"Highlights Of A Trip To Hell"

Contextualizing the Initial Reception of Larry Clark's *Tulsa*

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by

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Abstract

Released in 1971, *Tulsa*, American artist Larry Clark's career-launching first photobook, is today remembered as marking a watershed moment in American photography. This paper travels back to the era that *Tulsa* was first published to examine the book's initial critical reception and significance within that specific cultural and artistic climate. It presents an abbreviated overview of *Tulsa*'s gradual creation; illustrates the ways in which the book was both similar to and different from other commonly cited contemporaneous works; and surveys its evolving status and reputation throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, when its second edition was published. This paper ultimately argues that *Tulsa*'s critical success and current iconic cultural status was neither as immediate nor as consistent as previous accounts have led us to believe, but was instead the result of both Clark's unrelenting perseverance and the exciting time period in which it came of age.

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Introduction

American artist Lawrence "Larry" Donald Clark's (b. 1943) first photobook, *Tulsa*, is widely regarded as the work that launched his now lauded career. First published in the fall of 1971, *Tulsa* chronicled the lives and deaths of a group of drug addicts – a group that Clark himself was intermittently an active member of throughout the 1960s and '70s – in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the artist's hometown, over an 8-year period. The book's short introduction, photographs, filmstrips, and sparse captions tell a tragic narrative of drug use, violence, and death in white Middle America from the perspective of an insider and participant. This paper will return to Clark's early career to reexamine *Tulsa*'s early history by first summarizing the book's gradual creation; then contextualizing the book within the era that it was produced and first published; and, finally, chronicling its critical reception throughout the 1970s and early '80s, the era that largely shaped its ultimate meaning and legacy.

My interest in *Tulsa* began with the back cover of the 2000 Grove Press edition of the book, which featured a reproduction of an article originally written in October 1971 by Dick Cheverton entitled "A Devastating Portrait of an American Tragedy."[1] Upon seeing this article, I was first struck by the visceral response Cheverton had to a book that I, as a young viewer, did not immediately find shocking or particularly affecting. Moreover, the article's presence on the Grove Press edition's back cover suggested a controversial reception surrounding the book's release in 1971 that I was entirely unaware of. Upon researching the topic, however, I found that, to my dismay, relatively little has been written on *Tulsa*'s reception and the few texts that do mention it often oversimplify its story. In almost all cases, *Tulsa*'s history is presented as one of two largely contradictory stories: the first presents *Tulsa* as an instantly celebrated classic that has sustained its status up to the present day while the other account, conversely, presents the book as creating a

[1] Dick Cheverton, "A Devastating Portrait Of An American Tragedy," *Detroit Free Press*, November 7, 1971, 5B.

widespread, largely unprecedented controversy that needed time to be fully understood and appreciated by the art world. Through my research, then, I hope to construct a more nuanced, detailed account of the book's initial critical reception and perhaps determine which, if either, of these nearly opposite accounts holds more truth.

Due to Clark's broad popularity, the literature surrounding him is incredibly diverse and far-reaching. These texts can be found in books, on the web, or in periodicals and can frame him within discourses ranging from popular culture to art and fashion. Beginning my research, I started by focusing on two self-published books that, despite being flawed in their own ways, focus on and attempt to distill the wide range of literature on Clark. First, Billa Harden's *Larry Clark: Bibliography* is a relatively comprehensive bibliography of texts on Clark that features an additional essay in German.[2] While Harden's book assisted me in digging deeper into Clark's broad bibliography, it proved incomplete and littered with factual errors. Additionally, Chelsea Spengemann's *The Tulsa Reader: 1971-2010* is another useful bibliographic resource devoted solely to literature on *Tulsa*.[3] However, the publication itself is a strange one. Branded as an anonymously produced artist book – Spengemann's name never appears within the text – the publication features Xerox photocopies of various interviews, articles, press releases, and gallery memos in a style reminiscent of Clark's constant use of archival documents and ephemera within his own artistic practice. Although I agree with photography critic Jeffery Ladd's assertion that "the [book's] 'collage' aspect that seems to be touting an artist book flavor seems a stretch," it nonetheless reproduces difficult-to-find texts on Clark and *Tulsa*, although it misses other significant ones and exerts no effort to interpret or contextualize them.[4] This paper will also offer a bibliography on *Tulsa*, albeit one that covers a shorter range of time, and will include texts missed by both

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[2] Billa Hayden, *Larry Clark: Bibliography* (n.l.: Billa Hayden, 2005).
[3] Chelsea Spengemann, *The Tulsa Reader*. (New York: Chelsea Spengemann, 2010).
[4] Jeffrey Ladd, "*Kiss The Past Hello* by Larry Clark," *5B4: Photography and Books,* March 22, 2011. http://5b4.blogspot.com/2011/03/kiss-past-hello-by-larry-clark.html.

Harden and Spengemann along with an interpretation of these texts and what they mean to *Tulsa*'s ultimate story and legacy.

Despite the wide array of literature on Clark, there are surprisingly few serious publications or texts devoted exclusively to him, let alone the history and interpretation of *Tulsa*. A reason for the overall lack of serious texts on Clark was hypothesized in *The Art Newspaper* as being a result of the difficulty institutions often face when gathering funds to publish scholarly exhibition catalogues on work that many consider shocking and outright offensive.[5] This was allegedly the case with the International Center of Photography's 2005 retrospective exhibition on Clark, which only gathered enough funding to produce a small booklet that was much more reminiscent of a takeaway brochure than a traditional exhibition catalogue.[6] Furthermore, the few catalogues that do feature texts on Clark, such as Musée d'Art Moderne's *Kiss the Past Hello*, tend to feature very general writings that do not go into the specifics such as *Tulsa*'s initial critical reception.[7] Furthermore, while there have been extended studies on other classic photobooks in recent years, such as Sarah Greenough's indispensible *Looking In: Robert Frank's The Americans* or the titles in Errata Editions' ongoing "Books on Books" series, *Tulsa* has yet to receive a similar extended critical and historical analysis. Although this paper will not entirely fill that void, it aims to at least help occupy a small part of it.

While no books other than Spengemann's have been devoted specifically to *Tulsa* and its history, various articles have mentioned the book's status and reception throughout the 1970s, although it is typically secondary to the author's central topic and, as previously mentioned, is often presented in an oversimplified manner. Clark gave the first mention of Tulsa's history in 1979, less than a decade after its release, in Thomas Dugan's book of interviews, *Photography Between the Covers*.[8] In Dugan's book, Clark gave valuable information about the conception and production of *Tulsa*, but only provided a few sentences about its reception, which

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[5] "Larry Clark's Non-Existent Catalogues," *The Art Newspaper*, April 2005, 36.
[6] Larry Clark, *Larry Clark* (New York: International Center of Photography, 2005).
[7] Larry Clark, *Kiss the Past Hello* (New York: Luhring Augustine, 2011).
[8] Thomas Dugan, *Photography Between the Covers: Interviews With Photo-Bookmakers* (Rochester: Light Impressions, 1979), 65-77.

painted an over-generalized and slightly contradictory story. Early in the interview, Clark vaguely stated, "the Tulsa book caused such a sensation in Tulsa and all over," but in a later question claimed "everybody wrote about it, everybody liked it […] it was amazing."[9] In many respects, the vague accounts of *Tulsa*'s history begun by Clark in Dugan's book have persisted through the present day.

For example, Vince Aletti, in his popular *Artforum* column, "First Break," which provided brief, one-page accounts of an artists' first major work, devoted an installation to *Tulsa*. In the article, Aletti presented a brief description of Clark's early life and the various stages of photographing for the book, but only quoted one positive, early review by A. D. Coleman and concluded that all later commentators generally agreed with Coleman's judgments.[10] Likewise, A. D. Coleman, when writing about Clark in 1990, simplified the work's reception and Clark's activity throughout the 1970s: "the book was an immediate success and made Mr. Clark's reputation overnight; *Tulsa* was at once an important social documents, a brutally frank personal testament and a brilliant exploration of book form. As a result of the acclaim, Mr. Clark lectured and exhibited widely."[11] Conversely, however, Mary Warner Marien, in her widely read history of photography survey, *Photography: A Cultural History*, merely asserted that *Tulsa* "provoked negative reactions."[12] This simplified story continues on through 2011, when Sebastien Gokalp, writing in *Kiss the Past Hello*, framed *Tulsa* simply as a "bombshell" of early 1970s photography.[13] It seems, then, that although many writers find it necessary to briefly frame and introduce *Tulsa* within the time of its release and mention how contemporary audiences first received it, there appears to be little consensus as to what these audiences actually thought of the book. In this paper I hope to shed some light onto their varied reactions and ultimately demonstrate that while none of the

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[9] *Ibid*, 72, 75.
[10] Vince Aletti, "First Break: Larry Clark," *Artforum* 40:9, May 2002, 27.
[11] A. D. Coleman, "Highly Charged but Mute Parade of Social Ills," *The New York Observer*, October 8, 1990, 28.
[12] Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Hall Inc., 2011), 353.
[13] Sebastien Gokalp. "The Savage Eye," in *Kiss the Past Hello* (New York: Luhring Augustine, 2011), 9.

aforementioned accounts, or ones similar to them, are entirely untrue, they all manage to oversimplify the story of *Tulsa*'s reception and, by extension, Clark's history and that of American photography in the 1970s.

It is therefore the aim of this paper to create a more thorough account of *Tulsa*'s initial reception than previous literature has managed to provide. In this paper's first chapter, I will briefly summarize Clark's early life, the periods he spent making *Tulsa*, and close with a brief overview of the book. The second chapter will highlight some popular works and prevailing trends in both American culture and photography during in the late 1960s and early '70s that relate in various ways to *Tulsa*'s predominate themes, style, and rhetoric. Through this, I hope to demonstrate the discourses that Clark would have been inserting *Tulsa* within and the ways in which contemporary readers may have framed or understood the book upon its release in 1971. In the third chapter, I will survey reviews of the book that appeared in print between its release in 1971 and 1983, the year Clark self-published *Tulsa*'s second edition. Furthermore, in this chapter I will also provide a brief overview of the various exhibitions of the work held throughout the decade, an aspect of the *Tulsa*'s story that is often disregarded by historians. By analyzing if or how writers framed and used *Tulsa* as the decade progressed, partly in relation to Clark's personal life throughout the period, I hope to show how the book became the classic we recognize it as today. In the fourth and final chapter, I will analyze *Tulsa*'s legacy and current status. I will also briefly survey some of the many artists whose work has been overtly influenced by *Tulsa* in the years since its release. Finally, the paper's conclusion section will summarize the previous chapters and give a final summary of *Tulsa*'s early history.

Chapter I: A Short History of *Tulsa* and its Development

The production of *Tulsa* largely mirrored Clark's personal life throughout the 1960s and early '70s and was marked with stages of both focused activity and complete inactivity. These periods mostly coincided with various "hot" and "cold" stretches within Tulsa's drug scene, in which Clark had been a participant since 1959, when he was first introduced to drugs by friends Billy Mann and David Roper, both of whom became the book's two main protagonists. Also around this time, Clark began learning photography when he started assisting his mother, who photographed newborns for a living; a practice Clark often refers to as "kidnapping."[14] This chapter will provide a short summary of how these early activities in Clark's life – "shooting" and "shooting up" – merged in the early 1960s to ultimately produce the body of work that would become *Tulsa*.

A major early event in *Tulsa*'s pre-history occurred, unusually, when Clark left his hometown of Tulsa for the first time to attend college. Upon graduating high school – an accomplishment neither Mann nor Roper achieved –, Clark was desperate to leave the monotony of Oklahoma and enrolled in Layton School of Art's photography program in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Once there, however, he failed to connect with the program's students and ended up befriending art students in the school's painting and sculpture departments and quickly adopted their avant-garde attitudes. Around this time, Clark describes coming to the revelation that he didn't "have to be photographing baby pictures door to door. […] I didn't realize you could use photography for other things."[15] At Layton, Clark was introduced not only to an avant-garde attitude that complemented his already rebellious, narcotic-using persona, but also to the realization that he could focus his camera on alternative subject matter, including his own life.

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[14] Larry Clark, *Teenage Lust* (New York: Larry Clark, 1987), n.p.; Dugan, *Photography Between the Covers*, 66.; Paul Schrader, "Babes in the Hood," *Artforum* 33, May 1995, 76.
[15] Dugan, *Photography Between the Covers*, 67.

Upon leaving Layton School of Art in 1963, Clark briefly assisted his former teacher, Walter Sheffer, in Milwaukee while photographing for local magazines, such as *Let's See*, before returning to Tulsa. Although he had been casually photographing his friends and their lifestyle since 1961, it was not until his return home in 1963 that he began to treat the practice as a serious, sustained project. However, this period, which would eventually make up *Tulsa*'s opening chapter, came to a halt in 1964 when Clark went to New York City after his friend, Tom Zimmerman, invited him to show a selection of work from his ongoing project for the first time at the Heliographer's Gallery in the Upper East Side. Although there is little documentation of the exhibition, Vince Aletti cryptically writes: "a number of the gallery's members resigned in protest; otherwise the show went unnoticed."[16] In addition to displaying his work in the gallery setting, Clark was also published in that year's *Photography Annual* with a photograph he made as a student entitled *The Bridge*.[17] While productive, Clark's time in New York City was not long lasting – four months after his arrival to the city, he was drafted at the age of 21. For the following two years, Clark served in the military, training first in the American South for a year and then fighting in Vietnam the next.

