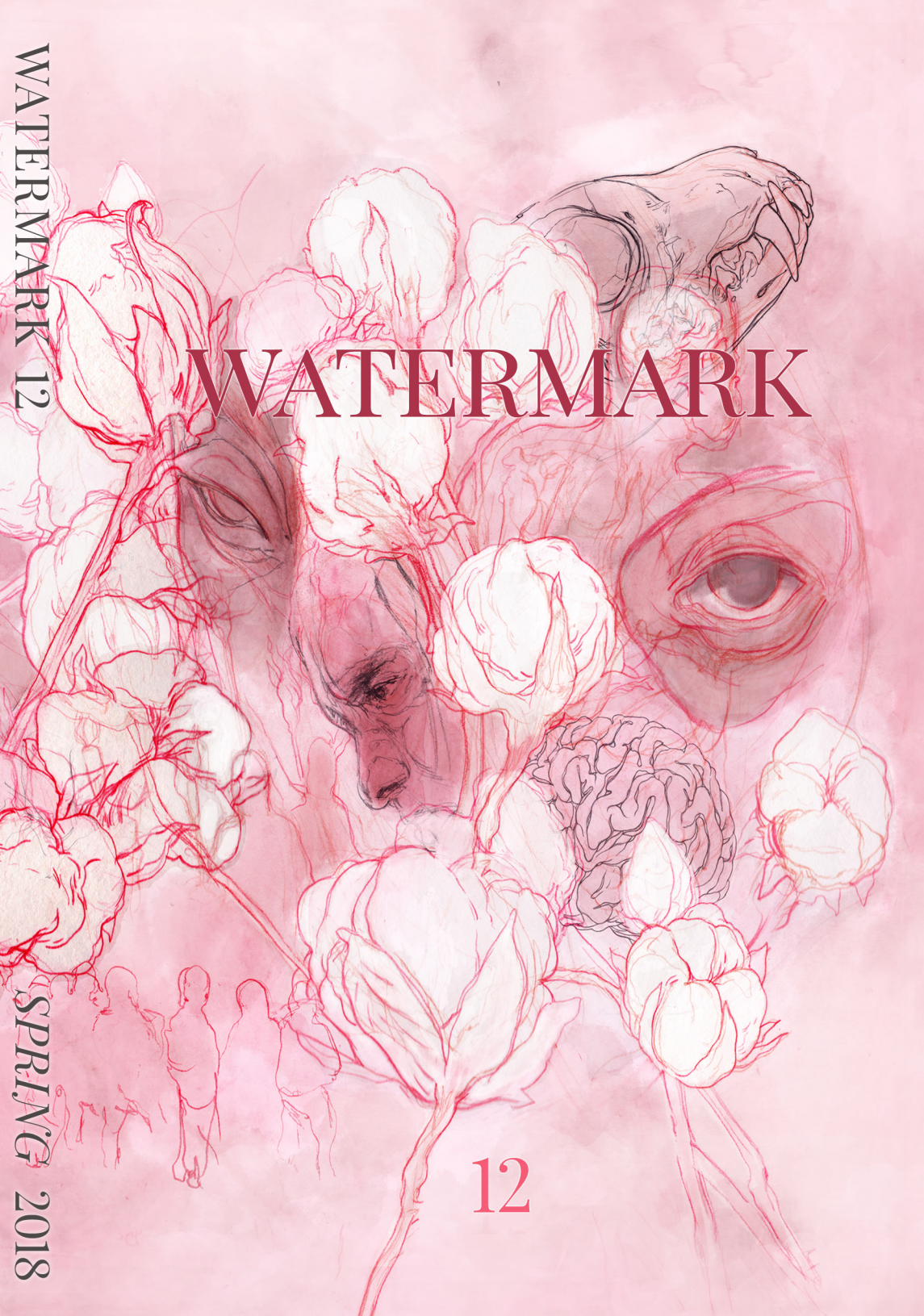

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Table of Contents

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The Third Space: Diasporic Identities and the Ambiguity of Discursive Power in *The Interesting Narrative*

The African Slave Trade, which began in the fifteenth century initiated the forceful removal of Africans from their native land to enslavement across the Atlantic. Upon stepping foot on British ships, their bodies became a battle site of language and ideological discourse. Olaudah Equiano, a British enslaved subject caught between freedom on English soil and the slave territories of the U.S. and West Indies, wrote the 1789 slave narrative, *The Interesting Narrative*. This text exhibits the influence of the diaspora on the form and content of one's written life history. *The Interesting Narrative* testifies to the extent to which enslaved persons were products of competing discourses. These discourses, highlighted in *The Interesting Narrative*, exert varying degrees of power in the lives of displaced Africans. Because of this discursive tension in the text, the question of language and discourse, in *The Interesting Narrative,* necessitates a discussion about assimilation and power. Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s and Homi Bhabha's work challenge the rigidity within dichotomies, such as "center and periphery," and "African and European," in relation to language and identity (Gates 2433; Bhabha 2353). Gates and Bhabha provide a theoretical framework that proves Equiano's engagement with the dominant English discourse is perpetually in an indeterminate relation to power – subservient to, but never entirely succumbing to the dominant English discourse.

At the heart of Equiano's indeterminate relation to power is his position outside of any kind of binary thinking. Binaries, as Bhabha notes, are the reductive characteristics that structure Western thought, and Equiano proves to be outside of both Western and Igbo thought. In the concluding scene of *The Interesting Narrative*, Equiano justifies every incident that he includes in his narrative, claiming each incident speaks to his "extremely checkered life" and

that "almost every incident in [his] life made an impression on [his] mind" (225). And, indeed, the scenes in which Equiano engages in language and writing, such as the "Talking Book" scene, show Equiano culturally repositioning himself in and outside of both the dominant English discourse and his own native culture (67). By way of culturally repositioning himself, Equiano demonstrates an acute understanding of the discursive nature of power and makes productive use of competing discourses, standing not against but alongside them. This powerful nature of discourse is found within, what I claim is "the gray space" of the narrative, where assimilation into the dominant discourse is neither a means of legitimation nor a rejection of his African origin.

Much of the scholarship that addresses Equiano's acquisition of language tends to argue for two extremes with regard to the discursive power of his voice. Some scholars, like Tanya Caldwell, insist on reading Equiano's voice as seeking to sever ties with his otherness, which readily demonstrates "the European nature of his mind" (Caldwell 265). Other scholars read Equiano's narrative as representative of an object with "no inherent subjectivity," who functions within the object of his narration and that "the act of writing alone announces his newly found status as a subject" (Gates 171). While there has also been scholarship that argues for Equiano's "African British identity," most of this scholarship reconciles a hybrid identity by pointing to his pivotal role in initiating the African-American slave narrative genre (Murphy 553). Yet, in standing on either extreme, or in reconciling the existence of a double consciousness, scholars have imposed unity on a text built on a series of competing rhetorical elements. Thus, my analysis sets out to show not that Equiano wholly and consciously rejects his otherness nor that he aligns himself entirely with English culture. Instead, I argue that the text evidently paints a grey space where assimilation into the dominant discourse is neither a means of legitimation nor a rejection of his African origin.

Equiano's native oral African discourse and the discourse of power that characterizes print culture represents the heterogeneity present within Equiano's diasporic identity. Henry Louis Gates Jr. proposes that, in representing themselves, black people should use mainstream, academic criticism while also incorporating the African tradition (2437). This analysis of representation is, in many ways, much more problematic for Equiano, whose African descent places him in the category of Black Atlantic writers who were forced to forge their subjectivity out of disparate sources. I want to borrow from Michel Foucault and call these disparate sources "epistemes," or periods governed by a particular discourse or structure of knowledge. Equiano's account of his life in Igboland indicates that his native episteme was one characterized by communal orality. Even as he travels between African masters, Equiano notes that "the languages of the different [African] nations did not totally differ, nor were they so copious as those of the Europeans, particularly the English. They were therefore easily

learned; and, while I was journeying thus through Africa, I acquired two or three different tongues" (51). That languages among different African countries bore similarities to such an extent that the young Equiano could pick up on them with ease, is suspect because within the same country there are a vast number of languages that natives cannot decipher among themselves. For example, in Nigeria, Igbo is one of over five hundred languages; an Igbo speaker is very unlikely to understand a speaker of the Igede language (Ndimele 23). As such, his acquisition of two or three African tongues functions as a rhetorical strategy that establishes a clear distinction between the communal and oral episteme. This communal and oral episteme characterizes Equiano's life in Africa, and the hierarchical, disorienting episteme of print culture characterizes his life beyond the Atlantic. The oral African discourse illustrates a community structure of knowledge rooted in safety that is derived from a comprehension among members of the community. Unlike the written word, which is read as a static one-way signification, the oral tradition is predicated upon more than just the verbal utterance; it is also based on the exchange of a series of oral rhetorical strategies that facilitate communication even among different nations and tribes. The oral discourse that characterizes Equiano's upbringing in Africa incorporates him into an African collective identity, which is why Equiano remarks, "from the time [he] left [his] own nation [he] always found somebody that understood [him] till [he] came to the seacoast" (50). Indeed, upon his arrival at the seacoast, Equiano enters a new episteme, which never again provides him with the same sense of comfort and understanding as his native discourse.-

Although Equiano enters into the dominant British discourse that obliterates his sense of security, isolates him, and positions him in a precarious state in relation to his subjectivity, his participation in the English discourse should not be read as his absolute acquiescence to it; it is based on social necessity rather than on negation of his former oral discourse. The need that drives him to subscribe to the dominant discourse first occurs when a deathly linguistic isolation marks his introduction to the seacoast. Despite the terror evoked by the slave ship and the subsequent threat of presumed white "cannibals," what constitutes an unmatched terror is the linguistic barrier that prevents him from talking with anyone, a sentiment he echoes three times in the initial pages of chapter three:

> I now totally lost the small remains of comfort I had enjoyed in conversing with my countrymen . . . not one soul who could talk to me . . . I was now exceedingly miserable, and thought myself worse off than any of the rest of my companions; for they could talk to each other, but I had no person to speak to that I could understand. (Equiano 62)

For critics, the hermeneutic problem that arises in this scene is found in the use of Western language to describe Equiano's initial alienation, which potentially undermines his authentic love for Igbo culture. It can be inferred from Tanya Caldwell's research that this tension is evidence of Equiano consciously severing ties with his native language and culture. Poignantly, she claims that "rather than struggling for autonomy the narrator gradually and subtly eradicates that otherness which he saw as a threat to his own security" (Caldwell 265). She goes as far as to argue that "Equiano's view of himself as fundamentally white is consistent from beginning to end of the *Narrative*" (Caldwell 265). Samantha M. Early provides an alternative understanding of Equiano's use of the dominant discourse. She points out that his "self-construction as both an African and an English-speaking subject . . . was a strategic maneuver" to position himself not at the margins but at the center of these discourses (Early 5). As Early notes, Equiano's employment of both discourses is a strategic maneuver. Nevertheless, such deliberate use of discourse does not mean he entirely sees his "otherness" as a "threat to his own security," as Caldwell suggests (265). Emblematic of the diasporic identity, upon crossing the Atlantic, Equiano faces the challenging mental, intellectual, and psychological task of navigating his way through multiple cultural lenses. One example is when Equiano's master and captain forces him to change his name to Gustavus Vasa. While Equiano initially refuses to answer to Gustavus Vasa, the physical abuse he receives leads him to acquiesce and begin responding to a name that is entirely disconnected from his Igbo identity (63) Inevitably, his journey across the Atlantic places him in the midst of competing discursive realities. At the same time that he attempts to retain his Igbo identity, he also realizes that, in order to reposition himself within a social context that privileges literacy, he cannot employ his native oral tradition. Yet, by constructing his identity as a British African and manipulating different discourses, Equiano does not create an authorial voice for himself at the center of each discourse, as Early argues.

Rather than emerging as an authoritative voice within each discourse, Equiano employs both discourses in such a way that keeps him vacillating between discursive realities without mastering either. The "Talking Book" trope is presented as an episode common in slave narratives where the slave attempts to talk or listen to a book but is met with silence, which befittingly identifies the two discourses at risk. Gates argues that the "Talking Book" scene creates a "curious tension between black vernacular and the literate white text, between the spoken and the written word, between the oral and the printed forms of literary discourse" (131). In his desire to "talk" to the book, Equiano reveals what Gates sees as the negotiation of oral and print forms (131). By this point in *The Interesting Narrative*, Equiano has also learned to "smatter a little imperfect English" so that when he arrives at the talking book, he dramatizes what composition theorist Juan Guerra calls a practice of "transcultural repositioning"

(Equiano 63). Guerra describes this repositioning as a rhetorical strategy used by individuals who, coming from varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds, must move back and forth "between and among different languages and dialects, different social classes, different cultural and artistic forms, different ways of seeing and thinking about the increasingly fluid and hybridized world emerging" around them (652). Equiano purposely uses the motif of a book that speaks aloud as a way to reposition himself transculturally in the realm of printed language, while still translating the terms of his alterity through the oral episteme.

If the talking book scene depicts Equiano finding his way through both discourses, the following scene alternatively illustrates him moving completely, though momentarily, out of his native discourse. Equiano recalls an early moment of racial awareness saying that he had often observed, that when [Mary's] mother washed her face it looked very rosy; but when she washed mine it did not look so; I therefore tried oftentimes myself if I could not by washing make my face of the same colour as my little play-mate (Mary), but it was all in vain; and I now began to be mortified at the difference in our complexions (68).

