



## BERNADETTE WEGENSTEIN SOBRE A PRODUÇÃO DE UM CINEMA FEMINISTA<sup>√</sup>

### ENTREVISTA

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#### RESUMO

Bernadette Wegenstein é uma linguista e documentarista nascida na Áustria. Recebeu seu PhD em Línguas Românicas e Linguística da Universidade de Viena, após ter estudado Linguística na mesma universidade, Semiótica com Umberto Eco, na *Università Degelli Studi di Bologna*, Antropologia na *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* em Paris e, em seguida, completou um pós-doutorado em Literatura Comparada e Cinema na Universidade de Stanford (EUA). Publicou os livros **Getting Under the Skin: Body and Media Theory** (2006) e **The Cosmetic Gaze: Body Modification and the Construction of Beauty** (2012), ambos pela MIT Press. Atualmente, é professora de estudos de mídia e pesquisadora na universidade Johns Hopkins, onde fundou o *Center for Advanced Media Studies*. Juntamente com seu centro de pesquisa, ela organizou um programa anual de artistas-residentes feministas com o Museu de Arte de Baltimore, e que contou com as residências artísticas de Sharon Hayes, Mary Reid Kelley e Tamar Guimarães, entre outras. Bernadette também é organizadora do *thishumanworld*, primeiro festival austríaco de filmes de direitos humanos, membro do Conselho Executivo do Programa Austríaco de Financiamento da Ciência e Tecnologia (WWTF), revisora de projetos da Academia Austríaca de Ciências e do Conselho Europeu de Pesquisa, membro do Conselho Executivo da Associação Internacional de Literatura

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Comparada e *peer reviewer* para *Theory, Culture and Society*. Ela será a vice-presidente da NeMLA (*North Eastern Modern Language Association*) a partir de 2019. Também produziu e dirigiu os documentários **Made over in America** (55 min. Icarusfilms, 2008), **See you soon again** (65 min. The Cinema Guild, 2012), **The good breast** (90 min. Icarusfilm, 2016) e **Devoti tutti** (2017), que explora e reconta o mito da Santa Ágata de um ponto de vista feminista, no momento em fase de pós-produção. Seu quinto documentário, **We Conduct**, em fase de produção, é sobre a regente de orquestra estadunidense Marin Alsop e sua busca pela diversificação de uma profissão predominantemente masculina. O presente texto é composto pela tradução de um artigo de Bernadette Wegenstein e por uma entrevista inédita com a autora. A entrevista foi realizada em setembro de 2018.

Palavras-chave: Cinema. Feminismo. Corpo.

## DEVOLVENDO O OLHAR: EXISTE TAL COISA COMO UM DOCUMENTÁRIO FEMINISTA?<sup>1</sup>

Sim. Existe um documentário feminista. Mas não é um gênero fácil de definir, como se pode dizer de quase tudo em relação ao feminismo e outros “ismos”, que são geralmente práticas e ideologias com um passado particular de opressão que os impedem de “ser” ou “torna-se” algo por si mesmos, sem fazer referência a uma corrente dominante de que ou se distanciaram ou tiveram que redefinir. O documentário feminista, assim como quaisquer outros “ismos”, leva tempo para se tornar algo, para inventar um modo de expressão *sui generis*, que não existia antes. E que, finalmente, não precise de qualquer comparação, origem ou lar, mas que simplesmente seja.

## EMPATIA: EMOÇÃO SOBRE AÇÃO

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<sup>1</sup> “Returning the gaze”, publicado originalmente em inglês na revista **Viewfinder**, Junho 2017/No107, pp.12-13.

