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On the Cover: a gelatin silver print by Robert Mapplethorpe (American, 1949-1989) entitled *The Sluggard* (1988). Mapplethorpe is considered among the most important American photographers of the twentieth century. Although Mapplethorpe's initial work incorporated a variety of media, during the mid 1970s he began to gradually move from using paint as his main source of expression to photography. During the early 1980s Mapplethorpe produced a series of well known male and female nudes, floral still lifes, and society portraits. In 1986 Mapplethorpe was diagnosed with AIDS. This news did not slow his work but hastened his creative production.

The year following his death, Mapplethorpe's photography came under severe criticism when conservative groups charged that a series of erotic images displayed in a traveling Mapplethorpe exhibit were shocking and pornographic. Some have suggested that the resulting obscenity trial was the first of many instances where values would be played out publicly, forcing arts groups to become politically active. Mapplethorpe's art was indeed ideological, existing as commentary on society, politics, race, gender, and sexuality. *The Sluggard* is an ideal example of his interest in emphasizing classical formal beauty. Mapplethorpe's ability to transform a classic statue into an erotic image not only accentuates the tension between art and society but also allows him to subtly comment on the historical discourse of sexuality.

—Liz Legerski

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all of the individuals that were crucial to the production of Volume 26 of Social Thought and Research. Kate Meyer of the Spencer Art Museum of the University of Kansas was invaluable in helping us select our cover image and prepare it for printing. Thanks are also due to the Mapplethorpe Foundation for granting us permission to reprint the cover image, *The Sluggard*. Thanks are also due to Gwen Claassen of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Word Processing Division for quick turnaround times and diligent attention to the tasks we presented her with. Thanks are also due to the hard work of our manuscript reviewers, as well as all of those that submitted their work for Volume 26.

This will be the final volume of our journal printed by the University of Kansas Printing Services, which closed in March of 2005. We would like to thank the Printing Services division for their help in printing over thirty years of the Kansas Journal of Sociology / Mid-American Review of Sociology / Social Thought and Research.

Tori Barnes-Brus
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