It may well indicate we are lost in a dark wood of idolatries and iconoclasms when two sophisticated and much-lauded scholars sketch, in the same year, opposite cartographies of these landscapes. In historian James Simpson’s book Under the Hammer (Oxford 2010), the way of iconoclasm inevitably begets further image breaking, while anthropologist Bruno Latour insists in his book On the Modern Cult of the Factish Gods (Duke 2010) that the path of iconoclasm generates, despite itself, further image making. There are ways their stories converge, too, but such convergences occur largely over the ambiguities of iconoclasm. What makes iconoclasm so tangled and rough, so difficult to discern and describe?

I suggest that, anesthetized for decades—centuries, even—to our own iconoclasm, we Westerners are still full of sleep as we grope toward a path through icons, images, and idols. My goal with this article is not to shine a beam of clarity onto iconoclasm. It is instead to do two things. First, I want to awaken us to the ways that it is more difficult than it may at first appear to identify iconoclasm. In doing this, I will dip briefly into historical and current events, not to offer definitive interpretations of them (should such a feat be possible), but
to constellate them in ways that disturb prevailing notions of what and where iconoclasm is occurring. Second, I want to begin beating a path through this thicket by generating a typology of iconoclasms that distinguishes them by the kind of “breaking” they entail.

I will begin with descriptions of contemporary image controversies, review the importance and limits of Simpson and Latour’s theses about iconoclasm, and then propose my non-exhaustive taxonomic approach. Along the way, I hope to demonstrate that iconoclasm is deeply embedded in modern Western society, not because the modern West hates images, but because iconoclasm is intrinsic to iconophilia. Such work, I hope, will clear the way to ask more nuanced theological questions about iconoclasm—not questions of whether we should be iconoclastic or how we might avoid being iconoclastic, but questions about what kind of iconoclasm we should practice and under what conditions such iconoclasm might help us learn to love certain images better. I hope to display the way hating and loving images, making and breaking them, no longer present themselves as two poles on a spectrum, competing options we can and must choose between. More than ever before, iconoclasm and iconophilia come to us knotted together, so that iconoclasm needs to be reinterpreted for a new age.

I

To understand the ambiguities of the image in contemporary society, I take us back to the end of the eighteenth century and across the Atlantic to France, image-maker extraordinaire of the Western world. The French Revolution was a decisive moment in the history of images. The revolution began, as revolutions often do, by breaking images of the former religio-political order. Following the revolutionaries’ assembly vote to destroy signs of the old regime, the summer of 1793 was hot with iconoclastic fervor. Enraged mobs dug up the ornamented tombs of kings, pulled down royal statues, and vandalized Notre Dame Cathedral as they sought to instantiate a
new order of liberty, equality, and fraternity. Not all revolutionaries enthused over the destruction of old masterpieces, though. Those troubled by their fellow revolutionaries’ image breaking found in the suggestion of Pierre Cambon an alternative to destroying images. They transformed the Louvre Palace into a museum where such masterpieces could exist comfortably, having had their role as signs of the old regime’s power safely curtailed.¹

Did, then, the museum prevent further acts of iconoclasm? Or was creating the museum itself an iconoclastic gesture, one that silenced images even as it left them intact? Ensconced in the museum, images were politically and religiously neutralized. They became fine art that could be appreciated for what was now being called their aesthetic value; they called for a disinterested gaze that could, for example, appreciate the skill, the genius of paintings of the Madonna without finding it necessary to venerate the Madonna herself. Taking art out of public spaces charged with political significance began the work of draining art of its political significance. As the museum worked with the institutions of the university and the gallery to solidify the category of fine arts as one that did not testify to political or religious realities, political and religious art could be displayed outside the museum without threatening secular democracy. Art had been largely politically neutralized.

