

Paula Chambers

Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance: Activating Feral Materiality

Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance (2018) (The Narration)

Folding chairs, like women, are mindful of the space they take up. Packed away, flat and hidden, unseen and forgotten until next needed, then, ah ha, that useful folding chair makes a reappearance. In the garden, in the park, for camping, picnics and outdoor parties and festivals. For protests, demonstrations and sit-ins, for squatters and street life, for recreational fishing and other antiquated sporting events, the folding chair has upheld its worth.

Light, portable, functional and convenient, tidy, discreet and user friendly the folding chair surpasses the more cumbersome traditional deckchair whose renowned complication of construction and heavy wooden frame and canvas seating, has a whiff of awkward masculinity, the stiff upper lip of the Edwardian middle-class. Sitting too is ungainly in a deckchair, the hammock-like canvas invites sprawling indignity, the folding chair however, requires the sitter to maintain posture, slender armrests, a sprung seat and upright back provides a contained and proscriptive seated experience.

Like feminism, the folding chair has proved durable and enduring. Fashions and attitudes change, the invention of the ubiquitous molded plastic chair, most often seen in white, would seem to have usurped the classic folding chair. But wait; a revival, antique shops and vintage stores stock originals in 1960's floral prints. Tesco's, Asda, Argos and other low end shopping emporiums, have also rediscovered the folding chair, in deckchair stripes and plain bold colours, the utilitarian folding chair has made a come back.

Yet in certain circumstances the folding chair is also unstable; lean too far in one direction or another and it is liable to tip over and dislodge the sitter in what is often a comedy moment. So folding chairs have humor too. Witness the hilarity of Uncle Albert, one moment sitting comfortably, bottle of cheap lager in hand, the

next, upon leaning too far to receive a half cooked hot dog, or plate of wilting salad, deposited upon the ground in an unseemly and undignified manner. Nylon shirt and slacks awry, mismatching sports socks and sandals formally unnoticed but now pointing skyward much to the amusement of previously bored family members. The potential instability of the folding chair is disruptive and unsuspecting, it takes you unawares.

The twenty-first century folding chair now has small metal catches at each side as a safety measure against sudden closure. The chairs from the 1960s and 70s had no such safety measures, they were not so community minded and were known to snap shut suddenly, the spring mechanism ensuring considerable pain and often resulting in trapped fingers and bar shaped bruises on backs of thighs and backs of heads. One could get stuck in a folded folding chair. Yet the aggressive tendency of the folding chair has not dulled its appeal, in fact the opposite, it almost seems a shame that safety catches have been introduced as the uncertainty of sitting, the added element of potential danger made the experience of using a folding chair one that could not be taken for granted.

So, like women, the folding chair is not what it might at first appear to be. The slightly prim utility and convenience hides humor and potential danger. There is an autonomy to the adaptability of the folding chair, one that cannot be forced to be what it is not. Time has not relegated the folding chair to quaint nostalgia, nor has it been immortalised as modernist icon. Surpassing class, the folding chair is equally at home sipping Prosecco at Proms in the Park as it is at a council house back garden barbecue. And like feminism, the folding chair will continue to serve a purpose whilst we still need it; supportive and ultimately portable the folding chair comes with us as we head up the feminist resistance.

Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance: Activating Feral Materiality

'For protests, demonstrations and sit-ins, for squatters and street life'.

In an essay titled 'Witness It: Activism, Art and the Feminist Performative Subject', Hilary Robinson (2019) identifies what she terms the intentional feminist activist performative gesture to camera (Robinson, 2019; p.245). And whilst Robinson's feminist activist is discussed in terms of her subjectivity, it is my intention here to propose that the intentional activist gesture may also be performed by objects, for material things are political too. Political activism has a material culture of its own, from the objects woven into the chain link fence at Greenham Common women's peace camp (1981-2000), the white headscarves worn by the Mothers of the Disappeared in Argentina (1977-2006), to the pink knitted Pussy Hats worn by thousands at the mass protests against the inauguration of Donald Trump in 2017, and the brightly coloured handmade balaclavas of Russian performance group Pussy Riot (Chambers, 2020), amongst other such examples. These objects exist as material things, yet also as the documentation of their performative role in the political actions which they have come to re-present. In fact it could be seen that the distribution of this documentation of the performative actions of these material objects have come to be the intentional gesture to camera that defines them as activist. 'Is the circulation of documentation what transforms an otherwise mundane objects into an activist one? Is the documentation (the creation and circulation of photos, videos, websites) an activist practice itself?' (Harvey, 2014; np). Images (static or moving) have political force, they formulate evidence and establish strategies; they are material things in and of themselves. The activation of feral materiality as proposed by Meskimmon's (2019) work of art, what art work does, in *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* (2017), performs as an intentional gesture of resistance and dissent.

Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance is a short film originally made in a PowerPoint slide show format which features a black folding chair with the word FEMINIST stenciled on the back in white. The chair seemingly inhabits a range of seating arrangements, from the formal to the feral. The chair itself was rescued from a roadside collection point in Halifax, West Yorkshire. I sprayed the frame black to match the fabric seat and added the stenciled text. The chair was photographed from many angles in a makeshift set up in my living room and photoshopped into images of various seating situations I sourced from Google images. The film has an ironic overlaid narration that aligns the ubiquity of the folding chair to the resilience of women as feminist subjects. The folding chair acts as a stand-in for the female (feminist) body, yet is also a material embodiment of feminism; to be a feminist in every situation one finds oneself in requires commitment and stamina. As a film, *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* manifests Robinson's (2019) intentional feminist activist performative gesture to camera, as material evidence of a folding chair enacting strategies of resistance. The chair, in its myriad of seating scenarios, becomes the feminist performative object.

This essay investigates the potential for feral materiality, the found object as it performs as artwork, to be analysed within the context of new materialist thinking around the agency of objects, as feminist, as activist, as political, as resistant, and as disruptive. I analyse *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* as politically vibrant evidenced through the form and materiality of its manifestations; as feral materiality, as performative gesture, as film (the document) and as evidence of material activism.

If objects and materials can be seen to have agency, as new materialist thinking argues (Ahmed, 2006: Bennett, 2010: Boscagli, 2014: Coole and Frost, 2010: Miller, 2010), then I am asking, what kind of agency is enacted by objects and materials that occupy the boundary spaces of culture and society? Developing Maurizia Boscagli's (2014) proposition that garbage is the outlaw underside of consumer culture and as such is both wild and dangerous, this analysis of *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* investigates the liminality, threshold spaces and

activist social relations materialised in this short film. An understanding of materiality as vibrant and agentic underpins the analysis of this essay; in particular feral materiality as it performs as artwork. The specific materials and objects understood as feral (wild, undomesticated and dangerous), is of importance in relation to my proposition that the activation of feral materiality as artwork enacts the intentional performative gesture. And that the activation of feral materiality as a feminist activist gesture is one in which the inter-relational encounter between (feminist) subject and (domestic) object is disruptive of domesticity itself. Artwork made from domestic objects sourced from the street or from the economies of second-hand exchange, the feral materiality of this essay; perform as a materialisation of feminist social relations. In the still images from *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* analysed here, it is the specific nature of materiality that perform the threshold spaces of uncertainty and danger as a protest against domestication. Meskimmon (2011), conceptualises threshold spaces as transitional states both physically and metaphorically, states that can be applied to artworks that fracture an understanding of 'being at home' through their disruption of domestic materiality (Meskimmon, 2011: p.32). Domestication implies a process whereby a subject is tamed, and trained to undertake the tasks associated with home life. The domestic object as feral materiality can be seen to have escaped the confines of home and as such perform now as a subversive material embodiment of 'not-being-at-home'.

Agency as attributed to both (feminist) subjects and (domestic) objects is a key proposition of this essay, and as materialised in my sculptural practice. Developing new materialist thinking on the intersubjective relationship between subjects and objects, how a shared sense of agency forms and informs the material encounter of both, I argue that the unruly agency of the found object as feral materiality performing as artwork, is an embodiment of the disruptive agency of women as a feminist strategy of resistance and dissent. Following Pil and Galia Kollektiv's (2010) proposition that sculpture and installation (and other artworks made from found objects) are performative in and of themselves, I apply this notion of performativity to the folding chair featured in the film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* as an intentional activist gesture.