Not surprisingly, it is only after he repositions himself in the sphere of printed language that Equiano becomes acutely aware of the physical difference between Mary and him, an awareness that causes him intense mortification. Already having learned to "smatter" English, and now receiving his formal introduction into the world of printed language, Equiano demonstrates a new way of seeing the world emerging around him that is not as liberating as he imagined literacy to be, as in the many times he equates "improving myself" with learning to read and write (76, 83,90). As Gates points out, if "in the English language are embodied 'the noblest theories of liberty' and 'the grandest ideas of humanity,'" then the opposite is also true (2432). In this context, the English language also houses ideas of racial inferiority and difference. Not surprisingly, Equiano reproduces the racial ideologies that are inherently tied to the English language and discourse he imbibes. In triggering an irrational desire to wash off all traces of his Igbo origin and reposition himself at the center of white culture, Equiano alienates himself in language. He actively strives to be a part of the discursive reality that cannot be fully inhabited by any member of the diasporic community whose knowledge is considered inadequate. Still, Equiano works through the very indeterminacy that gives and simultaneously takes from him in an attempt to exist in the kind of external environment in which he finds himself.

Though Equiano cannot reconcile his native oral discourse and the dominant English discourse, part of existing within and in spite of each discourse involves an ongoing process of negotiating combative elements, ultimately defying the kind of knowledge that leads to closure. Because he is constantly in the process of transculturally repositioning himself, the language he uses and the sentiments he expresses must be read as only fractions of his diasporic

identity. For example, when Equiano refers to Englishmen, he states that he "no longer looked upon them as spirits, but as men superior to us; and therefore I had the stronger desire to resemble them; to imbibe their spirit, and imitate their manners" (76). Here, Equiano illustrates an identity in flux, rather than a holistic representation of himself denouncing his African identity in favor of a British identity. Bhabha provides the terms for reading this scene as a negotiation of the politics of location and identity. For Bhabha, negotiation of identity "is to convey a temporality that makes it possible to conceive of the articulation of antagonistic or contradictory elements: a dialectic without the emergence of a teleological or transcendent History" (2360). Equiano's desire to "imbibe" the English spirit seems to articulate a contradictory desire: a longing for an English identity and a longing to speak for blacks and defend them against the very persons he seeks to emulate. However, using the framework that Bhabha provides, Equiano's antagonistic tendencies can be read in a more productive way. As one of the first to articulate a diasporic identity, Equiano creates his own discourse precisely out of the antagonistic elements that make up his diasporic experience. Given the treatment in Equiano's external environment, it is not surprising that he would naturally develop an unsettling but legitimate desire to emulate English culture. This desire is born from both a need to assimilate and a means of undermining aspects of his African identity that were considered inferior by the dominant discourse. Yet, the narrative also makes clear that Equiano nourishes the desire to resemble the dominant discourse, so that he can reposition himself in relation to his oppressors.

Part of the discourse that Equiano creates involves inhabiting an alternative space that not only avoids stopping points, but also remains in perpetual movement by cross referencing discourses without staying grounded in one. From his first interaction with the English language, Equiano's discursive engagement is contingent on his understanding of the cultural, social, and political realities that surround him. For example, Equiano acknowledges that the only way he can address the cause of the slave is by addressing it through literacy, particularly through his appropriation of English literary culture. Quoting from major Western texts including the Bible and Milton's *Paradise Lost,* Equiano undeniably bathes in Western discourse, even as his use of these texts aims to subvert the dominant hegemonic power. By using the voice of *Paradise Lost's* Beelzebub in his appeal to slaveholders, Equiano depicts the slave's isolation and potential for resistance using literary language that the Master would understand (105). Likewise, when he quotes "The Dying Negro," Equiano inscribes in his narrative a notable vestige of abolitionist critique on the slave system whose origin is, nevertheless, a white source, Thomas Day and John Bicknell. Such a questionable foundation is precisely why his appropriation of English literary culture manages to project only a trace of the slave's plight. Though clearly present, the trace is repositioned and nestled amidst the language

of a dominant discourse that refuses to grant it absolute validity. In the end, the dominant power still constructs the framework from which Equiano speaks. From this framework emerge spaces of difference where the voice of the former slave dwells indefinitely. Yet, in many ways Equiano accepts that there is no single end to knowledge when living in the midst of the Master Slave Narrative. His trajectory through English culture—laden as it may be with contradictory desires and actions that do and undo themselves—is his way of dealing with and making sense out of the convoluted discursive realities within which he must operate. It is not surprising, then, that he cultivates a nomadic consciousness that obliterates all considerations of an endpoint, motioning instead at a striving for, but never arriving at any totalizing form of knowledge.

For Equiano, this nomadic consciousness operates productively through the writing process. His understanding of this writing process, which Bhabha calls "the force of writing, its metaphoricity and its rhetorical discourse" can be seen during his description of the unbearable conditions in the West Indies (2357). This experience prompts Equiano to author his own abolitionist verse:

> With thoughts like these my anxious boding mind/Recall'd those pleasing scenes I left behind;/ Scenes where fair Liberty, in bright array/ Makes darkness bright, and e'en illumines day;/ Where no complexion, wealth, or station can/ Protect the wretch who makes a slave of man. (Equiano 119)

Only a few pages after quoting Milton's poetry and "The Dying Negro" to express his most poignant antislavery sentiment, Equiano uses the Master's linguistic tools to talk back, framing his abolitionist message by using the same poetic form as British poets. But, in Equiano's lines of verse reside a sharp trace of a "contest of opposites," between freedom in Igboland and freedom in England (Bhabha 2361). At face value, Equiano's poem—with its idyllic tone and allusion to "those pleasing scenes" he left behind—seems to refer to his idyllic Igbo childhood in which he experienced freedom (119). Read in context, however, the verses refer more accurately to a romanticized England and his association of "fair Liberty" to the possibility of acquiring his freedom there (Equiano 119).

What, then, do we make of his abolitionist writing when its object seems ambivalent, encompassing at once the hope of freedom in England and a trace of nostalgic longing for freedom in Igboland? Using Bhabha's conception of language and writing, I contend that Equiano purposefully crafts his verse as such because he understands writing to be a "productive matrix," and its dynamics "require us to rethink the logics of causality and determinacy through which we recognize the 'political' as a form of calculation and strategic action dedicated to social transformation" (2357). The nostalgic sentiments Equiano derives from the only freedom he knows in Igboland, before purchasing his freedom, establishes the foundation upon which he builds the abolitionist

rhetoric in his poem. His "strategic action" aimed at transforming the social horrors of slavery emerges in the form of writing that transcends binaries (2357). In other words, a single voice does not characterize Equiano's abolitionist aesthetic. To say that his abolitionist rhetoric embodies solely an English persona would be to deny the ever-lingering trace of his Igbo identity, which, at the moment "of the enunciation of the political statement" brings to light a "dialogic discursive exchange" between his Igbo and British identity (Bhabha 2357). Even when Equiano makes the case for freedom in England, he continues to negotiate the heterogeneous terms of his identity through both his native oral discourse and English discourse, which allows him to articulate the oppositional elements of his hybrid identity rather than negate his identities.

Upon reconfiguring Equiano's liberation writing as a "dialogic discursive exchange," the indeterminacy that characterizes this writing opens up a third space. It is in this space that Equiano's love for his African countrymen and his abolitionist and liberationist ideologies reside in a dialectic without transcendence (Bhabha 2360). After spending a large portion of his narrative depicting the inhumanity of the slave trade, Equiano purchases his freedom, but does not express desire to permanently remain in Britain where "fair Liberty" reigns (119). Rather, he applies to be a missionary in Africa, a complicated move that highlights Gates' question: "What language(s) do black people use to represent their critical or ideological positions?" (2437). Surely Equiano's desire to return to Africa confirms that the rendering of his Igbo childhood was not merely to show readers that his past "with all the imperfections—was one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on God's behalf" delivered him (Roscoe 121). Vestiges of his displaced Igbo identity remain consistent throughout his narrative. But to attempt to answer Gates' question requires that we examine negotiation through what Bhabha calls "the structure of iteration," by which he means "a process of change through contest of opposites that . . . does not necessarily lead to a predetermined end" (2361). When Equiano expresses desire to return to Africa as a missionary, his native oral episteme re-emerges, but as an iteration that undergoes a change.

In a letter addressed to the late Bishop of London that Equiano and the Governor write, one of the appeals they present describes the advantage of sending black missionaries, "who by their education are qualified to undertake the same and are found more proper than European clergymen, unacquainted with the language and customs of the country" (211). Whereas in the opening chapters, Equiano's possession of the oral episteme serves a communal function, here he cites it as an asset that qualifies him to be a missionary; its power lies in its potential to be an instrument of evangelization. In other words, the oral episteme is an asset as long as his enunciation of it can transculturally reposition him into this third space where, to answer Gates' question, he represents his ideological position in the language of difference. By speaking in this language

of difference, he brings his political and spiritual motives into dialogue, which reflect his sincere concern for the African and the contradictions that are tied to those different discourses. To what end, then, does residing in this third space aid Equiano, if, after all, what it yields is a dialectic *without* transcendence?

Insofar as the third space of enunciation grants Equiano the ability to negotiate and articulate intersecting and competing discourses, its productive capacity is unquestionable. However, for the diasporic subject whose only route to anywhere is through this third space, this negotiation proves to secure little material success. Addressing the productive potential of the "split-space of enunciation," Bhabha points out that it "may open the way to conceptualizing *inter*national culture, based . . . on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity* . . . And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves" (2372, emphasis in original). By inhabiting this third space of liminality where Equiano speaks the language of difference, he evades "the politics of polarity," neither existing stagnantly on the margins nor permanently excluded from the center (Bhabha 2372). Ironically, his vacillation within the third space becomes both the force that enables Equiano's hybridity and his perpetual restriction.

One of the concluding scenes of his narrative in which he details his expedition to Sierra Leone functions as a synecdoche for the dialectic without transcendence. This scene, too, requires close analysis of "the structure of iteration" which Bhabha notes "informs political movements that attempt to articulate antagonistic and oppositional elements without the redemptive rationality of sublation or transcendence" (2360). Equiano's involvement with the controversial colonization mission functions as a political movement in which he articulates the antagonistic elements of dual discourses. Despite the covert mission of "ethnic cleansing motivated by racism" and the intrinsic issue with sending black slaves back to an African country that was not their own, Equiano still describes it as fundamentally "humane and politic in its design" (Carretta 232; Equiano 218). Nevertheless, along the way Equiano intervenes by complaining about the suffering, injustices, and oppression faced by his African countrymen. This intervention results in his public dismissal, which is an end devoid entirely of any "redemptive rationality" (Bhabha 2360). Thus, while the social transformation he tries to enact indeed involves a dialectic between his loyalty to the British political discourse and his sincere concern for helping his brethren, it cannot come to fruition.

Plagued by the controversy of his dismissal, Equiano's narrative ultimately ends in an anticlimactic controversy made public by Samuel Hoare, the banker at the root of his dismissal. Wounded personally by the controversy, Equiano pens one more letter in self-defense where he writes that his "conduct has been grossly misrepresented" (219). Equiano briefly notes that the Lordship partially resolved the matter by paying him wages for his service. However, Vincent

Caretta suggests that the damage caused by his dismissal can, in part, be traced to a fact that Equiano cannot transcend, despite his strategic negotiation of the competing discourses throughout his narrative: the complexion of his skin. Despite little evidence that would confirm his dismissal was "racially motivated," Caretta does cite publicly released documents (not included in Equiano's narrative) that explicitly make "Equiano's complexion an issue" (233). One such correspondence expresses the following sentiments:

> The expedition of the Blacks to Sierra Leone is not in the least retarded by the dismission of V—the Black who was appointed to superintend the Blacks . . .
>
> Let us hear no more of those *black* reports which have been so industriously propagated; for if they are continued, it is rather more than probable that most of the *dark* transactions of a *Black* will be brought to *light*. (Carretta 233, emphasis in original)

Carretta's source indicates that whether Equiano's dismissal was racially motivated or not, any defense he gives is undermined simply because it bears the mark of a "*black* report" (233, emphasis in original). The complexion of Equiano's skin continues to reaffirm the perpetual bind from which the former black slave cannot escape. Likewise, Equiano's complexion reveals that engaging in a dialectic without transcendence cannot consistently translate into material benefits for the diasporic subject within the third space.

As unsettling as it is to end with the idea of a dialectic without transcendence, to expect any kind of closure or unity out of *The Interesting Narrative* would be to pin down a text that refuses to be pinned down. A close look at language and discourse in relation to power brings to the forefront clear manifestations of uncertainty, which embody the diasporic identity. Such discursive, rhetorical, and material uncertainty exposes the competing epistemes of Equiano's life expressed through language. For the former slave, the acquisition of language becomes both the ultimate condition for knowledge and the ultimate restriction for absolute emancipation. Furthermore, an examination of the ambiguity derived from Equiano's engagement with language and discourse provides a realistic understanding of this body of literature that avoids overlooking the diasporic subject's trajectory between major and minor narratives.