But not all images have been so neutralized. As Muslim immigration to France increased, religiously charged symbols crept back into public French spaces from across the Mediterranean. Almost two hundred years after the Louvre became a museum, controversy erupted over hijab. The controversy began in the late 1980s and early 1990s when girls were suspended for refusing to remove their headscarves in public schools. The position was codified in 2004 when the French parliament voted to forbid any ostentatious sign of religious affiliation in public schools, including yarmulkes and large crucifixes together in the ban against hijab. Recently a more stringent law has come into effect regarding the burqa, which is forbidden in all public spaces, including streets, shops, and parks.²
Yet certain religious iconography is cleared for public consumption. One year after the law banning headscarves in public schools in France, cartoon representations of Mohammed were published in a newspaper in Denmark and republished in various papers up through 2008 to affirm a commitment to free speech. For depicting Mohammed—and for depicting him as sinister and ridiculous—the cartoons touched off a firestorm that included protests that became violent in the Middle East and North Africa, expressions of grief and loss by many Muslims, prayer vigils in mosques, and death threats to the cartoonist. In Europe and North America, though responses varied, the dominant response was the reassertion of free speech together with a concern to respect individual beliefs and a confirmation that devout Muslims (especially in the Middle East and North Africa) have an unsophisticated concept of the relationship between sign and signified. In characterizing the controversy, Saba Mahmood cites journalist and filmmaker Tariq Ali dismissing the “religious ‘pain’” many devout Muslims claimed regarding the images. It was, after all, not like the Prophet himself was harmed in the drawing. The drawing, this line of reasoning goes, merely externalized the cartoonist’s interior imaginings.

Who are the iconoclasts here? Are the cartoons themselves iconoclastic, attacking cherished ideologies (icons) of a cultural order? And if the images are iconoclastic, then what does that make the destruction of such images? Iconoclasm against iconoclasm? And in a digital world where images can be easily and instantaneously reproduced, how can an editorial cartoon be broken, anyway? In the age of the World Wide Web, once an image becomes public, it is virtually impossible to remove. Under these conditions, is iconoclasm even possible?

In France, too, the Danish cartoon controversy continued when the French newspaper Soir reprinted the cartoons under the headline, “Oui, on a le droit de caricaturer Dieu” (Yes, we have the right to caricature God). Yet, the editor of Soir was fired in the ensuing controversy. Again: who are the iconoclasts? And who is
protecting images? If the French media have the right to caricature God, they do not have the same right to so represent French citizens. The difference between French and American media on this point of media representation was brought into relief by the arrest of Dominique Strauss-Kahn, now-former chief of the International Monetary Fund and one-time presidential hopeful of France. While the American media showed images of Strauss-Kahn’s arrest, the French media protested that such images violated the presumption of innocence. Images of the “perp walk” are, in fact, illegal in France, which passed La Droit à L’Image (the right of image) law in 2000. When U.S. media splashed images of an unshaven and handcuffed Strauss-Kahn across screens and papers, the French reaction was not Ali’s dismissal of “religious pain” but a “national trauma . . . far deeper than anyone could have imagined.” One French political leader called the publication of images “unheard-of brutality, cruelty and violence.” Another broke down in tears. In these reactions and in France’s right of image law, there is a recognition of the potency of the image. Is it accurate, then, to call these responses iconoclastic? Different laws and sensibilities governed the proliferation of the perp walk images in the United States, which interestingly both converges with and diverges from France in these controversies. The United States media, for example, were implicated in the Danish cartoon controversy, when some sources reflected sentiments somewhat similar to those in France, and in the headscarf controversy, where the media were generally less sympathetic to France. These United States positions of advocating for the publicity of images, icons, and signs in these cases might suggest the United States has a more consistently iconophilic position than France. But, of course, Americans need not look far to discover their own ambiguously iconoclastic impulses. There is a much stronger tradition in the United States than France, for example, of Protestant anxiety about religious imagery, which has generated much starker, more ascetic church buildings. Modern polemic against icons and images does have roots, after all, in Reformation polemics against Catholics.
Related to, yet distinct from, the Protestant worry about imagery was the controversy in the wake of Andres Serrano’s *Piss Christ* and Robert Mapplethorpe’s sadomasochistic and homoerotic retrospective *A Perfect Moment*. The controversy centered largely on the governmental funding of such art, but the arguments around it treated the larger issue of the place of images and art in society. Whatever their differences, these arguments illustrated that the museum had not definitively quelled art’s political voice. In an attempt to defuse the political tension around the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA), the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. withdrew from the Mapplethorpe exhibition. Their attempt to de-politicize the conversation around art only heated it up further, when activists excoriated the perceived capitulation of the Corcoran to political conservatives. The director of the Corcoran Gallery apologized and promised, “Our course in the future will be to support art, artists and freedom of expression.” The apology came too late in two senses. Artists picketed the Corcoran, and congressional debates had already gained national attention. In Congress, the appropriations bill for the NEA was being discussed in somewhat different terms. Senator Jesse Helms introduced a floor amendment that would ban grants from being used to “promote, disseminate or produce obscene or indecent materials, including but not limited to depictions of sadomasochism, homoeroticism . . . or material which denigrates the objects or beliefs of the adherents of a particular religion or non-religion.” The amendment ultimately did not pass, though a version of Helms’s concerns made it into the final bill. Art critic Dave Hickey’s anger at the art community’s reaction expresses the ambivalent place of art images in America.

