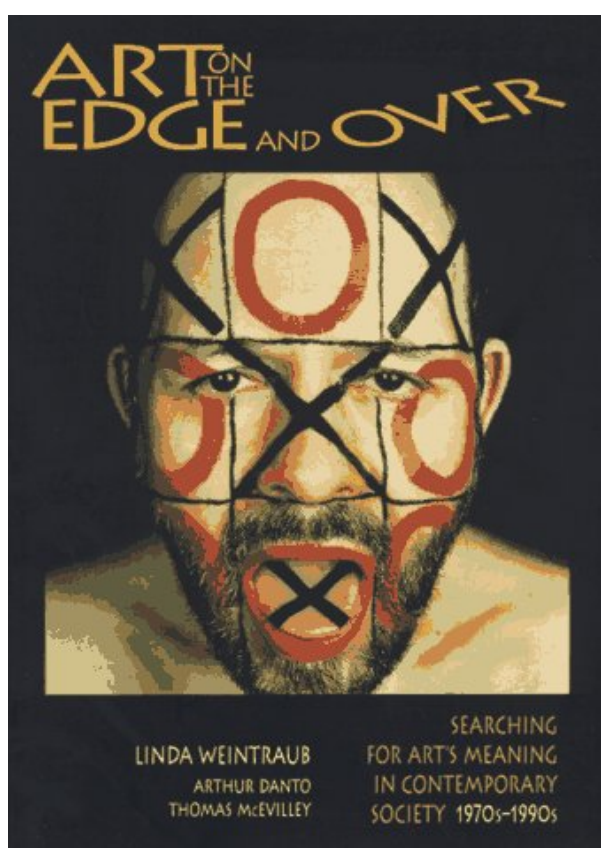
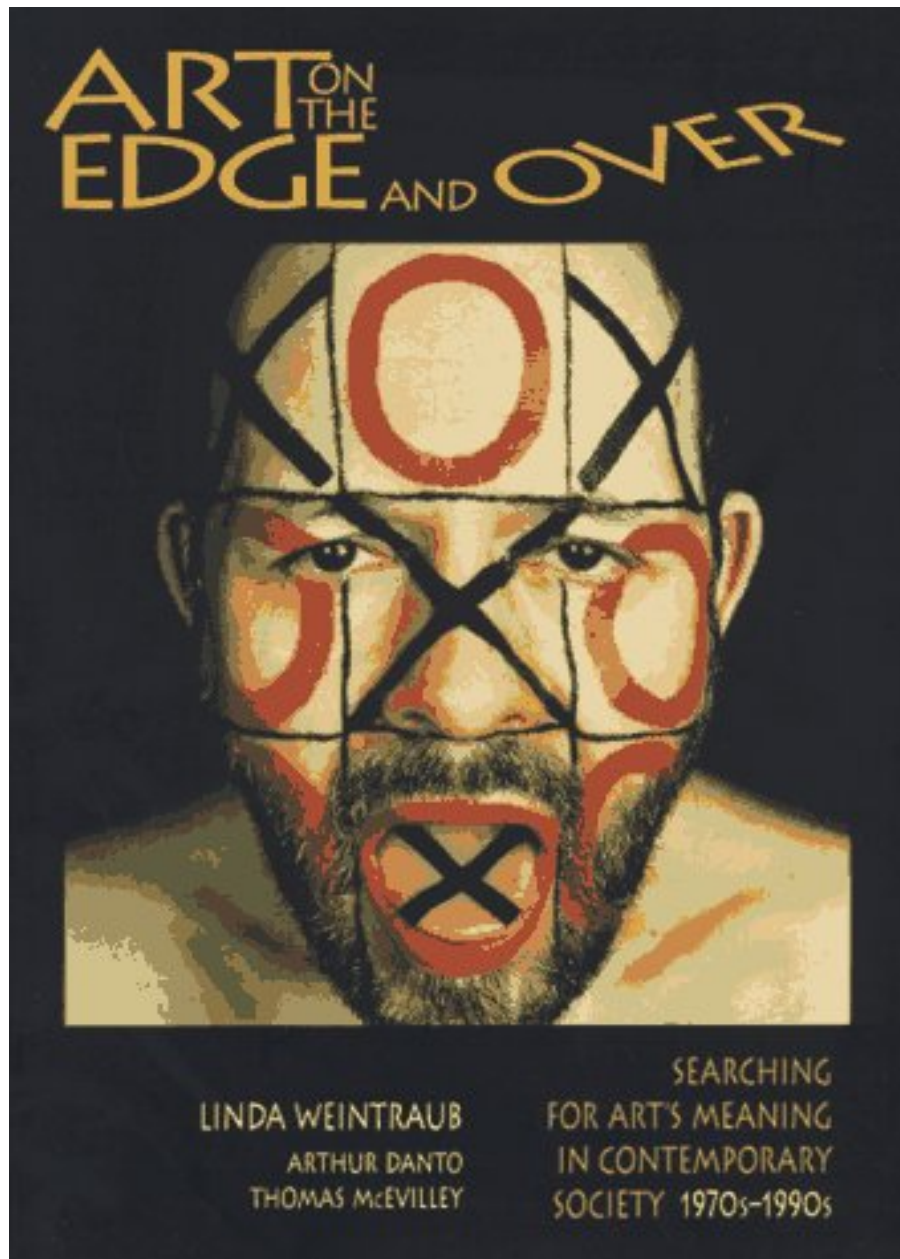


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SEARCHING FOR ART'S MEANING IN
CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY, 1970S-1990S BY
LINDA WEINTRAUB**