O gênero de documentário investigativo, a documentação de coleta de evidências, em que o subjetivo se torna objetivo, a raiva empática que transforma a si mesma em acusação, e transforma a nós, espectadores, em testemunhas, é historicamente um gênero masculino. Não há, aqui, espaço para entrar em detalhes, mas **Shoah** (1985), de Claude Lanzmann, foi o verdadeiro precursor do documentário investigativo *vérité*, que hoje é um dos gêneros documentais mais prolíficos e bem-sucedidos, subscrito por autores documentaristas de gênero predominantemente masculino, como Erros Morris ou Ales Gibney. Em **Shoah** (1985), Lanzmann revelou e compartilhou o trauma de sobreviventes do Holocausto, conduzindo-os através de sua dor e, ao inserir a sua “voz de acusação” nas imagens e, por vezes, até se colocar no filme, participando da criação desta verdade subjetiva-objetiva que funciona como um julgamento.

Eu gostaria de me perguntar: qual foi a estratégia do documentário feminista daquela época e como ela se compara a Lanzmann? Em maio de 1978, um coletivo feminista em Roma documentou o primeiro julgamento de estupro a ser filmado na Itália. O julgamento foi sobre Fiorella, uma garota de 18 anos que denunciou um conhecido seu, Rocco Vallone, e três outros homens, por a terem estuprado em grupo. O julgamento ficou famoso porque lentamente se transformou em um julgamento contra a acusada Fiorella, a qual os advogados dos criminosos retrataram como imoral e “merecedora” do abuso. Quero citar o coletivo de mulheres cineastas que cobriram o julgamento, o *Gruppo Colletivo Femministe Cinema di Roma*, que disse: “queremos nos explicar e não nos justificar”.

No filme, as cineastas estão completamente invisíveis. A câmera está nas mãos de diferentes mulheres registrando os eventos, não há uma cinematógrafa atuando, mas a movimentação de uma câmera que cria empatia e que está espantada e em choque com aquilo que vê e testemunha, juntamente com os mais de 12 milhões de espectadores que assistiram a isso na televisão italiana.

A melhor maneira de descrever esta abordagem cinematográfica é com o conceito de “ver-sentindo” [*feeling-seeing*] que foi analisado por Jill Soloway, criadora de **Transparent** (2014) e de muitas outras narrativas feministas, em sua *master class* sobre *The Female Gaze* durante a TIFF [*Toronto International Film Festival*] de 2016.

Para o meu documentário **The good breast** (2016), eu pensei muito sobre a noção de ver-sentindo e sobre como algo assim se traduziria numa abordagem

fílmica que incluísse minha interpretação feminista do tratamento de câncer de mama e especialmente das práticas de cirurgias plásticas nos tratamentos atuais de câncer de mama. Comecei com a história do tratamento cirúrgico do câncer de mama desde a mastectomia radical inventada e praticada desde o final do século XIX por William Halsted, um dos pais fundadores da Escola de Medicina da JHU [*Johns Hopkins University*]. Em minha pesquisa, descobri que na realidade a mastectomia não traz benefícios de sobrevivência – embora tenha outros benefícios, como a oportunidade de reconstruir uma mama. A partir disso, formulei um princípio orientador para minha abordagem cinematográfica que se concentrava na perda do seio não como necessidade médica, mas como sacrifício. Com esse conceito de ver-sentindo em mente, imaginei a perda do seio como um sacrifício cristão e a sala de operações como uma catedral.

Imagem 1 - *Still* de **The good breast** (2016)



Fonte: arquivo do autor

## PARTICIPAÇÃO

Agora quero falar sobre a questão da participação e da ausência feminina na tradição do cinema documental feminista. É claro que o grande momento de participação veio com o movimento do *cinema-verité* da década de 1960 e com o estilo de documentário etnográfico de **Chronique d'un été** (1961), de Jean Rouch. A

câmera se tornou uma provocadora, uma estimuladora de conflitos, não escondeu sua presença. Embora esse cinema seja definitivamente mais feminino no sentido do ver-sentindo [*seeing-feeling*] de Jill Soloway, ele não é, no entanto, feminista por natureza (ainda que existam certos autores daquela época mais interessados em personagens femininas, como os irmãos Maysles). E a presença da cineasta feminina? A autodocumentação da autora/performer feminina não é uma invenção da prática do filme documentário. Conhecemos essa prática dos importantes trabalhos documentais de Agnès Varda ou Chantal Akerman, e também de performers predominantemente femininas das décadas de 1960 e 1970, como Gina Pane ou Marina Abramovic, que encenaram a participação na vida, corpos e sentimentos das mulheres através da arte performativa.