The American art community at the apogee of its power and privilege, chose to play the ravaged virgin, flinging itself prostrate across the front pages of America and fairly daring the fascist heel to crush its outraged innocence. Moreover, this community chose to ignore the specific legal transgressions celebrated in Robert’s photographs in favor of the “higher politics.” It came out strenuously in defense of the status quo
and all the perks, privileges, and public money it had acquired over the last thirty years, and did so under the tattered banner of “free expression”—a catchphrase that I presumed to have been largely discredited by the feminist critique of images.¹⁰

In Hickey’s narrative, Mapplethorpe’s photographs were successful precisely because they were able to move beyond the “aura of moral isolation, gentrification, and mystification” that clouds the art world, because they were able to be politically relevant, to launch a rhetorically embellished argument into democratic debate. What frustrates him about the art world’s reaction is that it strove to push Mapplethorpe’s photographs back into this cloud of political impotence. For Hickey, it was Helms, not the leaders of the art community, who knew how to engage an artwork, how to take seriously the political threats it can pose. And so we are again left to wonder who the iconoclast is in this set of debates: one could say Helms, for proposing to limit images on the grounds of decency and religion. Or the art community, for insisting that the political claims of an artwork not be debated in the political space of congress. Or again it could be the Corcoran Gallery, for valuing the free expression of art so much it was willing not to display art that might threaten that freedom. Perhaps it is Serrano, for taking the crucifix, one of the most revered images of the Western tradition, and soaking it in urine. Or is it, as the apostle Paul claimed, that Christ crucified is already iconoclastic, “a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks” (1 Cor 1:23)?

Recently I attended a graduation ceremony for students of Cranbrook Academy of Art. Maxine Frankel, a major patron of the school, explained her own involvement in art and exhorted her audience similarly to support the arts. She did so by relating an anecdote from the 1960s.

During this exhibition at the MoMA [the Museum of Modern Art in New York City], I saw a painting that made me physically ill. I became enraged with the museum. I couldn’t
believe they would install something that would make me feel so bad and so ill. I left the museum in a huff. . . . After a while . . . it became apparent to me that there must be something to this art, if it could elicit such a strong and emotional response. I returned to the museum and visited the painting and discovered that it was Picasso’s Guernica, a perpetual reminder of the tragedies and horrors of war. One look was all it took.  

Far from solidifying the place the image is supposed to have, this account proliferates questions for me. One look at what, the caption or the image? What happened to her disgust? Where was it displaced? Is disgust an improper response to an image in a museum? Or does the image direct disgust to an absent object? Is it possible to love an image that elicits disgust, even if it redirects such disgust? Can, in the walls of a museum, that disgust be political?  

So here we are, back at the museum, that institution so critical in constructing the relationship of modern Westerners to their images. Whatever we say about iconoclasm is going to have to address this complex and ambiguous institution. One virtue of the accounts of iconoclasm from both James Simpson and Bruno Latour is that they do just that.

II

Iconoclasm, James Simpson argues, is deep in the heart of Western modernity, especially in the Anglo-American tradition. Simpson turns to the Enlightenment and the museum as central to identifying such iconoclasm, offering what he describes as a “less” and “more” ambitious argument about them. On the one hand, the museum protects the image and revalorizes it in the face of iconoclasm. But in his more ambitious moments, Simpson wants to describe the Enlightenment as sharing iconoclastic goals, particularly in developing three alternatives to “literal iconoclasm”: 1) philosophical iconoclasm that, under the influence of Enlightenment scientific models
of knowledge, describes ideology as an idol, a false consciousness that must be broken; 2) an iconoclasm of neutralizing the image by placing it in the museum; and 3) an iconoclasm of commodifying the image “under the market’s hammer.”

