

## **Expel, Pink Truck and Rodents**

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*Undergraduate Student*

*Artist Statement*

The main themes of my current paintings have evolved three-fold. The unofficial working title to these ideas is Mastication, Masturbation and Menstruation; that is to say, consumption, overindulgence and reproduction. My primary interest is to explore gender stereotypes projected by contemporary culture, specifically with respect to the confused roles of the sexes in post-feminist times. This relates directly to copulation. Also, I generally utilize visual and linguistic puns as a method to illuminate my strategies.

The types of metaphors in my work are a form of iconoclasm. I exploit the traditional meanings of commonplace objects and pervert them to my cause. I am interested in words, phrases and objects with elements of humor that are used colloquially to describe genitalia or relate to their appearance or function. I find humor a compelling, and often undervalued, means of communicating in art. By using a lighthearted approach, I believe my audience is more receptive and open to the gravity of my subject matter.

Recently, I have been exploring uses of paint and non-paint materials, and researching untraditional applications of these materials in my work. Some of these processes include pooling and squirting of paint, as well as application of elements like glitter, plastic sheeting and patterned papers. Working in this way enables me to think beyond the confines of traditional painting and reconsider the inherent connotations these materials possess.

For example, in the piece Pink Truck, the spattered white areas have a seminal quality that references male virility, while the pooled gloss pink on top of these areas sabotages this potency. The wood-grained contact paper, a moveable material, I believe renders traditional masculinity false. These elements represent the dichotomy men and women face when assuming contemporary gender roles.

Expel uses patterned tissue paper as an organizational and unifying device. The honeycomb pattern of the paper alludes to the hexagonal structure of sex hormones. As in Pink Truck, irregular areas of white paint represent male sexuality. The form of the gas pump was chosen for the implications of its function and appearance.

I also collaborate with my sister, Michelle Dobbratz, under the name Dick Mernilia Randolph. We assembled the name from our parents' hometowns and the first names of each of our grandmothers. Together we work using child-like line drawings and text in the form of slogans and labels. We play with the idea that very simple images actually carry complex information and represent reality in the form of icons or logos. For the most part, this body of

work's imagery is loosely derived from the animal kingdom, insect world, and the "five elements"; water, metal, wood, fire, and earth.

Our piece, Rodents/Iconoclasts explores the associations given to members of the rodent family. The slogans beneath the animals reflect common and pop-culture association given to them. We are also interested in the role technology plays in the timeline of human development. As in my independent work, humor, contemporary iconography, culture and stereotypes play an important role in our experiments.

## A. Dobbratz

### "Rodents/Iconoclasts" 2003



Oil on Canvas

**A. Dobbratz**

**"Pink Truck"**  
**2003**



Acrylic and Contact Paper on Linen

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**"Expel"**  
**2003**



Acrylic and Oil on Tissue paper on Muslin