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From Library Journal

For the past three decades, contemporary artists have been dissolving the boundaries of established art by creating works that neither hang on walls nor adorn pedestals. The artists sometimes struggle against concepts of aesthetic value, permanence, and visual sense. Curator and educator Weintraub has researched and/or interviewed 35 prominent radical artists and here explores the common themes, creative processes, diverse media, and purposes in their works. Devoting one essay to each artist, she provides superb preparation to museum and gallery goers who may be confronting these exasperating works for the first time. The clear, highly sensitive essays discuss Andres Serrano's photo of a crucifix submerged in urine; the half ton of dirty clothes Christian Boltanski piled on a museum floor worn by children of the Holocaust; Janine Antoni's mammoth blocks of chocolate and lard, reflecting compulsions; Chuck Close's computer art; and David Hammon's construction forged from urban refuse. Recommended for collections with an interest in contemporary works. ?Joan Levin, MLS, Chicago
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Recognizing that art at the end of the twentieth century changes too quickly and is too multifaceted and unfamiliar to be automatically understood, **Art on the Edge and Over: Searching for Art's Meaning in Contemporary Society** explains the intractably avant-garde art of the 1970s, 80s and 90s by searching for art's meaning within the context of popular culture and the common trends that have led to such new forms of expression. This one-of-a-kind resource is composed of 35 easy-to-read, chapter-long essays that each cover a particular deviation from conventional art practices (such as smell as an aesthetic ingredient, shopping as a creative process or blood, pollen, discarded dolls and toxic earth as a medium of expression.) Within each chapter, the theme discussed is illuminated by and elucidates the work of one particular artist (such as Laurie Simmons, Wolfgang Laib, On Kawara, Marina Abramovic, Gilbert and George, David Hammons, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, David Salle, Janine Antoni, Rosemarie Trockel, Andres Serrano, Carolee Schneemann, Barbara Kruger, Vito Acconci, and Mike Kelley). An easy-to-follow guide to the unconventional art of our contemporaries, **Art on the Edge and Over** is a vital resource for all those interested in art history, studio art, aesthetics, and contemporary society.

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ART ON THE EDGE AND OVER: SEARCHING FOR ART'S MEANING IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY, 1970S-1990S BY LINDA WEINTRAUB PDF

In this highly accessible introduction to American art since the 1970s, Linda Weintraub offers art lovers a readable exploration of some of the most important artists and movements of the past three decades. Today artists routinely dissolve the old boundaries of art by creating works that neither hang on walls nor adorn pedestals, and often willfully overturn conventions of aesthetic value, permanence and optical reward. Curator and educator Weintraub has researched and/or interviewed 35 prominent radical artists and here explores their common concerns, creative processes and media. Devoting one essay to each artist, Weintraub offers a primer for museum and gallery goers who may be confronting such works for the first time, discussing Andres Serrano's photo of a crucifix submerged in urine, the half ton of dirty clothes Christian Boltanski piled on a museum floor worn by children of the Holocaust, Janine Antoni's mammoth blocks of chocolate and lard, Chuck Close's computer art and David Hammon's detritus constructions.

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Most helpful customer reviews

57 of 59 people found the following review helpful.

An OK overview, but superficial

By A Customer

I guess this book is meant as a real "intro" text, but if you do know something about this art, it seems pretty lite. Clearly, lots of people like it, but Weintraub seems to bend so far over to make complex work accessible that she really over-simplifines. And the "art" in the book is so scattered and uneven, you don't get any deeper sense of what is going on, what the historical context of any of this might be.

Granted, there aren't many intro texts on recent art. So if this is one of the "better" ones, it's mostly for lack of competition. I wish there was some accessible middle ground between pop/gossip texts and academic tomes. This feels like it's written from someone really distant to the work, who's not always that well-informed.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

One of the few books I still remember from college...

By ireview4u

I just stayed up all night just trying to find this book again! I had to have it for an Art History course in college years ago, and out of all the textbooks I had and all the memorizing I had to do, the only art history I can remember today always traces back to this book. While other "art history" type books focus on bombarding you with a bunch of names with dates and titles of work (along with other insignificant information), this book focuses on the concept of the work from some of the most stand-out, atypical artists of this time period. Most importantly you really see the artists' work from the perspective of the creator and get a true sense of the artist's most intimate thoughts. If you're interested in sociology or psychology, this is especially the book for you.

If you're looking for in-depth artist biographies or need to do a research paper on the contemporary art movement, you can't rely on just this alone. But the author does an excellent job on getting straight to the point and providing you with just enough information and selected works that embody the overall essence of the artist (and the artists, collectively, give you a sense of what was going on during the 70s and 80s).

If there was a book like this for every art movement in history, I would buy all of them! Granted, some

movements are more interesting than others, but this format is so easy to learn from. You remember works and artists first, then naturally remember the general time and movement, rather than memorizing and forgetting titles and dates with no real significance. I wouldn't call myself a history lover but I'm definitely interested more in people, and with this book, a connection is made between the art and the artist, and a deeper understanding is made about both. I'm so glad I found this and I'm definitely buying it to add back into my collection--my first "art history" book I actually like and WANT in my bookshelf!

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Very Dissapointing

By D. Olsen

A poor text. The author takes an uncritical and overly romantic stance on the various artist's work. While the artists included represent some of the very best examples of avante-garde practices spanning three decades, including several to whom I had would not have otherwise been exposed, the write ups read like publicity for their shows rather than critical analysis of the work. Most disappointing was the structure. Each artist is pigeon-holed into the demographic category they fall within, e.g. Felix Gonzales-Torres: A Latin, Homosexual Man. While I respect the effort to include a diverse range of artists, the demographics appear to be placed above the significance of their body of work. A difficult issue to address, and this book does so poorly.

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