Upon his discharge from the military and return to civilian life in 1967, Clark moved back to Manhattan. During this period, he began to play rock 'n' roll music and collaborated with many musicians, including Steve Marcus, the famous jazz-rock fusion saxophonist. Clark contributed vocals to three tracks on Marcus' 1969 album, *The Lord's Prayer*, including renditions of The Troggs' "Wild Thing" and Bob Dylan's "Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues."[18] Also during this time, Clark met Ralph Gibson at photographer Philip Perkis' house, a popular meeting place for photographers at the time. The two became close friends within days, founding a

[16] Aletti, "First Break," 27.
[17] Bruce Downes, ed., *Photography Annual 1964: A Selection of the world's finest photographs compiled by the editors of Popular Photography* (New York: Ziff-Davis, 1964), 128.
[18] Steve Marcus, *The Lord's Prayer*, Vortex Records. Vinyl LP. 1969.

friendship that would, unbeknownst to both of them, prove instrumental to the production of *Tulsa* four years later.[19]

In the summer of 1968, Clark left New York and returned to Tulsa, this time with a Bolex 16mm camera and tape recorder, to make what would become the book's middle chapter. Remembering this stage in the project, Clark recounted: "Originally, I had wanted to do a film. I had all the early photographs and couldn't see it happening as a book because the scene was just so crazy […] I actually borrowed a movie camera and a tape recorder with the idea of doing a one-man movie, which was totally impossible."[20] Though filmmaking at the time proved impractical, the filmstrips made during this 1968 trip were ultimately included in *Tulsa*'s second chapter and marked the first of many future film projects Clark would embark on decades later.

Once the scene in Tulsa began to slow down later that year, Clark briefly returned to New York before hitting the road with a girlfriend, eventually settling in New Mexico by 1969. During this time, though, Clark continued to make trips back to New York, where he met with Gibson, who eventually persuaded him to conceptualize the project as a book and create a dummy for it. Later in 1970, once a workable dummy had been created, Clark's sister Elizabeth, then part of the Tulsa drug scene, visited him in New Mexico with news that the scene was once again in motion. When Clark retuned to Tulsa, however, he encountered a changed atmosphere – Mann had died of an overdose that October and Roper had grown to become, in Clark's words, the "old man of the drug scene."[21] This final period of photographing for *Tulsa* allegedly came naturally to Clark, who by that time had a solid grasp on the structure that the book would take and the photographs he needed to complete it. "Back in 1971," Clark modestly recounts, "I'd say I was the best photographer in the world. For a few months there I was hot."[22]

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[19] Dugan, *Photography Between the Covers*, 69.
[20] Mike Kelley, "Larry Clark: In Youth Is Pleasure," *Flash Art* 25:164, May-June 1992, 83.
[21] Larry Clark, *Teenage Lust*, n.p.
[22] Ashely Heath, "Conversation on Thompson Street," *Arena + Homme* 18, Autumn/Winter 2002-2003, 310.

By the spring of 1971, Clark was done shooting and back in New York, where he finalized *Tulsa*'s sequence and layout in Gibson's Bowery apartment. Funding for the book's printing, the book's last crucial detail, came from photographer Daniel Seymour, who had been introduced to Clark through Robert Frank, a friend of Gibson's. Seymour had also recently completed a dummy for his autobiographical photobook, *A Loud Song*, and was ready to publish. He, however, unlike Clark or Gibson, had the money to do so and agreed to front the bill for both books. Late that summer, *Tulsa* and *A Loud Song* went to press in Los Angeles under the auspices of Gibson's recently launched independent publishing house, Lustrum Press, which he had founded the previous year to self-publish his first book, *The Somnambulist*. Roughly 2,700 of the desired 3,000 copies were printed due to a California law allowing publishers to go 10% over or under their estimated volume.[23] Finally actualized, *Tulsa* was distributed by Bill Edwards and Lionel Suntop of Light Impressions in Rochester, New York, the era's most popular photobook distributor.

On sale at bookstores and galleries for $5 by the fall of 1971, the first aspect of *Tulsa* that readers would have encountered was its now iconic, boldly designed cover. The cover is adorned with a photograph of Billy Mann sitting shirtless atop an unmade bed, casually brandishing a pistol, finger on trigger, with a brazen smirk across his face. A heavy black border surrounds the photograph, one that Dick Cheverton, within weeks of *Tulsa*'s release, astutely observed as creating, "a picture book bound – most appropriately – in black."[24] The

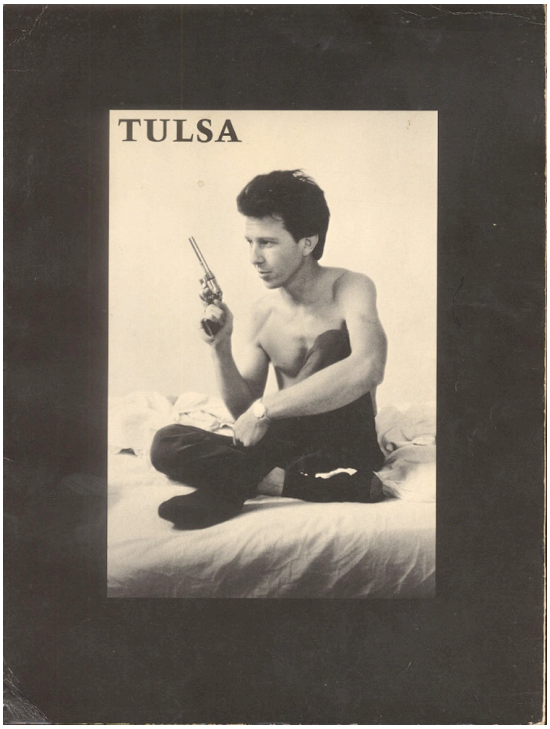

Figure 1: Front cover of* Tulsa *(New York: Lustrum Press, 1971)

[23] Dugan, *Photography Between the Covers*, 71.
[24] Cheverton, "A Devastating Portrait," 5B.

cover's only text announces only the book's title, which is printed in black over of the photograph's upper-left corner. Upon handling the book, readers manage a roughly 9'' x 12'' object that is small enough to easily cradle in one's hands, yet large enough to allow 8'' tall vertical photographs to be reproduced around a generously-sized white border. Upon opening the cover and flipping past publishing and copyright information, readers find a two-page spread that establishes the context in which to interpret the work. The left-hand page presents, in descending order, the book's title, Clark's last name, and Lustrum Press' signature star logo. The right-hand page shows, in Clark's now signature all-under-case type, *Tulsa*'s opening statement:

> "i was born in tulsa oklahoma in 1943, when i was sixteen i started shooting amphetamine. i shot with my friends everyday for three years and then left town but i've gone back through the years. once the needle goes in it never comes out. / L. C."

Immediately following this introductory spread, the first chapter of *Tulsa*'s photographic sequence begins by introducing Roper and Mann, the book's two main protagonists, by name along with the year the first chapter was set, 1963. This section begins by framing both characters as all-American, clean-cut looking boys, shown, for example, hunting in the woods. However, the book's upcoming turmoil is also foreshadowed with photographs that suggested latent inner dramas, exemplified with particular directness in a photograph of Roper's face reflected through a broken mirror. In this section, additional nameless characters are introduced alongside photographs illustrating the highs and lows of drug use. While underlying violence can be detected throughout this first chapter, death, which some claim to be *Tulsa*'s primary subject, does not creep into the narrative until its final spread. The spread shows, on the left-hand page, Mann lying on a bed, awkwardly cradling a baby while smoking a cigarette. Across from him, on the right-hand page, is a photograph of a nameless woman, who we now know as his then wife, Deanna Mann, age 19, above the straightforward and all-telling caption: "dead."

The book's next chapter, 1968, primarily reproduces filmstrips from Clark's 16mm film work that year. These filmstrips appear over four pages and show scenes of drug use alongside additional acts of violence in rough, grainy, and aggressive style. The section closes with its only still photograph: the cover image of Mann, captioned "dead 1970," across from a quote by him that Clark recorded that year, repurposed in the book as an epitaph: "death is more perfect than life."

By the time readers reach *Tulsa*'s final and longest chapter, 1971, darkness and hopelessness dominate the book's narrative. The chapter opens with a crude and threatening message from Roper, the book's surviving and rapidly aging protagonist, to Tulsa's police, written on a piece cardboard in front of his home. The proceeding photographs illustrate incidents such as an accidental gunshot wound, the beating of a police informer, a pregnant woman shooting up, and, immediately following, her newborn baby, dead, laid out in a coffin. The book ends, however, on its most chilling note, not with the ultimate demise and death of *Tulsa*'s remaining characters, but with the introduction of the next generation of the city's drug scene who Clark, by then a self-proclaimed "old man" of the scene, had met that year. The book's final photograph shows a young man leaning over and attempting to locate a vein on his arm to shoot up, presumably for the first time.

Figure 2: Larry Clark,* Untitled, *1971. Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.

Chapter II: *Tulsa* Within the Period

While many aspects of *Tulsa* were innovative, perhaps even groundbreaking, the book was not produced within a cultural or artistic vacuum and existed alongside many other comparable works at the time of its release in 1971. This chapter will briefly highlight a few of these works and the period in which they and *Tulsa* were produced and first appeared. By doing this, I hope to show not only ways in which *Tulsa* could have been described as pioneering, but also demonstrate existing trends within American culture and photography that the book would have then mirrored and created a dialogue with.

First, the pessimism and fatalism that propels *Tulsa*'s narrative sequencing was widespread by the late 1960s, particularly within the era's rock 'n' roll music, which Clark notably played towards the decade's end. As George Lipsitz writes:

> Popular [rock 'n' roll] songs routinely projected fatalism and dread about political crises. Even in personal matters, despair and cynicism reigned, as evidence by Jefferson Airplane's 1967 'Somebody to Love,' which begun, 'When the truth is found to be lies, and all the joy within you dies.' […] Bob Dylan's insistence that 'When you ain't got nothing, you got nothing to lose' in 'Like a Rolling Stone' articulated the resignation and fatalism of a generation that saw itself caught between warring factions at home and abroad. Its strongest impulse was neither to defend nor to attack the American empire, but to get out of the way of the confrontation.[25]

Like Clark, many of the genre's musicians saw drug use as an escape mechanism against the era's overarching political strife and were similarly blunt in their presentation of it in their work. As Phillip Monk notes, *Tulsa*'s frank introduction, which closes with "once the needle goes in it never comes out," captures the same cultural zeitgeist famously observed by Lou Reed and The Velvet Underground in their 1967 hit, "Heroin," which concludes: "Wow, that heroin is in my blood / And

[25] George Lipsitz, "Who'll Stop the Rain?: Youth Culture, Rock 'n' Roll, and Social Crises" in *The Sixties…: From Memory to History,* ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 221.

the blood is in my head / Yeah, thank God that I'm good as dead / Oh, thank your God that I'm not aware / And thank God that I just don't care / And I guess I just don't know / And I guess I just don't know."[26]

The impulse to narrate from a personal and subjective point of view can also be detected far beyond *Tulsa*, perhaps most notably in a literary genre that emerged throughout the 1960s that, by the end of the decade, had been dubbed "new journalism." The genre emerged with newspaper and magazine writers who began to create increasingly self-driven assignments that applied traditional literary techniques to journalistic writing, often utilizing a first-person point of view.[27] Writers associated with new journalism approached a huge variety of topics, including drug use. While Tom Wolfe's 1965 collection of essays, *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby*, was an early foray into drug culture, Hunter S. Thompson's *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: A Savage Journey to the Heart of the American Dream* is the new journalism work that relates most closely to *Tulsa*. First published as a two-part feature in *Rolling Stone* in 1971 and collected into a novel the following year, *Fear and Loathing* not only intersects *Tulsa* in its time of release and frank presentation of drug use through a participatory, first-person narrative, but also sketched a similarly despondent account of contemporary culture. Throughout his drug-fueled *roman à clé*, Thompson constantly refers to the horrors of the Vietnam War and the failed utopianism of the 1960s as the backdrop for the new decade. "But that was some other era," he writes of the 1960s, "burned out and long gone from the brutish realities of this foul year of Our Lord, 1971."[28] Like much now iconic music and writings of the late 1960s and early '70s, *Tulsa* also represented the bleak worldview that was prevalent during the time, one that was markedly different from the "All You Need is Love" counterculture of years past.

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[26] Phillip Monk, *The American Trip* (Toronto: The Power Plant, 1996), 17; The Velvet Underground, "Heroin," on *The Velvet Underground & Nico*, Verve Records. 1967. Vinyl LP.

[27] Tom Wolfe, an early participant in this genre, outlines its history in: Tom Wolfe, *The New Journalism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

[28] Hunter S. Thompson, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. New York: Random House, 1998. 23.

The impulse to move towards an increasingly personal and subjective approach to storytelling extended far beyond new journalism and into other disciplines as well, including photography. Summarizing this trend in photography, Jonathan Green writes:

> It was consistent with the social and psychological upheavals of the sixties that a documentary focus should emerge that looked at the less newsworthy, internal aspects of the new culture. [… The] work was "personal journalism": it evoked the pretense of reportage while in fact describing the world from a significantly personal, subjective viewpoint.[29]

While this broad move towards the subjective in American photography took on many forms, as demonstrated in such different exhibitions as Nathan Lyons' *Contemporary Photographers: Toward a Social Landscape* (1966 – '67), Thomas H. Garver's *12 Photographers of the American Social Landscape* (1967), or John Szarkowski's *New Documents* (1967), a predominant strain that *Tulsa* most closely related to focused on the autobiographical. Certain aspects of this autobiographical impulse are often traced back to Robert Frank's seminal *The Americans* (1959), republished in its second American edition in 1969. Not coincidentally, Lustrum Press published the first American edition of Frank's autobiographical *The Lines of My Hand* in 1972 and is today largely remembered as a notable supporter of this approach.[30] Therefore, if *Tulsa* alone was not immediately seen as existing within this emerging and nuanced contemporary discourse that Green dubs personal journalism, its publisher's reputation may well have situated its position within it.

