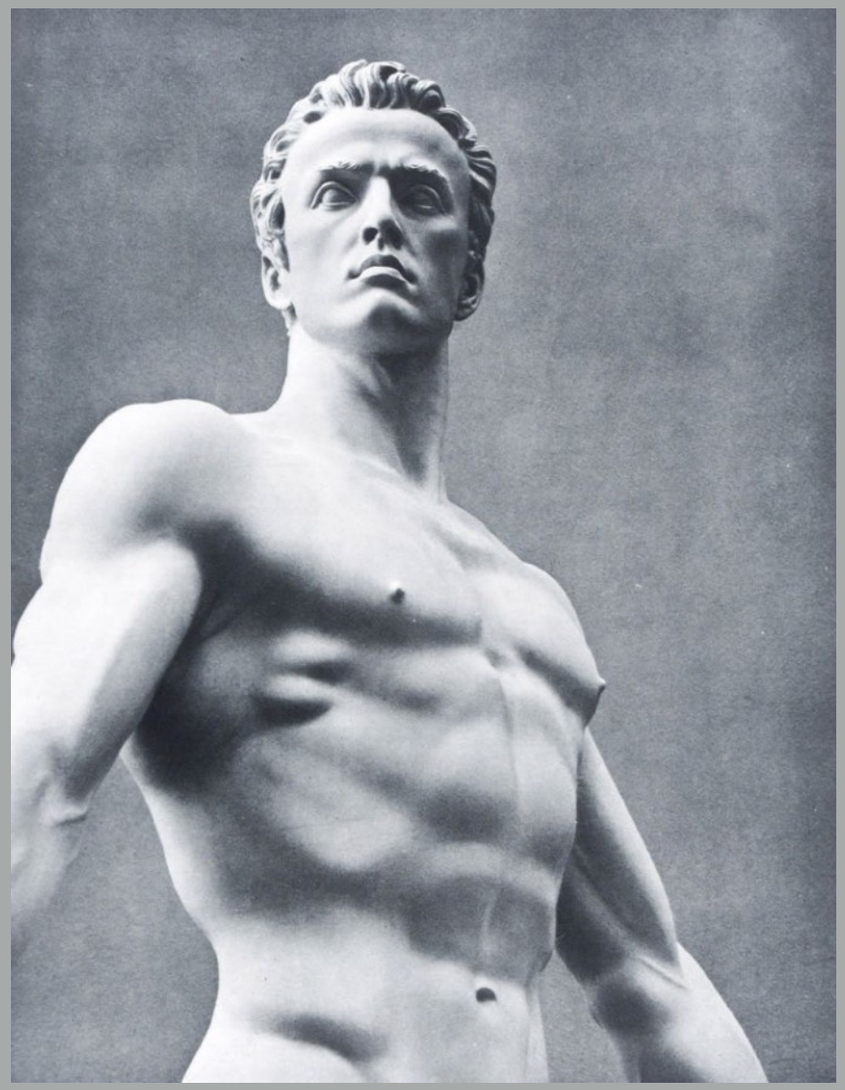
2. Typical: scenes of everyday life of the people.