In total, then, there are four kinds of iconoclasm Simpson identifies. The literal iconoclasm against which the other three are developed as alternatives is driven by what Simpson names as an “unqualified evangelical hatred of images.” It is a hatred fed by and expressed in anti-Catholic polemic. In such polemics, English Protestants object to images as idolatrous, corrosive of liberty, and competitive with God. For these Reformers, images mediate religion in a way that moves God farther away from the faithful, by either displacing God as the object of worship or by intervening between the worshiper and God. All images become idols. To salvage the image from this critique, the museum protects the image by denying its sacrality. It reassociates the image with taste rather than salvation. It affirms that images are dead. Once the image is removed from the realm of the sacred, once it is pronounced dead, it acquires one kind of haven from the hammers of the faithful. In the tomb of the museum, the image is silenced—yet not completely. Simpson wants to affirm that images manage, somehow, to continue to speak.

The museum, then, is an unsuccessful alternative to iconoclasm that nevertheless does not completely silence the image. To the extent that Simpson draws lines of continuity between the museum and the evangelical iconoclasts, he illustrates his thesis that iconoclasm is always an unfinished system that begets further iconoclasm. Material iconoclasm instantiates a logic that will attempt to complete its project in philosophical iconoclasm, attacking the further enchantments of image and ideology. The Enlightenment mode of critique is the iconoclasm by which we (Westerners, scholars) continue the idol-smashing inaugurated by the Reformation.

Simpson imagines iconoclasm as a beast that, once unleashed, continues to take on new forms, hungry to consume more and increasingly immaterial images. While he does claim at one point
that “the accommodations of the image are at every point responsive to the dangers of the image,” he focuses less on the adaptations of images and more on the adaptations of iconoclasm. The iconoclasts are endlessly creative in their destruction, constantly discovering new forms of breaking and new victims to break.

The question Simpson raises for me is: In this narrative where every form of image destruction constitutes an act of iconoclasm, how is iconophilia possible? There are no true iconophiles in Simpson’s narrative; everyone from Voltaire to Burke to Thomas à Kempis is some form of iconoclast, even if he seems to embrace images at one level. Even proclaimed iconophiles like museum directors can be unwitting iconoclasts. The few pages he does spend on defenders of images like Reginald Pecock, Thomas More, and Nicholas Love describe men who defend the orthodox possibility of using images in a wider system of religious practices. But could even they escape Simpson’s capacious label of iconoclast? Given his descriptions of iconoclasm, might even Simpson himself be iconoclastic? How does his own ideology-exposing project, his work to lay bare the hidden heart of the Anglo-American tradition, to destroy our illusion that iconoclasm is elsewhere, avoid becoming one more act of iconoclasm?

I want not to impugn Simpson but to suggest a way of making his argument more nuanced by accepting that iconophilia need not be sanitized of iconoclasm to be iconophilia. Indeed, iconophilia may even require iconoclasm, inasmuch as loving an image qua image may fail to take seriously the particular claim an image makes on the beholder. To love an image qua image is to love it with the disinterested museum love that Simpson has pointed out is itself a form of iconoclasm. It is a way of silencing the image, of ignoring the claim it makes on you. The iconophilia in which there is no hidden heart of iconoclasm is an iconophilia without philos. It is icon-apatheia. I want to suggest that the possibility of loving a particular image requires the possibility of rejecting images—both the image in consideration and other images—because to take its claims seriously is to entertain the possibility of not accepting those claims and to
entertain the possibility of accepting those claims, in some cases, will entail entertaining the possibility of not accepting other images. Rejecting them does not require that we smash those images, but Simpson has already drawn our attention to the way that iconoclasm need not require physical violence. Elaborating the different forms of iconoclasm that may be intrinsic to iconophilia will require the taxonomic approach to iconoclasm that I earlier proposed.