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"Wonderfullest things are ever the unmentionable": Queer Tidings in *Moby-Dick's* "The Lee Shore"

Know ye now, Bulkington? Glimpses do ye seem to see of that mortally intolerable truth; that all deep, earnest thinking is but the intrepid effort of the soul to keep the open independence of her sea; while the wildest winds of heaven and earth conspire to cast her on the treacherous, slavish shore?

– Herman Melville, "The Lee Shore," *Moby-Dick*

The thinly veiled homoeroticism prevalent in his fiction coupled with speculation surrounding his personal sexuality render Herman Melville's oeuvre ripe terrain for queer theorists. Though *Billy Budd* receives the bulk of the attention in this regard, queer subtext has also been explored by Melville scholars in the epic whale tale, *Moby-Dick*. This paper maintains a narrow focus on the minor character Bulkington, a seafarer who makes just two brief, enigmatic appearances in the novel and yet is afforded the entirety of one chapter: Chapter 23, "The Lee Shore." The novel's narrator, Ishmael, glimpses him ashore in an early chapter and finds his personage noteworthy, prior to their becoming shipmates on the Pequod. His physical stature—his sheer bulk, one might say—aligns him with the great, white whale as well as the ocean herself. Thematically the novel deals extensively with the tension between a land-based values system and the freer terrain of the open ocean, and crucially its universe comprises a (very nearly) single-gender populace. Some critics have dismissed Bulkington, whose fleeting presence in the novel has nevertheless evinced fascination, as a vestigial character, perhaps originally envisioned as playing a larger role. Scholarly consensus appears to interpret Bulkington as a manifestation of Emersonian self-reliance, epitomizing non-conformity and independence of spirit. Rather than discarding this conclusion, I instead will appropriate and build upon it in my reading of Bulkington through the lens of queer theory; in

the land/sea ethos dichotomy, Bulkington stands firmly for the values of the maritime, namely freedom from prescriptive social conventions, and is moreover a manifestation of Melville's 'unmentionable' homosexual desire.

Naturally there is a contingent of scholars who resist queer readings of classic texts by reason of their seeming to impose modern notions of sexual orientation and identity onto past generations' homosocial relations. For example, a major Melville biographer, Laurie Robertson-Lorant, tellingly relegates discussion of Melville's sexuality and its perceived influence on his fiction to an afterword, where she summarily dismisses such discussion as wrongheaded, revisionist, and even devious: "I feel it is restrictive to reduce Melville's writings to coy sexual disclosures, or his life to an elaborate lie" (618). She goes on to state more explicitly:

> What Ishmael and Queequeg, Huck and Jim, and other same-sex interracial homosocial couples in American literature have in common is not necessarily overt, covert, or latent homosexuality, as Leslie Fiedler argued in *Love and Death in the American Novel*, but transgressive paradigms of homosocial brotherhood and male intimacy that challenge and seek to subvert the soulless, misogynistic competitive construction of masculinity dictated by the new market capitalism and industrialization. (620)

Essentially she argues here that close, intimate relationships among men in nineteenth-century America were not subject to the same knowing scrutiny they are today, and such actions as platonically sharing a bed or even engaging in homosexual acts were not conflated with identity in the sense of a determinate sexual orientation as a character trait. Her argument is corroborated by Kyla Schuller's "Sex Before Sexuality," itself a review of the book *Tomorrow's Parties: Sex and the Untimely in Nineteenth-Century America*, by Peter Coviello, which lays out the realities of sex in Melville's time, and the ways in which a modern audience might misread homosocial affections in terms of sex and fixed sexual orientations (though it's notable that the term 'homosocial' was coined by pioneering queer theorist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, author of the seminal texts *Epistemology of the Closet* and *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*.) Schuller relates the following: "Modern sexual discourse, Coviello explains, functions as an 'almost indefinitely adaptive *strategy*' for combining desires, behaviors, affects, and traits into a 'sexually-rooted, taxonomically specific' attribute of the liberal individualist self" (385). This line of thinking aligns with the more traditional reading of Bulkington as representative of independence, heedless of sexual or gendered considerations. Irrespective of her book review, however, Schuller herself seemingly takes the opposite position, as lain out in her article "Specious Bedfellows: Ethnicity, Animality, and the Intimacy of Slaughter in *Moby-Dick*," wherein she discusses

whaling as the epitome of masculine enterprise, especially in contrast to more seemingly-effeminate athletic endeavors. She discusses how the familial atmosphere fostered by the ship environment leads intimate relationships to develop not just among seamen, but also between the whalers and the sperm whales that are their prey. She also examines the famous sperm-squeezing scene (which I will treat shortly) as orgiastic sentimentalism and indistinguishable from sexual intercourse itself.

What is not in question is that in a cataclysmic meeting of two titans of the American literary canon, Herman Melville met Nathaniel Hawthorne at a picnic and became immediately enamored of the older, accomplished author. They exchanged impassioned, fawning letters, and indeed *Moby-Dick* is dedicated to Hawthorne "In token of my admiration for his genius" (Melville np). One of many scholars who have studied this relationship, which appears to have been felt more intensely (or at least more openly) on Melville's part, is David Richards, who explores the tyrannical role of American patriarchy in the two men's respective biographies and fictions, and patriarchal homophobia particularly in Melville. Referencing *Moby-Dick*'s dedication to Hawthorne, he concludes that the probable absence of consummation in the authors' relationship is secondary to the effect of Melville's adulation of the older author and the ways it influenced his authorship. He postulates a 'gay panic' on Hawthorne's part as one reason for the rupture of their impassioned friendship. With her reluctance to assign sexual orientation in arrears, Robertson-Lorant laments: "The colonization of literary critical studies by French scholars who eroticize texts, then deconstruct them, has combined with the emergence of gay and lesbian studies to thrust sex and gender into the foreground of biographical studies" (617). (I will revisit this eroticizing and deconstruction farther down when I take up the unique linguistic analysis of Melville's syntactical tendencies and employment of literary devices undertaken by Rasmus Simonsen.) But, if one takes issue with such a retrospective deconstruction, then what to make of Melville's own confession to Hawthorne?:

> In me divine maganimities (sic) are spontaneous and instantaneous […] I felt pantheistic then—your heart beat in my ribs and mine in yours, and both in God's. A sense of unspeakable security is in me this moment, on account of your having understood the book. I have written a wicked book, and feel spotless as the lamb. (Herman Melville, Letter to Hawthorne, November 1851; Schillace 94)

While making allowance for the prejudice of modern sensibilities in reading this excerpted correspondence, it appears that Melville is confessing to encoding the "unmentionable" within the novel's pages.

Returning to Bulkington, whom I argue personifies this very 'unmentionable,' scholars have latched onto his stature as one access point to his

interpretation. In similar fashion the physiognomy assigned Billy Budd, arguably the queerest of Melville's creations, is much belabored by his author and critics alike; he is expressly identified as a superior specimen of male youth. Critic Jonathan Cook fleshes out a parallel between Bulkington and the Greek hero Hercules. He catches Ishmael's gaze and the narrator describes him thus: "He stood full six feet in height, with noble shoulders, and a chest like a coffer-dam. I have seldom seen such brawn in a man" (Melville 13). Cook connects Bulkington with the Greek demigod through his name, which "associates him with both supreme muscular strength (bull) and an elevated character (king), the two most outstanding traits of the Greek hero in the main classical tradition" (Cook 21) as well as their shared "hint of mysterious sorrow" (Cook 22) and his thesis argues: "[Bulkington's] appearance in 'The Lee Shore' draws on a famous moral topos associated with Hercules's life, the 'Choice of Hercules' between Pleasure (or Vice) and Virtue, as well as the example of the hero's agonizing death through self-immolation and subsequent apotheosis" (Cook 16). The close reading of "The Lee Shore" which follows cements the parallel Cook posits, but the crucial aspect of his conclusion injects Bulkington into the land- versus sea-values split. Interestingly, and in line with more conservative interpretations, Cook seemingly highlights the sailor's virtue and associates this with the independent ocean, with the land in turn representing the immoral raucous taverns and brothels, from which Bulkington conspicuously excludes himself (much to the chagrin of his reveling shipmates). He states: "Just as the figure of Pleasure promises the young Hercules the free indulgence of his physical nature… so the 'port' here offers supreme physical comfort… 'all that's kind to our mortalities.' But to reach the port may involve self-destruction on the lee shore, just as the full indulgence of Pleasure's mandates may eventually bring about physical as well as moral disintegration" (Cook 23). That Cook concludes by identifying Bulkington as a potential progenitor of Billy Budd fortifies support for queering Bulkington.

Another critic, Brandy Schillace, also elected to undertake an interpretation of Bulkington vis-à-vis his size. Schillace's article makes an interesting argument that dovetails perfectly with mine, albeit the particulars barely intersect. She sidesteps questions of gender relations in the novel in favor of reading through the lens of scale. She argues that representations of gender in the novel serve only to define man in contrast to the Great Unknown (in a spiritual/philosophical sense). Each of the white whale, the ocean itself, and the character of Bulkington are described in terms exaggerating their immensity, elevating them to a peer-level to the (mostly absent) God figure (just as Cook equates the demigod Hercules with the vaunted seaman): "Hebraic and pantheistic, male and female, contradictory and inclusive, the novel (much like its author) contains 'divine magnanimities'—the 'soul' of man mapped onto an enormous shifting landscape of water and sky" (96). Here again, Bulkington is aligned with the sea by virtue of its purity, its own association with the heavens, and man's righteous exercise of

free will in order to resist "earthly" (leeward) temptations. Yet a less perfunctory reading of "The Lee Shore" chapter suggests precisely the opposite when read through a queer lens. If man is indeed gifted the free will to choose, why should he not be free to succumb to his innate desires? The supposition of an orthodox Judeo-Christian ethos on the part of one practicing personal freedoms is both presumptuous and, set in its accurate context, naïve. If many scholars have read the novel, and particularly this chapter, as a comment on Emersonian self-reliance, this interpretation only serves to heighten a queer reading's takeaways. Robert O'Hara, who explores "The Lee Shore" for the express purpose of arguing an early 19th-century author's poem of the same name (by Thomas Hood) as the source material, explicates its central paradox of seeking safety by fleeing safety. "The lee-shore sailor in both Hood and Melville must fly from these specific comforts—the home, the wife, the child, the firelight—because to seek them will be his undoing" (47). He moreover connects Bulkington's character with the ship itself, as it fights against the wind's blowing it back toward shore, which provides grounds to situate Bulkington in the metaphorical context. In his conclusion, O'Hara exhorts fellow Melville scholars to more deeply examine Bulkington, which is precisely what this paper purports to undertake.

One legend we might appropriate in our reading can be found in the very interesting analysis of Melville's short story "I and my Chimney" by Rasmus Simonsen, who reads through an architectural lens, specifically to unpack the multiplicities of queer subtext through a linguistic deconstruction. To make his argument he discusses the etymology of the word "queer," Melville's development of an 'anal syntax,' and the employment of multiple words with the same root but different endings as a rhetorical device (coined 'polyptoton'): "The 'backwardness' of Melville's rhetoric expresses an inexpressible desire that can only be represented by a prose style turned against itself, which mimics the narrator's resistance towards normative living arrangements of the mid-nineteenth century" (26). One recognizes this device immediately in the opening sentence of "The Lee Shore": "Some chapters back, one Bulkington was spoken of, a tall, newlanded mariner, encountered in New Bedford at the inn" (Melville 93). The sentiment is more logically ordered, and more readily understood, reading backwards from the end. That the inn is located in "New Bedford" warrants scrutiny itself; morphologically dismantled, the town's name might be read literally as an alternative or novel (new) means of traversing (fording) the space between two bodies sharing a bed? Those who advocate the homosocial aspect of bed-sharing as commonplace in this time might balk at this reading. But breaking down the name into parts suggests that something has transpired in the bed, and indeed it becomes Queequeg's and Ishmael's "marriage bed" of a kind (Melville 22). Returning to "The Lee Shore," *Moby-Dick* plays out in a virtual single-gender universe, so it's significant that two entities are anthropomorphized herein by virtue of their being gendered female: the ship itself, the Pequod, and Man's

soul. Feminist readers and instructors have struggled with the pedagogical implications of the absence of the female in the novel and have at times accordingly been loath to teach it. This is the subject of Professor Elizabeth Savage's article "What We Talk around When We Talk about *The Dick*" wherein she defends the novel exactly because it "disturbs categories of gender and sexuality upon which patriarchy and the canon are built" (92). By freeing men at sea from the stifling roles prescribed them by a hegemonic patriarchy, the cast of *Moby-Dick* defy the ultra-masculinity projected onto an adventuring whaler and instead develop close bonds of intimacy and reveal vulnerabilities with their ship-family. Bulkington is at the helm, and hence may be credited with the ship's "thrust… into the cold, malicious waves" (Melville 93). We also have shivering, and a "shudder, through and through" – both erotically tinged verbs. At the same time, Ishmael relates that the chapter "is the stoneless grave of Bulkington" (Melville 93); one recalls "la petite mort"—though Melville's contemporaries would not have called it that—the association of orgasm with death. The concluding words, "straight up, leaps thy apotheosis!" (Melville 94) are highly suggestive of male ejaculation ('apotheosis' signifying a climax). Moreover, adds Simonsen: "The trope of verticality combines with Melville's use of different back-turning syntactical devices, such as periodic sentences and hypotaxis, to disrupt the forward motion of the plot" (26). That Melville embeds so much language that is easily lent to double entendre further intimates his submergence of 'the unmentionable' that hovers beneath the surface of this hyper-masculine whaling adventure story. "Because for Melville as for Ishmael the power of self is inseparable from sexual potency, he repeatedly turns to sexual imagery when he wishes to render his sense of his deepest and most fundamental integrity" (Shulman 186).