While many photobooks of the era exemplified this personal mode of working, including Bruce Davidson's *Brooklyn Gang* (1959) or *East 100th Street* (1970) and Seymour's *A Loud Song*, Danny Lyon's *The Bikeriders*, released in 1968, was in many ways closest to *Tulsa*. The book featured photographs of and interviews with Lyon's Chicago motorcycle gang, The Outlaws. Although the actual

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[29] Jonathan Green, *American Photography: A Critical History, 1945 to Present* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1984), 118-119.
[30] Parr and Badger's sole mention of Lustrum is as fitting "firmly in the documentary, stream of consciousness mode." *The Photobook, A History, vol. 1*, 237.

degeneracy of the group has been questioned throughout the years, Lyon, like Clark, was keen to show his deviant lifestyle while making his subjectivity and personal involvement overtly clear. While Clark used *Tulsa*'s introductory text to establish his relationship with his book's subjects, Lyon instead chose to do this by placing a photograph of himself, casually leaned over his Triumph motorcycle while sporting a sleeveless leather jacket, on the book's back dust jacket. Throughout the 1960s, then, a variety of artists, including Clark, were becoming increasingly drawn to describing their own personal experiences from subjective, sometimes autobiographical points of view while refusing to turn away from any difficult subject matter their lives may have entailed, including, in Clark's case, drug use.

Despite a growing number of personally driven projects by photographers during the late 1960s and early '70s, the bleak drug culture so famously described by Lou Reed in 1967 had yet to be fully explored photographically. Curiously, the most lasting view of adolescent drug addiction previous to *Tulsa* was published in *Life Magazine*. First introduced in 1936, *Life* was the brainchild of *Time* founder Henry Luce and was initially conceptualized as a major, all-American picture magazine for the masses. By the time Clark was a child, the magazine was one of the country's dominant forms of media and entertainment, reaching unprecedented levels of popularity – the magazine was consumed by about 22.5 million readers, or roughly 21% of the American population above 10 years old, by the late 1940s.[31] Most issues of *Life* featured approximately 200 photographs, many of which were carefully arranged into linear and clearly legible photo-essays that followed familiar narrative structures that included a clearly defined beginning, middle, and ending. *Life*'s didactic narrative impulse became a dominant form of photographic communication during the mid-twentieth century and spread to practices well beyond the picture magazine, perhaps most famously to Edward Steichen's blockbuster exhibition, *The Family of Man*, which opened at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1955 and went on to travel widely throughout the world.

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[31] Erika Doss, *Looking at Life Magazine* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 3.

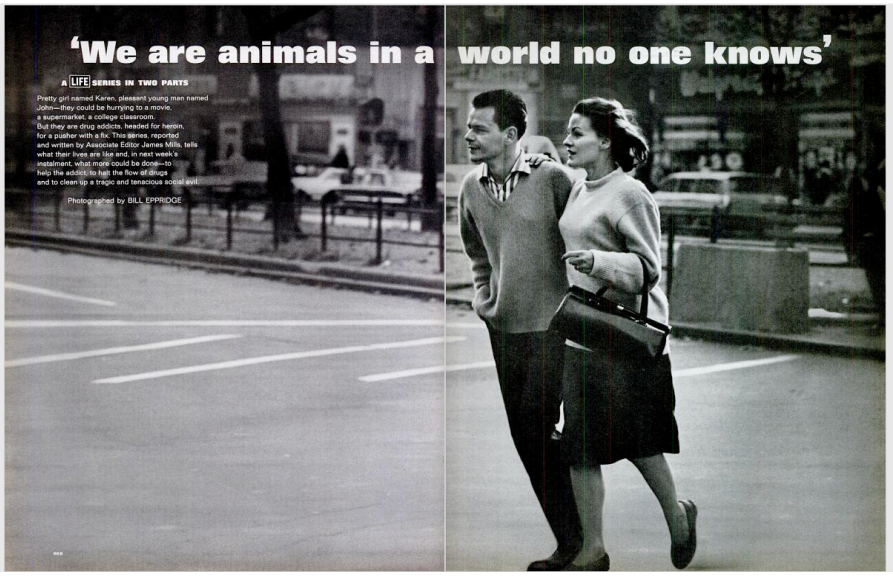

Figure 3: Opening Spread of "We are animals in a world no one knows."* Life, *February 26, 1965*, *p. 66-67. Photograph © Bill Eppridge,* Time/Life *Collection*, *Getty Images.

It was, oddly, within this context that "We are animals in a world no one knows," the photo-essay that most famously depicted pre-*Tulsa* drug culture, was consumed. This work was featured within the first of a two-part feature in *Life*'s February 26 and March 5, 1965 issues and featured photographs by Bill Eppridge, texts by James Mills, and a design by Bernard Quint.[32] In the photo-essay, Eppridge followed two young, white adults, Karen and John, both of whom were heroin addicts in New York's Needle Park (Sherman Square, located at the intersection of Broadway and 72nd Street). The essay began by introducing the subjects with an image of them crossing a boulevard that, without the article's ominous title, could have easily illustrated any young couple, including the *Life*'s mostly white, middle class audience's children. However, the following page spreads quickly familiarized readers with the daily horrors of Karen and John's lives, including scenes of them shooting up, resorting to illegal activities to support their habit, being jailed for those activities, and a nearly fatal overdose. The photo-essay ended, however, with a moment of calm desperation, an image of Karen cradling Johnny and his brother in a

[32] Bill Eppridge, "We are the animals in a world no one knows," *Life*, February 26, 1965, 66-81.

motif undoubtedly borrowed from Dorothea Lange's iconic, Madonna-inspired *Migrant Mother*.

Tulsa and Eppridge's photo-essay both depict drug use in a similar style and are today frequently compared to one another.[33] However, despite these comparisons, the two bodies of work remain more dissimilar than alike. Firstly, the productions of these projects were markedly different. Clark, throughout his career, has often cited W. Eugene Smith, initially one of *Life*'s great photo-essayists and later one of its great detractors, as a primary influence. In his often-cited interview with Mike Kelley, Clark explained:

> Eugene Smith had quit *Life* because they wouldn't give him enough time to do the assignments. He was always writing these diatribes about the *truth*, and how he wanted to tell the truth, the truth, the truth. It was a real rebel position. It was kind of like a teenager's position: why can't thing be like they should be? Why can't I do what I want? I latched on to that philosophy.[34]

Many of Smith's public grievances with *Life* stemmed from the production of their photo-essays, which were heavily collaborative and often included up to 7 people contributing to a single project.[35] Ultimately, as Glenn Willumson writes, "the photographer acted more like a thesaurus than an author. It was the photo editor who selected the pictorial 'words,' combined and arranged them into double-page 'paragraphs,' and sequenced them in a coherent 'essay.'"[36] Clark, aware of these procedures, felt, "[the editors] crop it, and they mess it up; they pick the wrong pictures and you have no control. […] I got over working for the magazines. Since then I've just been out photographing on my own, doing my own thing."[37] Eppridge,

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[33] The most explicit example of this comparison is in Joseph Marshall, "The Moral Issue of a Pregnant Woman Shooting Up," *Photo Review* 16:1. (Winter 1993): 2-9.
[34] Kelley, "In Youth is Pleasure," 82
[35] Maitland Edey, *Great Photographic Essays from* Life (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1987), 5. Edey explains that certain stories could have up to 7 staff members assigned to them: photographer, departmental editor, photo editor, negative editor, designer, managing editor, and researcher.
[36] Glenn Willumson, W. *Eugene Smith and the Photographic Essay* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 23.
[37] Dugan*, Photography Between the Covers*, 67-68.

on the other hand, was handpicked by *Life*'s editors, partly due to the fact he *looked* like "someone whose friends dropped acid," to photograph the story that Mills had already proposed and coordinated.[38] Therefore, while creating *Tulsa*, Clark, following Smith's search for "the truth," knowingly broke away from then common systems involved with creating and publishing photographs in favor of a much more self-driven project that would allow him autonomous authorship and control.

Additionally, another photo-essay by Eppridge, made for the second part of *Life*'s two-part feature, appeared in the following week's issue and greatly affected the overall rhetoric of his project. Building off of the defeat and desperation that ended his previous photo-essay, this second one presented optimistic solutions by highlighting drug rehab facilities and support groups, ultimately giving the overall project an entirely different tone than *Tulsa*'s bleak and hopeless *dénouement*.[39] Typically, *Life* was, as John Gennari writes, "more than happy to accommodate new social trends that appeared to pose no grave threat to the old order."[40] By highlighting the ways in which the nation's wayward youth would recognize their wrongs, receive help, and eventually become reintegrated back into society represents only one of many examples of *Life*'s stubborn optimism that the traditional values it promoted would in the end win out. On the other hand, *Tulsa*, along with other works of its era, blatantly challenged and disrupted this optimism.

Furthermore, the contexts in which these projects were consumed vary tremendously. Eppridge's photographs were seen within *Life*'s familiar format: staple bound, printed on lightweight paper alongside other articles and advertisements. For example, the spread before Eppridge's first photo-essay featured a full-page, color advertisement for Sunkist; the final paragraphs of an article on colorful, pop art inspired fashion; and an advertisement for Contac sinus pills that urged consumers to "Help free America of stuffy noses." Comparatively, *Tulsa* was a relatively self-contained work of art that was not compromised by

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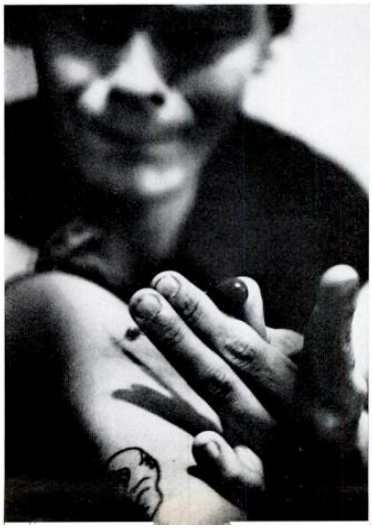
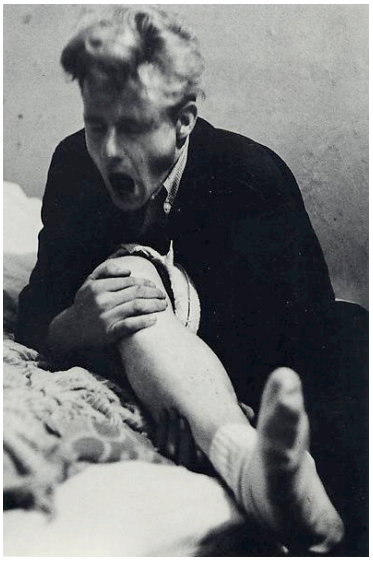
[38] Edey*, Great Photographic Essays of* Life, 239.
[39] Bill Eppridge, "'I told them not to go home,'" *Life*, March 5, 1965, 92-103.
[40] John Gennari, "Bridging the Two Americas: Life Looks at the 1960s," in *Looking at Life Magazine,* ed. Erika Doss. (Washington: Smithsonian Press, 2001), 273.

advertisements, was printed on heavyweight, slightly glossy paper, and was free from the editorializing and rhetoric that Clark saw as being damaging to the integrity of photography commissioned by picture magazine like *Life*.

Despite Clark's insistence on making *Tulsa* different from picture magazine photo-essays, similarities remain. For example, certain commentators have accused the book of echoing the didacticism that dominated many *Life* photo-essays, including those by W. Eugene Smith. "Though *Tulsa*'s photographs are only sporadically captioned," writes Zoë Chan, "they could nonetheless be linked with *Life* magazine's 'overt educational imperative ('to see and be instructed')' through their famous photo-essay format. Through a strategic ordering of its featured imagery, *Tulsa* ensures a hyper-legibility of content and narrative."[41] Additionally, photographs from both projects, if removed from the contexts in which they were consumed – and with their iconic statuses magically erased – begin to look more similar to one another than different. Their handheld style, grainy quality, and deep blacks, along with their similar subject matter, make them *look* remarkably alike. Ultimately, however, despite these formal similarities, the distinguishing differences between them lie in their productions, contexts of presentation, and, importantly, conclusions about their subject matter.





(left) Figure 4: Photograph from "We are animals* in *a world no one knows."* Life, *February 26, 1965, p. 69. Photograph © Bill Eppridge,* Time/Life *Collection, Getty Images.

(right) Figure 5: Larry Clark,* Untitled *1963. Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.

[41] Zoë Chan, *Wild Boys: Primitivism and Male Youth in Larry Clark's Photography and Films* (MA Thesis, Concordia University, 2008), 58.

On July 13, 1971, less than two months before *Tulsa* was printed, the film *The Panic in Needle Park* was released. Joan Didion, herself an author associated with new journalism, along with husband John Gregory, adapted the film's screenplay from James Mills' book of the same name, which was an extended, allegedly fictionalized version of his articles that originally appeared alongside Eppridge's photo-essays in *Life*. The film starred a young Al Pacino in his first leading role as Bobby, a drug addict who frequented Needle Park with his girlfriend, Helen. Unofficially considered by many to be the first mainstream film to show actual drug use, *Panic* proved much more like *Tulsa* than its *Life* counterpart. Most notably, the film depicted a despondent post-1960s drug culture that lacked *Life*'s quick and easy solutions. The film ended, unlike the *Life* article or Mills' book, without rehab facilities or happy endings, implying that, as Clark wrote, "once the needle goes in it never comes out." As James Bell notes, the film's ending presented "no fairytale redemption, suggesting that, like their city, their dope-ravaged lives were only going to slide into oblivion."[42] Released only months before *Tulsa*, *Panic*'s film adaptation mirrored Clark and others' sentiments much more than its 1965 *Life* predecessor's.

In many respects, *Tulsa* was similar to many contemporaneous works of its era. The book was able to draw on its author's personal experiences to show a lifestyle that at the time was largely under- and misrepresented. Although Bill Eppridge's *Life* photo-essay is a lasting precursor for photographic depictions of adolescent drug use in the 1960s, its optimistic pandering largely sets it apart from *Tulsa*. As the political turmoil of the 1960s carried over into the 1970s, *Life*'s unrelenting optimism was one of many features that began to increasingly alienate readers until it ceased publication as a weekly in 1972, just a year after *Tulsa* was released.[43] Ultimately, Clark, along with other contemporaries outlined here, described a specific contemporary social scene in a manner that was much different from the way *Life* chose to, adopting instead a personal, participatory role while making work that presented no easy solutions or reassuring qualities.