3. Realistic: in the representational sense.

4. Partisan: supportive of the aims of the State and the Party.



Paul Duerinckx - Memento Park, Budapest









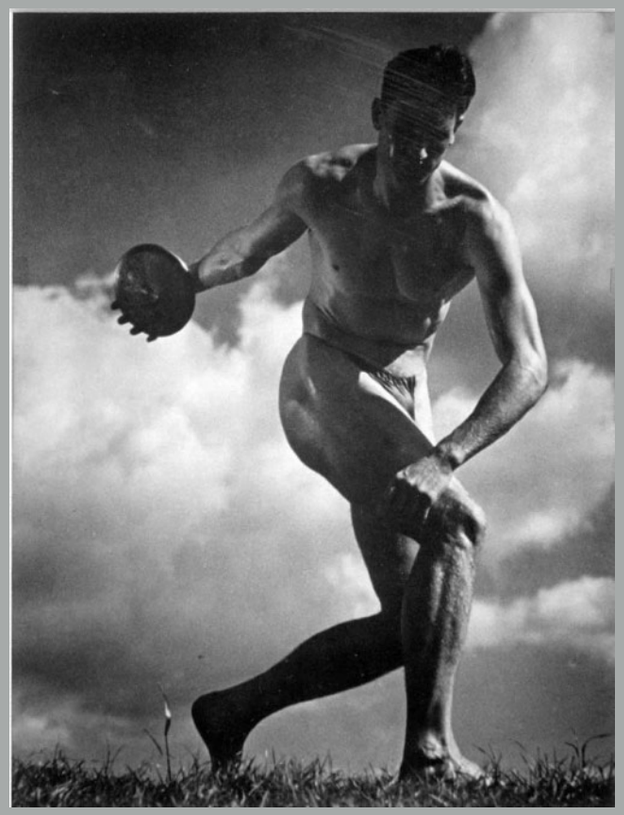
Arno Breker



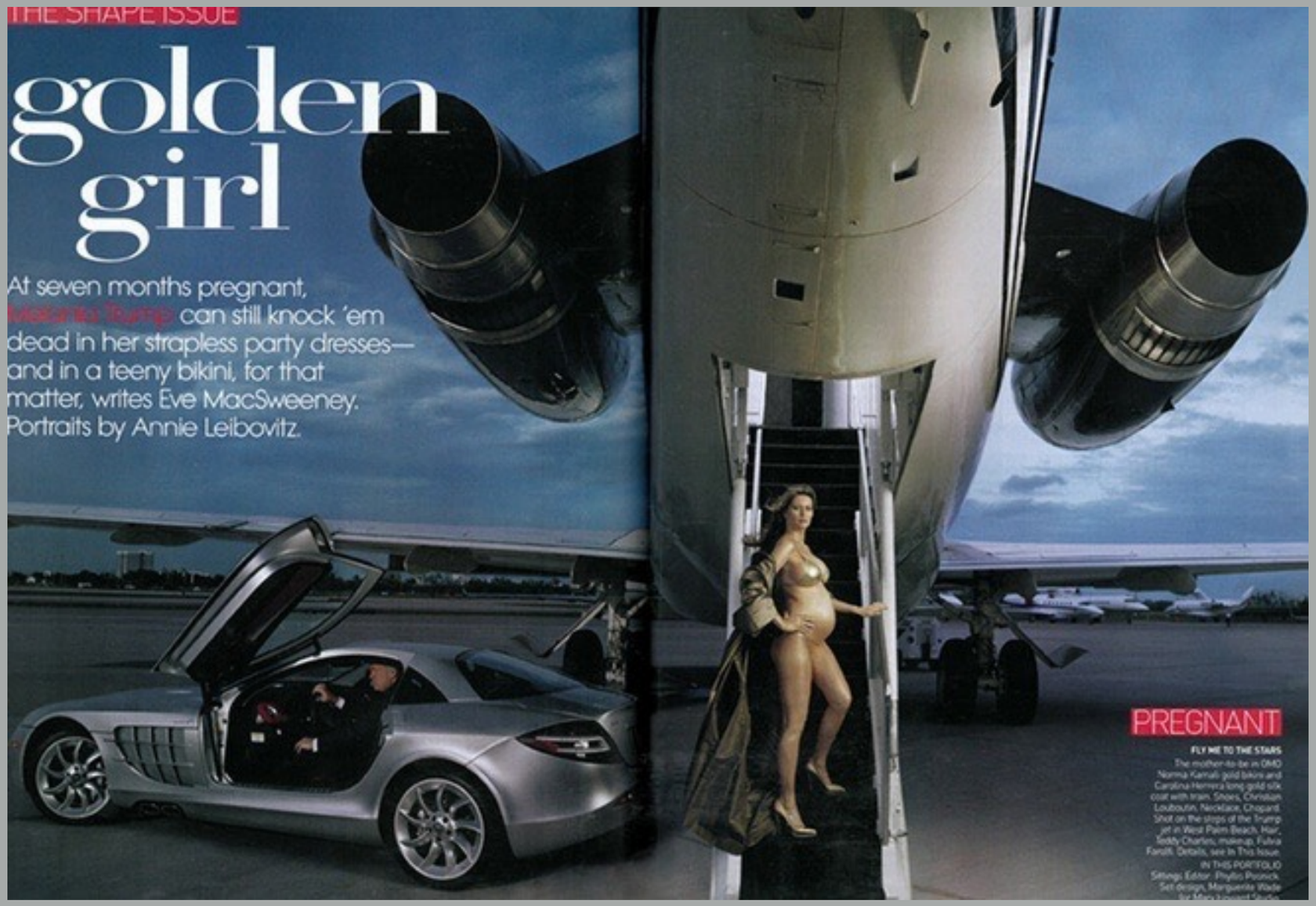

Annie Leibovitz



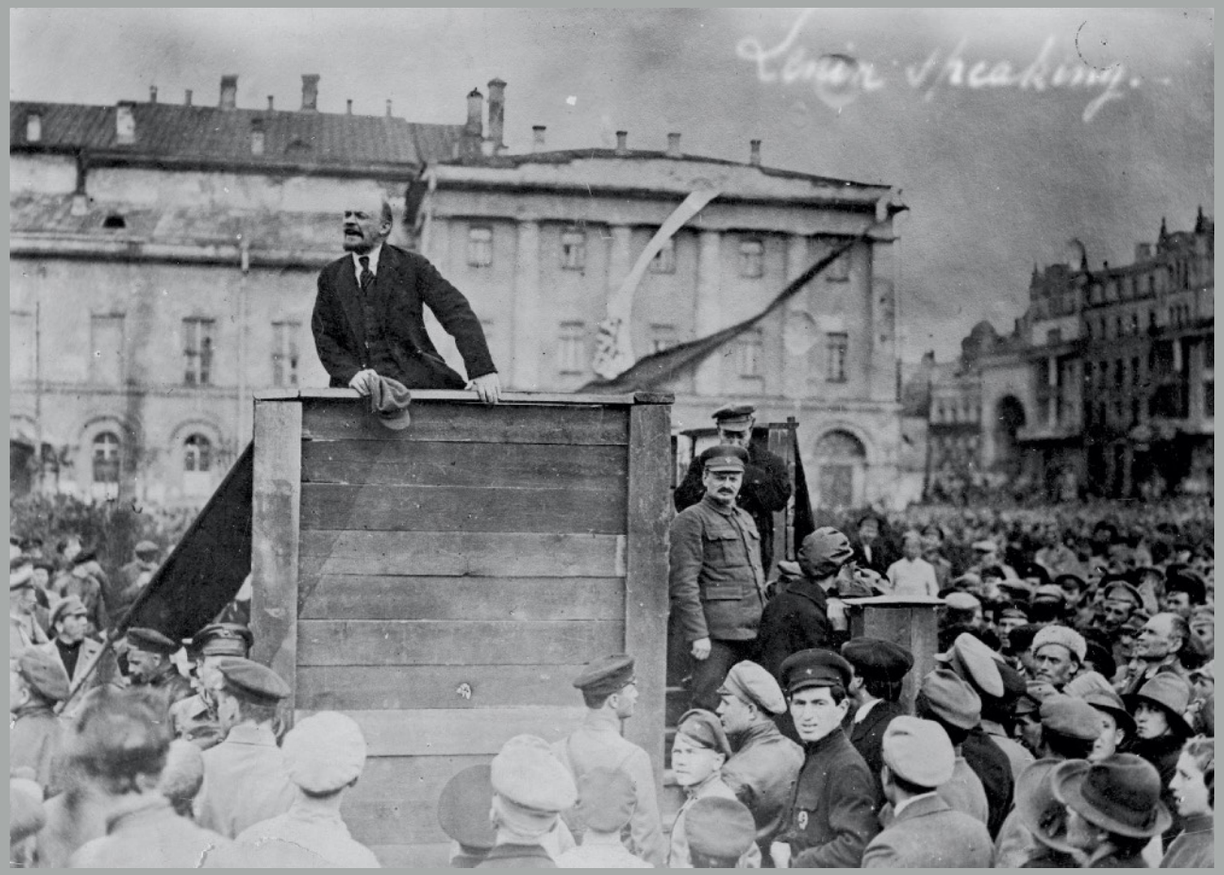




Leni Reifenstahl - *Olympia*




Annie Leibovitz






Lenin - Speech to Soviet troops in Sverdlov Square, with and without Leon Trotsky and Lev Kamenov, 1920.



Stalin at the Moscow Canal with and without Naval Commissar, Nikolai Yezhov




Annie Leibovitz, Vanity Fair Cover without James Franco



Diego Valázquez, Las Meninas (1656)

# Intermission

Diego Valázquez, *Las Meninas* (1656) - with inspection



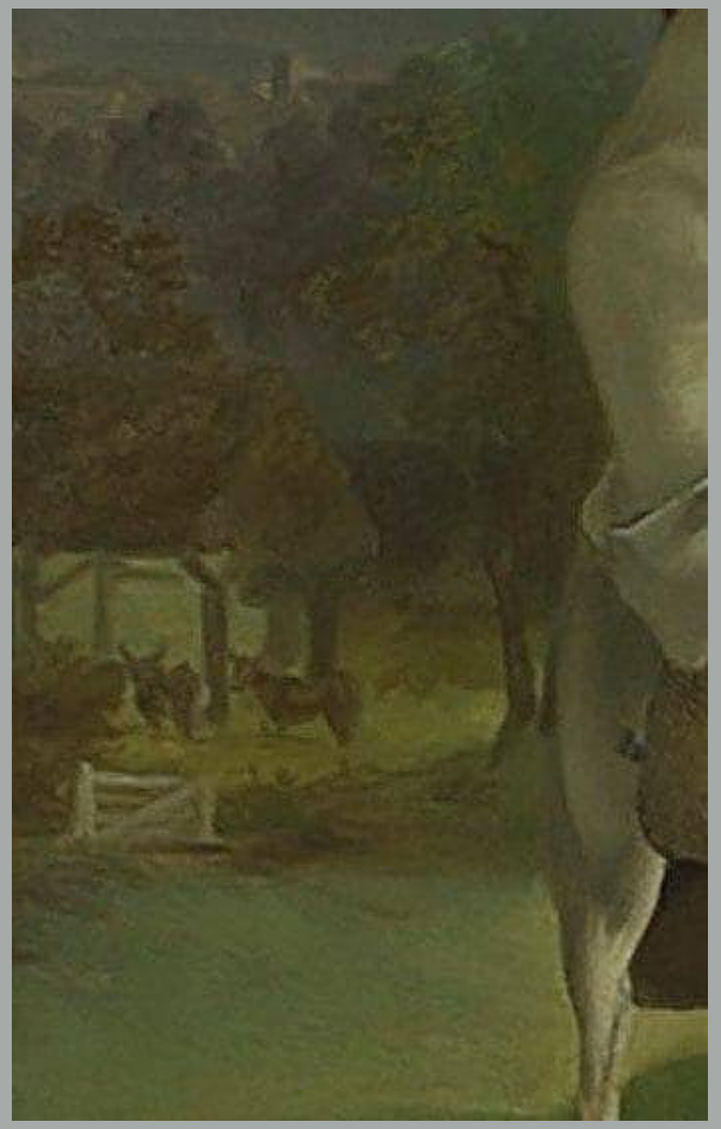


Thomas Gainsborough - *Mr and Mrs Andrews* (circa 1750)









Gainsborough - *Mr and Mrs Andrews* (details)



Jan van Eyck - *The Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434





Jan van Eyck - *The Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434 with image inspection





Jan van Eyck - *The Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434










Donald Trump’s Trump Tower Apartment

“The Spectacle is capital…accumulated to the point where it becomes image.”

Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*



Apple Macintosh Advert (Dir. Ridley Scott)



Apple Macintosh Advert - ‘I’m a Mac, I’m a PC’




# Recuperation

(Co-option)

The commodification of radical ideas or images




The Che Guevara 'T-Shirt' image (original photograph: Alberto Korda)


DOLLAR


Communism killed
100 million people
and all I got was this
lousy shirt.




Shawn Corey Carter, AKA Jay Z



Prince Harry



Che Guevara


1986







Gregory Crewdson - from *Twilight*




Annie Leibovitz - Queen Latifah as Ursula



Gregory Crewdson - set



Annie Leibovitz - set




Sigmar Polke - Capitalist Realism

See Also: Gerhard Richter, Manfred Kuttner and Konrad Lueg.