So what is Melville's "unmentionable" deep memory, which "leaves no epitaph"? Some buried real-life incident, relationship, or even unrealized desire that he harbored? No evidence points to any sexual interplay between himself and Hawthorne, despite his clear longing in that regard. An additional candidate might be hidden in plain sight: in the naming of the white whale himself. While Melville never offered conclusive commentary on his choice of 'Moby Dick' there was in fact a historical sperm whale named 'Mocha Dick' owing to its proximity to a Pacific island of the same name and the random selection of "Dick" as an identifying appendage. According to one speculative researcher, "in the very month [Melville] rediscovered his lost buddy of the *Acushnet* and fellow deserter on the Marquesas, Richard Tobias Greene, [he] began 'The Story of Toby' [the sequel to *Typee*]. May not 'Toby Dick' then have elided with 'Mocha Dick' to form that one euphonious compound, 'Moby Dick'?" (*The Life and Works of Herman Melville*). There is widespread speculation that he and Toby were lovers, the historical truth of which is irrelevant to the fictional significance of male-male relations aboard long-voyaging ships. Among the most oft-cited

passages in the novel by queer theorists is the sperm-squeezing episode in Chapter 94, aptly titled "A Squeeze of the Hand" wherein the seamen begin to process the whale oil:

> Squeeze! squeeze! squeeze!… I squeezed that sperm till a strange sort of insanity came over me; and I found myself unwittingly squeezing my co-laborers' hands in it, mistaking their hands for the gentle globules. Such an abounding, affectionate, friendly, loving feeling did this avocation beget; that at last I was continually squeezing their hands, and looking up into their eyes sentimentally; …nay, let us all squeeze ourselves into each other; let us squeeze ourselves universally into the very milk and sperm of kindness. (368)

Simonsen, citing parallel scenes in Melville's "I and My Chimney" and *Typee*, concludes "it does not strain the imagination to read this as a scene of masturbation. Moreover, 'plying' one's instrument can be taken as an expression of individualism or the exercising of resistance to outside forces that are imposing on one's personal liberties" (36). Biographer Robertson-Lorant, meanwhile, with her antipathy toward reading Melville through a queer lens, goes so far as to suggest that Melville's depiction of mutual masturbation is actually meant to promote platonic brotherly love, a rationale that becomes comical in light of the aforementioned orgiastic scene among the sailors. It's notable, too, that the first sailor encountered and described by Ishmael upon entry to The Spouter Inn is unnamed, but is apprehended in the performance of another thinly-veiled autoerotic act: "At one end a ruminating tar was still further adorning it with his jack-knife, stooping over and diligently working away at the space between his legs. He was trying his hand at a ship under full sail, but he didn't make much headway, I thought" (Melville 11).

It is indeed remarkable that Bulkington's other appearance falls amidst the sequence of Ishmael's meeting and sleeping with Queequeg; Chapter 3 finds Ishmael at "The Spouter Inn" (more suggestive diction in this nomenclature – one imagines a projectile liquid entering some space). And Queequeg, whose name, after all, sounds like 'queer' is, after all, a harpooner… Bulkington captures Ishmael's attention only to disappear into the night, fortifying his firmly siding with sea values. It's notable that several of his fellow seamen loudly lament his sudden absence from their party. Ishmael offers as an aside that Bulkington "interested me at once; and since the sea-gods had ordained that he should soon become my shipmate (though but a sleeping partner one, so far as this narrative is concerned), I will here venture upon a little description of him" (13). The parenthetical clause is curious here, particularly in light of Ishmael's claim which follows on the same page, and which belies a mote of gay panic: "Nor was there any earthly reason why I as a sailor should sleep two in a bed, more than

anybody else; for sailors no more sleep two in a bed at sea, than bachelor Kings do ashore. To be sure they all sleep together in one apartment, but you have your own hammock, and cover yourself with your own blanket, and sleep in your own skin" (13). Fiedler's book singles out *Moby-Dick* from the canon by reason of its being 'womanless' and identifies Queequeg as a stand-in for Ishamel's wife or (female) lover supplied "by the green heart of nature" (362). He develops an argument positing "a sacred marriage of males" (à la Twain's Huck and Jim) in defiance of and flight from the restraints imposed by the performance of societal expectations and as one imagining of Utopia. In this sense, he also connects the sailors' putting out to sea with the uniquely American explorer/adventurer motif.

It is valuable to extend the modern-day notion of queer visibility backward in time in order to elucidate a key character trait of a giant of the American canon. While scholars and critics have proposed many interpretations of the very minor, but eminently enigmatic Bulkington, ranging from self-reliance to Hercules manifest, the sailor can clearly be read allegorically as a queer character. His cursory presence serves as Melville's hint to the reader to heed the homoerotic subtext that pervades the whole of the novel. One wonders at Bulkington, remembered for his sad eyes (with some "reminiscences that did not seem to give him much joy" (Melville 13)) and his acting as a medium for Melville's "unmentionable… wonderfullest things" which it's hard to imagine reference anything except the proverbial closet. Perhaps through granting Bulkington his apotheosis, a kind of deification of the man who represented seafaring values, permissive of homosexuality, Melville wrote for himself a redemptive ending he could not realize in life.

> *In his very telling of this story, [Melville] may have told us… that there is a way out, that love between men on terms that challenge patriarchal homophobia is not, as Hawthorne believed, impossible, but, though fraught with the psychological difficulties arising from men's (including gay men's) internalization of homophobia, may be possible and even redemptive.* (Richards 119-120)

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Judith Butler's Gender Performativity Theory as Applied to Transgender Inmate Fictions and Realities

Introduction

Readers of this essay, including many or most cis-gendered people – those who feel that their assigned gender identity from birth is accurate, and are therefore content within their own bodies – may be surprised to learn that "twenty-one percent of transgender women have spent time in prison or jail, versus 5 percent of all people in general" (Murphy). Statistics like these, while not quite common knowledge, are realities for thousands of transgender human beings. The numbers can be baffling: yes, transgender women are over four times as likely to be arrested than any other demographic; yes, just over one in five individuals who identify with this niche portion of the American population find themselves incarcerated at some point in their lives. Transgender women explicitly make up that twenty-one percent, a total that lays claim to the physical, psychological, and emotional abuse of imprisoned transgender people, a group whose numbers are disproportionately growing in relation to incarceration (Brown, McDuffie).

As of 2016, LGBT persons in America are officially confirmed as having a higher chance of becoming victims when it comes to encounters with law enforcement or jails (Murphy). Gender nonconforming or transgendered persons, though they and the rest of the LGBT community only make up about 3.8 percent of the total American population, are especially vulnerable to legal trauma (Caiazza). Once "inside," transgender inmates are stripped of even the most basic of rights that are afforded to gender-conforming prisoners. One's safety within prison walls quite literally depends on their personal gender identity. This is perhaps the depravity that renowned queer theorist Judith Butler foresaw nearly thirty years ago when writing Gender Trouble,

a landmark inquiry into the cultural construction of gender and how its presence affects human lives. Her gender performativity theory, a cornerstone in queer and feminist theory, implies that one's culture determines their exterior identity pertaining to biological sex, i.e. gender. Since gender is socially fabricated, it has the power to confine a person to certain culturally understood behaviors, styles, and rules. Gender Trouble argues that these limitations are damaging to one's own actualization of themselves. These roles that all people must adhere to – strictly binary in fashion, meaning man or woman – function as constricting performances since "gender" is merely a routine, not a reality.

While Butler's work looks into gender-bending performances that involve dressing in drag, others have seen value in applying her theory to trans existence. As gender performativity relates to transgendered individuals, many now write about the influence of gender in the lives of those who either embrace the opposite of their anatomy, choose not to conform to such terms, or completely shirk any kind of gender. But the correlation between Judith Butler's Gender Trouble and arrested transgender people has yet to be entirely fleshed out. In the U.S., where both the general population and mass incarceration rates are at their highest, gender has become a problem for the criminal justice system. Unfortunately, few studies dedicated to this very specific and vulnerable demographic actually exist.

Transgender existence is notoriously absent from queer and feminist studies, falling between the cracks of theoretical application. Even Judith Butler's gender performativity theory has rarely, if ever, found itself on the same page as "transgender prisoner." Her work has mostly been used in the backing of sexuality studies or feminist debates in the past, yet Butler's theory has a real, important place in the lives of transgender individuals, specifically in the lives of transgender inmates. As Butler theorizes, "The prevailing law threatened one with trouble, all to keep one out of trouble" (2540), and this same prevailing law that leads to the incarceration of transgendered people does nothing to protect them once they are imprisoned.

In Gender Trouble, Butler argues that culturally imposed binary genders and their consequences radically shape the internal as well as external body of a subject. Drawing on Adrienne Rich's assertion of a societally enforced compulsory heterosexuality, Butler essentially compares gender to the "imprisonment," so to speak, of those who refuse to serve the heterosexual agenda. Ironically, an investigation into the incarceration of trans or other gender nonconforming members with Butler's theory at the forefront has never been conducted. Is it so far of a stretch to refer to the work of an infamous queer theorist to better understand the lives of transgender prisoners, or has queer theory really, truly left the T in LGBT completely behind?

Willfully, I will acknowledge the shortcomings of this conversation before it begins. My limited knowledge of transgender experience, as I am a cis-gendered

woman, does not allow for an entirely thorough exploration of transgender prisoner rights, but it is a topic worth discussing, one that has been omitted from queer theory and Butler's gender performativity. It is the goal of this paper to expose the connection between Judith Butler's gender performativity theory as described in Gender Trouble and the rising collection of American inmates that identify as transgender or gender nonconforming; through this connection, a better way of going about prison reform for transgender welfare can become a reality, once the binary social system of prisons are explicated alongside the equally binary social system of gender. Support for a restructured criminal justice system is building like never before (Caiazza) and may finally be achieved if enough is understood about this volatile environment as it relates to trans inmates.

Incarceration of transgender individuals, while complex, must be taken into account in order to improve prisons, an inclusion that would perhaps come to be for the very first time: The American prison system is notoriously binary, much like Butler's claim about gender being a restrictive, even dangerous set of chains one must bear, making prisons difficult to fix. Keeping such parallels in mind, it's crucial to remember that transgender prisoners' collective wellbeing is on the line with no illumination from any contemporary theory – until now. Judith Butler's Gender Trouble has the very real potential to upend the U.S.'s dated prison system (one that relies too heavily on binary gender norms) for the benefit of trans inmates. As with many things, policies have yet to catch up to the 21st century's budding transgender rights movement, but some fictional tales have latched onto the trans dialogue with success.

Netflix's Trans Inmate

Orange Is the New Black is a Netflix original show that oscillates between the genres of drama and comedy. Based on a memoir, the series debuted its fifth season on the popular streaming service's platform in 2015. One character specifically, played by actress Laverne Cox, has received critical acclaim and much attention due to her status as a transgender woman in a women's prison. Cox, a transgender woman herself, plays the role of Sophia Burset, a trans- woman arrested for credit card fraud and imprisoned among other crime-committing women in the fictitious Litchfield Penitentiary, set in upstate New York. Sophia remains to be the only trans inmate at Litchfield so her character arc represents an important demographic outside of television, raising plenty of questions and garnering necessary attention for this trans issue.

Viewers have gravitated toward Sophia's trans-woman storyline in the show, and while some believe her inclusion is a positive step forward for transgender visibility in both media and the real world, especially in a prison setting, others are less than impressed with the portrayal. For the most part, "Sophia had been doing okay in prison despite setbacks like being denied medication

and struggling to connect to her family on the outside, but in Season 3 things got a lot worse for her and she ended up being sent away" (Walsh) to solitary confinement for her own safety, a controversial actuality in American prisons for transgender inmates that will be addressed more thoroughly further on in this paper.

Sophia's fictional story has the potential to hit close to home for trans viewers, given that her hormone medication was once withheld: in truth, medicinal privileges require "extensive documentation and medical records… Absent the documentation, hormones would not be continued" (Brown, McDuffie 8). Moreover, fellow inmates, although women, seldom treat Sophia well. Outside of the screen, trans prisoners do grapple with life-threatening dilemmas and numerous rights violations. Fictional depictions of transgender experiences are uncommon, making Sophia a fan favorite for many reasons; however, her story, though a breath of fresh air, often veers quite far from the actual experiences of incarcerated transgender individuals today, experiences that can easily end up being life-or-death situations.

Reality's Trans Inmates

Inmates who identify as transgender women are consistently placed in male prisons (Brown, McDuffie). In one of the few studies that bridges the queer theory gap separating Judith Butler and transgender identity, Karma R. Chávez details "the case of Victoria Arellano, a transgender HIV positive Mexican migrant who died while in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention in July 2007" (2). Her article "Spatializing Gender Performativity: Ecstasy and Possibilities for Livable Life in the Tragic Case of Victoria Arellano" references Butler early on as Chávez concedes, "Resignifying norms to make life more livable for those rendered unintelligible through current norms is the ultimate political goal of the theory of gender performativity. Despite this political aim, the subversive potential of performativity, in a very material way, has yet to be fully actualized" (1-2).