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[42] James Bell. "Love and other drugs." *Sight and Sound*, 21:10 (October 2011): 84.
[43] For *Life*'s editorializing in the area of photography, see A. D. Coleman "Life May Have Died, But Photography Lives On." *The New York Times*, January 14, 1973.

Chapter III: *Tulsa*'s Initial Critical Reception

The first two reviews of Clark's completed project appeared late in the summer of 1971 and were drawn not from the book, which had yet to be printed, but from an exhibition of the work held at the San Francisco Art Institute. While Leland Rice, writing for *Artweek*, and Alfred Frankenstein, writing for *The San Francisco Chronicle*, both reviewed the show, it was the latter's conclusions that proved lasting.[44] In his review, Frankenstein remained completely unaffected by Clark's work, asserting that his images were unconvincing and his subjects looked "no more in the grip of a lethal addiction than so many baseball fans drinking beer." Ultimately, he concluded, "the wages of sin is boredom; so it is, at least, in Tulsa, according to this show."[45] In a 1992 interview with Jutta Koether, Clark recalled his reaction upon first reading Frankenstein's review: "[I saw it] just before I went in the printing plant. And I wanted to shoot myself in the head and burn all the fucking pictures and negatives. […] I said, 'Oh, my god. What have I done?'"[46] Discouraged, Clark nonetheless made his way to Los Angeles the following the week, where *Tulsa* and Seymour's *A Loud Song* were printed by printer Tom Jones.

Weeks later, back in New York City, advanced copies of *Tulsa* were distributed around the photography world. One copy was given to prominent critic and friend of Ralph Gibson, A. D. Coleman, who gave the first official mention of the work in its finalized book format. Coleman's text appeared in a mid-September installation of his *New York Times* column, "Latent Image." While this particular article also discussed other subjects, Clark's book received mention alongside *A Loud Song* and Neal Slavin's *Portugal*, which was also released by Lustrum Press that fall, and received the bulk of Coleman's praise. Nearly immediately, Coleman

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[44] Leland Rice, "Larry Clark" *Artweek*, September 4, 1971; Alfred Frankenstein, "'The History of My Life': Romanticism to Reality," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 17, 1971, 46.
[45] Frankenstein, "The History of My Life," 46.
[46] Jutta Koether, "Larry Clark," *Journal of Contemporary Art* 5:1 (Spring 1992): 37.

framed *Tulsa* as "a major work, almost too good (coming from a young and relatively unknown photographer) to be true." While Frankenstein remained unmoved by *Tulsa* the previous month, Coleman was deeply touched, asserting that "in the midst of all this death the characters are in life; and, harrowing and painful though Clark's images are, the very involvement they create and the intense emotionality they extract from anyone (and everyone) who encounters them are affirmations of the viewer's own life urge."[47]

Like Coleman, many other early reviewers of *Tulsa* grouped the book in with Lustrum's other fall titles, including Gene Thornton in his early October article, "This Publisher Dares." Though Thornton's article focused on Gibson and Lustrum, *Tulsa* was highly praised and a photograph from it was used as the article's sole illustration. Thornton noted *Tulsa*'s beauty despite its difficult subject matter and ended by comparing it to the work of Robert Frank and Diane Arbus, of which he felt was the highest possible praise.[48] Additionally, David Vestal, who concluded "Not nice; real" when writing for *The New York Times* in December 1971, Margot Kernan, writing for *The Washington Post* almost exactly a year later, and A. D. Coleman, writing again for the *New York Times*, all also praised *Tulsa* while contextualizing it alongside other Lustrum titles and recently published photobooks.[49]

Although *Tulsa* did not immediately receive critical attention on its own, extended reviews did begin to appear by the end of 1971 and continued on throughout 1972. The first article devoted solely to the book was Dick Cheverton's "A Devastating Portrait Of An American Tragedy," published on November 7, 1971. Below a large reproduction of a photograph of Roper laughing in front of a framed print of Jesus Christ, Cheverton quickly summarized the book's narrative and its

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[47] A. D. Coleman, "Latent Image: The life-death drug paradox," *Village Voice*, September 16, 1971, 24.
[48] Gene Thornton, "This Publisher Dares," *The New York Times*, October 3, 1971, D33.
[49] David Vestal, "Photographs and Photography," *The New York Times*, December 12, 1971; Margot Kernan, "Writing with Light," *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, December 3, 1972; A. D. Coleman, "Gibson: Masterful Maker of Images," *The New York Times*, February 25, 1973, 138.

photographs, which he found "[shimmered] with ferocious honesty."[50] Although longer, more detailed reviews of *Tulsa* would come in the following months, Cheverton's has remained widely cited due perhaps to the novelty of technically being the "first" to focus only on the book in addition to its later placement on the back cover of Grove Press' 2001 edition of the book. Other articles devoted only to *Tulsa* followed. L. M. Kit Carson, writing for *Rolling Stone* in March 1972, astutely noted the boldness of presenting recreational drug use outside of the urban, minority-populated areas it was often depicted as taking place within and concluded that the book marked the death of the longstanding tradition of the American Outlaw.[51] The longest and most ambitious writing on *Tulsa* during this period, however, appeared in the second issue of the Visual Studies Workshop's journal, *Afterimage,* and was written by Workshop student Alex Sweetman. In his six-page article, Sweetman gave an extensive interpretation of Clark's image pairings and overall photographic sequencing. He compared the book with Frank's *The Americans* in the sense that it too was able to articulate, quoting Szarkowski, "the background hum" of America, which he asserted was, in that era's case, death.[52] First examined within the context of Lustrum Press, *Tulsa* quickly began to be discussed on its own. Almost immediately, art world commentators praised the book for its frank presentation of then antisocial behavior while frequently aligning it with Frank's *The Americans* and the work of Diane Arbus, who had committed suicide only months prior to *Tulsa*'s release, leaving behind an oeuvre that, among other things, presented viewers with a social panorama that challenged popular notions of normalcy and socially deviancy.

Interestingly, while discussions regarding *Tulsa* were active in the United States, the book was also receiving attention internationally. In February 1972, the popular Japanese magazine *Camera Mainichi* ran *Tulsa*'s cover image on its cover and devoted an additional 16 pages to the work. In the article's short text, *Mainichi*'s

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[50] Cheverton, "A Devastating Portrait," 5B.
[51] L. M. Kit Carson, "Books: Tulsa by Larry Clark," *Rolling Stone*, March 16, 1972, 68.
[52] Alex Sweetman, "'Tulsa': Death is the Unconscious Goal," *Afterimage* 1:2 (April 1972): 8-10.

editor explained that he first encountered the book while in New York the previous Christmas and contextualized it as "a report made entirely from inner experience" by a photographer coming to awareness of themselves and society.[53] Additionally, *Fotografia Italiana,* a Milan-based magazine, also published work from *Tulsa* the following May.[54] Although a global photography syndicate certainly existed by this time, it remains notable that such a young, previously unknown photographer could so quickly receive such overwhelmingly positive attention both within his home country and abroad.

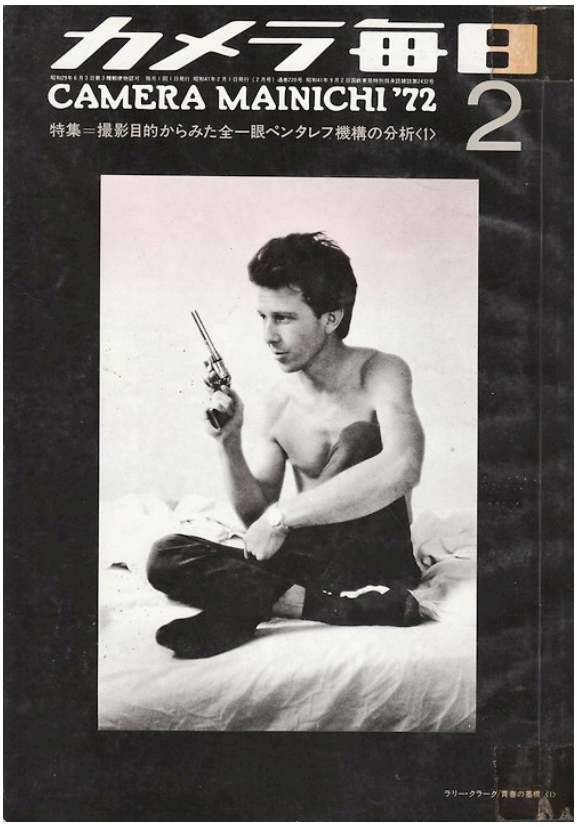

Figure 6: Front Cover of* Camera Mainichi, *February 1972.

However, while many of the aforementioned early writings on *Tulsa* came from established critics and appeared in art sections within major newspapers or specialized magazines, *Camera 35*'s feature on *Tulsa* in their January-February 1972 issue introduced the work to a much broader, general photography audience for the first time. The article was introduced in the issue's table of contents as "a full-blown classic of contemporary photojournalism" and opened with a crudely written note by Clark in all lower case type. The article reproduced 11 photographs and one filmstrip from *Tulsa*, but, unlike the book, laid them out multiple items to a page, a

[53] "Special Feature: Tulsa," *Camera Mainichi*, February 1972, 2-16, 31. Although Clark was the only American in that particular issue, *Mainichi*, who in their early years co-published material with American magazine *Popular Photography*, had many connections with Western photography and often published emerging, American photographers. For example, Lee Friedlander's "Self-Portrait" photographs appeared in the previous month's issue.
[54] Italo Zannier, "Larry Clark: Tulsa," *Fotografia Italiana* (Milan), May 1973, 35-36.

design strategy used in many *Life* photo-essay, and sequenced them to ultimately create a much different narrative from the book, one that had a clear, more definitive ending: the cover image of Billy Mann above the quote "'Death is more perfect than life' – Dead 1970."[55] Importantly, unlike previous press, this extended feature resulted in serious blowback. Firstly, Jim Hughes, then editor of *Camera 35*, claimed eight years later that the article nearly got him fired.[56] Additionally, the magazine moderated a debate on the work through its letters to the editor columns in four subsequent issues. These columns offer a rare glimpse into the reactions of an amateur photography audience and encompassed opinions that ranged from the unimpressed claim that the work belonged in an issue of "*Life* in 1948" and that *Camera 35* should stick to articles on technical photography; to ones that took general offense to the photographs, particularly the image of a dead child; to a letter that praised the magazine for showing "that life isn't all wine and roses" before requesting information on where to purchase a copy of the book.[57] Outside of the art world, reactions were mixed and not nearly as uniformly positive.

Back in Oklahoma, distributor Light Impressions released *Tulsa* to local bookstores sooner than Clark had anticipated, stirring further controversy. Upon seeing the book, trouble quickly arose with the maternal grandparents of Billy Mann's two daughters, who at the time were the legal guardians of the children – both parents' deaths were chronicled in Clark's book. They objected to the use of a photograph showing Mann holding one of their granddaughters while smoking a cigarette and filed a defamation lawsuit against Light Impressions. Although the case was settled outside of court, it served as a demoralizing blow to Clark that ruined his relationship with the popular photobook distribution company.[58] Additionally, Tulsa native Gaylord Oscar Herron, who had grown up with Clark and was at the time a feature-reporter for Tulsa-based television station KOTV alongside many notables including future ABC News 20/20 reporter Bob Brown, took offense

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[55] Larry Clark, "Tulsa," *Camera 35* 16:1 (January/February 1972): 54-61.
[56] Jim Hughes, "Proof Sheet," *Popular Photography* 85:6 (December 1979): 13.
[57] "Give & Take: Letters to the editor," *Camera 35* 16:3-6 (April, May, June, and July-August 1972).
[58] Dugan, *Photography Between the Covers*, 74-75.

to the book and blasted it on air.[59] Notably, Herron became a well-known photographer years later for his 1975 photobook *Vagabond*, which took the city of Tulsa as its primary subject and can been seen as an antithesis to Clark's Tulsa. As we can see, then, accounts of the book being an instant success are very easily justified if one focuses only on early literature produced largely within the art world by writers well versed in contemporary photography. Conversely, accounts of the book being an unprecedented controversy are equally easy to come to if one looks exclusively outside of the art world, particularly within Tulsa during the early 1970s.

Entirely left out of histories of *Tulsa*'s reception, however, are additional remarks made by commentators who used the work, often quite literally, for alternative purposes. Perhaps the best example of these commentators was longtime Harvard University medical professor and psychiatrist Dr. Lester Grinspoon, who reviewed the book in *Medical Tribune*'s November 1, 1972 issue. After providing an abbreviated history of amphetamine usage and its addictive nature, Grinspoon described *Tulsa* as both a social document and work of art capable of showing "all the concomitants and sequelae of speeding – the confidence and euphoria, the high and the depression and ennui of the crash, the increasing social and sexual disintegration, the violence and even the death."[60] Although not writing from an art background, Grinspoon was nevertheless consistent with the book's other reviewers in praising Clark for his honesty and radical insider point of view, although he used and interpreted the book in a much more didactic manner than many of his art world contemporaries.