The feral materialities that I am analysing here are the liminal objects that occupy the threshold spaces of urban and rural environments, objects that unsettle and fracture an understanding of 'being at home' through their disruption of domestic materiality. If feral can be defined as that which was once domesticated but has now returned to the wild, that which operates on the margins or thresholds of society and culture, then going feral is a process of liminality, a boundary practice that disrupts our understanding of the stability of domestication as a one-way process. Feral materiality is the abandoned, cast out and undomesticated object, the liminal and unsettling stuff that haunts the marginal spaces of consumer culture. The materiality of found objects exposes vulnerabilities, it is stuff at its most uncertain, vulnerable and wild, the found object is the outlaw underside of consumer culture, a threat to order, it has a confrontational quality (Boscagli, 2014). The transgressive and unstable material culture of domesticity as the marginal and affective found object, in *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* is presented back to us as a reclamation of the detritus of the domestic, as a protest against domestication.

Importantly, *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* was created as an intentionally political artwork. As such, I argue that new materialist thinking, grounded in the physical (the matter or materiality of both subjects and objects), can be analysed as vibrant or agentic of feminist activism. Feral materiality made manifest as feminist activism performs the social relations of political activism, it is the stuff through which things are made to happen. A material transformation takes place via an event and makes possible a radically different re-articulation of the object, 'a transformation that changes altogether not only the usage of the object but also it alters the set of relations that produce its meaning in this context' (Kallianos, 2014). The making of artwork from found domestic objects as a feminist strategy of disruption and resistance materialises activism through the *work* of art I propose. Feminist agency, both that of the maker and of the objects that are transformed through making, is collaborative and inter-relational. The film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* activates feral materiality whereby the found domestic object in its

performative role as artwork becomes the material embodiment of domestic disruption as a feminist strategy of resistance; feminist agency is materialised through the dynamic transformation of the material culture of domesticity with activist intent.

'The potential instability of the folding chair is disruptive and unsuspecting, it takes you unawares'.

An analysis of two still images from the short film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* guides the following discussion on feral materiality as a protest against domestication. In relation to the arguments of this essay the analysis of these two images visually embody the found object as feral materiality, including the folding chair in context, the specific qualities of its materiality, and its staging and presentation of the film as document, evidence of a feminist activist performative gesture.

[Insert Figure 1]

In the 'still' from the film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance*, 'For Squatters and Street Life', (see figure 1), the folding chair is seen loitering on the street in the company of two office chairs and a metal folding chair that appear to have been improperly discarded. The folding chair faces its discarded colleagues as if engaging them in conversation; the chairs take on a personality specific to their materiality, they appear animated and autonomous, dangerous and wild, as if they have escaped from the confines of domestication.

The scenario in which the four chairs find themselves appears to be outside a garage, there is a locker containing gas bottles with a sign that reads 'Danger, Keep Out'. All four chairs are black; they appear like housebreakers or street artists, dressed incognito for acts of nighttime vandalism. The illegal act of graffiti spray painting as a material intervention into public space is one that Schacter (2014) terms 'insurgent ornamentation', a term that could perhaps also be applied to the documentation of feral materiality as it inhabits the public space of the street. In figure 1, the metal chair and the two office chairs are

scruffy. The feminist folding chair in comparison appears smartly dressed, perhaps she is in the process of organising a strike or agitating her redundant colleagues for disruptive action. Yet the informal, even casual attitude of these chairs, abandoned and no longer of practical use, might suggest a more benevolent act on behalf of the feminist folding chair. Perhaps the other chairs have found themselves homeless due to a life of domesticity that has somehow evaded them, the folding chair offers squatting as a strategy of reclamation and redemption.

[Insert Figure 2]

In the 'still' from the film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance, 'For Protests, Demonstrations and Sit-ins'*, (see figure 2), the folding chair is seen in the company of two white plastic moulded chairs (the Monobloc), of the kind that have become ubiquitous. The street is deserted of people, the chairs are seemingly its only occupants. The street itself is ambiguous in both location and time. 'The Monobloc is one of the few objects I can think of that is free of any specific context. Seeing a white plastic chair in a photograph offers you no clues about where or when you are' (Zuckerman, 2011; np). The material qualities of the situation in which the chair finds itself would seem to offer the possibility of past, present and future activisms, alongside its Monobloc companions, the folding chair stages a material sit-in.

Like the sit-in protests first instigated by the US civil rights movement in 1960 such as that undertaken by African American students in Greensboro, North Carolina (Hohenstein, 2020), the folding chair claims the liminal space of the street as if bringing to attention the need for a feminist reappraisal of domestic working conditions; the chair is unafraid to voice her opinions. The sit-in is a form of non-violent direct action that can involve one or more people who occupy an area for protest to call for political, social or economic change. Protestors gather conspicuously in a space refusing to move until their demands are met. The folding chair and her Monobloc companions are conspicuous in their occupation of the otherwise deserted street, and like old women gossiping

in the street, they exchange information, tactics and strategies. Like the ubiquitous and seemingly timeless Monobloc, the folding chair is light and portable, it can be taken with her to other situations where there is a need for feminist intervention.