Ultimately, because of gender, "certain lives are deemed livable and others are not" (Chávez 4), causing a rift in the binary that situates transgender existence in its own lonely purgatory. Arellano's tragic death is explained in Chávez's article in a heartbreaking manner:

> Despite her outward performance, her self-identity, and the possibility of grave danger, ICE officials placed Arellano in a large men's detention cell with only a handful of other transgender or gay detainees. The ICE officials' decision evidences Butler's claim that sex is not something one has or a descriptor of what a person is; sex "will be one of the norms by which the 'one' becomes viable at all, that which qualifies a body for life within the domain of cultural intelligibility." (7)

Furthermore, "… the logics of the heterosexual matrix are built into the U.S. immigration system, and such logics are reproduced by the space of detention centers" (Chávez 7). Butler's point about "the gender border control that differentiates inner from outer" (2549) feels accurate to the control of ICE officials that ultimately ended with Arellano's horrific passing.

Just as Chávez points out, Butler's theory "is ultimately a theory concerned with survival" (11) in its examination of culturally determined gender. Deaths like Victoria Arellano's are unfortunately not out of the ordinary in American detention history. Even more typical are in-prison assaults that take place with transgendered inmates highly likely to be at their centers (Jenness 7). Cases like Arellano's have resulted in public outrage, yet "prisons, which have historically developed along gender lines, arguably remain the most sex segregated institutions in the U.S. and abroad and continue to be fundamentally organized around gender" (Jenness 3-4).

Valerie Jenness, who will appear several times throughout this paper, is a veteran researcher in the way of transgender prison lifestyles. Her published findings document how trans inmates go about their environment, insight that further proves the need for a change in this system. In her 2010 study "From Policy to Prisoners to People: A 'Soft Mixed Methods' Approach to Studying Transgender Prisoners," Jenness begins with transgender parolee Alexis Giraldo's 2007 court case against the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), citing serial rape over the course of two years in prison "by her male cellmates" (2). Again, such cases are not unheard of, and they often result in the prison system's victory, as Giraldo's case did. "Both sides in this high profile legal dispute emphasized that the plaintiff is a gendered subject, but they differed" (Jenness 3), with Giraldo's legal team vehemently defending her female identity while the state continued to reference her genitalia to categorize her sexually as a man. Taylor Flynn's thoughtful 2001 study "'Transforming' the Debate: Why We Need to Include Transgender Rights in the Struggles for Sex and Sexual Orientation Equality," somewhat ahead of its time, states, "Transgender rights litigation presents an opportunity to broaden judicial understandings of sex by helping courts comprehend that gender identity, rather than anatomy, is the primary determinant of sex" (395), and with what is sure to be a growth in such court cases, the legal system should get the chance to update itself for the sake of trans rights.

The transgender challenge facing the American prison system "raise[s] fundamental questions about the structure and operation of prisons as well as the lives of transgender prisoners in prisons designed for one sex, and one sex only" (Jenness 4). There is an alarming lack of policies in place to house transgender inmates without threat in U.S. prisons (Brown, McDuffie 3). Regrettably, "the result is a prison system that simultaneously segregates and concentrates some

transgender inmates and, at the same time, desegregates and isolates other transgender inmates in prisons for men" (Jenness 10).

Jenness's understanding of gender and sexuality as a "tricky business" holds true in the inclusion of Judith Butler's gender performativity theory, where we become subjects to culture's categorization of bodies based on arbitrary biological facts. In her study with Sarah Fenstermaker called "Agnes Goes to Prison: Gender Authenticity, Transgender Inmates in Prisons for Men, and Pursuit of 'The Real Deal,'" Jenness discusses "doing gender" behind prison walls, informing readers about the performance of gender that occurs for trans inmates. The conclusion that "gendered social structures produce inequality" (5) is upheld by the samples of interviews included. These transgender prisoners are perceived as radical in their gender performance since they "do not conform to the dictates of an extremely heteronormative and masculinist environment," and they are subsequently seen "as a potential source of in-prison disorder" (Jenness, Fenstermaker 8). Butler herself says, "When the disorganization and disaggregation of the field of bodies disrupt the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence… that regulatory ideal is then exposed as a norm and a fiction that disguises itself as a developmental law regulating the sexual field that it purports to describe" (2548).

Simply (or not so simply) by being themselves, trans inmates are in permanent protest of the binary system that subjects them to an imprisonment that seems to punish them for going against the status quo. Transgender women who share cells with men are considered to be "'girls among men'" (Jenness, Fenstermaker). For these inmates, their very presence in a men's prison establishes their sex as male; ongoing interaction, however, offers the chance to vie for an "'authentic' femininity," or what one inmate deems "'the real deal'" (Jenness, Fenstermaker 9).

Perhaps more so in prisons than anywhere else, Judith Butler's gender performativity theory is very much alive and well. Transgendered prisoners are, for their own sake, on display in a constant proving of their internal gender externally, waging a small-scale civil war with fellow trans-women in prison to earn the affections and respect of male inmates around them. This "competition" is "taken to be an important measure of gender status among transgender prisoners" (Jenness, Fenstermaker 10). Complications arise in this study with such statements as "I'm a woman, but not a female" (Jenness, Fenstermaker 12), which confirm a contrast between internal and external bodies, as Butler discusses, but also insists upon a need for altering gender/sex views. In the very current lives of transgender inmates, Butler's theory applies, even if the seeds of their connection are only just now being sown.

Trans Inmate Culture

Any cultural indoctrination as deep-seated as the concept of "gender" is near impossible to shake. Early on in Gender Trouble, Butler quotes Foucault as saying, "The body is the inscribed surface of events" (2543). If we are to take Foucault's statement to heart, transgendered bodies behind bars are exceptionally vulnerable to this inscription, and for those trans bodies, this becomes more of an unwanted graffiti across their external identities. The "power regime" that Foucault ascribes control to is the same force that Butler credits with having brainwashed society to continue using cultural labels like sex and gender. As discussed in Jenness and Fenstermaker's study, prison culture is its own beast to tame. "The unique and often predatory environment of prison is defined by deprivation, including both loss of freedom and markers of individuality typically used on the outside" (Jenness, Fenstermaker 3). Prison is quite the stage to perform gender on, given that transgendered inmates are 13 times more likely to experience in-prison sexual assault compared to their gender-conforming peers (Jenness, Fenstermaker 8).

While confined, transgendered individuals must adhere to prison's own kind of culture, one that requires them to adapt to new social cues, hierarchies, and relationships. Butler maintains that gender is culturally preserved, upheld by the omnipotent law that governs bodies under a binary fist. Naturally, the culture of prison preserves its own gender binary, and transgendered women in male prisons are expected to give the performance of their lives: Act like a lady or surrender your true gender identity in exchange for a mask of masculinity (Jenness, Fenstermaker). It is baffling to realize that gender performativity has never before been applied to transgender inmate experiences given its pertinence in these very much at-risk lives.

As a result of their performances, "this 'pageant' requires other prisoners – the men – to be judges socially positioned to bestow status on transgender prisoners. The accomplishment of gender by transgender prisoners" rewards them with respect as women despite the orange jumpsuits (Jenness, Fenstermaker 20). Judith Butler describes a "regulation" (2546) of gender that occurs within cultures, and prison culture's regulation doesn't differ from that of the free world. Similar to Butler's argument is Jenness and Fenstermaker's declaration that gender performativity for transgendered inmates "translates into expressions of situated gender practices that embrace male dominance, heteronormativity, classed and raced gender ideals, and a daily acceptance of inequality" (23). Herein lies the fundamental, cyclical manipulation of individuals at the hands of gender, specifically individuals who are transgendered, a reality that even exists in fiction as trans TV portrayals like Laverne Cox's continue to emerge.

Far from the glitz and glam of Hollywood production, though, are the statistics that have come out in recent years in studies such as George R. Brown and Everett McDuffie's "Health Care Policies Addressing Transgender Inmates

in Prison Systems in the United States." Gender identity disorders (GID) are admittedly challenging when it comes to American prison policies, and in Brown and McDuffie's 2009 publication, "a reasonable estimate is that at least 750 transgender prisoners were in custody in 2007" across the U.S. (a number that has surely increased) with "the vast majority of transgender inmates" pigeonholed as "anatomically male" (1-2). Brown and McDuffie's findings contend that "nineteen states reported they had no policies or directives on the management of transgender inmates" (4).

A medically motivated glimpse into transgender prisoner health protocols raises questions regarding how forcibly mis-gendered trans-women deal with prison procedures in the problematic obtainment of necessary drugs or treatments (spoiler alert: "the probability of inmates being able to provide [the] documentation [to receive their hormones] in the context of social marginalization, poverty, and lack of access to health care is generally low") while in jail (Brown, McDuffie 7). All transgendered individuals operate "'outside' the hegemonic order" (Butler 2545) and are therefore mistreated – even when it comes to their health – while they are incarcerated; these are the consequences of such rebellious gender nonconforming behavior.

And how does this reality translate to television? Not very accurately. For one thing, Laverne Cox's Sophia Burset is held in a women's prison, where she functions as the resident hairstylist and intentionally ironic expert on all things sex. Her position in prison is that of a seasoned inmate who is comfortable in knowing her place, having made her way fairly well through the first two seasons. The major conflicts Sophia faces include her brief hormone therapy hiatus (which is quickly rectified by Litchfield's dubious management) and some strife with other inmates, who are all females. These surroundings are considerably more fortunate than those of trans inmates in real life. But once Sophia is swept under the rug and placed in solitary for protection after getting physically violent with another inmate, her storyline as a transgender prisoner begins to align more with reality: "Rather than keeping this victim with the rest of the prison population, which might force others to get to know a trans person as a human being, she is erased from the community altogether and the entire topic of trans people is literally out of sight, out of mind" (Emswiler). Yet OITNB could certainly use this heavy dose of realism. When a television show attempts to bring a real human experience into a fictional realm, and that show sugarcoats this oftentimes depressing human experience until it's unrecognizable, the show has failed at communicating the experience to its audience. Of course, when a television show excels in showcasing the realities of that human experience, no matter how harsh, it educates and moves its audience for the better. By allowing for Sophia's life to not be as flawless as her hair on OITNB, director and creator Jenji Kohan "shows that existing patterns of social relations are not immutable but at the same time does not portray an idealistic

or utopian vision of change," according to Melissa Tyler and Laurie Cohen in "Management in/as Comic Relief: Queer Theory and Gender Performativity in The Office" (129). While Tyler and Cohen's study pertains to the U.K. version of television show The Office, their scrutiny of the program "in order to highlight the critical potential of popular cultural texts" is universally applicable (128). Tyler and Cohen see Butler's theory in the safeguarding of masculinity in characters from The Office, and this same theory can be seen in Sophia. Despite her triumphs as a trans prisoner in earlier seasons, Sophia is brought down to the level of reality by Season 3's end, and as sad as her fall is, it is a necessary and more honest representation of transgender inmate culture, even if it's a harder one for people to watch.

Solutions?

Judith Butler's understanding of gender as a performance, one with no origin or example to refer back to, greatly informs the topic of transgender prisoner wellbeing. With gender involuntarily thrust upon them, trans-women in male prisons are responsible for their own safety as they perform their feminine gender surrounded by masculine criminals. Never mind the location of this tightrope walk – the mere fact that these human beings must parade themselves around as objects while their bodies "become a cultural sign, to materialize itself in obedience to a historically delimited possibility, and to do this, not once or twice, but as a sustained and repeated corporeal project" (Butler 2551), is the curse of the trans prisoner.

It's no secret that the American prison system has long been in need of reform. Butler's gender performativity theory in mind, it is important to realize the detriment facing every single newly arrested trans person in this country. "We regularly punish those who fail to do their gender right" (Butler 2551) and this is most accurate in the incarceration of transgendered individuals. They are doubly punished once inside, since the prison system still has not adapted to fit the needs of its tenants, relying instead on those inmates to do the adapting. The outcome of this relationship is the abuse, assault, manipulation, dehumanization, and even death of trans inmates across the nation, with stories like Victoria Arellano's going viral yet no discernible change to the problem occurring because of it. These individuals are dying for the perpetuation of a binary gender system that they do not subscribe to.

Since "we incarcerate more people per capita [in America] than any other nation in the world" (Arkles 515), it seems as though the U.S. should have a much more progressive and trans-friendly infrastructure to its prison system than it actually does. Gabriel Arkles, who identifies as transgender, writes in "Safety and Solidarity Across Gender Lines: Rethinking Segregation of Transgender People in Detention" that "incarceration has had a particularly devastating effect on marginalized communities," mostly for "transgender people, particularly

transgender people of color" (516). What's more is that "a recent study showed that fifty-nine percent of transgender women in California men's prisons have been sexually assaulted while incarcerated, as compared to four percent of a random same of people incarcerated in California men's prisons" (Arkles 517). Per Arkles' analysis, these are the people who are buried in statistics that are crying out for help through the pretext of gender performance in prison.