Similarly, also neglected in many accounts of the work's reception are the exhibitions it received throughout the decade. Many of these shows were rented from the work's first institutional collector, George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, who purchased a complete set of prints from the book in 1972 and

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[59] Grant McClintock, "The Genesis of *Vagabond*," *This Land Press*, accessed April 12, 2013, http://thislandpress.com/06/13/2012/the-genesis-of-vagabond/.
[60] Lester Grinspoon, "A Picture Book of Speed: Tulsa, by Larry Clark," *Medical Tribune* 13:42:1 (November 1, 1972): 8.

offered the set as a traveling exhibition until 1978. In their brochure for the exhibition, the Museum interestingly marketed it as "[offering] the unique opportunity to compare original to reproduced photographs and book format to exhibition format." Although Sebastien Gokalp briefly mentioned exhibitions rented from George Eastman House throughout the decade, incorrectly asserting that they began in 1975, he neglected to mention the venues they traveled to.[61] Interestingly, the context of some of these venues, particularly during the first years the exhibition was offered, suggested a literal, moralizing interpretation of the work not dissimilar to Grinspoon's. One of the show's first venues, for example, was Wellesley High School, located in an affluent, white suburb of Boston, Massachusetts. Other venues during these earlier years included the University of North Dakota and a community college in Illinois, neither of which had photography programs at the time. In a 1986 interview, Clark, during a period of sobriety, acknowledged: "You know, I sent the Tulsa book to this guy who runs a drug rehab center wondering if it might put him off. He thinks it's the best advertisement against drug taking that he's even seen. That book has always been many things to many people."[62] Ultimately, then, despite Clark's insistence on publishing *Tulsa* with an independent press to gain complete editorial and authorial control as to how his photographs were used, the book was still, like virtually all cultural artifacts, used by a variety of people in many unexpected ways, a fact he seemed to accept and even embrace.

While *Tulsa* received varied attention from many factions upon its initial release, much of the publicity and public debates surrounding it abruptly died down by early 1973. Between *Tulsa*'s release and this time, Gibson continued to run Lustrum Press, publishing the American edition of Robert Frank's seminal *The Lines of My Hand* in 1972 and, the following year, Erica and Elizabeth Tonnard's *Sunday*, Michael Martone's *Dark Light,* and his own book, *Déjà-vu*. Daniel Seymour, after assisting Frank with his now infamous film, *Cocksucker Blues* (1972), was reportedly killed in a boating accident in the Caribbean. Clark too, almost immediately following the release of *Tulsa*, decided to leave New York. He returned home to

[61] Gokalp, "The Savage Eye," 6.
[62] Michelle Bogre, "Q&A: Larry Clark," *American Photographer*, October 1986, 74.

Tulsa, where he planned to face any criticism or anger over the book in person. Back home, however, he once again became involved with drugs and crime. These activities quickly caught up to him. Clark managed to squander a 1973 National Endowment for the Arts grant on attorney fees and, stemming from unrelated charges, was later sentenced to a 5-year prison sentence, of which he served 19-months of in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary beginning in 1976.[63] Remembering this period of his life, Clark recounted, "I had dropped out completely. I mean, I had just lost it. I lost it. I don't know what happened. I just lost it."[64]

Clark's abrupt exit from the New York art world and subsequent plunge into relative obscurity can be easily detected in the lack of texts on him throughout this period. Between 1973 and 1977, the only mention of him was in, rather unusually, *Esquire*'s February 1976 issue. In the issue, Clark had one photograph reproduced within an article written by Douglas Davis entitled "The Ten 'Toughest' Photographers of 1975."[65] Curiously, however, instead of creating a list of photographers, Davis' text is much more a manifesto on the medium that championed a trend he saw emerging that involved photographers adopting a "tough," subjective approach to their photographic practice. Of the ten photographers whose work was reproduced alongside Davis' text, Judy Dater's *Imogen and Twinka* was the only one that Davis directly addressed. Clark's photograph, which showed a teenager asleep with an erection, was captioned by him and appropriately concluded, "I never thought *Esquire* would publish this picture."[66] Remembering the article, Guy Trebay recalled, "I called *Esquire* then to find out more about this photographer, but no one knew. 'We just got the picture and we thought it was great' was what they told me, 'but we have no idea how to

[63] Clark's various legal troubles are very often outlined in various writings on him. See Ron Horning, "People and Ideas: The Autobiography of Larry Clark," *Aperture* 94 (Spring 1984): 2-4 and Clark, *Teenage Lust* for rundowns
[64] Clark, *Teenage Lust*.
[65] Douglas Davis, "The Ten `Toughest' Photographs of 1975," *Esquire*, February 1976, 108-115.
[66] *Ibid,* 111.

reach this guy or anything. If you ever do find out please let us know.'"[67] Completely out of contact from the photography establishment, the *Esquire* article evidently did little to help improve Clark's quickly failing reputation.

Although he was seldom mentioned in print during this period, Clark's work did not completely disappear. Prints from *Tulsa* were shown at Parson's New School of Photography in New York in 1976. George Eastman House's exhibition also continued to travel throughout 1973, had no renters in 1974, showed at the University of Delaware in 1975, and, in 1976, at the New England School of Photography. 1977 proved to be a particularly busy year for the prints. They were shown internationally for the first time: first in Saskatchewan, Canada in March; then at Tokyo's Pentax Gallery in August and September; and finally, back in the United States, at the University of Wisconsin in October. Additionally, in 1974, Colloquium, Inc. and Lustrum Limited Editions published a limited edition portfolio of *Tulsa* work. Although the project seems to have been a failure, a rare, pre-publication prospectus remains that outlined the project, which included ten prints in an edition of fifty, priced at $1250 each. Importantly, however, a cult status began to grow around Clark and *Tulsa* during these years. After its release in 1971, the book quickly went out of print and prices for it on the secondary market steadily rose throughout the decade, commonly reaching prices between $150 and $250 to as much as $800 at auction.[68] Because of these prohibitively high prices, copies were reportedly often lent and discreetly passed amongst groups of photographer enthusiasts, helping to build a cult status to the work. Off of the radar, Clark remained out of reach for much of the 1970s, but *Tulsa* did not completely disappear from the evolving photographic discourse.

The previously discussed increased interest in George Eastman House's exhibition in 1977 coincided, whether coincidentally or not, with Clark's release

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[67] Guy Trebay, "Hot Flash?: The Photographer from 'Tulsa' Resurfaces," *The Village Voice*, October 15-21, 1980, 62.

[68] Though $150 to $250 is the most commonly cited price for a first edition of *Tulsa* by the late 1970s, Robert Freidus Gallery claimed $800 was the highest recorded price in an open letter to museum professionals in 1983 that aimed to sell the second edition.

from prison that year. The only mention of him in print in 1977 was in the first volume of Lustrum Press' *Darkroom* series, where he discussed the technical aspects of his printing practices, ultimately urging readers to follow their instincts: "there ain't no rules."[69] Intriguingly, in Clark's biography section, the only mention about how he'd spent the time since *Tulsa*'s release was a note of his 1973 NEA grant, with no mention of his personal or legal troubles. Following his release from prison that year, Clark, on the advisement of his parole board, returned to New York City, where he reentered an art photography establishment that was significantly changed from the one that he had left behind earlier in the decade.

Away from New York, Clark largely missed photography's proliferation in the art world throughout the 1970s. The decade marked the era when photography went from that status of, to use Richard Christopherson's words, "folk art to fine art."[70] Throughout and previous to the 1960s, the only two museums to consistently see photographs on display were New York's Museum of Modern Art, whose photography department was then under the leadership of John Szarkowski, and George Eastman House, where Nathan Lyons maintained an ambitious exhibition schedule. During the 1970s, however, due in no small part to funding provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, whose photography department was under the ambitious guidance of Renato Danese, photography began to become widely collected by and displayed within museums throughout the country.[71] The decade also marked the rise of the study of the medium's history within the university. This can be seen in the increase of academic appointments throughout the decade, including, but not limited to, Beaumont Newhall to the University of New Mexico in 1971, Peter Bunnell to Princeton University in 1972, and Joel Snyder to the

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[69] Larry Clark, "Mixing Your Own Chemicals," in *Darkroom*, ed. Eleanor Lewis (New York: Lustrum, 1977), 44.
[70] Richard W. Christopherson, "From Folk Art To Fine Art: A Transformation in the Meaning of Photographic Work," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 3: 123-157.
[71] See Lewis Baltz "American Photography in the 1970s: Too Old to Rock, Too Young to Roll," in *American Images: 1945-1980*, ed. Peter Turner (Penguin: Middlesex, 1985), 156-164 for detailed overview of institutionalization of photography.

University of Chicago in 1976.[72] Furthermore, and perhaps most germane to Clark, photography also began to be shown and sold in some of New York's premier art galleries, including Leo Castelli Gallery, Robert Miller Gallery, and Pace Editions.[73] Though photographs had previously been shown and sold at a few select galleries focusing exclusively on the medium, such as Helen Gee's Limelight Gallery, Lee D. Witkin's Witkin Gallery, or, after 1971, Harold Jones' LIGHT Gallery, it only reached a broader market and audience later in the 1970s. In many respects, *Tulsa* appeared at the cusp of one of American photography's most pivotal and defining decades. Although Clark was absent for the medium's proliferation throughout it, *Tulsa*'s status as a rarity and Clark's mysterious whereabouts during the time only added an extra dimension to both his reputation and the book's status, a dimension that ultimately proved to benefit him upon his return to the city.

Back in New York and staying with Gibson, Clark began to slowly reinsert himself back into the contemporary photography discourse. A notable achievement for Clark during that period was having his work purchased by renowned curator and collector Sam Wagstaff. This led to his inclusion in the popular traveling Corcoran Gallery of Art exhibition, *An Exhibition of Photographs From the Collection of Sam Wagstaff*, its small, accompanying booklet, and its still widely cited catalogue, *A Book of Photographs from the Collection of Sam Wagstaff*.[74] Additionally, Clark was also included in Thomas Dugan's *Photography Between the Covers*, where he discussed *Tulsa*'s history for the first time.[75] The most notable career landmark for Clark at the time, however, was gaining representation from Robert Freidus Gallery in New York, which had been established in 1976 with a multidisciplinary program that focused on sculpture, but also valued photography and other mediums. Importantly, through the gallery, Clark was able to officially consolidate his then

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[72] Douglas R. Nickel, "History of Photography: The State of Research," *The Art Bulletin* 78:3 (September 2001): 555.
[73] Baltz, "American Photography in the 1970s," 159.
[74] Sam Wagstaff, *An Exhibition of Photographs from the collection of Sam Wagstaff* (Washington: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1978), 4; Sam Wagstaff, *A Book of photographs from the collection of Sam Wagstaff*. (New York: Gray Press, 1978), 37
[75] Dugan, *Photography Between Covers,* 65-77.

precocious fame. His partnership with Freidus was liaised by Janet Borden, who was hired to expand the gallery's growing interest in photography. Upon meeting Clark at the opening of John Szarkowski's *Mirrors and Windows* at MoMA in July 1978 and hearing him complain about not being included in the exhibition, Borden allegedly convinced him that joining an active gallery with other active artists would help him to be included in shows of a similar caliber.[76] Soon after, Clark had signed a deal with the gallery and by the fall of the following year, hung two shows that would prove incredibly important to his career. The first exhibition, which ran from September 11 to October 13, 1978, displayed the entire *Tulsa* sequence, with the exception of the filmstrips, in its original order. The following show displayed Clark's ongoing work on 42nd Street and other material from his *Teenage Lust* series.

Notably, both Freidus shows received tremendous press and put Clark and *Tulsa* back into the contemporary spotlight. For many, the shows were long overdue. Gene Thornton, for example, concluded in his review of the show, "[Clark] has had to wait eight years from the publication of *Tulsa* to have his first New York show, and even then not in a major museum, although *Tulsa* is certainly one of the finest achievements of contemporary photography."[77] John Yau, likewise, praised the work and concluded, "these carefully chosen photographs are the highlights of a trip to hell," a statement that could have been just as true in regard to Clark's life as it was about *Tulsa*'s narrative.[78] Interestingly, though, while most writers were positive about the two shows at Freidus, the prevailing focus of their texts proved to be much less on the work being shown than on Clark's tumultuous past. For example, the first published article on Clark's *Tulsa* show at Freidus Gallery emphasized the fact that "He got himself known, disappeared, and resurfaced last year." [79] Richard Esposito, in an article entitled "Ex-addict presents an essay in

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[76] William Green, email with Janet Borden, July 30, 2013.
[77] Gene Thornton, "Practitioners With a Story To Tell," *The New York Times*, September 30, 1979, D31. Thornton incorrectly called the Freidus exhibition Clark's first New York show; however, it was in fact his second.
[78] John Yau, "Larry Clark at Robert Freidus," *Art in America*, December 1979, 116-117.
[79] "Briefs: A Serendipitous Guide of the Week," *Village Voice,* September 17, 1979.

photos," devoted the first two sections of his text to summarizing Clark's legal troubles and contrasting them with the disciplined lifestyle he was following at the time.[80] Likewise, Jim Hughes, in his article on both Freidus Gallery shows, also began by introducing Clark through his jail time and conspicuous absence from New York throughout the decade.[81] Guy Trebay, in an article entitled "Hot Flash?: The Photographer from *Tulsa* Resurfaces," focused exclusively on Clark's troubled biography.[82] Interestingly, while Lustrum Press' *Darkroom* completely avoided discussing how Clark had spent most of the 1970s, many of the articles on the Freidus Gallery shows two years later focused almost exclusively on his past, using it not as a detracting detail, but as a badge of authenticity that was used to further authenticate *Tulsa*.

Following the two Freidus shows in late 1979, Clark's fame began to rapidly increase. He was featured in many exhibitions throughout the early 1980s, perhaps most notably in the 1981 Whitney Biennial, where he showed his ongoing 42nd Street photographs. Beginning in 1978, he also began to lecture about his work at universities, which became an increasingly common occurrence during the 1980s, when he spoke at venues including Pratt Institute, Rutgers, and M.I.T. In 1980, due no doubt to his growing popularity and successful showings at Freidus Gallery the previous fall, Clark and Freidus produced and sold a complete portfolio of the *Tulsa* work. Printed at 11'' x 14'' in an edition of 100 (plus 15 artist proofs) and officially priced at $15,000, Freidus astutely began marketing the *Tulsa* portfolios not only to photography collectors, but also to bankers and investors, many of whom took advantage of a legal tax loophole present at the time that allowed them to purchase the portfolios at a steeply discounted price, immediately donate them to museums, and then claim a tax write-off equal to the value of the prints' combined individual prices, which came out to be significantly more than what they had actually paid.[83] This arrangement was beneficial to all parties involved and, importantly, finally got

[80] Richard Esposito, "Ex-addict presents an essay in photos," *Daily News*, September 30, 1979.
[81] Hughes. "Proof Sheet," 13.
[82] Trebay, "Hot Flash?"
[83] William Green, email with Robert Freidus, July 29, 2013.