Found objects bear the scars of their use and misuse; the folding chair featured in my film was very dusty when I found it but otherwise in a remarkably good condition for an object that had been discarded. It was still useable and bore only light scratches on the arms and folding legs, which were easily covered by the black paint I applied. The previous owner of the chair had chosen not to skip this object, but had rather left it by the side of the road for possible collection by someone who might find a use for it; that someone was me. Found objects such as my folding chair have ambiguous domestic biographies, I do not know who or how many have used them, where or why they were used, yet they resonate a domesticity that is at once past, present and future. The folding chair has been activated through its reclamation and re-presentation as the lead in the film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance*. It has taken on the role of the feminist performative subject. Through its activation via the medium of film as document, the chair enacts the dynamic cycle of use, reuse and misuse of feral materiality.

Driving and walking around the back streets of any town, city or countryside area in the UK, one encounters a great many abandoned or discarded items of furniture. These domestic objects take on personality, they slump or stand proud, defeated or defiant in their out-of-placeness, they appear to have gone feral. My usage of the term feral is one that doesn't have to operate solely outdoors; a feral animal may live on the boundaries of domestic space, choosing to be indoors or out yet still retaining the undomesticated state that defines it as feral; so too with furniture and domestic objects that have been abandoned, cast out or discarded. The material culture of domesticity, most often encountered indoors, in the private spaces of home, becomes transgressive when encountered on the street, in alleyways or by roadsides, out in the public realm. Domestic objects encountered in these threshold spaces are always on the verge of becoming valueless, they are objects at the borders of commodified matter

(Boscagli, 2014), stuff that has been withdrawn from the cycles of consumption and has undergone the structural shift in value implicit in the process of casting out (Crewe and Gregson, 2003: p.167). This devaluation of materiality encountered in the public realm can be seen as in direct opposition to the binary of public/private, in which the public is given precedence and value over and above that of the private.

'The added element of potential danger made the experience of using a folding chair one that could not be taken for granted'.

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED, 2018) defines 'feral' as 'in a wild state, especially after escape from captivity or domestication', including in brackets '(especially of an animal)' (OED, 2018). It goes on to add, 'behaving in a wildly undisciplined and antisocial way' (OED, 2018). This alignment of wildness, escape, and undomesticated antisocial behavior with animals is a theme that positions those whose behavior and lifestyle is perceived as threatening and potentially dangerous. The labeling of disenfranchised and disaffected people as a feral underclass pathologises the representation and spaces of poverty so that, 'council estates were abject border zones within the state which were not only *liminal* with regard to wider societal norms and values but were actively *antisocial* spaces' (Tyler, 2013, p.160 italics original). And although this notion of a feral underclass has been applied to people, it might equally be applied to the liminal materiality of the (perceived) antisocial spaces of council estates and other border zones, spaces inhabited by those that do not matter, and by implication, by matter that does not matter. The sofa on the street, the discarded fridge or mattress are as much feral objects as the subjects who abandon them. The folding chair in the street scenes of the film stills analysed above, occupies just such liminal and anti-social spaces as those identified by Tyler (2013). In figure 1, the folding chair is seen in the company of discarded and broken office chairs who appear to loiter as an unruly and disorganised group in a manner that could be perceived as threatening if the chairs were subjects rather than objects. In figure 2, the folding chair occupies the liminal space of the street with more confidence; the chairs might even be seen to be in the process of planning, or plotting, an act of resistance. The low economic, social and cultural value of the

folding chair, its Monobloc companions, and the discarded office chairs in figure 1, contribute to their status as feral materiality. An antique upholstered chair abandoned in a similar manner would not have the same resonance of law breaking as the folding chair and its feral comrades, for the objects of material culture are equally complicit in the actions and events arising out of the social and historical injustices of the British class system.