E o que o cinema documental feminista como intervenção tem a oferecer no sentido de um cinema participativo? É aqui que quero voltar aos anos 1960, desta vez ao cineasta “feminista” ou “queer” Pier Paolo Pasolini e seu **Comizi d'amore** (1964). No documentário de Eleanora Danco, **N'capace** (2014), as personagens são apresentadas como se fossem “desfiladas” pela cineasta. Ela as alinha, e muitas vezes as expõe, de modo semelhante a Pasolini. O momento feminista, neste documentário, ocorre quando descobrimos os sofrimentos e os problemas das personagens, como no caso da idosa que, quase “por casualidade” e “participando” da narrativa através da cineasta, relata a história de seu marido abusador.

Um documentário feminista fala por, com e através da personagem. O corpo é usado como uma ferramenta priorizada sobre a tecnologia, incluindo a câmera. Seriam todas essas cenas construídas a partir da presença e da relação das personagens com a equipe de filmagem, ou seria a diretora – que é vista ou ouvida por detrás da câmera – uma extensão do nosso ponto de vista, ou das personagens e da equipe? Acho que o olhar é uma expressão de nossas perspectivas combinadas, as das cineastas com as das personagens. Nós nos fundimos com a personagem mais do que num filme documentário “masculino”, como o de Werner Herzog, que apresenta seus personagens “na frente” de si.

## DEVOLVENDO O OLHAR

O olhar feminino sempre significa devolver o olhar: **eu vejo você me vendo**. O filme pergunta: “como é estar aqui e ser visto?”. Soloway diz, “nós não escrevemos cultura – somos escritos por ela”. Mas o que podemos fazer quando queremos ser o sujeito, e nomear você como objeto? Não se trata de inversão de gênero. É esta a justiça sociopolítica do fazer arte. Isso é política.

Portanto, o olhar feminino e o documentário feminista também são uma ferramenta política. Podemos decidir a jornada de uma heroína. No meu filme **Devoti tutti** (2017), decidi contar a história de Santa Ágata através do seu ponto de vista, fazendo algo que nunca foi feito antes, uma vez que todas as histórias que ouvimos sobre ela só foram contadas por homens. De acordo com o mito, em 251 d.C., na Sicília, Ágata da Catânia, de 14 anos, recebeu uma proposta de casamento do poderoso governador romano Quinciano. Ela se recusou e foi brutalmente punida pela recusa tendo sua mama amputada. Desde então, é venerada na Catânia como a única garota que enfrentou o patriarcado dizendo “não!”. Dar à Ágata uma voz e “devolver o olhar” é uma coisa ousada de se fazer e isso cria muitas complicações, porque estamos diante de questões tão novas como “de quem é a voz” e “sob o ponto de vista de quem?”. Mas, em **Devoti tutti** (2017), eu quero ver Ágata trocar olhares com seus devotos. Como ela se tornou Santa Ágata e como se sentiu com isso?

O cinema nada mais é que farsa, seja documentário ou ficção, e não há distinção entre esses dois domínios exceto por serem formas de arte diferentes. Como colocado pelo filósofo Stanley Cavell, a distinção real não é entre o ficcional e o factual, mas entre o filme como arte e o filme como documento. Mas mesmo esses limites são borrados na prática do documentário feminista, porque essa prática vem de um lugar de emoção encarnada por sobre a ação, de um lugar de participação com o documento do filme – transformando este documento em uma expressão, e de um lugar de fantasia em que pode haver algo como um “não olhar” ou um “olhar verdadeiro” que poderia ser retornado. E, no entanto, todas as farsas e mentiras que o cinema nos conta são reveladoras das muitas verdades da vida.