Clark's work placed within a variety of institutional collections, a crucial career step. Throughout the 1970s, prior to Freidus Gallery, Clark's sole institutional collectors were George Eastman House, a very active champion of him and *Tulsa*, Visual Studies Workshop, who kept the prints used for Sweetman's *Afterimage* article, and Philadelphia Museum of Art, who acquired four prints by Clark in 1976. However, this quickly changed when the 1980 *Tulsa* portfolios, often donated, made their ways to additional institutions throughout the United States, including San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Center for Creative Photography, Tucson; and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (see appendix 2 for a detailed list). When asked why he was doing the portfolio, Clark allegedly responded, "for money"; however, even if we are to believe this shortsighted claim, the portfolios proved to do much more than simply generate income.[84] Within only a few years, then, thanks in no small part to Freidus Gallery, Clark went from entirely out of contact to being, for the first time, an active member of the photography world who was being widely shown and collected.

However, despite Clark's "resurfacing" and the proliferation of his work in the gallery and museum archive, the *Tulsa* book remained rare and increasingly difficult to come by. Influenced in part by worries about additional lawsuits from the grandparents of Mann's daughters and others, Clark told Thomas Dugan in July 1978, "I won't put the book out [again], even if I could, in the States. I don't want to bring all that heat back. It's 7, 8 years old now. It's no use bringing it up. Let's let it lay back and be whatever it is. I meet people who tell me about *Tulsa* and they've never even seen the book. The book is so obscure now that it's fun. I enjoy that."[85] This sentiment, however, was not long lasting. After the success of his 1980 portfolio, it took only three more years for *Tulsa*'s second edition to come to fruition. Self published by Clark, this edition was officially announced and promoted by Robert Freidus Gallery in an open letter to museum professionals, dated

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[84] "Prints and Photographs Published," *The Print Collector's Newsletter* 11:3 (July-August 1980).
[85] Dugan, *Photography Between the Covers,* 73.

February 10, 1983.[86] The reprint was issued in an edition of 3,000 copies and was printed by legendary printer Sid Rapoport in New York, bound by Sendor Bindery, and retailed for $35. Aware of the infamously flimsy perfect binding affecting Lustrum titles even then, Clark chose to bind the book as a hardcover, which was mentioned in advertisements for the new edition: "Unlike the Lustrum edition, the current edition is hard cover and Smythe sewn for greater durability."[87] Other than a reordering of front matter and different binding method, the second edition of *Tulsa* remained faithful to the first in its size, content, and sequence, setting a precedent that all later editions of the book have adhered to. In 1983, nearly 13 years after its first edition, *Tulsa* finally saw a new printing.

With its second edition, *Tulsa* received renewed critical attention. Andy Grundberg, writing in April of that year, noted that the new edition of *Tulsa* retained its initial impact, unlike other prominent work from the 1970s, such as that by Les Krims and Ralph Gibson, which he saw as already looking stale.[88] Likewise, Owen Edwards asserted that *Tulsa* remained the most "terrifyingly authentic drama" to be made outside of a war zone and closed his article by asserting that the book should "never be out of print."[89] Ultimately, then, the years between moving back to New York and reissuing *Tulsa* in 1983 proved to be crucial ones for Clark. In its second edition two decades after it was begun and well over a decade after it was first published by Lustrum Press in its finalized book format, *Tulsa* finally began to be discussed as the classic title that we know it as today.

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[86] Because the second edition of *Tulsa* lists only 1971 as its copyright date and does not present itself as a reprint, the year of its release is often confused and widely disputed. Some booksellers list it as 1979 and the International Center of Photography's 2005 retrospective on Clark lists it as 1981; however, it was not mentioned in print or advertised until 1983 and that year remains the most commonly and confidently agreed upon date.
[87] Mary Efron to John Szarkowski, February 10, 1983, in *The Tulsa Reader*, ed. Chelsea Spengemann (New York: Chelsea Spengemann, 2010), n.p.
[88] Andy Grundberg, "Why Some Art Retains Its Emotional Impact," *The New York Times*, April 10, 1983, 31-33.
[89] Owen Edwards, "Data Bank: Book Bits," *American Photographer*, October 1983.

Chapter IV: *Tulsa*'s Legacy

Alongside *Tulsa*'s second edition in 1983, Clark also published his sophomore title, *Teenage Lust*. The book, which can be seen as a sequel to *Tulsa*, included various material stretching back to the artist's childhood culled from his personal archive, outtakes from *Tulsa*, later photographs of the teenagers who inherited the drug scene in *Tulsa*'s final chapter, work Clark had been making on the adolescents who frequented Manhattan's 42nd Street, and an extended account of his life up to that point. A major second book, *Teenage Lust* remains a notable, highly sought after work in its own right and today has reached a cult status not dissimilar to *Tulsa*'s.

It goes without saying, though, that Clark's artistic output and *Tulsa*'s history did not suddenly come to a halt in 1983; both have morphed as his career has continued to progress with additional photography projects, conceptually-driven serialized works, and extensive filmmaking endeavors. At the heart of all of the projects Clark has pursued since *Tulsa*, there has remained a sustained focus on evolving youth cultures and issues central to them. By the mid-1980s, these reoccurring, overarching themes were already widely recognized as Clark's signature subject matter, although certain commentators were publically skeptical about how he would continue to approach them in new, meaningful ways. Abigail Solomon-Godeau, for example, wrote in 1988 of her concerns about what would happen once Clark, growing older but continuing to pursue younger subjects, began to "assume the role of voyeur and thus […] forfeit the absolute intimacy, and hence, identification, that gave *Tulsa* its special authority and power."[90] Furthermore, Vince Aletti, in a 1992 article not so subtly entitled "Arrested Development," probed Clark on this reoccurring theme:

> I remind him of this comment to Mike Kelley [from "In Youth Is Pleasure"] about *Larry Clark 1992*: "The idea is to put all these fucking teenage boys in

[90] Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Clark, Larry," in *Contemporary Photographers*, ed. Colin Naylor (Chicago & London: St. James Press, 1988), 180-181.

> one place and just finish it there. Just put the whole obsession with going back in one book and maybe it will be finished, maybe I can do something else." Clark, caught, looks mischievous and totally unrepentant. "I was lying," he laughs, "I changed my mind."[91]

Despite concerns about redundancy, Clark has remained committed to exploring youth cultures. Since the mid-1990s, he has managed to at least partially sidestep concerns about his inevitably changing relationship with his subjects by pursuing projects with young people that are increasingly collaborative. For example, *Kids* (1995), his first feature film, centered on a day in the life of sexually active teenagers in New York City and gained much of its power and authenticity not from his own heavy handed directing, but from Harmony Korine's brilliantly written screenplay and acting provided by teenagers with no previous Hollywood experience, most notably Leo Fitzpatrick and Justin Pierce. Already a huge art world personality, the tremendous success of *Kids* made Clark a household name. Lynn Hirschberg, writing the year the film was released, applauded him as an artist immersed in the worlds of teenagers no different from the world of gangsters and wiseguys that Martin Scorsese identifies with.[92] In subsequent films, Clark has continued to focus on adolescence and collaborate with non-actors, such as in films like *Wassup Rockers* (2006) and, most recently, *Marfa Girl* (2012), to gain the distinctly insider point of view into a subculture that he naturally had when creating *Tulsa*.

Today, *Tulsa* is often cited as Clark's career-launching work and an important example of the subjective, autobiographical approach to documentary practices that emerged throughout the 1960s and early '70s. It has been included in virtually all recently composed histories of photography and is often framed as marking a watershed moment in photography. Naomi Rosenblum, in her survey, *A World History of Photography*, notes the book's cult status throughout the 1970s and the way it "appears to have persuaded other photographers to investigate areas

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[91] Vince Aletti, "Arrested Development: Larry Clark Pins Adolescence to the Wall," *Village Voice*, October 13, 1992, 100.
[92] Lynn Hirschberg, "What's the Matter with Kids Today?" *New York Magazine*, June 5, 1995, 35.

previously considered off-limits other than for publication in frankly erotic or pornographic magazines."[93]

Furthermore, in recent years *Tulsa* has also received renewed critical attention within the still emerging history and discourse surrounding the photographically illustrated book – a genre often referred to as the "photobook." Although the genre has long been recognized as an important area of study within the history of photography, it has only become a broadly researched and tentatively canonized area of the medium's history within the past decade. Andrew Roth's *The Book of 101 Books*, published in 2001, was an early contributor to this discourse and presented an art photography oriented selection of titles that included Clark's *Tulsa*.[94] Likewise, *Tulsa* was also featured in the Hasselblad Center's 2004 publication, *The Open Book*, which was spearheaded by a team led by Roth and also appeared as an exhibition at New York's International Center of Photography.[95] *Tulsa* was selected by Martin Parr and Gerry Badger for the first volume of their seminal and widely read *The Photobook: A History* series, which first appeared in 2004 and aimed to expand Roth's art-centric, largely American and European focused history.[96] Although all of these recent and popular titles have presented distinct and varying histories of the photobook, *Tulsa* has nonetheless consistently played an integral role in all of them.

Since 1971, *Tulsa* has also influenced a huge range of cultural figures and can still be felt in countless contemporary works. In film, director Gus Van Sant has cited Clark and *Tulsa* as a primary influence, particularly when developing *Drugstore Cowboy* (1989), in which he thanked Clark in the film's production notes; Martin Scorsese allegedly referenced the book when directing *Taxi Driver* (1976); and Francis Ford Coppola's *Rumble Fish*, which was adapted from Tulsan S. E. Hinton's

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[93] Naomi Rosenblum, *A World History of Photography* (New York: Abbeville Press, 2007), 544.
[94] Andrew Roth ed., *The Book of 101 Books: Seminal Photographic Books of the Twentieth Century* (New York: PPP Editions, 2001).
[95] Andrew Roth ed., *The Open Book: A History of the Photographic Book from 1878 to the Present* (Göteborg: Hasselblad Center, 2004).
[96] Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, *The Photobook: A History, vol. 1* (London: Phaidon, 2004).

novel of the same name, was also reportedly influenced by Clark and *Tulsa*.[97] Clark's influence is strongly felt in Tulsa-born artist Joe Andoe's relentlessly self-mythologized, substance-fueled lifestyle, which he chronicled in his 2008 memoir, *Jubilee City: A Memoir at Full Speed*. Clark has also become an icon within streetwear and skateboarding counterculture movements, with his photographs being reproduced on skateboard decks and t-shirts, including his popular collaboration with New York-based clothing brand, Supreme.

In photography, *Tulsa* and Clark's influence is equally widespread and can be felt in the work of a diverse and broad range of image-makers. American photographer Nan Goldin remembers the liberation and recognition she felt upon first seeing the book: "In 1974, I went to school and there was a teacher who showed me Larry Clark. It has entirely changed my work. I knew that there had been somebody else who had done their own life. You know his book *Tulsa*? I knew that [there] were precedents for using one's private experiences as art."[98] A similar, drug-fueled autobiographical impulse can be traced through 1990s, perhaps most pointedly in Corrine Day's *Diary* (2000). Currently, the posturing and self-mythologizing of the exclusive Manhattan "downtown" artists, a scene epitomized by figures such as Dan Colen, Ryan McGinley, and Dash Snow, is equally indebted to Clark. *Guardian* writer Sean O'Hagen, when discussing the Polaroid work of the late Snow notes, "You can trace [that posturing] back through the work of photographers such as Larry Clark and Nan Goldin, mythmakers whose myths depend on an unvarnished and often hardcore portrayal of the lives of the beautiful losers they ran with, took drugs with and whose defiance and despair – and sometimes even their deaths – they turned into art of the most relentlessly uncompromising kind."[99] Despite its rather modest beginnings, *Tulsa* has become a

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[97] Gus Van Sant, "Larry Clark: Shockmaker," *Interview Magazine,* July 1995, 43.
[98] Adam Mazur and Paulina Skirgajllo-Krajewska, "If I want to take a picture, I take it no matter what: Nan Goldin Interview," *Photo Tapeta*, accessed June 22, 2013, http://www.fototapeta.art.pl/2003/ngie.php.
[99] Sean O'Hagan, "The last days of Dash Snow," *The Guardian*, September 19, 2009, accessed June 22, 2013, http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2009/sep/20/dash-snow-new-york-artist

lasting and important artwork of the early 1970s. Its influence can be felt in a broad range of works that have been made since its initial release and its celebrated historical legacy continues to be reconsidered as histories of photography, art, and culture continue to be revised.

Conclusion

As Patrizia Di Bello and Shamoon Zamir remind us, "photobooks are not just for looking; they 'function' in a direct and private interaction with the reader and they only come alive when they are used, touched, handled, and manipulated."[100] This passage reminds us that each of the roughly 2,400 copies of *Tulsa* printed in 1971, in addition to the book's 1983 edition, a 1996 Japanese edition, a deluxe and limited 1999 Printed Matter edition, and Grove Press' 2000 edition, has had its own unique history.[101] These many copies and their stories range from the one that Shantelle Jennings, Billy Mann's daughter, writes of seeing in 1972, at the age of nine, that provided her with a glimpse of her deceased father for the first time; to the unknowable amount of volumes that have inevitably been ruined or destroyed in the over 40 years since *Tulsa*'s first edition appeared in bookstores; to, finally, the copy in the George Eastman House's Richard and Ronay Menschel Library that I, along with countless other researchers, have consulted throughout the writing of this paper.[102]

Clark made *Tulsa*'s photographs for nearly a decade before Gibson and Lustrum Press, with crucial funding provided by Seymour, agreed to publish the work. After that, it was over another decade before the book became widely praised and was reprinted. Immediately after its release in 1971, *Tulsa* certainly did receive overwhelmingly positive attention from writers versed in contemporary art, along with significantly negative attention from additional, non-art world factions, and literal, one-dimensional readings from others. Some of these early reviewers astutely praised Clark for his honest, insider point of view towards a subculture that

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[100] Patrizia Di Bello and Shamoon Zamir, "Introduction," in *The Photobook: From Talbot to Ruscha and Beyond,* ed. Patrizia Di Bello, et al (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 11.