[Insert Figure 3]

My analysis of the feral object and processes of going feral are a development of Attfield's (2000) concept of 'feral design'. Attfield uses the term to define a sub-genre of objects that were produced in response to the needs and desires of a classed and gendered consumer, the mass production of domestic objects that have been relegated by design history to the arena of low taste and kitsch. It is very often this genre of objects that find their way onto the street, or into a skip, deemed to have low value by those who discard them. Yet these abandoned and discarded feral objects are a rich material source for artists such as myself who make sculpture from found domestic objects. Whiteley (2011) identifies the process of sourcing the discarded objects of consumer culture for re-use as art through the use of the term 'feral scavenging' to describe the skip raiding, dumpster diving and tip dwelling strategies of artists who work with a 'bric-a-brac sensibility' (Whiteley, 2011: p.56). Crewe and Gregson (2003) analyse another range of spaces within which these cast-out objects come to be reclaimed, charity shops, car boot sales and sites of retro retailing. These liminal spaces of consumer culture, they propose, are an in-between space and time that offer that possibility of object rehabilitation or redemption. As artwork, these feral objects scavenged or salvaged from the liminal spaces of consumer culture, whether from skip, roadside, car boot sale or charity shop, have an agency above and beyond their origins at point of manufacture. These objects have multiple spatialities and temporalities all of which they perform when encountered as artwork. Boscagli's (2014) analysis of the specific agentic qualities of the found object as feral, is one whereby the conceptual position that garbage occupies as unruly and potentially dangerous stuff disrupts the cycle of commodity culture

due to its liminal status as neither desirable consumer object, nor as waste at the end of its useful life. This proposition that feral materiality is potentially dangerous due to its liminal status applied to an analysis of the film stills from *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance*, identifies the specific material qualities of the folding chair that I originally found by the roadside, and that of the other chairs in the stills, as agentic of the multiple spatialities and temporalities that define them as feral.

[Insert Figure 4]

Boscagli (2014: p.227-268), identifies the resonance of trash as liminal objects that upset the narratives of consumer culture through cycles of use, reuse and abandonment, as such becoming abject and marginal but with the potential for a radical rereading as feral materiality. Abject materiality here, as that which is cast out, corresponds to Douglas' (1966) identification of dirt as matter out of place, as a threat to order. Developing Douglas' analysis, garbage, Boscagli proposes is 'a full affront to ordered materiality, is stuff at its most uncertain, vulnerable and wild' (Boscagli, 2014: p.227). Domestic materiality, already culturally denigrated as homely, ordinary and boring, encountered outside the home is exposed as potentially valueless. As junk, the discarded or abandoned object illuminates the uncertainty and liminality of the cycles of commodity exchange. 'Each home's stuff, ...becomes junk outside its domestic shelter: outside, each object appears disposable and vulnerable, its presence, permanence, and meaning suddenly uncertain' (Ibid: p.227). The propensity of stuff to become junk, to become garbage outside the home troubles the historical object-subject split and offers instead the potential for subject-object entanglements. The liminal status of junk Boscagli proposes, neither one thing nor another, yet still affective and embodied, is trash as a threat to order, 'the outlaw underside of consumer culture' (Ibid: p.227). Junk as the discarded materiality of domestic life is stuff as objects at the borders of commodified matter.

Stuff refers to those objects that have enjoyed their moment of consumer allure, but have now shed their commodity glamour – without yet being quite cast aside. They exist brazenly as neither one thing nor the other: not quite saleable. And certainly not garbage, not monumental or important objects, but still bearing traces of a past, of desire, of life, and of the interactions between subject and object that formed them and wore them out. (Boscagli, 2014: p.6)

The found domestic objects, the feral materiality of my short film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* are those identified by Boscagli as not monumental or important, yet certainly not garbage, they are objects we are not ready to let go of, or are not ready to let go of us. They have been reclaimed, or reactivated as artwork, and it is this activation that gives these objects political agency.

In *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Douglas (1966) identified dirt as being matter out of place, the transgressive spatial materiality that functions as the necessary stuff of social structure. The abjection or casting out of dirt defines boundaries both physical (bodily and spatially) and social (moral and religious). Transgression of these boundaries as imposed by taboo or law making, brings with it the threat of social abjection and as such dirt becomes the stuff through which societies self-regulate. However, for Douglas, the disruptive nature of dirt as a threat to order also has the potential for power, as it is in the liminal or threshold spaces that boundaries inevitably produce that the transgressive agency of subjects may manifest (Douglas, 1966: p.114). Douglas' identification of dirt as matter out of place, the transgressive materiality of threshold states and spaces with transformative potential, in *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance*, materialises the disruptive potential of feminist activism through the performative agency of feral materiality itself.

'There is an autonomy to the adaptability of the folding chair, one that cannot be forced to be what it is not'.

