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Reeve, Charles

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This suggestion is based on a notion, prevalent among some literary scholars, that there exists a coherent, homogeneous literary core in Israel that could be threatened by Be'er's life writing or, for that matter, by any autobiography written at the margins. The distinction between the core and the margins, however, must be reconsidered and the hybrid nature of Israeli culture recognized. Be'er's orthodox family may not have identified with the Israeli establishment at the time, but orthodox families were a major piece of the puzzle that composed Israel's national identity. So was Kaniuk, the compulsive outsider, who was seen, mainly by himself, as a marginal novelist but whose fiction contributed a great deal to the ways in which Israelis came to realize their post-traumatic state following the 1948 war and the wars that followed. The literary works by the Baghdad-born Ballas and the Holocaust survivor Appelfeld were often contrasted to an imagined Israeli literary canon, but Israeli identity has been shaped as much by these two authors as by what Hess defines as representatives of the hegemony—that is, European-born men who are neither immigrants nor Holocaust survivors.

Here lies perhaps the main lesson to take away from this book: Israeli autobiographies are enlightening not because they adapt the private to the public, the individual to the collective, and the self to the nation but because the people presenting themselves in all their concerns, fears, and weaknesses are the real building blocks of Israeli society.

Michael Keren

Eva Hesse. *Diaries*. Edited by Barry Rosen with assistance from Tamara Bloomberg, Yale UP in association with Hauser & Wirth, 2016, 904 pp. ISBN 978-0300185508, \$25.95.

When a brain tumor ended her life in 1970, the artist Eva Hesse was just thirty-four years old. But, as this book's promotional materials state, Hesse was (and remains) one of the greatest American artists of the 1960s, on par with the other artists these diaries name as part of her social and professional circle, including Dan Graham, Sol Lewitt, Mel Bochner, and Robert Smithson (who also died young, in a plane crash). This contrast between her life's fleetingness and her reputation's durability mirrors the disparity between her art's ephemerality and this book's sturdiness. Works like her well-known *Hang Up* (1966)—a wall piece comprising steel tube, cord, cloth, and wood that pokes fun at the solipsism of many 1960s paintings—seem ready to fall apart. Yet this compendium of Hesse's complete dairies, with its squat format and thick spine, looks solid as a brick—an impression highlighted by its cover's sandpaper feel and dark rust color.

But does the book's painstaking editing by Barry Rosen (her estate's artistic advisor) and attractive production enrich our understanding of Hesse's life, work, or epoch? This query is especially pointed given that Yale University Press already, in 2007, published a facsimile edition of her date books from 1964 and 1965 and that throughout this volume's 900 pages, Hesse says little about her art, concentrating instead on her illnesses, her experiences with psychotherapy, and, most prominently, her stormy marriage to sculptor Tom Doyle. Are we better off for having this material? Do we profit from reading Hesse's innermost thoughts, insecurities, and anxieties?

Arguing for the prosecution, we might say that we don't. For instance, her repeated references to Doyle's mistress as "0" (that is, zero) only diminish Hesse—as in, while recounting a dream from July 1966: "T + 0 are still together, plan to marry" (648). Similarly, is anything advanced by knowing that, having lost her mother to divorce and then suicide while a young girl, Hesse is hit hard when her father dies in August 1966, essentially orphaning her at thirty years old (697)? And even such discussions of her art as do appear here are intermittent and perfunctory: lists of materials, possible titles of works, brief comments about sales or upcoming shows. But that's it. To be fair, we do see her gradual transition from painter to sculptor—though we learn nothing about the shift's motivations. Rather, we see this change at one remove, as her occasional notes about her artistic practice morph from comments on painting. For example, on October 28, 1964, Hesse states, "I will paint against every rule I or others have invisible [*sic*] placed" (285).¹ Later, in fall 1966, she writes a note about sculpture: "*New piece / black / 4 x 4 board / holes / rubber hose papier mâché" (715). The reasons for exchanging two dimensions for three remain obscure, and one might wonder if whatever we're left with just encourages what art historian T. J. Clark calls "idiot X-equals-Y biography" in the opening pages of *Picasso and Truth* (4). Perhaps it does, which prompts a further question: shouldn't some archival material stay in the archives (in this instance, at Oberlin College)? Again, perhaps. But poring through materials with no overt link to Hesse's art may yet have value. The defense may not have a slam-dunk case, but that doesn't mean it has no case at all.