[101] Larry Clark, *Tulsa* (New York: Lustrum Press, 1971); *Tulsa* (New York: Larry Clark, 1983); *Tulsa* (Tokyo: Taka Ishii Gallery, 1996); *Tulsa* (New York: Printed Matter, 1999); *Tulsa* (New York: Grove Press, 2000).

[102] Shantelle Jennings, "Tulsa Revealed," *This Land Press*, accessed April 14, 2013, http://thislandpress.com/05/09/2012/tulsa-revealed/.

had previously only been shown and presented through photographs by outsiders. This approach towards the subjective was, notably, a prevailing trend in American photography during the era and was also exemplified in other photobooks that touched on similarly marginalized subjects, such as Lyon's *The Bikeriders* and others working in the genre that Jonathan Green has dubbed "personal journalism." Likewise, *Tulsa* also shared the widespread fatalism towards the failed utopianism of the 1960s that was prevalent during the period, a quality detected by Sweetman in 1972 when he described *Tulsa* as focusing on death, early 1970s American's prevailing "background hum." Intriguingly, "We are animals in a world no one knows," the most lasting photographic account of drug addition preceding *Tulsa*, proves largely dissimilar to it in multiple ways, although the *Life* photo-essay's later film incarnation, *The Panic in Needle Park*, stands much closer to *Tulsa* both chronologically and thematically.

As we have seen, *Tulsa*'s popularity was not entirely sustained throughout the decade. The lack of mention of Clark and *Tulsa* in print around the mid-1970s reflects his personal troubles during the period and invites many further questions: What if Clark had been killed during his time as a full-fledged addict and outlaw? (If we are to believe his testimony in *Teenage Lust*, this came very close to happening on more than one occasion.) If he, like Daniel Seymour, had died prematurely, how would it have affected *Tulsa*'s ultimate legacy? If never reprinted, would we today view *Tulsa* as only an obscure cult classic, similar perhaps to the current treatment of Seymour's *A Loud Song*? Furthermore, what if Clark, afraid of possible legal repercussions, chose not to reprint *Tulsa* in 1983? Though these questions are clearly unanswerable, they at the very least demonstrate the book's tentative status through the decade and how easily its story *may* have been significantly different. Despite these questions, however, we know that Clark, as well as *Tulsa*, did survive the decade. Clark's tumultuous lifestyle throughout the mid-1970s was an initial setback, but ultimately proved, due to circumstances largely outside of his control, an unforeseen asset that he benefited from in a rather roundabout way. Away from the boom of the photography market in 1970s, questions surrounding his

whereabouts only inflated his reputation to nearly mythic proportions that have more or less been maintained up to the time of this writing.

After Clark's "resurfacing" later in the decade, the suitable answers to the press' questions of his whereabouts only added an extra, authenticating dimension to the book and his life that many writers continue to reference and rely upon. Furthermore, Clark benefitted tremendously from the gallery system available to him upon his return to New York, a system that was virtually nonexistent upon *Tulsa*'s initial release in 1971. Through Robert Freidus Gallery, Clark was able to show and sell his photographs at unprecedentedly high prices, place them within major institutional collections throughout the United States, and use the gallery as an important promotional tool that helped him to integrate himself back into the contemporary photography discourse. The 1970s were the perfect decade for *Tulsa* and Clark to come of age during.

Today, *Tulsa* is often mentioned as a timeless classic. In the years since its release, Clark has continued to pursue similar subjects in the blunt and direct style he mastered in *Tulsa*. Despite the various strategies he has adopted to counteract the problems involved with growing older but continuing to pursue young subjects, *Tulsa* remains Clark's most intimate and authentic body of work. Still, as this paper demonstrates, *Tulsa*'s journey throughout the 1970s, its first decade of existence, was neither predetermined nor straightforward and proved to be the product of both the era and Clark's perseverance throughout it.

Appendix 1: Exhibitions, 1964 – 1983

1964: Heliographers Gallery, New York, NY.
1971: San Francisco Art Institute. San Francisco, California.
1972: *University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota.
1973: *Wellesley High School, January 15 – February 15, 1973.
Kirkland College. Kirkland, New Jersey.
*State University of New York (S.U.N.Y.), Buffalo, New York. March 1 – 31.
*Oakton Community College. Morton Grove, Illinois. April 1 – 30.
1974:
1975: *University of Delaware. Newark, Delaware. May 1 – 31.
1976: New School of Photography. New York, New York.
*New England School of Photography. Boston, Massachusetts. April 1 – 30.
1977: *Photographer's Gallery, Saskatchewan, Canada. March 9 – April 2.
*Pentax Gallery, Tokyo, August 15 – September 14
*University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, October 1 – 19, 1977.
1978†: *Group*: The Collection of Sam Wagstaff" (Travling)
1979: Robert Freidus Gallery. New York, New York.
Photographers' Gallery and Workshop. Sydney, Australia.
Group: Albright College, Reading, PA.
Group: DeCordova & Dana Museum, Lincoln, MA.
1980: James Madison University. Harrisonburg, Virginia.
Glyph Gallery. Amherst, Massachusetts.
Group: Albright College
Group: DeCordova & Dana Museum
Group: James Madison
Group: Glyth Gallerhy, Amherst, Massachusetts
Group: Art Lending Service, MoMA
Group: 1980, CAPS Fellowship Recipients
1981: G. Ray Hawkins Gallery. Los Angeles, California.
Group: 1981 Whitney Biennial. Whitney Museum, New York, New York.
Group: Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, Germany.
Simon Lowinsky Gallery. San Francisco, California.
Zenith Gallery. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
Galerie Agathe Gaillard. Paris, France.
Group: Rheinishches Landesmuseum, Bonn
Werkstatt fur Photographie der VHS. Kreuzberg, Germany.

1982: Monmouth College. Monmouth, New Jersey.
Kresge Art Center, Michigan State University. East Lansing, Michigan.
Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design. Providence, Rhode Island.
Group: Kunsthalle, Basel, Switzerland. (Travling.)
Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.
North Texas State University, Denton. TX.
University of California at Davis, Davis, CA.

1983: Fay Gold Gallery. Atlanta, Georgia.
New York Cultural Center, New York, NY.
Werkstatt fur Photographie, Berlin, Germany.

* Rented from George Eastman House.

† George Eastman House retired their *Tulsa* traveling exhibition in the spring of 1978.

Appendix 2: Institutional Collectors, 1971 – 1983

1972: George Eastman House, Rochester, New York.
-Complete set of prints used for *Tulsa*'s first edition.

1974: Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, New York.
-Seven prints from *Tulsa* originally used in *Afterimage* 1:2.

1976: Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
-Three prints from *Tulsa* and one from *Teenage Lust*.

1980: National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio, along with additional prints.
Washington Arts Consortium, Seattle, Washington.
- Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.

1981: Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio (#87/100).
Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio (#49/100).
Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, Louisiana.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California.
-Single print from 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton, Massachusetts.
-Single print from *42nd Street.*

1982: Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New York.
-Three prints from 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.

Milwaukee Art Center, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
Newport Harbor Art Museum, Newport Beach, California (now Orange County Art Museum).
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, New Jersey
-4 prints from *Tulsa.*
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, California.
-Three prints from 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.

Listed on Clark's 1983 résumé, but not formally accessioned until years later:

1986: Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, Virginia.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.

1987: International Center of Photography, New York, New York.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.
Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.

1991: Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, South Hadley, Massachusetts.
-Complete 50-image 1980 Robert Freidus Gallery *Tulsa* portfolio.

Appendix 3: Annotated Bibliography of Reviews and Mentions of *Tulsa*, 1971 – 1983

Alfred Frankenstein, "'The History of My Life': Romanticism to Reality," *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 17, 1971, 46.

This article deals primarily with *The History of My Life*, an Imogen Cunningham exhibition at the San Francisco Art Institute. However, the final two sections are devoted to two other exhibitions also showing at the Institute that summer: a show of ceramic sculptures by Robert Rasmussen and an exhibition of Clark's *Tulsa* photographs. Frankenstein's review of Clark's work is remarkably unaffected. He describes Clark's style as "detached, wry, slightly weary realism," while noting that his subjects "look like very ordinary citizens no more in the grip of a lethal addiction than so many baseball fans drinking beer." Ultimately, Frankenstein questions the authenticity of Clark's subjects and the pathos of his images, concluding "the wages of sin is boredom; so it is, at least, in Tulsa, according to this show."

Leland Rice, "Larry Clark" *Artweek*, September 4, 1971.

In her positive review of Clark's San Francisco Art Institute show, Rice likens Clark's *Tulsa* photographs to Robert Frank's, Walker Evans' and Wright Morris' of years past in their ability to faithfully chronicle the "most contemporary scene[s]."

A. D. Coleman, "Latent Image: The life-death drug paradox," *Village Voice*, September 16, 1971, 24-26. Published later in A. D. Coleman, *Light Readings: A Photography Critic's Writings, 1968-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 79-81.

This edition of A. D. Coleman's "Latent Image" column focuses on three subjects: Lustrum's press' recent publications, including *Tulsa*; *The Third Sex*, a three man show at the Neikrug Galleries in New York; and *Photographs from Sing Sing* at Floating Foundation of Photography, an exhibition of photographs from a photographic workshop held at Ossining Correctional Facility. Within the article's first section on Lustrum, *Tulsa* gets the bulk of Coleman's attention. In his review, he praises Clark's ability to "trust his

honest subjectivity, his instincts and heart and guts, and ride with it" in order to create an honest and authentic view of his experiences immersed in Tulsa's drug culture. Additionally, Coleman gives a short, yet astute summary of the book's narrative sequence. Coleman ultimately sees *Tulsa* as "a major work, almost too good […] to be true," that elicit strong emotional responses from its readers through its honest, authentically produced photographs, and carefully sequenced photographs.

Gene Thornton, "This Publisher Dares," *The New York Times*, October 3, 1971, D33.

In this article, Thornton focuses on Ralph Gibson and Lustrum Press, first writing about Gibson's *The Somnambulist,* then briefly introducing each of Lustrum's three most recent books, and finally ending with a short history of the press. Of the three books, all of which are favorably reviewed, *Tulsa* receives the highest praise. Thornton introduces the book's subject matter and then describes its formal beauty and layout. He concludes that *Tulsa* is the strongest of the recent Lustrum titles and ranks it amongst Robert Frank's *The Americans* or the portraits of Diane Arbus, who had committed suicide only a few months prior. "A testimony to life in our times -- a small part of life, perhaps, but one that won't go away."

Dick Cheverton, "A Devastating Portrait Of An American Tragedy," *Detroit Free Press,* Sunday, November 7, 1971, 5B.

In his review for *Detroit Free Press*, Cheverton describes *Tulsa* as "a collection of photographs that assail, lacerate, devastate. And, ultimately indict." Most of his short review is devoted to describing the subject matter of each of the book's three chapters in an extremely sympathetic tone. The review ends with a comment that the book is appropriately bound in black.

David Vestal, "Photographs and Photography," *The New York Times*, December 12, 1971.

In this article, Vestal lists 22 recently released photobooks, giving roughly a paragraph to each. His review of *Tulsa* is placed alongside reviews of the three other Lustrum titles released that fall. His short paragraph on the book comments on the fact that it was authentically and subjectively seen "from

the inside." He also comments on the dichotomy between the beauty and disturbing nature of the photographs. Vestal concludes the review with the simple statement: "Not nice; real."

Larry Clark, "Tulsa," *Camera 35* 16:1 (January/February 1972): 54-61.

This *Camera 35* issue features a selection of photographs from *Tulsa* with an introductory text by Larry Clark. The article is introduced in the issue's table of contents as a photo essay and "a full-blown classic of contemporary photojournalism." The text starts with a typewritten letter Clark sent to Jim Hughes, *Camera 35*'s editor, in April 1971 while he was printing and editing the work with Ralph Gibson. In the text, Clark describes his background and each of his three trips to Tulsa to make the work. The 11 photographs and one filmstrip reproduced after the text are all taken from the book, but are chronologically out of order and, also unlike the book, reproduced as multiple images on one page. This sequence ends on a more definitive note than *Tulsa* with the image of Billy Mann sitting on his bed with a handgun above the caption: "Billy Mann – 'Death is more perfect than life." – Dead 1970."

"Special Feature: Tulsa," *Camera Mainichi*, February 1972, 2-16, 31.

This issue of *Camera Mainichi* reproduces *Tulsa's* iconic cover photo on its cover and features a selection of images from the book along with a short article by a nameless author recounting his first experience with *Tulsa* during a trip to New York City shortly before Christmas 1971. He asserts that viewers will undoubtedly find the photographs shocking, but contextualizes them as the result of coming of age rebelliousness that often benefits society and helps it to develop. However, the translation of this text into English is not perfect and muddles up the writer's point. In addition to this text, Clark's essay that appeared in *Camera 35* the previous month is also reproduced alongside a short commentary by Ralph Gibson, who recognizes that the work is inseparable from Clark's life and the final book is uncompromised, "unlike any other ever before."