To those critics who simply brush off the dangers awaiting trans prisoners with a simple "Just put them in solitary," Arkles says, "Involuntary segregation from other people in detention is in reality one of the greatest threats to the safety of TIGNC [transgender, intersex, and gender-nonconforming] people in these systems" (518). Under the absolute power of prison officials, the transgendered minority is subject to the whims of the heteronormative majority. Butler's gender performativity theory reaches peak relevance in this hazardous prison setting for transgendered inmates. If "the body is always under siege" (Butler 2543) then the imprisoned trans body is even more so. Arkles hits the nail right on the head in this eloquent explanation:

> Once incarcerated, transgender people are often targeted for violence by both facility staff and other people in detention. Gender motivated violence is a reality both inside and outside of detention. Profound cultural norms and systems of oppression serve to create expectations that non-trans men have a "right" to access bodies perceived as female and/or feminine, that sexual and other physical aggression is "natural" and therefore appropriate for non-trans men, that women have the burden of protecting their own safety or finding a man to protect them if they do not wish to submit to male violence and/or sexual desire, and that trans and gender nonconforming people ought not to exist at all and deserve to be punished for their violations of gender roles and norms. (526)

Miraculously, Arkles' sentiment relates perfectly to Judith Butler's own thoughts on gender and its enforced performance, especially given the heterosexual male power-holder, yet Arkles makes no mention of Butler in his thoughtful article. Neglect of Butler and her groundbreaking theory has created a pattern that can be seen in most of these transgender prisoner studies, which never reference her directly except in articles like Chávez's and few others.

In a marriage of gender performativity and transgender inmate realities (and even their fictions), Butler's theory may see renewed life through a meaningful application to this pertinent cause. Likewise, transgender prisoner rights violations will receive even more attention with new studies that link the two, shedding some much needed light on the issue of transgender inmate security. The quick-fix method of solitary confinement – a detriment played out

onscreen by OITNB's Sophia – is, according to Arkles, an ill-advised approach that mistreats all inhabitants.

Throughout Arkles' research, one trans advocate is quoted as saying, "Many trans people I've worked with prefer to be in general population because finding their place in the prison culture, although it is an exploited and vulnerable one, is preferable to the isolation of protective custody" (Arkles 539). Contrary to what those unconcerned with the trans inmate issue would believe, "protective custody" does not protect. For transgendered prisoners, even when they are marginalized in the prison's general population, it is preferable to be submissive to the way things are than to be removed from the culture entirely. This is how engrained gender performativity is, especially for transgendered individuals.

Lori Sexton et al.'s enlightening study "Where the Margins Meet: A Demographic Assessment of Transgender Inmates in Men's Prisons" emphasizes that "we have yet to fully understand this population within a rubric of non-normative gender and sexual identities. Transgender inmates are a unique and empirically underexamined population" (839). Nevertheless, this "forgotten group" within the prison system (Jenness, Fenstermaker) is consistently othered. Transgender writer Susan Stryker provides a useful analogy in "Transgender Studies: Queer Theory's Evil Twin" that accounts for America's forgotten group of transgendered individuals, let alone America's forgotten group of transgendered inmates:

> If queer theory was born of the union of sexuality studies and feminism, transgender studies can be considered queer theory's evil twin: it has the same parentage but willfully disrupts the privileged family narratives that favor sexual identity labels (like gay, lesbian, bisexual, and heterosexual) over the gender categories (like man and woman) that enable desire to take shape and find its aim. (212)

Upsetting to the process of understanding trans experience, says Stryker, is the fact that the term "'transgender' increasingly functions as the site in which to contain all gender trouble, thereby helping secure both homosexuality and heterosexuality as stable and normative categories of personhood" (214). Further othering occurs even within the LGBT community, where the T is coming to stand for "token." According to Stryker in her article "Transgender History, Heteronormativity, and Disciplinarity," transgender existence throws a wrench into a system that relies "on similar understandings of 'man' and 'woman,' which trans [has] problematized" (147).

Regardless of whether transgendered people are troublesome to this enduring system of dualistic gender interpretation, their needs are not being met in the instance that they are arrested. Butler says that the body is "politically regulated" (2551) and is therefore at the mercy of the political system that regulates it, i.e. the prison system that manages transgender inmates. Much

like Butler's own Gender Trouble, this paper is short on solutions. Stryker et al.'s "Introduction: Trans-, Trans, or Transgender?" asks the essential question: While we have been "queering things" for some time, "how might we likewise begin to critically trans- our world?" (13). To start, prison reform to rectify the wrongs that befall transgendered inmates – wrongs rooted in gender's everyday performativity – would be a trans-inspired move in the right direction.

Conclusion

Judith Butler's gender performativity theory, a concept that exposes us as puppets on the strings of culturally adhered-to gender norms, has not genuinely crossed paths in academic conversation with the present issue of transgender prisoner rights. Butler's theory, in all of its contention, is ripe with ideas that are applicable to considering transgender needs behind bars. The restrictive relationship between gender and sex especially restricts trans inmates in their systematic erasure from society once imprisoned. Here, they are expected to perform whatever gender necessary for the situation: If they are perceived as women, they must act helplessly, daintily, and flirtatiously, like good gender-conforming women; if they are perceived as men, they must closet any internal identity in favor of the opposite gender, since they are liable for their external performance and therefore their survival while in prison.

There has definitely been a revolutionary awakening to attention when transgender rights are on the table, but this same call to action does not extend to include transgender prisoner rights with the same passion. If Butler's Gender Trouble communicates anything, it's that gender is institutionalized and therefore untrustworthy. Yet gender holds all of the cards in the prison system, where transgender inmates must depend on stereotyped gender traits in order to defend their individual identities. This is the "trouble" Butler sees with gender.

Fictional interpretations of this transgender prisoner epidemic, such as Orange Is the New Black's Sophia Burset, have a tough time producing true-to-life stories. For transgender actress Laverne Cox, the positive portrayal of a transgender prisoner on television is an opportunity to squash stereotypes and xenophobia, yet the issue at hand persists. Gender performativity as a theory pertains to the wellbeing of transgendered individuals, without a doubt. However, those transgender individuals who become inmates in a U.S. prison system that operates on a binary spectrum, adhering to the kind of "heterosexual matrix" that Butler speaks of, are still harmfully misunderstood in a sea of cis-gendered lawmakers, administrators, and fellow inmates.

Unquestionably, "in the context of prisoners, Foucault writes, the strategy has been… to compel their bodies to signify the prohibitive law as their very essence, style, and necessity" (Butler 2547). Whether this phenomenon is observed in transgender prisoners on television or in real life, the truth is that Butler's theory has much more to do with the improvement of trans inmate

experience than previously seen. Trans inmates, at the "margins" of the social system (Butler 2545), are inherently defiant in their identities. They are true variants of gender who possess the ability to upset an order that culturally confines people to a binary system; they are citizens who, if they become prisoners, also become casualties of the gender regime that Judith Butler has fought valiantly for so many decades. That shared struggle, intricately linking trans inmates with Butler's theory, may illuminate solutions to this unique civil rights problem.

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"A Conglomeration of Loveliness": Social Space in *Jacob's Room*

Seven years before she would publish her first experimental novel, *Jacob's Room* (1922), Virginia Woolf disparaged a concert given at Royal Albert Hall by writing "I think patriotism is a base emotion . . . they played a national Anthem and a Hymn, and all I could feel was the entire absence of emotion in myself and everyone else" (*Diaries* 5). *Jacob's Room* echoes this sentiment and foreshadows the criticism Woolf would make in *Three Guineas* of the reductive "appeal to feel together" and "overpowering unanimity" engendered by patriotism (*Three Guineas* 161). The novel's famously fragmented form undercuts the ideas of "togetherness" and "unanimity." It evokes the bildungsroman by portraying the life of the title character, Jacob, from youth to adulthood; however, the disjointed narrative, peripatetic narrative gaze, and Jacob's perennial absence shift our focus from the typical forward movement of that genre to the novel's depictions of space, constructing a symbolic "room" around Jacob. I maintain that Woolf's spatial disruption of linear narrative embodies theorist Henri Lefebvre's concept of social space to challenge the sense of unanimity inherent in the progressivist narrative that buttressed the rhetoric of the British war effort. Instead of cohesion, the novel gestures towards spatial complexity and the shifting but constitutive relationship between social space and human subjects. It raises awareness of boundaries—narrative, interpersonal, and national—only to demonstrate their permeability. This novelistic transgression of boundaries reveals an alternative conception of literal and literary space in which irreducible complexity effectively resists the reductive drive of the progressivist narrative.

Vincent Sherry argues that the formal experimentation of modernists was a reaction to the attempts of the governing Liberal Party to legitimize Britain's entry into World War I through appeals to reason. Portrayed as rational, these

efforts, in fact "ceased to mean anything recognizable, as [the war's] conduct reached areas of the previously unthinkable, the unimaginably sordid" (Sherry 9). Sherry charts the way that this rationalist discourse contorted itself into justifying carnage as a reasonable sacrifice in the battle for English civilization, supported by a progressivist view of history, which "seems to lie as a kind of residual myth in the language of rationalism, in the syntax of reasonable argument, where the linear, consistent, and end-driven quality in logical proposition extends to a conception of historical time" (Sherry 30-31)[1]. In contrast, the language of *Jacob's Room* subverts this rationalist discourse to signal "an immense disruption in the prevailing order of linguistic time" (Sherry 273). However, in conjunction with the "disruption of linguistic time," the novel's relationship with space and its impact on the formal innovations therein demand an examination. Sherry's argument, while convincing, is silent about this how the text's rejection of the progressivist narrative displaces Jacob's character onto its constitutive social elements: the social space of which he is a part.

While *Jacob's Room* predates Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* by more than forty years, Lefebvre's analysis of modern spaces is strikingly similar to that of the novel[2]. He challenges the Cartesian notion of space as empty container, explaining instead that "any space implies, contains, and dissimulates social relationships . . . a space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things (objects and products)" (Lefebvre 82-83). This understanding that social space is a product that also produces its occupants sheds light on the novel's persistent depictions of space. Indeed, social space "plays a formative role in the construction of social life"; a society and its space exist in a dialectical relationship with each other (Thacker 17). Lefebvre also emphasizes the complexity of social space as being "intercalated, combined, superimposed – they may even sometimes collide" (Lefebvre 88). This layered aspect of social space is integral to Woolf's impressionistic characterization of Jacob. The novel discloses an awareness of spatial complexity by showing the transgression of seemingly firm boundaries, destabilizing sites of cultural and political value, and playing with characters' relationships to physical geography. Accordingly, we can unpack the novel's subversion of the progressivist narrative more fruitfully by examining how the currents of British nationalism thoroughly permeate its depictions of social space and shape the lives of those, like Jacob, who would die in what idealistic progressivists hoped would be the war to end all wars.

[1] This progressivist view of history stems from the eighteenth century Enlightenment's "aspiration for intellectual progress, and the belief in the power of such progress to improve human society and individual lives" (Bristow). According to this view, "as humankind clarifies the laws of nature through the advance of natural science and philosophy, the true moral and political order will be revealed with it" (Bristow).

[2] Both Lefebvre and Woolf argue that 1910 was a year that marked a significant, though subtle, shift toward modernity. In *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre asserts that "[A]round 1910 a certain space was shattered" (25). Woolf hazards her famous assertion that "[O]n or about December, 1910, human character changed" in "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (26).

Watermark

Woolf's use of politically and culturally significant sites demonstrates the complexity of social space and its ability to shape individual human lives. The space of the University of Cambridge, for example, foreshadows Jacob's role as a soldier and his eventual death in World War I. Complex and interpenetrated, the relationship between the university and the state nevertheless appears so unremarkable that the former initially appears as a closed and stable site. Reba Soffer notes that, while various government and scholastic authorities often disagreed about the goals of higher education, "they all agreed that university teachers must prepare young men for the leadership of church, state, and empire" (Soffer 1). At various points throughout the chapter, Cambridge symbolically affirms this mission: as Jacob listens to the stroke of the clock, it is "muffled; as if intoned by somebody reverent from a pulpit; as if generations of learned men heard the last hour go rolling through their ranks and issued it, already smooth and time-worn, with their blessing for the use of the living" (*Jacob's Room* 34). Here, the march of history and the forward motion of the British progressive narrative are encoded into space. The preservation of "God, country and good" binds itself to time, and the passage's religious connotations and masculine pronoun usage privilege a progressivism that champions conventional British notions of order (Soffer 3). While the modifier "learned" gestures toward academia, the martial connotations of "ranks" links the sound to empire and nation so that when the narrator speaks of Jacob as "the inheritor," his patrimony is one of imperial authority (*JR* 34). To further emphasize the significant role of social space in his character formation, "the Chapel . . . the Hall . . . the Library" echo with "magisterial authority: 'the young man—back to his rooms'" (*JR* 35). These echoes use the definite article to identify Jacob and sanction his presence in the space. The site's sonic interpellation of him suggests a linear progression for Jacob's life; as an "inheritor," his is not solely an individual endeavor, but one shaped by social expectations and historical events.

Woolf uses the image of the room, as well as enclosure metaphors, to demonstrate the shaping power of social space. The opera boxes at Covent Garden, which are "filled nightly" are not simply empty boxes, but display the socioeconomic stratification in British life via the price of admission and social standing of its occupants (*JR* 53). The narrator wryly observes that "nature and society between them have arranged a system of classification . . . stalls, boxes, amphitheatre, gallery" to "prevent us from being submerged by chaos" (*JR* 53). This comment reveals how space both obscures and normalizes class hierarchy by aligning it with biological evolution and highlights Lefebvre's claim that social and class relationships are "latent" in spaces (Lefebvre 89). On one hand, these borders seem rather impenetrable: those in attendance are organized according to their place on the social ladder, with the poor kept farthest away outside the theater walls. Spatial ambiguity in this context is tantamount to social "chaos," and the box-like boundaries maintain social distinctions by which the observer

can relate to the otherwise overwhelming crowd (*JR* 53). The ironic tone of the quip, however, undermines nature's role in this spatial metaphor and points instead to the definition of the theater-goers by their environment in a similar manner to Jacob's interpellation by Cambridge.