No primeiro documentário propriamente dito de Robert Flaherty, **Nanook of the north** (1922), tudo foi encenado. “Muitas vezes, é preciso distorcer uma coisa para capturar seu verdadeiro espírito”, disse Flaherty.



## ENTREVISTA COM BERNADETTE WEGENSTEIN

Imagem II – Bernadette Wegenstein



Fonte: <<http://bernadettewegenstein.com>>

**Guilherme Foscolo/Lilian Buonicontro (GF/LB):** *Professor Wegenstein, the body, as well as the gaze and the media, are all core concepts to your theoretical/academic work. In “Body”, your chapter for Mark Hansen’s **Critical Terms for Media Studies** (2010), you claim that the body is a medium, for it is “the source from which different*

*cultural styles of embodiment emerge”. This paves the way for a psychoanalytical perspective, which makes of the “body ego”, as you nicely put it, “a projection of the self as image and, as such, particularly responsive to the world of images”. Recently, though, some scholars and conceptual artists – like Joan Fontcuberta in his book **La Furia de Las Imagenes** (2016) – have pointed out that the contemporary world has been drowned by images that no longer are produced by, circulated by or respond to humans. The question we first would like to ask is how does that reality relate to a body which, as you claim, is “particularly responsive to the world of images”, if it still relates at all? Would you say this inaugurates an era of “disembodiment”?*

**Bernadette Wegenstein (BW):** I think actually the opposite is the case. And that is precisely because of the loss of a connection between body and image since the age of simulation. As you know, it has been a while since Jean Baudrillard talked about this so-called age of simulation, and he did so even before we had virtual reality. The age of simulation is basically the age of the new media revolution or the digital turn. Digital images do not have a “body” and do not necessarily have a connection to any material imprint, like for instance, the loss in cinema of the 35 or 16 mm imprints that had an actual “contact” or “testimonial relationship” with the reality that they recorded. The digital image just has that fitful connection. Precisely so, what happens in this media revolution of the disembodied image is actually even a stronger longing for embodiment. But this embodiment does not necessarily concern the whole body of a person: it can, and very often indeed, only relate to body parts. I actually have written about it in my two books, **Getting Under the Skin** (2006) and **The Cosmetic Gaze** (2012): how about a hundred years ago we would represent the body in this full bodily image, and now we are representing organs, or any other body part, as if it was its own body and its own person. The body part can nowadays step in for the whole thing because it has been fragmented, separated, from the idea of this whole unity. Regardless, there is this kind of swarming for embodiment ongoing in the digital era. I do not think at all that the longing – the desire – to connect a bodily experience with an image has anything to do with the question of how the image has been produced, whether it is digital or analog. I think that in that sense this goes beyond the question of materiality, towards a psychoanalytical perspective, or even a psycho-social one that asks why we produce and long for images tout court. Of



course, now with the digital turn it gets much trickier, because the image can mislead you perhaps more easily, it can misguide you, and it certainly opens up new avenues of production and imagination. You can photoshop yourself or quite anything in an image nowadays, and thus intervene in it. Just like I am intervening in the fabric of the reality of my film **Devoti tutti** (2017), as I am inscribing myself with a voice that I have allowed Saint Agatha to have. These are all artistic ways of embodying the image but this, quite frankly, is not something new. The means are new. It is easier and cheaper to intervene into the image now digitally, but honestly, we were able to do similar things just through painting before. To summarize, what we witness today is that our longing for embodiment responds to this feeling of loss of the body. The more one grows, the more the other also grows.