L. M. Kit Carson, "Books: Tulsa by Larry Clark," *Rolling Stone*, March 16, 1972, 68.

Carson's review of *Tulsa* in *Rolling Stone*, is short, yet particularly astute. The article begins by introducing the book and details such as the number of photographs, the years in which they were made, and Clark's age during the making of the book. In the second paragraph, Carson notes, for the first time, that the images challenge the commonly held notion that "the needle is a city-slicker." He then goes on to recap the narrative of the book and its two main characters: David Roper and Billy Mann. Carson concludes his review by stating that the book signaled the end of the long-standing tradition of the heroic American outlaw.

Alex J., Sweetman, "'Tulsa': Death Is The Unconscious Goal," *Afterimage* 1:2 (April 1972): 8-10

In this six-page article, Sweetman gives a thorough interpretation of the photographic sequence of *Tulsa*, asserting that the "background hum" of the book is death. Sweetman gives a very detailed overview of the narrative and even delves into the book's image pairings and their messages. Additionally, he, viewing the book in relation to *The Americans*, asserts the gun is the overarching symbol of the book and death is it's main character. He ends his review by claiming the book is "the vision of a tragic poet."

"Give & Take: Letters to the editor," *Camera 35* 16:3 (April 1972).

This edition of *Camera 35*'s "Give & Take: Letters to the editor" contains six letters regarding the *Tulsa* portfolio featured in the magazine's January/February 1971 issue. Divided evenly between positive and negative letters, *Tulsa*'s section of the article is entitled "Junk?" The first letter, by D. W. Armstrong of Pasadena, California, calls Clark's work "GARBAGE!" and makes the claim that the author's eight-year-old son could make better photographs. Another letter, by Leo Guichand of Redding, California, scolds the magazine for publishing such obscene work, claiming that he found *Camera 35* was "a fine family magazine." W. R. Wilson claims in his letter that the article belonged in an issue of "*Life* in 1948." Conversely, George Zurawski of Nipigon, Ontario found it to be an example of "startling realism that is unique." Two other readers were positive, finding it to be,

respectively, “probably the most courageous piece to be published in recent years” and “definitely heavy.”

“Give & Take: Letters to the editor,” *Camera 35* 16:4 (May 1972)

This edition’s “Give & Take” features only one letter regarding the *Tulsa* portfolio. The letter is from Susan Lester of East Hampton, New York and is titled “Censured Case.” Although the reader found the article to be “good and very effective,” she brings up ethical questions regarding the photograph of the dead baby in its coffin, claiming that the article could have still been just as successful without it. The magazine’s response reminds readers that the baby in the photograph was the child of a pregnant woman on the previous page and served as a conclusion to her behavior.

“Give & Take: Letters to the editor,” *Camera 35* 16:5 (June 1972)

This edition’s “Give & Take” features only one letter regarding the *Tulsa* portfolio from Lynda Behoff of Glenview, Illinois and is titled “Book Stall.” In the letter, she claims that she was “stimulated by [Clark’s] technique,” but was unsuccessful in finding the book. She asks the magazine where to find it and is directed to Rochester’s Light Impressions.

“Give & Take: Letters to the editor,” *Camera 35* 16:6 (July/August 1972)

Three letters to the editor regarding Clark’s *Tulsa* portfolio appear in this edition of “Give & Take” under a section entitled “Double Takes.” The first letter is from Randall Shinn of Colorado Springs, who criticizes other readers of the magazine for complaining about articles (Clark’s in particular) that stray away from the technical or picturesque. He states that their honesty is what makes them important and real life is not always pretty. Similarly, the following letter thanks the editor for showing them “that life isn’t all wine and roses” and urges the magazine to continue showing all sides of life, even the ugly. The third and final letter is similar to the first two in that it praises the magazine for publishing honest, graphic work while blasting other readers for demanding only the technical and pretty.

Larry Nygaard. "'Tulsa': A brilliant document," *The Dakota Student*, September 26, 1972.

In this review of an exhibition of photographs from *Tulsa* held at the University of North Dakota, Larry Nygaard, writing for the school's student newspaper, positively reviews the exhibition. He notes his unfamiliarity and fascination with the scene that Clark participated in and documented. Like many contemporary commentators, Nygaard also noted the work's honesty, concluding, "One wonders occasionally how aware these people were of the camera and what they thought of Clark's activities, but in the end it doesn't matter because 'Tulsa' us so very truthful. It is a brilliant document, a good look at a little known human situation."

Lester Grinspoon, "A Picture Book of Speed: Tulsa, by Larry Clark," *Medical Tribune* 13:42:1 (November 1, 1972): 8.

Dr. Lester Ginspoon opens his review of *Tulsa* by offering a short history of amphetamine usage and its addictive nature, asserting that *Tulsa* is both a social document and a work of art that gives viewers an intimate view of "the tragedy." Although written from a medical perspective, Grinspoon nonetheless recognizes "that only an insider could have created as intimate an impression as this book provides." He ultimately sees the photographs as perfectly communicating all the sides of the drug, including its ultimate consequences.

"Books Reveals Plight of Speed Addicts in Tulsa," *The Tulsa Tribune*, November 2, 1972.

This short and unusual review in *The Tulsa Tribune* is essentially one extend quote from Lester Grinspoon's earlier review of the book in *Medical Tribune* and offers no opinion or interpretation of its own.

Margot Kernan, "Writing with Light," *The Washington Post, Times Herald*, December 3, 1972.

In her article, Kernan reviews many recently published photobooks and only mentions *Tulsa* and other Lustrum titles in relation to Robert Frank's then newly released, American edition of *The Lines of My Hand*. She presents them as "books that are not random collections of pictures but complete works in themselves." She concludes that *The Lines of My Hand*, not *Tulsa*, was the Lustrum Press' finest release to date.

A. D. Coleman, "Gibson: Masterful Maker of Images," *The New York Times*, February 25, 1973, 138.

This article is meant to focus on Gibson photography, not his activity as a publisher, which it what he was then commonly known for. However, when introducing Lustrum's titles, Coleman states that only *Tulsa* "approaches the specifically sequential complexity" of Gibson's *The Somnambulist.*

Douglas Davis, "The Ten `Toughest' Photographs of 1975," *Esquire*, February 1976, 108-115.

In this manifesto on photography, Davis argues against the theory of photography as a window onto the world, instead championing the medium's highly subjective nature and a trend of "toughness" he sees as dominating contemporary photography. Davis defines toughness as "a work that defies the expectations of its audience yet, in the deepest sense, serves that audience [by refusing] pleasure on the normal, accepted ground." Of the ten photographs chosen, Davis only explicitly writes about one: *Imogen and Twinka* by Judy Dater. The others, including Clark's *Teen-ager Asleep*, which later appears in *Teenage Lust*, are accompanied by short captions supplied by the photographers. Of his image, Clark writes, "I am working on a book entitled *Teen-aged Lust* and this is an idea from it. I never thought *Esquire* would print this picture."

Allan Porter, "Direction: Ten Years After, 1969-1979," *Camera* 9 (September 1979): 4-13.

Allan Porter writes retrospectively about a party held in July 1969 at Wolf von dem Bussche's Canal Street studio that was organized by Carol Kismaric and attended by "a new, intensive and creative group of [American]" photographers, many of whom would go on to define photography in the '70s. Interspersed between his story, however, are three portfolios, each containing eight photographs, by photographers who were either too young to attend, such as Toby Old and Eileen Lewis, or, writing about Clark, not there, but "still very much in the tradition" of that group. While introducing Clark's eight images, all of which appeared in *Tulsa*, Porter gives a quick background on him before extensively quoting Leland Rice, writing for *Artweek*, and Clark himself in his piece for *Camera 35*.

"Briefs: A Serendipitous Guide of the Week," *Village Voice,* September 17, 1979.

This short write-up gives quick, matter-of-fact statements about Clark's *Tulsa* work then being shown at Robert Freidus Gallery. It interestingly notes that Clark, following the publication of *Tulsa*, "got himself known, disappeared [moved back to Tulsa, went to prison], and resurfaced last year."

Tony Perry, "Life in the raw vernacular," *The Age*, September 19, 1979.

This article, published in Melbourne-based newspaper *The Age*, reviews an exhibition of Clark's work at the Photographers' Gallery in South Yarra, Melbourne suburb. Perry firstly commends Clark, here presented as a photojournalist, for blending classical pictorial conventions with gritty subject matter that he interestingly sees as quintessentially American (guns, sex, and drug addiction). He also writes of the experience of witnessing these acts from an insider's perspective – for example, seeing not just an armed robbery, but also the casualness of offenders while preparing to commit one. Perry concludes his review by stating: "If Larry Clark can approach them with compassion and insight, so should we."

Richard Esposito, "Ex-addict presents an essay in photos," *Daily News*, September 30, 1979.

This review of Clark's show at Robert Freidus Gallery offers a biographical sketch of Clark and his work. Interestingly, it is the first to mention his prison sentence, of which Clark explains, "I was in [prison] for stopping a fight at a poker game. I shot a guy in the leg, that sure stopped the fight fast." The article goes on to talk about his life in New York City while shooting what would become *Teenage Lust* and the rarity of *Tulsa*. Esposito closes by quoting a positive 1972 review by Gene Thornton in *Saturday Review* and then giving a brief rundown of *Tulsa*'s plotline.

Gene Thornton, "Practitioners With a Story To Tell," *The New York Times*, September 30, 1979.

This review by Gene Thornton addresses both Clark's exhibition of *Tulsa* work at the Robert Freidus Gallery and an exhibition of Agustin Victor Casasola's work at Prakapas Gallery. When discussing Clark's work, Thornton details the narrative of *Tulsa* and its strength as a sequence while also claiming that it had lost none of its power since its first publication in 1971. Additionally, Thornton closes by claiming Clark, like Casasola, uses photography to convey a moral message, one that has been overshadowed in an art world he sees too concerned with formalism. Ultimately, Thornton champions the work, comparing it to Robert Frank, and expresses frustration that it was not shown in New York before 1979, and, even then, not in a museum.

John Yau, "Larry Clark at Robert Freidus," *Art in America*, December 1979, 116-117.

Yau's article is focuses on Clark's show at the Robert Freidus Gallery. The review begins by briefly introducing Clark before giving a recapitulation of the work's narrative. Yau comments on Clark's style, which he sees as just as casual as the drug use he is photographing and owing an obvious debt to Robert Frank both stylistically and for its enormous sympathy for its subjects. After praising Clark for not romanticizing the drug addiction, Yau closes the article with the summation: "These carefully chosen photographs are the highlights of a trip to hell."

Owen Edwards, "The Tulsa Connection," *American Photographer*, December 1979.

In Edwards's review of Clark's show at the Robert Freidus Gallery, he claims that, "at the heart of Clark's work is romance pure and not so simple." He finds that *Tulsa* presents "no lobbying for pity, no overt attempt to shock or castigate," unlike other work from insider perspectives, which he sees as too often clouded by sentimentality or self-absorption. Furthermore, Edwards writes, "it doesn't rally matter whether or not we can trust these photographs as documents; to see them as photographs, no more and no less, is enough." After giving a typical overview of *Tulsa*'s narrative, Edwards aligns Clark with Bruce Davidson's *Brooklyn Gang* and Brassï's *Paris de nuit*.

Jim Hughes, "Proof Sheet," *Popular Photography* 85:6 (December 1979).

Hughes' article on Clark's show at the Robert Freidus Gallery is in fact much more a profile on the artist than anything else. Hughes, a former editor of *Camera 35* during the publishing of Clark's *Tulsa* portfolio and its blowback, introduces Clark by stating that he lost track of him during the years after *Tulsa*, but decided to visit him upon his return to New York, where he was producing new work and being shown at Freidus. While much of the article thereafter relates to Clark's then ongoing work on 42nd Street and his continued obsession with American youth, Clark briefly discusses *Tulsa* and that there was "nothing missing that [Clark] would want to add" to the book. Interestingly, Clark is quoted here as saying "I don't want to be a photojournalist at all. If this project looked like photojournalism, even if it told the truth, I would probably burn it."

Guy Trebay, "Hot Flash?: The Photographer from 'Tulsa' Resurfaces," *Village Voice*, October 15-21, 1980.

This article is partly a commentary by Trebay and half an autobiography by Larry Clark. Trebay starts the article by remembering his initial experiences with *Tulsa*, first as a review in *The Village Voice,* presumably by A. D. Coleman in 1972, and then in *Esquire,* presumably by Douglas Davis in 1976. He writes of contacting *Esquire* to find out more information on Clark, but learning that the magazine had next to no information to give him. The second half of the article is written by Clark and recounts his life leading up to *Tulsa* and how

he spent the previous decade, ending with a discussion of his then ongoing work on Manhattan's 42nd Street.

[W. W.], "The Galleries: Hollywood," *Los Angeles Times*, November 28, 1980.

This short write-up summarizes an exhibition at G. Ray Hawkins Gallery in Los Angeles that featured Larry Clark, Garry Winogrand, and Arthur Tress. Of Clark, the reviewer, who only signs this short entry as "W. W.," says only that *Tulsa* became in the 1970s, "somewhat an underground classic as a book."

Andy Grundberg, "Why Some Art Retains Its Emotional Impact," *The New York Times*, April 10, 1983.

Here, Andy Grundberg laments over the fact that much of the most innovative work from the 1970s, especially Les Krims and Ralph Gibson, seemed stale only a decade later. He states, however, that Clark's *Tulsa*, which had just been rereleased, maintained its initial impact. He states that although the pictures remain connected to the 1960s drug scene, the book on a larger level remains "a universal past centered in late-adolescent rebelliousness, degrees of which have been experienced for generations." He closes the article by openly wondering if Cindy Sherman's "Untitled Film Stills" will keep their impact in the next decade or be lost to time.

Owen Edwards, "Data Bank: Book Bits," *American Photographer*, October 1983.

In this short blurb, Owen Edwards talks about the newly published second edition of *Tulsa*, claiming that the book retained its initial emotional impact, unlike most work from the late 1960s that was made "before the young rebels had a cause but plenty of angst" and tended to age poorly. Owens calls it the most "terrifyingly authentic drama" to be made outside of a war zone and closes by asserting that the book should "never be out of print."

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