These enclosures undermine the firmness of their own borders by showing the interconnected and permeable nature of social space. As Jacob copies Marlowe in the reading room of the British Museum, only the wooden border of a study carrel separates him from other researchers. Woolf further complicates the space by pulling our focus away from Jacob and identifying these minor characters by name: Miss Marchmont, Fraser "the atheist," and Miss Julia Hedge, "the feminist" (*JR* 83-84). The reading room itself is, ostensibly, a rather stable site, a civic institution geared toward research and serious study. Yet, its democratic admissions standards and nature as a public institution result in complexity and difference, placing the researchers from different walks of life in close contact. As with many of the other places in the novel, the reading room contains a symbolic multitude of social spaces that collide and overlap, symbolized here by the individual compartments of the carrels. Unsurprisingly, social space often intrudes into individual study: Julia Hedge laments "how composedly, unconcernedly, and with every consideration the male readers applied themselves to [their study]. That young man [Jacob] for example. What had he got to do except copy out poetry?" (*JR* 84). Hedge's frustration demonstrates that gendered attitudes and issues of mental and emotional health pervade the idealized site of academic study and that these attitudes are also inherent in that space. Intrusions of this sort, however, are not limited to Julia Hedge's mental space, for as Miss Marchmont despairs that "publishers are capitalists—publishers are cowards," she digs her elbow into her pile of books and knocks it over into Jacob's compartment (*JR* 84). Crossing a slender border into Jacob's realm of youthful gravity, Miss Marchmont and her philosophy that "color is sound—or perhaps it has something to do with music" serve as tokens of feminine vagueness that the supposedly rationalist (male-dominated) philosophical discourse purports to reject. Yet, for all the vagueness of her philosophy, Miss Marchmont is less abstract than Jacob, who is compared elsewhere to a statue (*JR* 63). She is more physically substantive "in her old plush dress . . . wig of claret-coloured hair . . . her gown and her chilblains" (*JR* 83). While the patriarchy may view Julia Hedge's feminism as dangerous, they most likely view Miss Marchmont as unserious or silly; her salutation to the Elgin marbles as she leaves, for example, "made Jacob and the other man turn around" (*JR* 85-86). It is, then, highly indicative of the gendered society in which these people live that while copying a passage from Marlowe, Jacob "remained quite unmoved," when Marchmont's books fell into his compartment (*JR* 84). Young, privileged, an inheritor, he may ignore the actions of somebody

with significantly less privilege. He cannot, however, separate himself from his surroundings entirely.

Ironically, Woolf's depiction of Jacob's room draws his character outward, associating it with "public" space while it invites aspects of the public into an ostensibly "private" space. This results in a conflation of the two and blurs the boundary between the conventionally personal and the social. Woolf draws our attention to the events going on below Jacob's window, so that, rather than impermeable, the walls of his room seem to make us more aware of people "vociferating at the lamp post and the woman battering at the door and crying 'let me in'" (*JR* 87). However, to Jacob, who studies the *Phaedrus* intently, this commotion is as quiet "as if a coal had dropped from the fire" (*JR* 87). Woolf indicates that this concentration is, in part, a product of his dedication to his studies as well as his youthful zeal, but we may also read this concentration as symbolic of his social standing and gender. Jacob's privilege is encoded into social space, which affords him the ability to temporarily ignore the social fabric of which he is a part. This ignorance, however, also predicts his eventual death in a war that he does not see coming. While Jacob's lack of awareness is not responsible for the outbreak of war, it certainly typifies the attitudes of many British citizens who were confident in the Edwardian narrative of national and technological progress. The same social structures that grant him power and status, allowing him to feel that "there will be no form in the world unless Jacob makes one for himself" also produce the real "form" of social space and its ideological underpinnings, which are invisible to him (*JR* 26). The sense of individual autonomy and ability to self-determine that exhibit themselves in the "rolling imperturbable energy" with which he reads the *Phaedrus*, are characteristic of the forward movement and indifferent drive of British nationalism fueled by the progressivist narrative (*JR* 87). The sounds of the street cross the boundary of Jacob's walls into personal space and remind us that he is attached to a particular society and historical period and does not exist in a vacuum. The sonic intrusion of the public into seemingly personal space does not merely show the permeability of brick and mortar, but symbolically demonstrates the existential implications of Jacob's entanglement in social space.

Woolf's characterization of Jacob exhibits a similar concern with space. Narrative focus examines him obliquely, describing him through shifting perspectives, granting narrative precedence to minor characters over him, and maintaining an inconsistent ability to depict his interiority. These elements initially appear to fracture the narrative into vignettes that are only tangentially related to the life of the protagonist, continually evoking the teleology of the bildungsroman only to thwart it. Yet, examining these elements in relation to social space reimagines characterization in terms of the complexity and breadth of social relationships. Woolf attempts to do narratively what her representations of space do more literally; social space shapes the social relations,

and the narrative mimics that space to constitute Jacob's character. The resulting narrative fragments depict the environment that has shaped Jacob's life and form a unified narrative, held together, in the words of Woolf, by "the Room . . . Intensity of life compared with immobility" (*Diaries* 167). These narrative fragments also flow into and relate to one another in the way that social spaces "interpenetrate" and "collapse upon one another like a mille-feuille pastry (Lefebvre 86). This technique contextualizes Jacob and creates a narrative space whose ever-changing boundaries are a symbolic room from which we cannot remove him and must understand through him.

Layers of observations and the reflections of minor characters form our view of Jacob. In one passage, Woolf condenses a pattern that emerges throughout the book in which the impressions of various characters, from Jacob's mother to his housemaid, contrast with one another based on their relationship with him. Clara's admiration of his "unworldly" demeanor clashes with his recounting of an indecent joke in the next paragraph (*JR* 55):

> Then Julia Eliot said 'the silent young man,' and as she dined with Prime Ministers, no doubt she meant: 'If he is going to get on in the world, he will have to find his tongue.'
> Timothy Durrant never made any comment at all
> The housemaid found herself very liberally rewarded
> Mr. Sopwith's opinion was as sentimental as Clara's, though far more skillfully expressed.
> Betty Flanders was romantic about Archer and tender about John; she was unreasonably irritated by Jacob's clumsiness in the house.
> Captain Barfoot liked him best of the boys; but as for saying why . . . (*JR* 55)

The shifting perspectives of Jacob's family, friends, and acquaintances coalesce to provide a picture of his character. They offer a piece-by-piece construction of him—as though from different angles—while also tinging their understanding of his growth with their own prejudices. Layering these perspectives on top of one another mimics physical space and contributes to an ever-changing boundary around Jacob, examining the impact of his character on *others*. Jacob may well be "unworldly," vulgar, "silent," unremarkable, generous, sentiment-worthy, clumsy, and likeable at the same time (*JR* 55). At various points throughout the narrative he has exhibited these qualities along with a myriad of others, but we cannot reduce him to any single descriptor or impression. Additionally, the confusion and uncertainty in this passage show that he is more than the sum of these characteristics. Elsewhere, Woolf comments on the complexity of representing the depth and breadth of an individual's life by noting that modern biography "will enlarge its scope by hanging up looking glasses at odd corners. And yet from all this diversity it will bring out, not a riot

of confusion, but a richer unity" ("The Art of Biography"). Like the dominant metaphor of the novel, Jacob's *room*, Woolf emphasizes how conceptualizing life in spatial terms ("odd corners") creates a picture that is complex and whole, resisting the reductive nature of narrative linearity. While minor characters view Jacob from different angles, they focus on a single unifying point like the red carnation of *The Waves*, "a whole flower to which every eye brings its own contribution" (*TW* 92).

However, this tendency to foreground the experiences and interiority of minor characters over that of Jacob is among those elements that makes narrative seem particularly fractured and complicated. In a particularly frustrating instance of narrative wandering, Woolf tantalizes her reader by hinting that Jacob is making important plans, but abruptly turns to an extended discussion of Cambridge professors: "Coming down the steps a little sideways [Jacob sat on the window seat talking to Durrant; he smoked, and Durrant looked at the map], the old man . . . went into his room" (*JR* 29). We expect that the narrative, having just concluded an outline of the contents of Jacob's literal room, would resume its focus on him. Similarly, we expect the participle phrase ("Coming down . . .") to modify the subject "Jacob." Instead, the narrative contains Jacob in brackets, separating him visually and grammatically from the rest of the section and minimizing his role in his own story. Jacob will not appear again for another three sections after the narrator has described the rooms and personalities of Professors Huxtable, Sopwith, and Cowan. As with the representation of social space at Cambridge, however, this narrative wandering serves to contextualize Jacob, drawing our attention to the surroundings and larger social fabric of which he is a part. Breaching the conventions of the bildungsroman, narrative focus may stray from Jacob, but its revelation of the context in which he exists as a student hints at his character and echoes Woolf's assertion that "[l]ife is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged," but "a luminous halo" ("Modern Fiction" 160). If we would like to know what type of form will be made for Jacob, we cannot pay attention only to the one he makes himself, but must attend to the one that social practice will make for him. Superimposing social spaces on top of one another, collecting and disseminating the perspectives of multiple characters, and creating a narrative that resists the linearity of progressivist history hints at a complex subjectivity for Jacob while also revealing the social relations that constitute his character. He defines and is defined, unites and is fragmented. That character and space are constitutive of one another destabilizes our view of both as single or completely unified. Jacob's position as "inheritor," the bildungsroman, and the meliorist view of British history, evoke a progressivist narrative which the text associates with the violence implied by "overwhelming unanimity." This method of spatial characterization, which stresses the complex and the unknowable, resists the reductive nature of that narrative.

Thinking about character in this way, however, reveals a tension between Jacob's flatness as a "type" of Edwardian male and the narrator's apparent trepidation to report on his interiority. This is not accidental, but symbolic of a dialectical relationship between social and self-determination in the novel. Edward Bishop argues that "in the figure of Jacob Woolf is not representing *character*; what she is exploring is the construction, and representation of, the subject" (148). Society constructs the subject through Althussarian interpellation[3], and continues Bishop "it is the *text* associating Jacob with entrapment and death rather than anything in his character deciding his fate" (151). Reconsidering Jacob's character in these terms widens our focus to include the infinite, diffuse elements of social life that impress upon the modern subject, which, in the words of Tamar Katz, is "constituted by the world's categories . . . woven and rewoven; it is the place where historical structures make their mark" (Katz 9). This imbues Jacob's often remarked upon lack of interiority with a thematic significance that gestures towards the mass casualties of the First World War. Bishop, however, asserts that the narrator's quest to search for Jacob's character is "misdirected" since "[i]t is not just that one can never know another person, it is that we can scarcely be sure what it is to be known" (167). While this point is a significant one, Bishop ignores the irony in the narrator's search for the "one word" which would be "sufficient" to sum up Jacob's character (*JR* 55). Rather than authorial misdirection or an earnest investigation undertaken by the narrator, the reluctance to dive into Jacob's interiority signals reticence and care, gesturing to the potential complexity of an individual's interior life. Rachel Hollander sees the narrative's inability to "penetrate" Jacob's character as an ethical action in which the restrictions of knowledge and representation limit us to "imagining an idea of the other's life that is infinite, just as we imagine our own to be" (44). Describing the context of Jacob's existence allows Woolf the ability to depict Jacob and still maintain an ethical distance from her subject. For, as much as Jacob is "unknowable," his room ties together the narrative, whether he is present or not. As the narrator notes, "what remains is mostly a matter of guess work. Yet over him we hang vibrating" (*JR* 57). Even if Jacob may *appear* to be a specific type of person, the wandering and fragmented nature of the novel signals that we cannot easily reduce his character or his life to manageable terms that would make it easily adaptable to a more linear narrative.

This unwieldy complexity contrasts with the teleology implied by the narrative of progressivist history. Its proponents, "men in clubs and cabinets," characterize the search for character as "a frivolous fireside art . . . mere scrawls," which the narrator differentiates from the straightforward manner with which the policeman at Ludgate Circus directs traffic: "not an ounce [of force] is diverted into sudden impulses, sentimental regrets, wire-drawn distinctions.

[3] Althusser argues that the discursive formations of Ideological State Apparatuses "interpellate or hail individuals as subjects" thereby subjugating them to the imagined conditions of their existence (Althusser 1357).