Imagem III – Capas dos livros **The Cosmetic Gaze** e **Getting Under the Skin**



Fonte: arquivo do autor

**GF/LB:** *If we do live in an age drowned in post-human image-making – in which images are mostly made by automatic machines and not for any obvious human usage, but to feed those same machines and their image-processing softwares – the*

*question of who or what assembles, disassembles, and reassembles the self, a process you describe in your book **Getting Under the Skin** (2006), is posited. In that regard, is it still possible to speak of divergent, bodily ways of producing images? At the same time, does it still make sense to say the flow of images today reflect a male-gaze oriented culture? And, if this is the case, would feminism mean iconoclasm? The task to destroy, or at least resist and recompose those images?*

**BW:** I think what is really exciting about the digital era – whereas I do not speak that there is a big difference in the idea of marrying the image to the body, it just happens no matter the media, whether analogical or digital – is that the digital offers much better and much more diverse ways of assembling the self. It can be done cheaply, you can do it yourself on your computer, you do not need big assets, and, in terms of Capitalism, it actually happens in the peripheral countries: people with a phone only can register, assemble and edit events. Bottomline, I think the digital offers a lot more possibilities to subvert the power system that has been producing the image. This is a very positive development. In that sense, yes, the contemporary flow of images does subvert, question, and redefine more easily and readily a normalized male-gaze oriented culture, but of course that very same culture is also not just dormant but “shoots back” by circulating the male gaze even more, and even more aggressively. Look at the Trump image culture! But the good news is that more feminist images are being circulated and “debated” in this current moment. Feminism acts by resisting and recomposing those images, and thus one might say feminism is exactly iconoclasm. It has already been discussed by Julia Kristeva, for instance in one very early work in the 1970’s (**Woman’s Time**), and Simone de Beauvoir, earlier than that, and now more recently Luce Irigaray in **The Sex Which is not One** (1977), these were all thinkers who were saying essentially one thing, which is: there has never been a true or real feminist iconoclasm. So, they had first to resort to language and make room in an already existent power structure, and then to rewrite it and insert a new point of view. As a result, these interventions can be radical, can be disturbing, they have to be surprising, at times they even have to be uncomfortable because what the norm and the canon want is for everything to stay the same. So, a certain pressure by a feminist claim or intervention is necessary. Just like in the #metoo movement, for instance. Overall, I think the digital age has spurred the acceleration

of feminist movements. There are now more ways to re-inscribe oneself to actually enter into the very thick fabric of the macro-history and of master narratives.

**GF/LB:** *Can you speak a bit about how your work as a cinematographer relates to your theoretical work?*

**BW:** In my work as a filmmaker I have the privilege and pleasure to see certain storylines coming together the way I want to see them, which diverges from the standard macro and historical way of producing storylines. So yes, most of my theoretical work translates to the way I tell a story on film. I always try to tell stories from the emotional point of view, as opposed to imposing a pre-given linear point of view as storyline. As a result, I like to tell a story in a non-linear way, with parallel stories told at the same time, and not all of them answered, or in perfect harmony with each other. In a given *cinema-verité* scene, what I do is to analyze the scene from within, which means from the moment I step into it, and then I try to tell what I feel from within it, figuring out where the protagonists' emotions lie, whether people are conducting like in my current film **We Conduct** (em fase de produção), performing surgery like in **The Good Breast** (2016) or living a cult like in **Devoti tutti** (2017). So, filming for me is about looking for that sort of emotional or sympathetic angle through which people are engaged. The cosmetic gaze is this gaze that puts things in order. The verb *kosmein* means to arrange, to put in order, and this is precisely what I try to do in my films: to arrange things in a way that it makes sense emotionally to the characters from their point of view, even if these points of view are in conflict with each other. This actually is a process that begins with the cinematography, meaning the way we depict a reality, but that also takes place – and to a high degree – during the editing phase. Then, of course, there is also the question of who you give a voice to. Who is your main character? Or do you have more? I try to give a voice to people who have not been heard, or perhaps not seen in a given profession, such as women conductors, and in some cases who have never had a voice – as is the case with Saint Agatha – and this is specially liberating for me.

