

# CREATIVE PHOTO COMMENTARY

## CONTROL YOURSELF

Angela Blakely

key words: Women's identity, body, stereotype, photography, self-worth

Much of my work looks at women's identity – I am interested in the way in which women who don't meet the media stereotype learn to like themselves; or dislike themselves. As we move further into the twenty-first century and function in an ever increasing visual society, the emphasis on appearance continues to contribute to the categorisation of the female body. The body is maintained as a measure of a woman's worth and identity. Today, women continue to be bombarded with images of the 'ideal' and learn to equate body image with self-worth. This ideal, for most, is crippling. My images focus on the fragments and the debris created from this process and are important in a discussion that challenges the 'ideal image' as a false representation.

'Control Yourself' deals specifically with the issues surrounding eating disorders and the more subtle social controls that encourage women to mutilate themselves in the name of beauty. I have attempted to capture the covert violence that exists towards women when aspects of consumer cultures combine to promote a beauty industry.

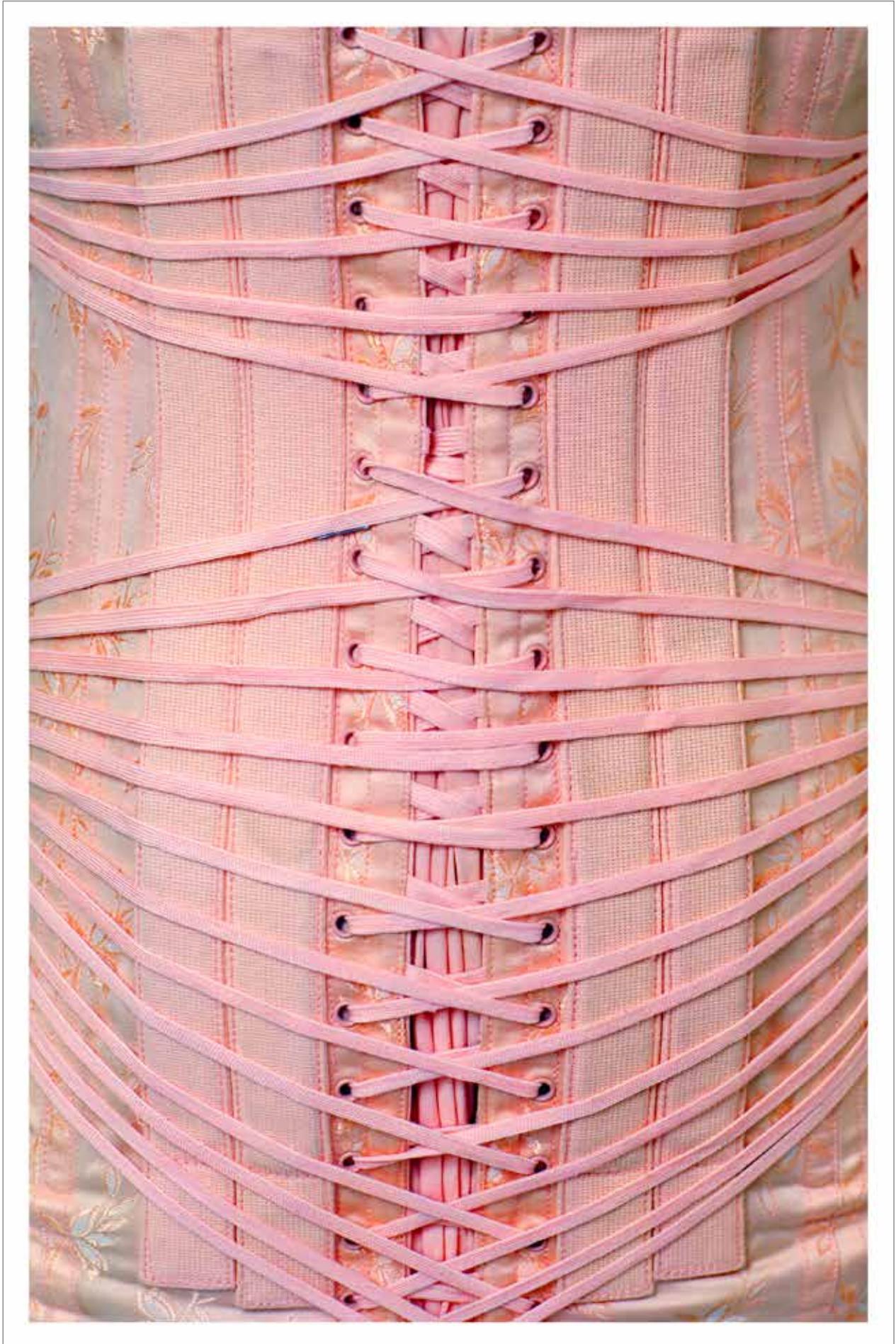
Susan Bordo, author of *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, western culture, and the body*, argues that most women in our culture are 'disordered' when it comes to issues of self-worth, self-entitlement, self-nourishment, and comfort with their own bodies. Eating disorders, far from being 'bizarre' and anomalous, are utterly continuous with a dominant element of the experience of being female in this culture. The anorectic does not 'misperceive' her body; rather she has learned all too well the dominant cultural standards of how to perceive.