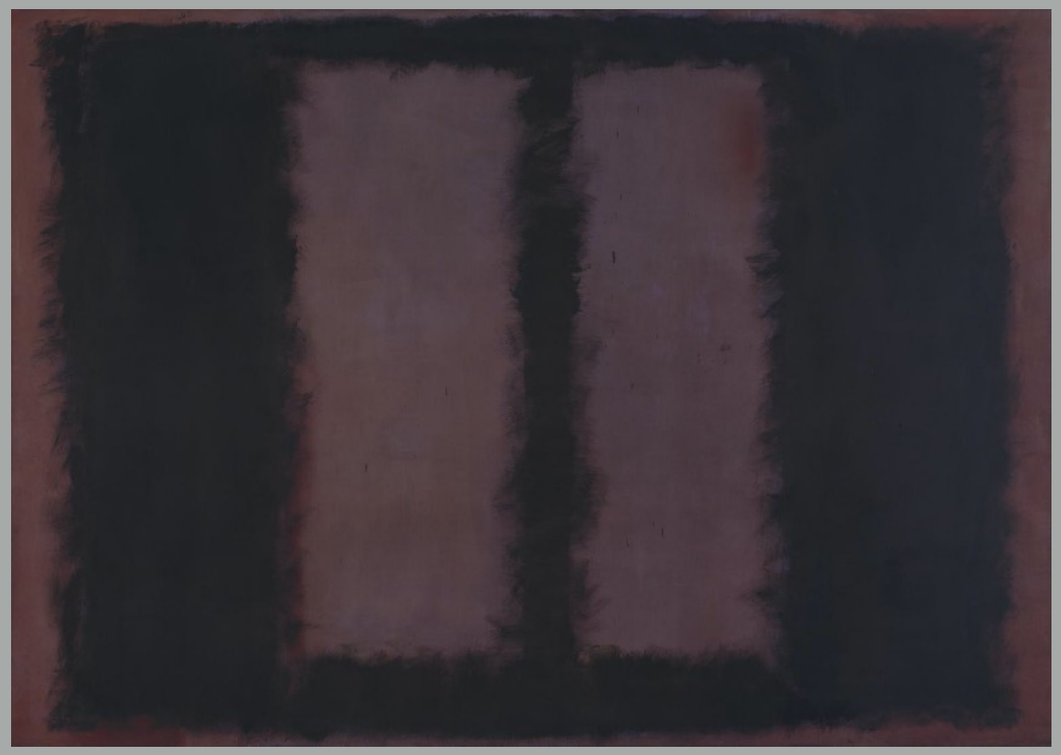
Sigmar Polke - Capitalist Realism



Gerhard Richter, *Party* (1963)

Jackson Pollock -
*Number One* (1949)





Mark Rothko - *Black on Maroon* (1958)



Willem de Kooning - *Police Gazette* (1955)


Campbell's
CONDENSED
ONION
SOUP
CREAM OF
MUSHROOM
SOUP
BEEF
SOUP
CONSOMMÉ
SOUP
GREEN PEA
SOUP
PEPPER POT
SOUP
VEGETABLE
SOUP
CHICKEN
NOODLE
SOUP
TOMATO
SOUP
BLACK BEAN
SOUP