III

I am not the first to see the need for a taxonomy of iconoclasm. Simpson developed a way of distinguishing four kinds of iconoclasm in his descriptions of how iconoclasm changed through and beyond the Reformation and Enlightenment. Similarly, Bruno Latour developed what he called “a rough classification of iconoclastic gestures.” But before he gets there, Latour lingers with the difficulty of identifying iconoclasm. His term *iconoclash* names the ambiguity of identifying an act as image breaking or image making. He wonders, not at how the logic of iconoclasm expands and proliferates, but how “all those destroyers of images, those ‘theoclasts,’ those iconoclasts, those ‘ideoclasts’ have also generated such a fabulous population of new images, fresh icons, rejuvenated mediators, greater flow of media more powerful ideas, stronger idols?” Attempts to avoid traditional image making, Latour claims, lead to new image sources, media, and works of art. He writes, “The more art has become a synonym for the destruction of art, the more art has been produced, evaluated, talked about, bought and sold, and yes, worshipped. New images have been produced, so powerful that they have become impossible to buy, touch, burn, repair, or even transport, thus generating even more *iconoclashes*: a sort of ‘creative destruction.’” In the strong version of his thesis, he claims, “It would seem as if ‘defacement’ and ‘refacement’ were necessarily coeval.”

Latour wants to live in the ambiguity of defacement and refacement and display the uncertain identities of iconophilia and icono-
He finds generating a typology useful for considering such ambiguity more extensively. He grounds the typology in an account of four different inner points of focus of the icon smashers: the roles they give to the destroyed images; the effects this destruction has on those who cherished those images; how this reaction is interpreted by the iconoclasts, and, finally, the effects of destruction on the destroyer’s own feelings. This multi-pronged principle generates a five-type classification. Type A, whom Latour calls the classical iconoclast, hates all images as disabling unmediated access to truth. They smash what they call idols to free those who naively believe in them. Type B also smashes idols, but she does so because she is against “freeze-framing” images. She wants a fast and fresh flow of images that never ceases moving. She does not believe it possible to get rid of images, nor does she want to, but she worries about “extracting an image out of the flow” and “becoming fascinated with it.” The truest iconophile, for Type B, is also a kind of iconoclast. To love images best is never to isolate an image.

The description of this iconoclast is not altogether unattractive. It resonates with Deleuze’s insistence on “the destruction of an image of thought” as the conditions of “true critique and true creation,” a destruction that accompanies “the genesis of the act of thinking in thought itself.” It also resonates with cataphatic and apophatic moments in the negative theology of Pseudo-Dionysius. Indeed, Latour goes on to identify himself as a Type B iconoclast and write another essay on such iconoclasm. But he complicates an easy self-righteousness when he names the impossibility of discerning Type A from Type B—or either from Type C.

Type C iconoclasts are only after the images of their opponents. Like As and Bs, Cs are confirmed in their idol-smashing by the horrified screams of the enthralled. Yet unlike As, they have nothing against the images they smash, and unlike Bs, they have nothing for them. According to Latour, the image for C is a token to be attacked in order to attack the Philistine’s beliefs.

The “innocent vandals,” Type Ds, smash idols out of ignorance or
profit. They often cherish images, yet in, for example, constructing their new building, they destroy the images on their chosen site. Type Es mock both the iconoclasts and iconophiles, whom they see as more related than not. They are ironic and agnostic, yet this may lead them to actions that render them indistinguishable from As, Bs, Cs, or Ds. Latour does not mean his typology to distinguish a given action as one type or another of iconoclasm. It is to help raise questions about iconoclasm, to display its multiplicities. But it is also to elevate one particular iconoclastic type. More aware than Simpson how easily a project about iconoclasm can become iconoclastic, Latour initially claims to want to avoid becoming iconoclastic, but later seems to accept his essay as itself a cascade of images, the kind of iconoclasm he labels Type B (a type interestingly similar to the image-qua-image embracing that Simpson leaves for us as iconophilia). While Latour’s typology makes clear the questions around iconoclasm, it does not help take us very far in addressing these questions, nor can he give us much help in learning how to become the type of iconoclast he commends to us.