For instance, insight into her frustration and pain around the situation with Doyle might well matter. Despite the picture we have of the 1960s as a time when struggles for gender equality, including sexual experience, gathered steam, the truth is different. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, articulating the vexation and unhappiness that many women felt as housewives, was only published in 1963. William H. Masters and Virginia E. Johnson's *Human Sexual Response* didn't appear until 1966, and Germaine Greer's *The*

Female Eunuch, with its argument that the social condition of women alienates them from their sexuality, came out in 1970. Far from being a time when an awareness of gender inequality bore fruit, the 1960s were a decade when this awareness started to emerge—mostly among women.

Men, in the meantime, seemed to feel that sexual liberation meant *male* sexual liberation and took that as licence to run roughshod over any notions of sensitivity or empathy. In other words, men carried on—in more ways than one—as before, while women worked out on their own what professional and sexual agency might mean for them. And while we're used to thinking of the art world as progressive and enlightened, the record suggests otherwise. Consider, for example, how Judy Chicago, in *Beyond the Flower*, recounts experiencing the same abuse of trust with her husband while, from the other side, Larry Rivers describes his own philandering in *What Did I Do?*. That is not to say that everyone from that era records such an experience: there's little about sexuality and nothing about such unfaithfulness in sculptor Anne Truitt's *Daybook* or, to move outside the realm of visual art to culture more generally, in Agatha Christie's *An Autobiography*.

If, however, some people got through the 1960s in one piece, many others experienced that time as one of considerable frustration, as the promise of emancipation bumped up against the reality of old habits dying hard and the complexities of romantic relationships turned out to reflect in miniature how things went in the world at large. Here is Hesse describing a September weekend in 1966 spent with art-world luminaries like Smithson, Graham, Bchner, and Lewitt (who has or had a crush on her) and the dealer Virginia Dwan:

Tonight again, same crew. Dinner at Smithsons. I am again non-artist, amongst Virginia. Same position. They all forget me when it comes down to talking. This includes Sol, yes, loyal Sol. He neglects me solidly. With Virginia I too am forgotten. Yes, Even Sol. (706)

“Non-artist” equals non-person, which equation links the apparently epiphenomenal musings of Hesse's diaries with the thing that brought us here in the first place: her influential art career. Significant though her career turned out to be, this quotation shows that she experienced it differently. Even among friends, she struggled to be recognized as a sentient human being with things to say, let alone as a sophisticated artist (her diaries are peppered with references to the literature of the day: Henry Miller, Saul Bellow, Norman Mailer), while those peers seemed to move effortlessly from strength to strength, socially and artistically. As she understands, the evidence strongly suggests that the difference is her gender.

And if this problem wasn't unique to Hesse during her moment, it also did not emerge from nowhere. A brief scan of art's historiographies shows that this structural misogyny always plagued both the mainstream and avant-garde communities (two classics—Linda Nochlin's "Why Are There No Great Women Artists?" and Lora Rempel's "The Anti-Body in Photomontage," about the Dadaist Hannah Höch—are enough to show that), as does a glance at Marie Bashkirtseff's diaries from the late nineteenth century. Hesse expresses the same frustration about differences in opportunities, so that even if the 1950s art schools no longer have a policy against admitting women, the effect is similar. And in that context, as Tamar Garb said about Bashkirtseff, what else would a bright, ambitious young woman repeatedly stymied in her efforts to get a fair shake from the art world write about other than her experience? Unlike a contemporary such as the painter Gerhard Richter, Hesse never could title her notebooks *The Daily Practice of Painting* because she could not assume that she would paint (or sculpt) every day.

