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**Document A**

**Frank O'Hara**, « Ave Maria ». *Lunch Poems*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1964.

Mothers of America

let your kids go to the movies!  
 get them out of the house so they won't know what you're up to  
 it's true that fresh air is good for the body  
 5 but what about the soul  
 that grows in darkness, embossed by silvery images  
 and when you grow old as grow old you must  
 they won't hate you  
 they won't criticize you they won't know  
 10 they'll be in some glamorous  
 country  
 they first saw on a Saturday afternoon or playing hookey  
 they may even be grateful to you  
 15 for their first sexual experience  
 which only cost you a quarter  
 and didn't upset the peaceful home  
 they will know where candy bars come from  
 20 and gratuitous bags of  
 popcorn  
 as gratuitous as leaving the movie before it's over  
 with a pleasant stranger whose apartment is in the Heaven on Earth Bldg  
 near the Williamsburg Bridge  
 oh mothers you will have made the little  
 25 tykes  
 so happy because if nobody does pick them up in the movies  
 they won't know the difference  
 and if somebody does it'll be sheer gravy  
 and they'll have been truly entertained either way  
 30 instead of hanging around the yard  
 or up in their room  
 hating you  
 prematurely since you won't have done anything horribly mean yet



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## Document B

**Hugo Münsterberg**, *The Film. A Psychological Study: The Silent Photoplay in 1916*. New York: Dover, 1970, pp. 98-100. [1<sup>st</sup> ed. *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study*, 1916.]

5 But the greatest mission which the photoplay may have in our community is that of esthetic cultivation. No art reaches a large audience daily, no esthetic influence finds spectators in a more receptive frame of mind. On the other hand no training demands a more persistent and  
10 planful arousing of the mind than the esthetic training, and never is progress more difficult than when the teacher adjusts himself to the mere liking of the pupils. The country today would still be without any symphony concerts and operas if it had only received what the audiences believed at the moment that they liked best. The esthetically  
15 commonplace will always triumph over the significant unless systematic efforts are made to reënforce the work of true beauty. Communities at first always prefer Sousa to Beethoven. The moving picture audience could only by slow stops be brought from the tasteless and vulgar eccentricities of the first period to the best plays of  
20 today, and the best plays of today can be nothing but the beginning of the great upward movement which we hope for in the photoplay. Hardly any teaching can mean more for our community than the teaching of beauty where it reaches the masses. The moral impulse and the desire for knowledge are, after all, deeply implanted in the  
25 American crowd, but the longing for beauty is rudimentary; and yet it means harmony, unity, true satisfaction, and happiness in life. The people still has to learn the great difference between true enjoyment and fleeting pleasure, between real beauty and the mere tickling of the senses.

30 Of course, there are those, and they may be legion today, who would deride every plan to make the moving pictures the vehicle of esthetic education. How can we teach the spirit of true art by a medium which is in itself the opposite of art? How can we implant the idea of harmony by that which is in itself a parody on art? We hear  
35 the contempt for "canned drama" and the machine-made theater. Nobody stops to think whether other arts despise the help of technique. The printed book of lyric poems is also machine-made; the marble bust has also "preserved" for two thousand years the beauty of the living woman who was the model for the Greek sculptor.  
40 They tell us that the actor on the stage gives the human beings as they are in reality, but the moving pictures are unreal and therefore of incomparably inferior value. They do not consider that the roses of the summer which we enjoy in the stanzas of the poet do not exist in reality in the forms of iambic verse and of rhymes; they live in color and odor, but their color and odor fade away, while the roses in the stanzas live on forever. They fancy that the value of an art depends upon its nearness to the reality of physical nature.

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45 It has been the chief task of our whole discussion to prove the shallowness of such arguments and objections. We recognized that art is a way to overcome nature and to create out of the chaotic material of the world something entirely new, entirely unreal, which embodies perfect unity and harmony. The different arts are different ways of abstracting from reality; and when we began to analyze the psychology of the moving pictures we soon became aware that the photoplay has a way to perform  
50 this task of art with entire originality, independent of the art of the theater, as much as poetry is independent of music or sculpture of painting. It is an art in itself. Only the future can teach us whether it will become a great art, whether a Leonardo, a Shakespeare, a Mozart, will ever be born for it. Nobody can foresee the directions which the new art may take. Mere esthetic  
55 insight into the principles can never foreshadow the development in the unfolding of civilization. Who would have been bold enough four centuries ago to foresee the musical means and effects of the modern orchestra? Just the history of music shows how the inventive genius has always had to blaze the path in which the routine work of the art followed. Tone combinations  
60 which appeared intolerable dissonances to one generation were again and again assimilated and welcomed and finally accepted as a matter of course by later times. Nobody can foresee the ways which the new art of the photoplay will open, but everybody ought to recognize even today that it is worth while to help this advance and to make the art of the film a  
65 medium for an original creative expression of our time and to mold by it the esthetic instincts of the millions. Yes, it is a new art—and this is why it has such fascination for the psychologist who in a world of ready-made arts, each with a history of many centuries, suddenly finds a new form still undeveloped and hardly understood. For the first time the psychologist can  
70 observe the starting of an entirely new esthetic development, a new form of true beauty in the turmoil of a technical age, created by its very technique and yet more than any other art destined to overcome outer nature by the free and joyful play of the mind.

**Document C**

Arthur Rothstein, "Colored Balcony, Birmingham, Alabama, 1940." Gelatin silver print, 32.7 x 25.2 cm.