I will follow Latour’s lead in resisting overly simple classifications while also avoiding his shortcoming of providing few resources for description by generating a typology with greater diagnostic power that nevertheless preserves the ambiguity of idol smashing acts.

**IV**

Unlike Latour, I do not want to classify iconoclasms in terms of what the smasher is anxious about but in terms of the much more concrete description of how the smasher attacks images. Also contra Latour, there is no hidden hero or villain in this typology, no type I am villainizing or valorizing above the others. Not even iconoclasm itself is the villain. I am trying to take iconoclasm out of both the pejorative (contra Simpson) and heroic (contra Latour’s Type B) registers. Clarifying types of iconoclasm is not itself a way to distinguish hero from villain, moral from immoral, but is simply one step
forward in considering the possibilities for an ecumenical theology of iconoclasm. With these differences from Simpson and Latour in mind, I propose the following fourfold typology.

**Type One: Materially Breaking Images**
Examples of this type of iconoclasm include burning flags, burning Qurans, and the defacement the Bamiyan Buddha statues in Afghanistan in 2001. This is the kind of iconoclasm to which Cambon responded with the Louvre museum, and it corresponds to what Simpson calls “literal” iconoclasm. It is, however, a form of iconoclasm less powerful in the digital age than previous ones—it would have been an impotent response to the Danish cartoon controversy—because images may be digitized and endlessly reproduced. It is effective, though, when the materiality of the image is significant—the flag being burned is an official United States flag, not a reproduction of the flag on a paper plate; or the image is particularly sacred—the Quran, perhaps, or the photograph of the pope Sinead O’Connor tore up on Saturday Night Live in 1992.

**Type Two:**
**Restricting the Spaces in Which Images Circulate**
Often, the spaces from or within which images are restricted are those marked public. Examples of such iconoclasm include France’s restrictions on Islamic headscarves and burqas, the French right of image law, and the removal of the Ten Commandments from American courtrooms. In this restriction, there is an implicit commitment that certain images should not make public or political claims or that they should not make certain types of political claims. It therefore corresponds to a restriction of the way images are allowed to speak and even project meaning. It often enacts a depoliticization of images.

**Type Three:**
**Rhetorically Contesting the Image**
This form of iconoclasm attacks images, signs, and ideologies by attacking the way they are seen and received. It is an attempt to
reframe the image. Iconoclastic art is an example. Serrano’s *Piss Christ* reframes the way the crucifix is seen and received, and the Danish cartoons do the same with Muhammed. Protests and protest art might also use this form of iconoclasm, which constitutes the kind of philosophical critique Simpson identifies with the Enlightenment. In these ways, it is evident that this is the form of iconoclasm to which liberal democracy is most hospitable. Yet this is also the kind of iconoclasm that the apostle Paul attributes to Christ crucified when he calls Christ a stumbling block to the Jews and a scandal to the Greeks for the way Christ crucified represents divinity. And it might also name the response of prayer vigils to the Danish cartoon controversy, inasmuch as the supplicants engaged in a rhetorical contest before God and the media. When images can be proliferated endlessly, rhetorical contest often becomes a way to buttress or elaborate material iconoclasm.

**Type Four: Prescribing Practices Around the Image**

This is the most ambiguous type of iconoclasm. Images often come with culturally or religiously prescribed, habituated, or forbidden practices that delimit the possibilities for relating to them. Examples might include Pseudo-Dionysius’s cataphatic and apophatic program for not saying, then saying, then denying certain things of God in a certain order to coax words and silences into conveying something of the superabundance of God. It might include the way certain strands of Protestantism historically forbid praying before the host or kissing icons. It could also include the way Orthodox habituate into kissing, bowing, and kneeling before icons, and the way they forbid buying and selling icons as a way of noting the breadth and limits of icons, of preventing them from meaning the way commodities mean, signifying what commodities signify. Practices often augment the importance of the image (kissing icons, kneeling before the host, taking off one’s hat before the flag), though they can also diminish it (as Pseudo-Dionysius’s flow of words or Latour’s flow of images works to prevent the reification of any particular word or im-
Similarly, forbidding certain practices often circumscribes an image’s power (Protestants who forbid kneeling before the host or kissing icons), though it can often increase it (the injunction against touching the ark of the covenant or selling icons).