This difference brings out the ideological value of Hesse's focus on her context: coded as feminine, the everyday is both the location and source of her frustration. The resistance that she and other women experienced (and continue to experience) is part of the condition in which she worked, and by recording that condition in her diaries, she reinscribes herself into the femininity that limits her art-world mobility. Here, her diaries do link to her art, since what is the softness, the vague organic-ness, of a piece like *Hang Up* other than the feminization of Minimalism's insistent, masculinist hardness? Beyond that, if Nancy K. Miller is right that we read autobiographies for how their authors differ from us, might we also read diaries for how their authors resemble us? Might we take comfort in seeing the most gifted among us struggle with the quotidian, worry about the dentist, obsess about affairs of the heart? Is there existential value in the potential for empathy that these shared concerns set up between us and these denizens of the firmament, in the demystifying that comes from learning that Homer not only nods but also pisses, shits, and vomits?

Of course, the story has another side, as we see in Marcie Begleiter's documentary *Eva Hesse*, released roughly contemporaneously with this book. Begleiter's film dwells briefly on the difficulties of Hesse's relationship with Doyle and her feelings of marginalization (and includes some salutary comments by art critic Lucy Lippard about Hesse's feminizing of Minimalism), but its overriding sense is that, as one of Hesse's key studio technicians says, "She was just one of the boys." Certainly, while the film is disappointingly clichéd, this contention has some foundation: in her brief life's last five years, she almost could not keep up with the demands for exhibitions; when she died,

in May 1970, that month's *Artforum* (then as now one of contemporary art's most influential publications) had an interview with her as its cover story. But still. One doubts that Robert Smithson ever felt ignored by Virginia Dwan.

And that doubt is the central term of Hesse's life, art, and reputation. If she were alive today, she'd be in her early eighties and experiencing all of the lionizing that accompanies being a senior artist: major exhibitions with catalogues written by esteemed scholars; extensive collections of personal papers being unearthed, archived, published, and put online. That these things are happening now even though Hesse has been dead for considerably longer than she was alive attests to her contribution's importance.² Not really a key to her art, productivity, and anxiety, these diaries rather are annoying, witty, tedious, and poetic. Perhaps like her life, and certainly like her art, their elusiveness is their most substantial quality.

NOTES

1. Here and throughout, the emphasis is in the original.
2. Extensive Eva Hesse archives are online at the Allen Memorial Art Museum's website: <http://www.oberlin.edu/amam/EvaHesseArchives.html>. I suppose it's a sign of the times that the *Diaries* reviewed here are already available on Google Books. For examples of lionizing exhibition catalogues, see Fer and the publication *Eva Hesse* edited by Sussman.

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Charles Reeve

Helena Michie and Robyn Warhol. *Love Among the Archives: Writing the Lives of Sir George Scharf, Victorian Bachelor*. Edinburgh UP, 2015, 246 pp. ISBN 978-147440662, \$34.95.

WHO IS SIR GEORGE SCHARF?

On a bad day, for Victorianists Helena Michie and Robyn Warhol, he is "the most boring man in the world" (6). For the rest of us—a group that may include scholars of Victorian literature and culture, historians, art critics, archivists, and avid readers of biography and biographical metafiction—he is the first director of London's National Portrait Gallery (NPG). Does this titled position, which led to Scharf being appointed a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, differentiating him from his father George Scharf, the German immigrant artist whose vocation the NPG website lists as "miniature painter, draughtsman and lithographer," make Sir George any less boring? Possibly. Although the biography of such a person may be categorized as niche, there are a number of reasons to write a life of Sir George Scharf. Michie and Warhol mention some of these, including Scharf's contributions to portrait identification and display techniques, for example. But out of the authors' self-professed limitations of training—both are literary critics—comes something more ambitious and expansive. Despite its entrenchment in Victorian literary scholarship, *Love Among the Archives* belongs to the ever-expanding category of experimental life writing, distinguished by the refusal of prescriptive narratives and the embrace of narrative twists, turns, and surprises. Michie and Warhol's book neatly undresses three characteristic plots in nineteenth-century fiction—the romance plot, the family