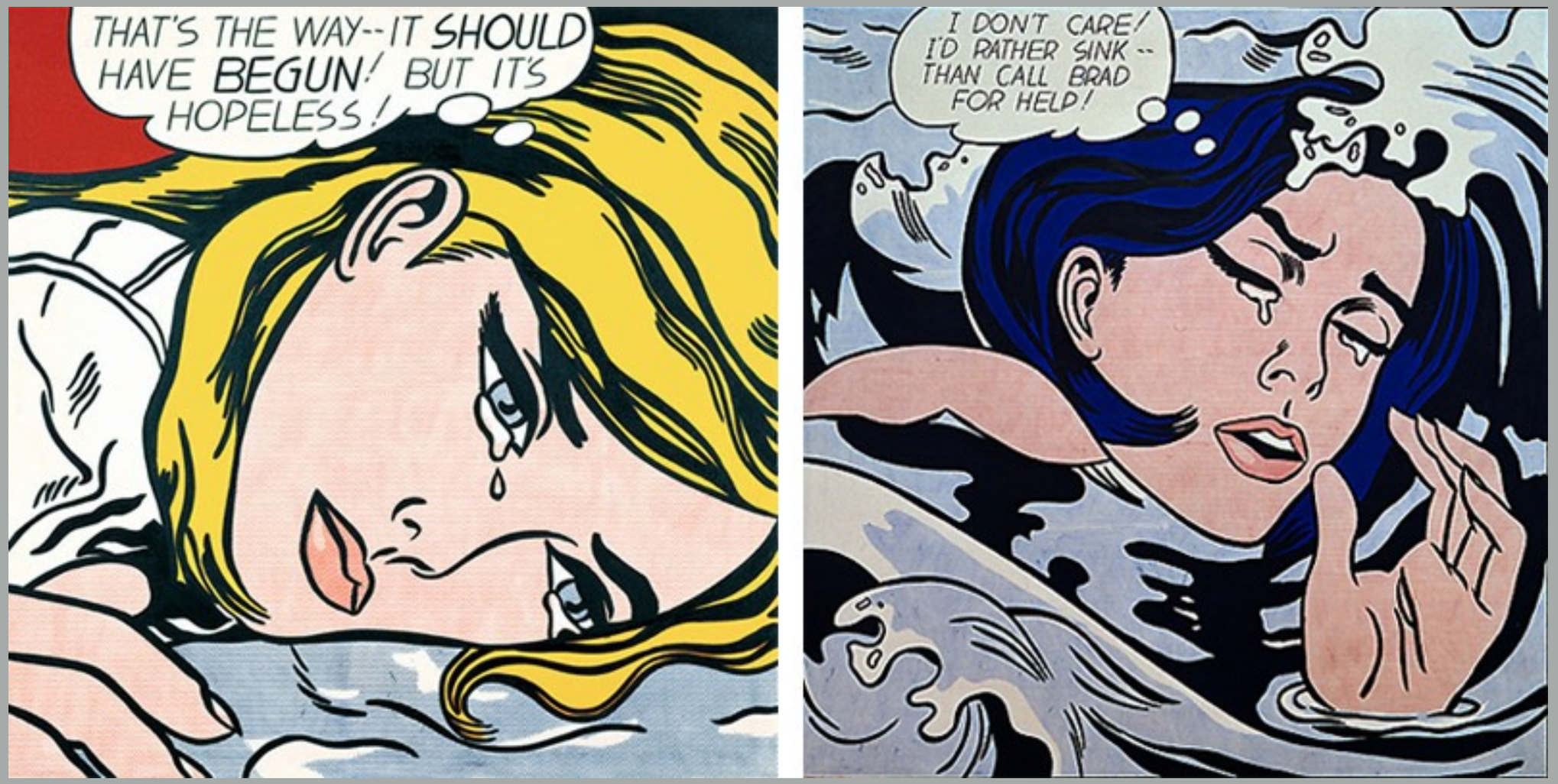
Andy Warhol







Ed Ruscha




Roy Lichtenstein

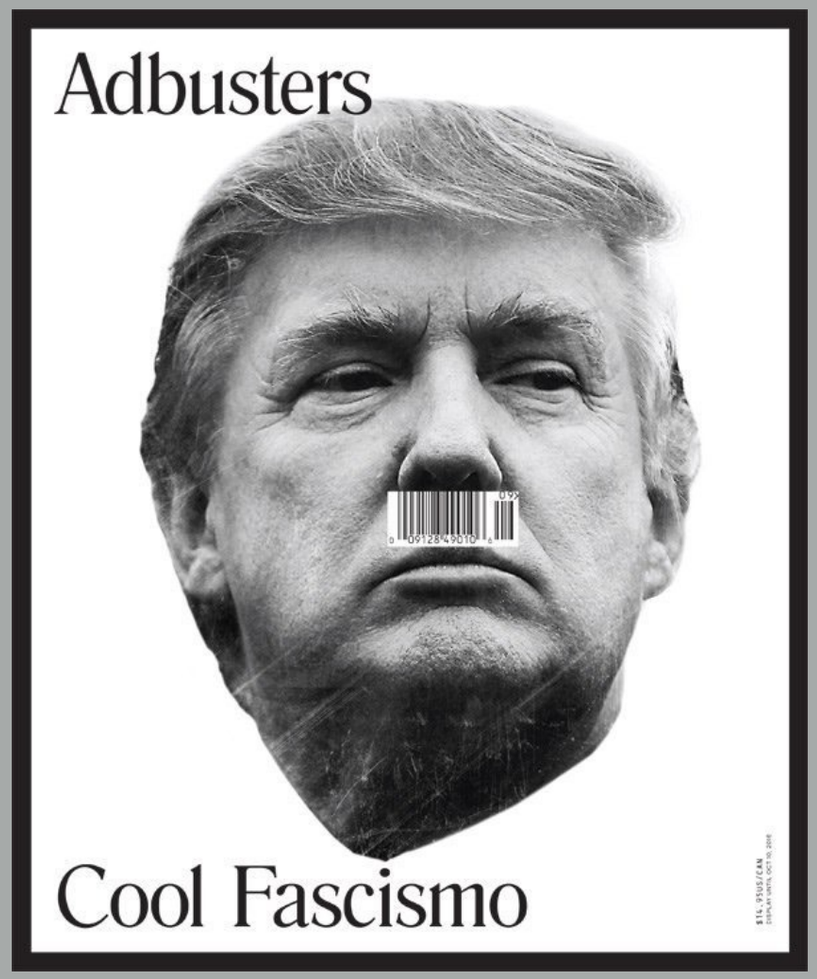


Richard Prince - Untitled (Cowboy)

# Détournement

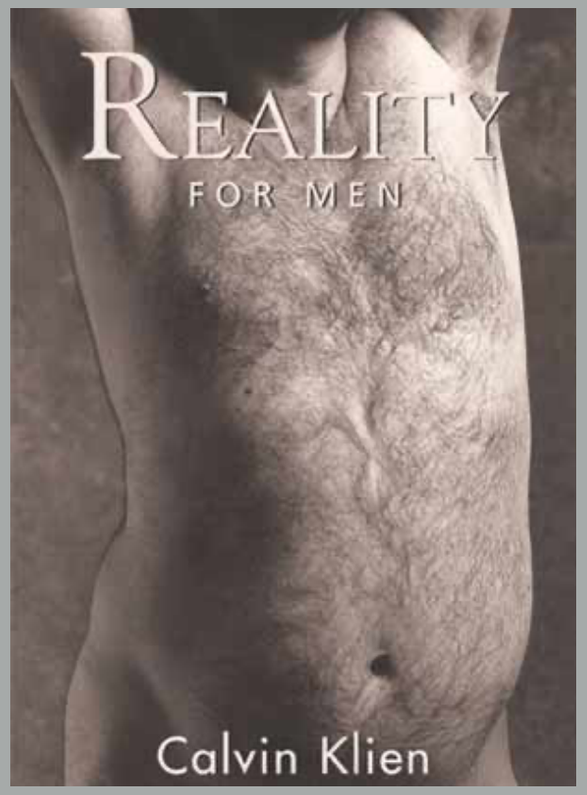
To turn expressions of capitalism against themselves