**GF/LB:** *In “Returning the Gaze”, a piece you wrote for the Viewfinder magazine (June 2017/No107), you reflect about Jill Soloway’s concept of “feeling-seeing” as a tool to promote emotion over action. We would like to ask you how “feeling-seeing” relates to feminist film-making.*

**BW:** Well, most of the time feelings are invisible, in the sense that people do not normally go on to talk openly about what they are feeling. Documentary-films have this very specific feature, it puts you close to real life people and makes possible for capturing people’s feelings and understanding how those feelings work in the moment. Differently from many other art forms, documentary-films can do this in a very straight-forward way, with practically zero filters between the observer and the feelings being communicated. This is why I think film is really a very psychological art, because it can actually access our emotional realm. Where the art comes in is when narration, including dramaturgy, music etc. reveals the “true nature” of an emotion by translating it from one realm of specific perception into another realm of general meaning. Art is when you observe something small, something specific, but can now make it relevant in other realms, perhaps even in all realms, like a religion almost. Films like any other art form is capable of revealing feelings we hardly put in words, because it is too painful, too difficult. Feelings of protection, hatred and non-acceptance, for instance, are often the reason for a lot of suffering. Thus, I am much more interested in being present when a protagonist feels something like that rather than them just talk about it – I am interested in translating a feeling into something visible, so that it can be.

**GF/LB:** *Today we are pushing beyond the binary function male-female, and perhaps this extends to the gaze as well. We would like you to comment on the possibility of those “diverging”, if we can call it that way, gazes – as gazes of “difference”, and how film-making can bring to light those divergent gazes.*

**BW:** What is really exciting about the female gaze is that it generally propagates multiple points of view, rather than having just this one – master-narrative – point of view. And the multiplicity is very much a female subject position. Historically, in opposition to the oneness of being a man, it had to do several salto-mortales and to

attract a lot of attention, in what Kristeva claims to be at times an “obsessive subject position”. For that same reason it has historically been psychopathologized as hysterical. The female gaze affirms itself despite, or even against, the laws of storytelling, because those laws generally resist the multiplicity of voices. And with that of course it poses all kinds of interesting questions for storytelling. Look at a film like **Holy Smoke** (1999) by Jane Campion. A woman with a dysfunctional family background who falls prey to an Indian cult gets put into a rehab situation, where her supervisor abuses her. Despite the fact that we see abuse and dysfunction in all realms of the stories presented in this film there is an attention to the emotional and absurdist quality of all protagonists.

**GF/LB:** *So, one could say the female gaze is about interrupting linear repetition and producing non-linear difference, to borrow from the Deleuzian arsenal?*

**BW:** Yes, absolutely. You know Deleuze’s books **Cinema 1** and **Cinema 2** are very important for thinking the female gaze. Especially the concept Deleuze calls the affection-image, because affection comes from the face, from the close up. And close ups are at the heart of female-gaze productions, because it is a tool for capturing emotions through attention to detail. The real filmic advantage here is that you can cut, focus on the detail and let it speak for itself. Now, while action-image is promoted by mainstream cinema, it has been a while it is in crisis. In this recent film *Black Panther*, I believe that there is a certain cinematography which is more feminist than it used to be the case for such action films. This is to be credited to the cinematographer, who is a woman [Rachel Morrison], and I think her camera is very detail oriented, more so than one would usually see in an action film like this.

**GF/LB:** *What do you think are the greatest challenges in producing feminist films in a gender-biased industry? Also, is there any theoretical work you develop with the crew prior to shooting?*

**BW:** I think the greatest challenges are finding funding because film is a very expensive medium. In the U.S. we have funding institutions that fund films from the margins, either with marginal themes or with women behind the camera, as directors,

editors etc. I was just at a funding meeting in Vienna Austria, where you can earn points for having a topic that promotes minorities, and also points for working with women and other minorities in the crew. There are such political actions that need to happen to develop a new film language. In terms of how I work with a crew: I prefer working with a woman cinematographer just because I have felt more connected with women's points of view. But I work with many men, as well. The important thing is to be honest with each other, to hear each other, and mainly to respect each other in a film crew. It's like a family.