My criticism extends into the way advertising media seduces the viewer. The products as objects are beautiful, but become ugly and violent through association. They seduce women into thinking it's OK to mutilate their bodies. Some of the overt deforming processes in which women have been engaged (historically – corsets, foot binding) have been replaced with more subtle forms through the use of laxatives, diet and pills, etc.

Photographing the objects allowed me to take work from the specific to the more universal.

### Reference

Bordo S. 2004 *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, western culture, and the body*, University of California Press. USA.





\* 12/06/95 - 47.2      3/07/95 - 48.05.  
 19/06/95 - 46.25  
 26/06/95 - 46.75

24/02/94	52.4	NFC	22/08/94	48.3	24/07/95	48.7	9/08/96	47
28/02/94	51.9		28/08/94	48.5	30/07/95	50.5	13/08/96	47.6
3/03/94	51.95		5/09/94	49.4	8/08/95	50	16/08/96	47.4
7/03/94	51.45		12/09/94	49.1	14/08/95	50.65	20/08/96	48.2
10/03/94	51.3		25/09/94	50.5	20/08/95	52.5 B.M.L	23/08/96	47.2
14/03/94	51.8		3/10/94	50.6	24/08/95	51	27/08/96	47.2
17/03/94	51.7		18/10/94	51	3/09/95	51.5 B.M.L	5/10/96	47.4
21/03/94	51.9		24/10/94	52.5	5/09/95	50.05 BAC	6/09/96	46
24/03/94	52.35		5/12/94	53.9	11/09/95	49.9	12/09/96	46.5
28/03/94	52.25		6/01/95	51.75	30/09/95	51.5 B.M.L AT.O	20/09/96	45.1
7/04/94	50.9	↓	11/01/95	52	12/10/95	50.7 B	27/09/96	45.5
8/04/94	51	BAC	23/01/95	51.1	10/12/95	52.5 1:15pm	4/10/96	44
12/04/94	51.2		8/02/95	51.1	19/12/95	53.5 11:50am	11/10/96	45
19/04/94	50.25		15/02/95	52.2	27/12/95	54.5 Banana	18/10/96	45
26/04/94	48.1		25/02/95	52.5	7/10/96	52.5 B	25/10/96	46
2/05/94	51.5		1/03/95	52.25	20/02/96	52.5	6/11/96	45
6/05/94	51.6		4/03/95	55	27/02/96	50.5	20/11/96	44
9/05/94	51.5		10/03/95	51.5	12/06/96	45 8:50pm	21/11/96	44
17/05/94	52.9		24/03/95	50	18/06/96	44 43.5	3/12/96	42.5
24/05/94	53.2		31/03/95	50.8	24/06/96	43 Sit.	4/12/96	44
31/05/94	52.8		11/04/95	49.5	28/06/96	42.4	18/12/96	43
14/06/94	53		20/04/95	48.2	2/07/96	43.4		
28/06/94	54.3		24/04/95	48.4	5/07/96	44.2	13/02/97	45
5/07/94	53.1		1/05/95	48.05	9/07/96	43.5		
12/07/94	52.2		15/05/95	46.2	12/07/96	44.2	2/05/97	44
19/07/94	51.9		22/05/95	44.5	16/07/96	44	30/05/97	44
21/07/94	51.1		25/05/95	44	19/07/96	46.2	6/06/97	43.6
25/07/94	49.7	↓	26/05/95	44.2	23/07/96	46.8	17/06/97	40.2
27/07/94	49.2	Ipswich	29/05/95	43.1	26/07/96	47.2		
1/08/94	49	BAC	6/06/95	45.5	29/07/96	46.8	2/07/97	39
8/08/94	47.7		10/07/95	48.5	2/08/96	47.1	4/07/97	38.4
15/08/94	47		17/07/95	49.4	6/08/96	46	8/07/97	37.8