Meskimmon (2011) proposes that artwork made from found domestic objects embody the notion of the threshold through their transformation of materiality,

the processes that enable a change of state, (art making) reconfigure sensory perception and as such does not depict memory or affect, but performs them (Meskimmon, 2011: p.37). This notion of the performativity of domestic materiality engenders a phenomenological understanding of the liminality of junk and of its transformative potential when presented as artwork.

We recognise the found objects and recall domestic interiors, we circumnavigate the installation through out habitual knowledge of the scale and mass of the doorways and the furnishings. Our attention is drawn to the extreme juxtaposition between found and fracture, temporarily our bodies are stopped, remembering is fragmented, the threshold is violated. (Meskimmon, 2011: p.37)

If, as Meskimmon proposes, the materiality of artwork made from found objects has the potential to locate us as subjects, and in the process to disrupt an embodied understanding of being at home, how might feral materiality, the stuff of 'not-being-at-home', spatially, physically and conceptually liminal, disrupt and disturb notions of home as a site of comfort, security and relational subjective encounter. And how might the domestic associations of this specific form of materiality, re-presented as activist feminist art practice, perform the protest against domestication proposed in this essay?

[Insert Figure 5]

Meskimmon (2019) in 'Art Matters: Feminist Corporeal-Materialist Aesthetics' adopts Barad's (2007) use of the word entanglements as a way of making visual the dynamic intersubjective encounter between matter and meaning; an embodied encounter where agency can be ascribed to both subject and object and where neither is less imperative than the other. As art work, agency, Meskimmon proposes, is the doing, the *work* of art, and as such can be experienced as a mode of experimental and material thought. In the film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance*, the *work* of art is presented in the form of film, the document as evidence of activist practice proposed by Harvey (2014). The

film materialises Meskimmon's dynamic intersubjective encounter through the recontextualisation of feral materiality as politicised objects.

In its form as the *work* of art, feral materiality offers the potential to be transformative of the ways in which we understand the material culture of domesticity as vibrant and agentic of feminist activism. The understanding of materiality as agentic breaks down the hierarchy of subject/object relations through the interrelational and intersubjective encounter between (feminist) artist and feral materiality as the *work* of art. Dimitrakaki (2013) asks how might art-making as labour might constitute practices of refusal, the flight from domestic space and reproductive work (Dimitrakaki, 2013: p.59). I propose that *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* materialises the disruptive and resistant encounter with feral materiality as performative of just such practices of refusal, of not-being-at-home as the *work* of art as a protest against domestication.

Materialisation implies a coming-into-being that is both material and agentic; an active process of making and of making things happen. The material encounter also proposed by Coole and Frost (2010) in which living matter structures natural and social worlds before, during and after they are encountered by rational actors (Coole and Frost, 2010: p.19). This material encounter is vital to an understanding of feminist activism performed through feral materiality, especially so for a feminist politics that sets out to challenge normative assumptions and established structures of power. I propose that it is through the *work* of art that just such a feminist political challenge can be materialised.

Conceiving matter as possessing its own modes of self-transformation, self-organisation, and directedness, and thus no longer as simply passive or inert, disturbs the conventional sense that agents are exclusively humans who possess the cognitive abilities, intentionality, and freedom to make autonomous decisions... (Coole and Frost, 2010: p.10)

Additionally, the film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* materialises Elizabeth Grosz's (2010) proposition for a feminist strategy of embodied

freedom where the indetermination of matter liberates life from the constraints of the present, whereby '...the ability to make (or refuse to make) activities (including language and systems of representation and value) one's own, that is, to integrate the activities one undertakes into one's history, one's becoming' (Grosz, 2010: p.152). *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* is an artwork that materialises the agency of both subject and object as a transformative activity that has the 'capacity or potentiality to act both in accordance with one's past as well as "out of character," in a manner that surprises' (Grosz, 2010: p.152). As a feminist act of autonomy and freedom, the making of artwork from feral materiality is just such a transformative action where memory and history materialise as the interrelationality of (feminist) subject and (domestic) object in a manner that surprises and offers the possibilities of exceeding the past whilst still acknowledging its presence in the present.