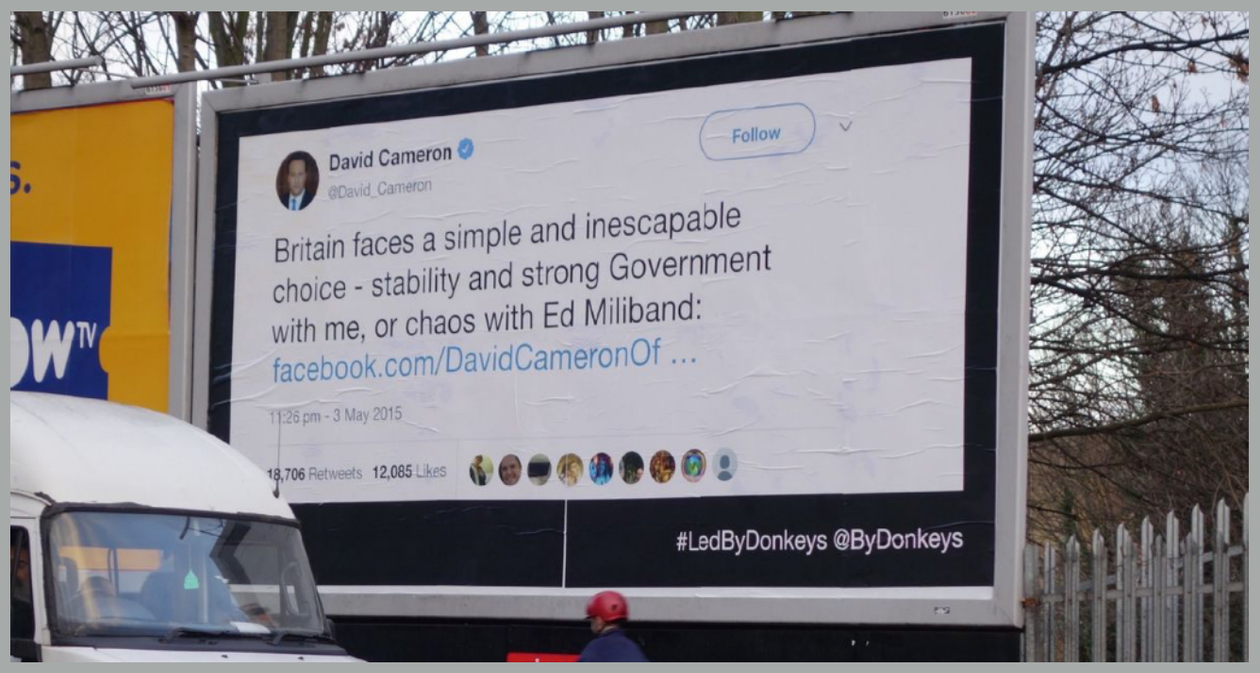



Adbusters; Subvertisments; Culture Jamming













Led by Donkeys










Barbara Kruger





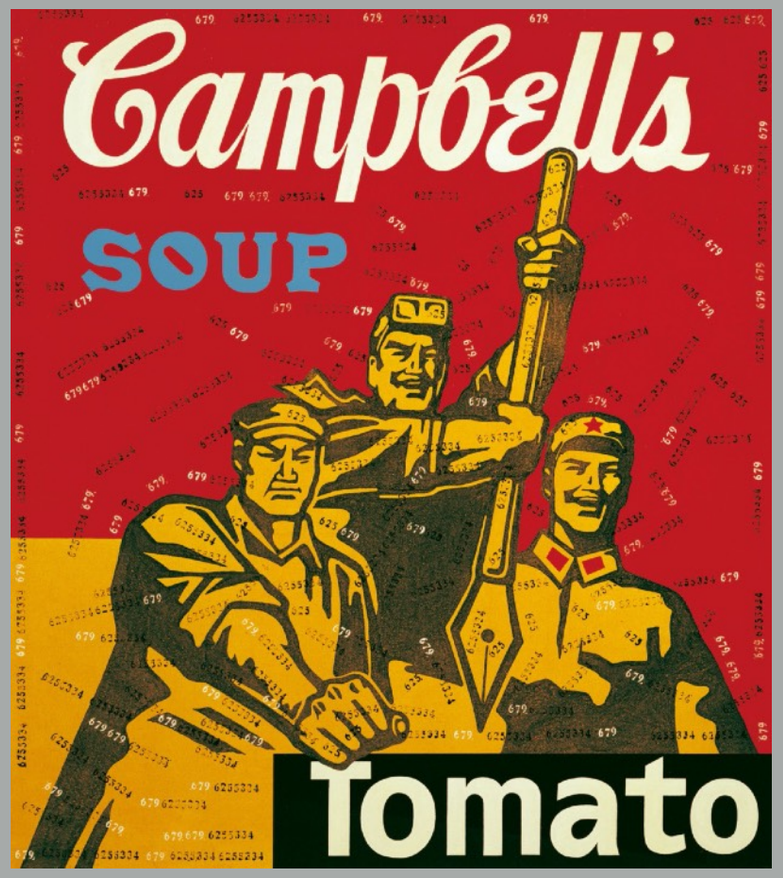


Jeff Coons




Wang Guangyi










Wang Guangyi



Gregory Crewdson - *Beneath the Roses*



Gregory Crewdson - *Beneath the Roses*





Gregory Crewdson - *Beneath the Roses; Twilight*



Gregory Crewdson - from *Cathedral of the Pines*

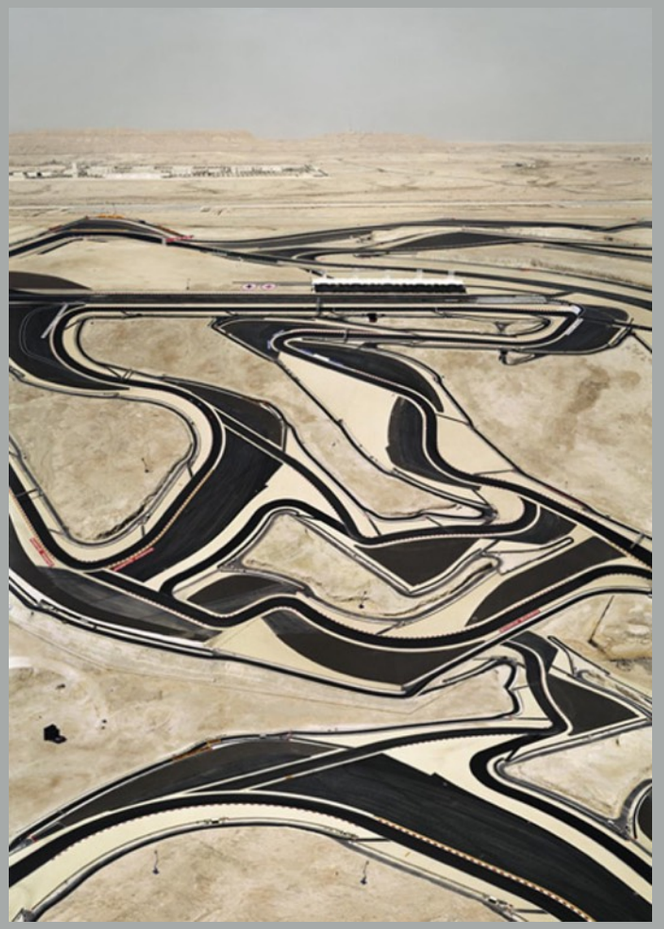



Gregory Crewdson - from *Cathedral of the Pines*



Andreas Gursky - Salerno (1990)









Andreas Gursky - (clockwise from left) Grand Prix Boxstop 1; Bahrain I (2005); Chicago Mercantile Exchange (1997); Hyatt Regency, Atlanta (1996)





