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**The Precarious Intimacy of Screened Abortion**

This paper presents a consideration of motherhood and abortion through an analysis of Agnès Varda's *One Sings, The Other Doesn't* (1977) focusing specifically on affective, temporal experience. Rather than concentrate solely on the issue of legality or historical past, the ambiguous implications of enduring the abortion itself are discussed, arguing cinema's necessary responsibility lies in representing and thinking women's experience, reflective of Simone de Beauvoir's existential and phenomenological question: Does a woman exist? The myth of the eternal feminine has long limited the political representation of women. Beauvoir argues that this myth that has constrained women and their bodies, preventing them from embracing their ambiguity: Alienated in her body and her social dignity, the mother has the pacifying illusion of feeling she is a being in itself, a ready-made value. (TSS 539, emphasis original). Abortion remains a topic of morality in a situation that holds women as other. Varda's film exemplifies how a film's intentional break with prevailing natural attitudes of womanhood and motherhood helps to reveal how the idealized institutions of marriage and family are two structures that support the myth of the eternal feminine. While procuring an abortion act does not form the central thread of this film's narrative, the embedded notion of freedom is very much explored through the different experiences of two women friends, of which abortion and its extant aspects play a role. Through the themes of friendship and generosity, *One Sings, The Other Doesn't* asserts that the struggle for woman's freedom is a constant project.

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