The film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* as evidence of the performativity of feral materiality analysed here as the feminist activist gesture to camera, has the potential to be world making, whereby, 'The world is not a thing out there, but one in which 'we' are formed and of which we are formative; the strength of feminist corporeal-materialism is its ability to imagine, think and make differently from within' (Meskimmon, 2019: p.366). It is this ability to imagine, think and make differently from within, that my film *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance* materialises through the activation of feral materiality. Homeplace, as bell hooks (1990) so famously reminds us, can be a site of resistance. Resistance can be against all kinds of things that are like war; opposition to being invaded, occupied, assaulted and destroyed by the system (hooks, 1990: p.80). A feminist resistance as the activist *work* of art made from feral materiality is, I propose, imperative, urgent, and dynamic. As a shared agency between (feminist) subject and (domestic) object, the protest against domestication performed in *Folding Chair for the Feminist Resistance*, materialises Robinson's (2019) intentional feminist activist performative gesture to camera. The film as document is the evidence of the political force of images and material things, whereby the feminist performative subject/object is made manifest through the activation of feral materiality.

[Insert Figure 6]

References

Ahmed, Sara (2006) *Queer Phenomenology: Orientation, Objects, Others*. Durham and London. Duke University Press

Attfield, Judy (2000) *Wild Things: The Material Culture of Everyday Life*. Oxford. Berg

Barad, Karen (2007) *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham and London. Duke University Press

Bennett, Jane (2010) *Vibrant Matter: a Political Ecology of Things*. Durham and London. Duke University Press

Boscagli, Maurizia (2014) *Stuff Theory: Everyday Objects, Radical Materialism*. London. Bloomsbury

Chambers, Paula (2020) *Materialising Dissent: Pussy Riot's Balaclavas, Material Culture and Feminist Agency*. In *Feminist Art Activisms and Artivisms*. Deepwell, Katy (ed.) Amsterdam. Valiz

Coole, Diana and Frost, Samantha (2010) *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics*. Durham and London. Duke University Press

Crewe, Louise and Gregson, Nicky (2003) *Second-Hand Cultures*. Oxford. Berg

Dimitrakaki, Angela (2013) *Gender, ArtWork and the Global Imperative: A Materialist Feminist Critique*. Manchester. Manchester University Press

Douglas, Mary (1966) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. Hove, UK. Psychology Press

Grosz, Elizabeth (2010) *Feminism, Materialism, and Freedom in New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*. Coole, Diana and Frost, Samantha (eds.) Durham and London. Duke University Press

Harvey, Penny (2014) *Curating the Activist Object*.
<http://www.activistobject.wordpress.com> (accessed 23rd December 2019)

Hohenstein, Kurt (2020) *Sit-in Movement*.
<https://www.btitannica.com/event/sit-in-movement> (accessed 2nd April 2020)

hooks, bell (1990) *Homeplace (A Site of Resistance) in Yearning, Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*. Boston. South End Press

Kallianos, Yannis (2014) *Political Materiality of Everyday Objects*
<http://www.activistobject.wordpress.com> (accessed 23rd December 2019)

Meskimmon, Marsha (2011) *Contemporary Art and the Cosmopolitan Imagination*. London. Routledge

Meskimmon, Marsha (2019) *Art Matters: Feminist Corporeal-Materialist Aesthetics*. In *A Companion to Feminist Art*. Buszek, Maria Elena and Robinson, Hilary (eds) New Jersey. Wiley Blackwell

Miller, Daniel (2010) *Stuff*. Cambridge. Polity Press

Oxford English Dictionaries, feral. www.en.oxforddictionaries.com (accessed 13th September 2018)

Pil and Galia Kollektiv (2010) *Can Objects Perform?: Agency and Thingliness in Contemporary Sculpture and Installation*

Robinson, Hilary (2019) *Witness It: Activism, Art and the Feminist Performative Subject*. In *A Companion to Feminist Art*. Buszek, Maria Elena and Robinson, Hilary (eds) New Jersey. Wiley Blackwell

Schacter, Rafael (2014), *Reflections on Activist Objects: The Material Culture of Social Movements*. www.activistobject.wordpress.com (accessed 23rd December 2019)

Tyler, Imogen (2013) *Revolting Subjects: Social Abjection and Resistance in Neoliberal Britain*. London. Zed Books

Whiteley, Gillian (2011) *Junk: Art and the Politics of Trash*. London. I.B. Tauris

Zuckerman, Ethan (2011). *Those White Plastic Chairs: The Monobloc and the Context Free Object*. www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2011/04/06/those-white-plastic-chairs-the-monobloc-and-the-context-free-object/ (accessed 27th December 2019)