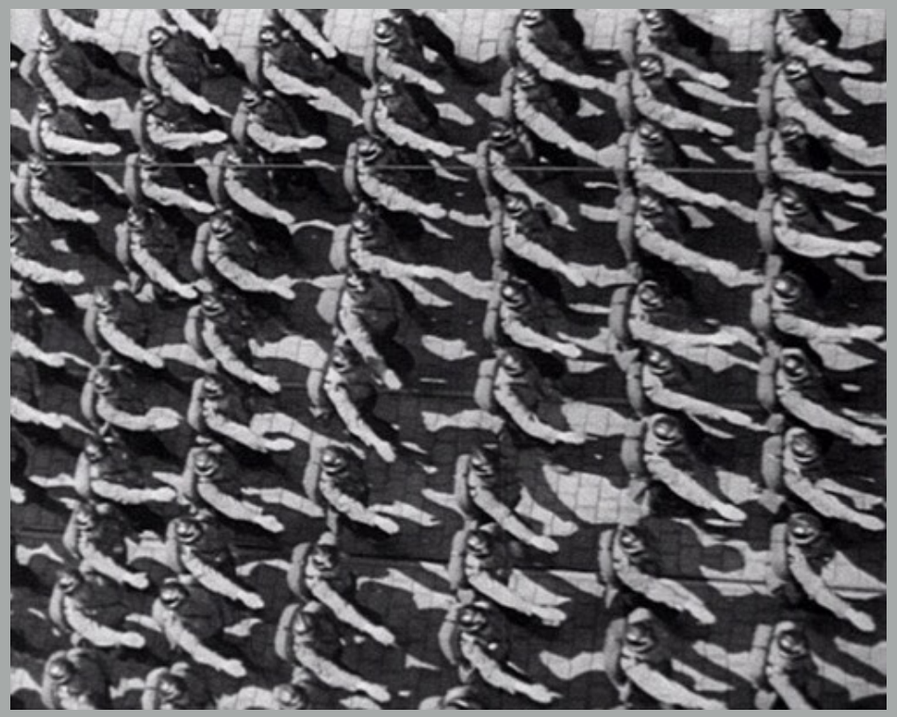
Bernd & Hilla Becher

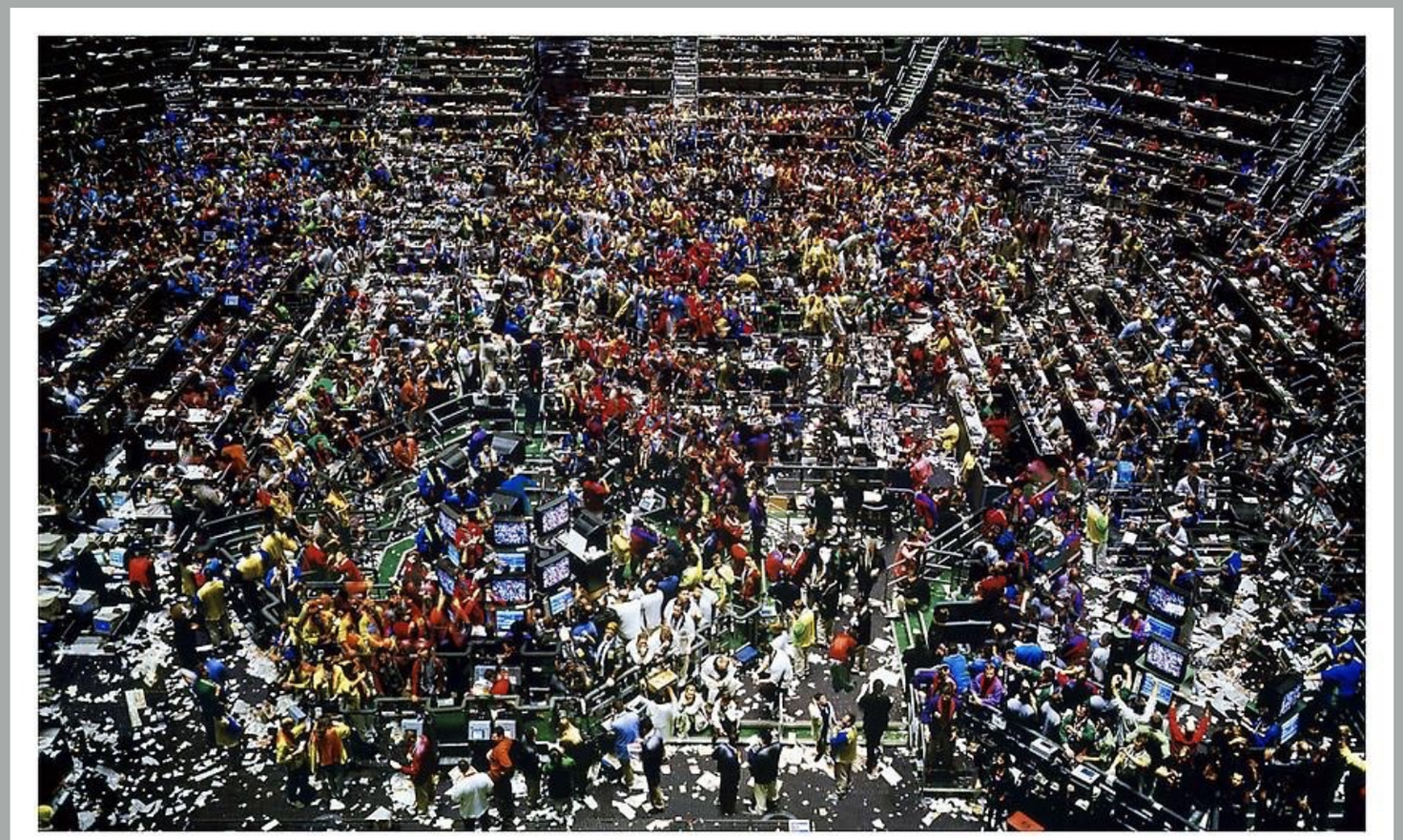




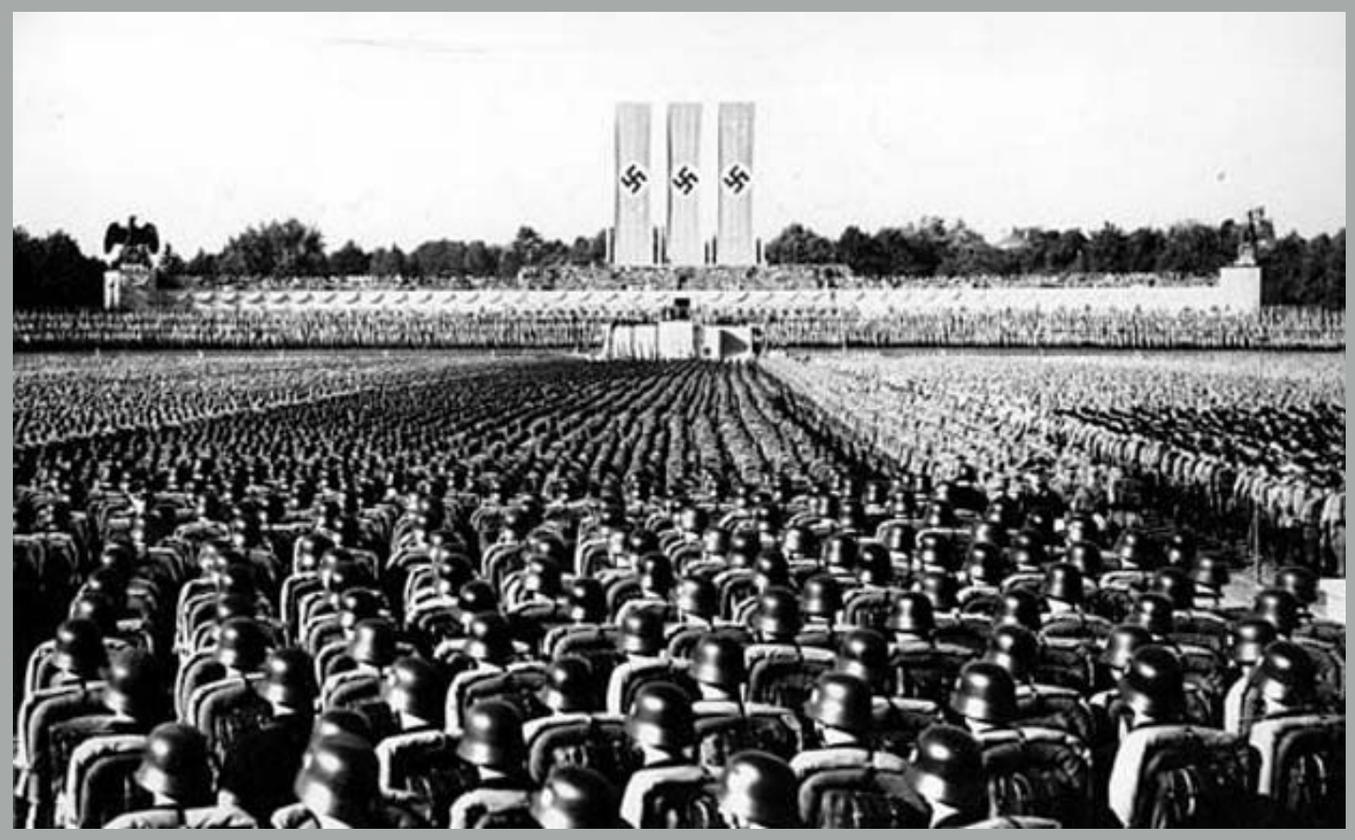
Albert Renger-Patzsch - *Neue Sachlichkeit*







Andreas Gursky - *Chicago Board of Trade II* (1999)



Leni Reifenstahl - *Triumph of the Will*

# The Accumulation of Spectacles

# Mass Objects



Gregory Crewdson - from *Cathedral of the Pines*

American Dream …



# …American Nightmare



"Some day we shall no longer need pictures: we shall just be happy."

Sigmar Polke and Gerhard Richter, 1966

(Founders of the Capitalist Realism movement)

# Macintosh Ads

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtvjbmoDx-I

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XqKHiNF2c7M