**GF/LB:** *Professor Wegenstein, could you comment on contemporary film productions which are currently “returning the gaze”, as you put it?*

**BW:** I borrowed this term from Jill Soloway who created the well-known series **Trans-Parents** and **I Love Dick** for mainstream television in the U.S. It means that you actually do not just expose people and their view-points, like for instance transgendered people, but that you also “bring the narratives home to them”. You let them have the last word.

**GF/LB:** *Lastly, from body as medium to body as machines: would you say those modern interventions in the body, from cosmetic to prosthetics, interfere with the image of the human body, since we might be on the cusp of producing a real post-human body which images fail to capture?*

**BW:** The idea that we only started now intervening in the body because we have modern technologies is not accurate. The body has always been a construct of both culture and nature or biology. And we have always intervened in it even in the distant past. Just take it from Egyptians huge pyramids and mummification processes – post-humanity is not something we have invented in the 21<sup>st</sup> century just because we have more invasive and minimalist, and therefore invisible (for instance in cosmetic surgery where we cannot see the incisions anymore), ways of intervening in our bodies. I do not think there has ever been a time that we did not want to intervene, the body has always been used as instrument, as a display, and even as channeling device for things eternal, theological, metaphysical. But of course, although the image of the human body has always persisted, it could be going through some



specific developments now. Today we can easily imagine our bodies with different implants more so than say even twenty years ago, and then it will be a question of what technologies are available out there. The body-standard-image and this drive to change it, though, poses to us some contemporary problems. In cosmetic surgery, there are many things you are allowed to do and much more you are not allowed to do. These patterns you should follow even before you reach the surgery table. And there is also the biopolitical question of who owns a body or its body parts.

### **BERNADETTE WEGENSTEIN:**

#### FEMINIST CINEMA UNDER PRODUCTION

#### ABSTRACT

Bernadette Wegenstein is an Austrian-born linguist and documentary filmmaker. She received her PhD in Romance Languages and Linguistics from Vienna University, following her studies in Linguistics at the same University, Semiotics with Umberto Eco at the *Università degli Studi di Bologna*, Anthropology at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* in Paris, and then completed a post-doc in Comparative Literature and Film at Stanford University. She published the books **Getting Under the Skin: Body and Media Theory** and **The Cosmetic Gaze: Body Modification and the Construction of Beauty** (both by MIT Press). She is currently a professor of media studies and a researcher at Johns Hopkins University, where she founded the Center for Advanced Media Studies. Together with her Center she has organized an annual feminist artist-in-residency program with the Baltimore Museum of Art, which has featured artist residencies with Sharon Hayes, Mary Reid Kelley, and Tamar Guimarães among others. Bernadette is also an organizer for the first Austrian Human Rights Film Festival *thishumanworld*, an Executive Board Member for the Austrian WWTF Vienna Science and Technology Funding Programme, a project reviewer for the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the European Research Council, an Executive Board Member of International Comparative Literature Association, and a peer reviewer for *Theory, Culture and Society*. She will be the Vice-President of NeMLA (North Eastern Modern Language Association) as of 2019. She also produced and directed the documentary-films

**Made Over in America** (55 min Icarusfilms, 2008), **See You Soon Again** (65 min The Cinema Guild, 2012), **The Good Breast** (90 min Icarusfilm, 2016), and **Devoti tutti**, which explores and recounts the myth of Saint Agatha from a feminist point of view, currently in post-production. Her fifth documentary, **We Conduct**, is about the U.S. orchestral conductor Marin Alsop and her quest to diversify this all male-profession. The present text consists of the translation of an article and an unpublished interview. The interview was held in September 2018.

Keywords: Cinema. Feminism. Body.