These are the four kinds of iconoclasm I have been able so far to discern. Christians throughout history have used all of them, as have those contesting Christians and Christian claims. It is my hope that this non-exhaustive typology might provide a way of tracing affinities, differences, and evolutions in iconoclasms across time and space without reducing iconoclasm to a particularly modern phenomenon (Simpson) or an activity the essential character of which is locked in the heart of the image breaker (Latour). What I hope this typology demonstrates, above all, is the way iconoclasm can be a way of taking images seriously and a way, too, of loving images better—the way, then, that it is not cleanly separable from iconophilia. Under what conditions and in what forms might iconoclasm be appropriate to loving a particular image?

I hope that tracing these types of iconoclasm has depolarized contemporary iconoclasm and iconophilia. We need to interpret image breaking and image loving in a world where there are new kinds of images and new ways of breaking them, where the alignments of the political and the religious have generated new ways of amplifying and silencing images. I have tried to trace what this means for the proliferation of iconoclasms. Such work opens the way for the next question: What does a theology of the image look like in this strange, new world where iconophilia may come to us as a form of iconoclasm?
Notes

1. For more on the creation of the Louvre museum, see Larry Shiner’s insightful descriptions in The Invention of Art: A Cultural History (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 169–82.


4. Hugh Schroeder, “A National Trauma: France, Strauss-Kahn and US Justice,” BBC News, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-13464257 (last accessed July 19, 2011). The context for the quotation reads, “The arrest and incarceration of former IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn have provoked a national trauma in France far deeper than anyone could have imagined. And it is the pictures that did the harm. Video footage of Mr. Strauss-Kahn emerging in handcuffs from a Harlem police station has been repeated endlessly on TV channels. His haggard features stare out from every newsstand. A new photograph—an almost unrecognisable headshot of Mr. Strauss-Kahn in prison clothes—will certainly cause even greater shock. Remember this was a man last photographed getting out of a Porsche in central Paris two weeks ago.”

5. Ibid., quoting Guigou. The passage reads, “Former Minister Elisabeth Guigou said the images of her friend being led from the police station were of an ‘unheard-of brutality, cruelty and violence.’”

6. Ibid. Schroeder writes, “Party leader Martine Auby is reported to have broken down in tears.”

7. Also differently than France, the name and identifying information of Strauss-Kahn’s accuser were not initially published in the United States.

8. The earliest appearance of the word “iconoclast” in the English language appeared in 1596 and referred specifically to the Byzantine controversy. Yet by 1654, amidst war and Protestant attacks on the Church, Jeremy Tayor used the word as a generic term for those objecting to Christian images. It was not then until the 1860s that it became a term in English referring to any attack upon authority. Anne McClanan and Jeff Johnson, “Introduction: ‘O For a Muse of Fire’” in Negating the Image: Case Studies in Iconoclasm, ed. Anne McClanan and Jeff Johnson (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 1.

9. A timeline of these events, together with these quotations, can be found on the web site for the NEA and for the progressive think tank Political Research Associates. “National Endowment for the Arts: Controversies in Free Speech,” National Endowment for the Arts (December 18, 2008), http://65.49.16.213/art/related


Maxine Frankel, “Commencement Address to Cranbrook Academy of Art” (Bloomfield Hills, MI, May 12, 2011).


Ibid., 10.

Ibid., 116–17.

Ibid., 122.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., 158.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., 13–15.

Ibid., 145.

Simpson names Reginald Pecock and Thomas More as the two most “subtle pre-Reformation defenders of the image” (Under the Hammer 63), yet he later reveals Pecock’s defense to require an (ambiguous) insistence that images are dead (Under the Hammer, 78).

Because he restricts himself to the Anglo-American tradition, Simpson also overplays both the modernity of the iconoclastic phenomenon and its religious impulses. The brief trip to France in the previous section suggested, I hope, deep political motivations to iconoclasm. As I work toward my own typology of iconoclasm, I want to arrive at descriptions of iconoclasm that are not restricted to modern, “religious” iconoclasm.


Ibid., 76.

Ibid., 69.

Ibid., 83.

Ibid., 83–84.

Ibid., 84.


Latour, “What is Iconoclash?” 70.