The buses punctually stop" (*JR* 124-125). These critics, their authority implied by their location in clubs and cabinets, prize the straightforward syntax of cause and effect, eschewing anything that appears to be tangential to the end-driven argument of national interest. They see Jacob and his ilk merely as an army, which "covers the cornfield, moves up the hillside, stops, reels slightly this way and that, and falls flat, save that, through field-glasses, it can be seen that one or two pieces still agitate up and down like fragments of broken match-stick" (*JR* 125). Here, the perspective is removed and we view the action at a distance as one would look at miniatures on a tactical map. The narrator also characterizes death in distant and abstract terms as one would the malfunctioning of a machine: "pieces still agitate up and down" (*JR* 125). In contrast with "character-mongering" (*JR* 24), this estimation of life values an individual only to the extent that they can be reduced to a unit and trained to advance national interest. This language here also implicates modern life in this project. The "blocks of tin soldiers" are reminiscent of the London workers who are workers are "split . . . or moulded," "figures" rather than individuals (*JR* 51). Woolf aligns this criticism of "character-drawing," with "the incessant commerce of banks, laboratories, chancellories, and houses of business," which are "the strokes which oar the world forward" (*JR* 125). Through the progressivist narrative, the social spaces of battlefield and daily life overlap, animated by the homogenization of imperialism and capitalism. As the text makes clear, these two interests are entangled, not only with British national interest, but with the British world outlook, a totalizing reality in which national interest justifies individual death as necessary sacrifice.

Depriving young men of their individuality and envisioning them merely as agents of war contradicts Jacob's quest for self-determination, for the form of the world is very much defined by forces outside of his control. The multi-perspective, fragmented, contextual characterization of Jacob formally resists the "unseizable force," which critics say "novelists never catch . . . it goes hurtling through their nets and leaves them torn to ribbons" (*JR* 125). Labelling life as a force that is "unseizable" indicates the reductive linearity by which the nationalist narrative attempts to conceive of life in manageable terms. The novel, however, avoids this since it neither commemorates Jacob's death as a sacrifice, nor eulogizes him. This would redirect our attention to the end-driven nature of that narrative, insisting on his death as the regrettable but necessary price for defending British civilization. Instead, Woolf draws our focus from the temporal to the spatial, the "net" rather than the "unseizable force." Here, Jacob's life is the figurative room of which he is a part, made up of his experiences and connections, the impressions he makes on the people around him, and, finally, the absence left by his death. In her comparison of Woolf's "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" to *The Production of Space*, Alice Gavin notes that the speaker's impression of Mrs. Brown "comes in the form of a 'draught' – either the speaker takes Mrs.

Brown 'in' via a deep inhalation of breath, or her character is equivalent to a 'current' or stream of air particularly encountered in a 'confined space' such as a room" (Gavin 50). Similarly, Jacob is the current that pervades the narrative space, linking disparate events, locations, and characters together, the "centre, a magnet, a young man alone in his room" (*JR* 75). If in *Jacob's Room*, as Tanya Agathocleous has argued of *Mrs. Dalloway*, "Woolf . . . posits a new version of community through the notion of provisional and continually re-made web-like connections," these connections are indicative of the way that social spaces "attain 'real' existence by virtue of networks and pathways, by virtue of bunches or clusters of relationships" (Agathocleous 193; Lefebvre 86). In contrast to the way that the end-driven nature of nationalism can justify sacrifice, conceptualizing social space as a net or web implies a sort of closeness or intimacy for which the linearity of progressivist history fails to account. Spatial awareness fosters the possibility of intimacy and results in a clearer and more permanent picture of absence and loss to challenge that narrative effectively.

The complex space of the novel implies the national, social, and historical issues that shape Jacob's life. As we have seen with Woolf's narrative method, this complexity also offers the opportunity for us to reimagine the potential of space to foster intimacy. By focusing on the overlapping connections that shape an individual, these momentary instances of closeness implicitly acknowledge the complexity of another's life and allow for moments of genuine connection that resist the inauthenticity and anonymity of the "overwhelming unanimity" inherent in the nationalist narrative. This is only possible by conceiving of social space in similar terms: layered and heterogeneous. Reimagining space to account for its inherent complexity reveals a unity that is more like Woolf's net, connected and elastic, than the restrictive unity of the "blocks of tin soldiers" and allows for the possibility of an intimacy which affirms difference, worth, and autonomy.

To present such a vision of space, the narrator's perspective often shifts between the global and the local. The novel's description of the world leading up to the war coincides with Jacob's trip to Greece, and before the narrator permits us to see Jacob return home, the narrative gaze skims the distance between Greece and Britain. In contrast with the removed perspective taken by military superiors of the soldiers on the field, the narrator's global view seems rooted in the local and returns to it. She aligns her gaze with the wind, which "pelts the smooth domes of the mosques," "was rolling the darkness through the streets of Athens," and "rolls the darkness through Lombard Street and Fetter Lane and Bedford Square (*JR* 130-131). This perspective elides geographic and temporal boundaries, telescoping in and out from the expansive to the narrow, contracting the

distances between these sites[4]. Like the wind, Woolf's wandering narrative emphasizes the role that history and the global have on the present and the local, challenging boundaries like national borders by skimming over their surface, connecting antiquity with modernity. In doing so, she highlights the way that the progressivist narrative conceals the layered and complex space of modernity, making it appear homogenous and manageable: the "summer's day" of progress has "vanquished chaos . . . dried the melancholy mediaeval mists; drained the swamp and stood glass and stone upon it" (*JR* 131). The erection of these boundaries, temporal as well as spatial, implies a break with the past and lulls pre-World War I Britain into a sense of security. However, this modern space simultaneously dissimulates and is penetrated by the networks of alliances that would lead Britain into the war, undermining the supposed security of national and temporal boundaries.

Woolf permeates her depiction of the novel's spaces with the continual revelation and elision of boundaries to present an alternative to the limitations those boundaries imply. In the British Museum reading room, for example, she reframes learning as a communion rather than depicting a linear quest for knowledge:

> Closely stood together in a ring round the dome were Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles, and Shakespeare; the literature of Rome, Greece, China, India, Persia. One leaf of poetry was pressed flat against another in a density of meaning, a conglomeration of loveliness. (*JR* 85)

Here, overwhelming complexity and difference form the basis for an admirable and irreducible unity that resists the forward drive of a linear narrative, despite Jacob's feeling that "one might . . . read it all through" (*JR* 86). Such an end-driven task is, of course, impossible due to the constraints of time. Appreciation of such a massive and heterogeneous formation entails respect for both the known and unknown, so rather than "overpowering unanimity," this "conglomeration of loveliness" celebrates the potential of difference and embraces dissensus. It must necessarily embrace the tangential web-like connections that describe everyday life and speaks to a worldview that can transcend the reductive tribalism that leads to the aggressive policing of boundaries.

While the space of Cambridge, for example, is one that functions as a site of nationalist grooming, it too offers fragmented instances of intimacy that resist the reductive narrative of nationalism. The narrator prefaces Jacob's time at university by asking "[d]oes Cambridge burn not only into the night, but into the day?" and initially concludes that it is the heterogenous nature of learning that shines: "the light of all these languages . . . of symbols and figures, of

[4] Lefebvre: "[W]orld space does not merely subsume national spaces, but even (for the time being at least) precipitates the formation of new national spaces through a remarkable process of fission. All these spaces, meanwhile, are traversed by myriad currents" (88).

history, of things that are known and things that are about to be known" (*JR* 22; 31). Yet there is another type of knowledge that interrupts the end-driven narrative of "things that are about to be known" in the depiction of Jacob and his friend Simeon as they discuss Julian the Apostate: "[i]t was the intimacy, a sort of spiritual suppleness, when mind prints upon mind indelibly" (*JR* 35). Here, individual boundaries between the two appear momentarily flexible, signifying a link that is substantial and authentic. This connection registers in spatial terms: "intimacy—the room was full of it, still, deep, like a pool. Without need of movement or speech it rose softly and washed over everything, mollifying, kindling, and coating the mind with the lustre of pearl" (*JR* 35). The intersubjective relationship between the two men blends with their spatial context so that the intimacy that fills the room conjures a momentary unity. As Kristina Groover notes, "Woolf's language in this scene renders friendship a sacred mystery, effecting a transfiguration of academic argument into an ecstatic state that transcends language" (Groover 51). The moment of intimacy between Jacob and Simeon contrasts highly with the descriptions of the dons, each separated into his room and content with his own sphere of influence, as well as the conception of Cambridge insofar as it represents a means to an end (*JR* 29-32). The experience between the two is not something that can be added to the progressivist narrative or nationalist project, as it resists the defining language that could render it otherwise valuable to either of these ventures. Yet, this experience influences the nature of the seemingly homogenous site, "so that if you talk of a light, of Cambridge burning, it's not languages only. It's Julian the Apostate" (*JR* 35). Where Jacob had been a background player earlier, the narrative now foregrounds his experience and demonstrates the way that this intimate moment influences the social space of Cambridge. Rather than a mere backdrop, the role of Simeon's room extends beyond containing this intimacy, but also takes the impression of it and absorbs it into the site of Cambridge. We find, then, that the site of the university is layered, composite, neither wholly the domain of students nor teachers, empire nor nation, but permeated by many currents and, therefore, resistant to absorption by any one narrative.

Woolf extends the heterogeneous nature of conglomeration to the landscape as an indirect rebuke of the nationalist narrative. Rooted in history, the site of Dods Hill nevertheless transcends the linear progression of time in a way that evokes the layered method of Woolf's narrative and mingles dissimilar items, insisting on their unity. In addition to flora and fauna, the moor holds "rusty swords," Betty's "two-penny-halfpenny brooch," "Roman skeletons," "darning needles," along with the memories of "the dead and the living, the ploughmen, the carpenters, the fox-hunting gentlemen and the farmers smelling of mud and brandy" (JR 106-107). While it functions as a symbolic graveyard for passing years—indeed, it foreshadows the fatal events of war—this site also blurs the boundary between the past and the present, indicating the flimsiness of that

modern certainty in "glass and stone" (*JR* 131) For Lefebvre, "the past leaves its traces; time has its own script. Yet this space is always, now and formerly, a present space, given as an immediate whole, complete with its associations and connections in their actuality" (Lefebvre 37). The layered nature of Dods Hill challenges the attempt of modern space to effect a rupture with the past through homogeneity. While the site's intimate mingling of these objects and memories gestures to the recurrent nature of violence—that too is a trace of the past encoded into the space—it also offers the promise of a communion that elides boundaries while preserving the potential for people's lives to be infinite, respecting what is irreducible about them.

Sites like these allow differences to intermingle and push up against each other. These spaces are heterogeneous and too complex to reduce to solely "British" places, just as an individual's life is too complex and multi-faceted to be captured in an end-driven narrative, or reduced to a single word like "soldier." Citing Susan Stanford Friedman's *Planetary Modernism*, Judith Brown, situates Woolf in the context of global modernity, arguing that *The Waves* "offers us an unexpected roadmap for larger modernism" and "[i]t reaches for something global, something that might vibrate, straining the elastic filaments of the sensible world and thus altering that world" (Brown 120). I maintain that *Jacob's Room* provides a similar model for the ongoing task of reimagining modernism in global terms, affording it a breadth and depth absent from reductive narratives of linear history, whether of nationalism or literary studies. Like the layered space of Woolf's novel, global modernism conceives of that subject as "a geohistorical condition that is multiple, contradictory, interconnected, polycentric, and recurrent for millennia and across the globe" (Friedman qtd. in Brown 120). To imagine modernist studies as the same "conglomeration of loveliness" means that we can extend the scope of its reach beyond the inward-looking perspective for which it is criticized and understand the ways that modernity continues to impact life in an increasingly globalized world. Specifically, the frequent policing of national borders and political boundaries often relies on nationalist narratives and a selectively curated version of history. Woolf's complication and elision of these boundaries in *Jacob's Room* offers a strategy for resisting the exclusionary and even deadly nature of these narratives. As in the novel, rethinking modernist studies in this way offers us the opportunity reimagine our approach to these boundaries through an embrace of layered, heterogeneous, and complex space—the space of Jacob's room.

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Integrating the Memoir into the Archive: A Case Study of Anis Kidwai's *In Freedom's Shade*

In 1947, the future first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, famously proclaimed the subcontinent to be on a "watershed dividing the past and future" (Nehru, "Partition Source 7"). While Nehru in this speech was specifically referring to Independence from British rule, another separate but interconnected historical event was inherent in this watershed: the Partition of India and Pakistan. After the British divided the subcontinent in a shoddy and sometimes arbitrary Radcliffe Line, mass forced dislocation, abductions, rape, and violence occurred on the subcontinent, the memory of which, as demonstrated by the 70th anniversary commemorations, lives on today. And yet, this memory held by the people of the nation seems to have been excluded from historical memory. Indeed, in the "history-writing project" that commenced, immediately following 1947 (Khan 365), high political histories such as Percival Spear's 1952 treatise represented Partition and the subsequent dislocation and violence inflicted upon millions as an "aberration that had no connection with the glory of independence" (Dube 68). In these linear narratives, Partition was mentioned only in attempts to determine causality—in other words, historians were preoccupied with "what led up to it and who was responsible for the violence" as opposed to the implications and effects of the violence itself (Dube 57). One potent reason for this, as Gyanendra Pandey writes, is that "the discipline of history still proceeds on the assumption of a fixed subject – society, nation, state, community, locality, whatever it might be – and a largely pre-determined course of human development or transformation" (92). The treatment of Partition as a mere stopping point on the road to Independence permitted high political histories to work solely within the frame of this fixed subject, who was imagined to be pre-defined and constructed before the event in

question, creating a linear history that moves "with certitude towards a definite end" (Bhalla 3120).

By focusing on such a fixed subject, high political historians could comfortably confine themselves to the institutionalized archive which was "generated by top officials" and consisted of statistics-oriented governmental reports (Dube 57). This archive effectively excluded the view of the unfixed subject, or those whose citizenship and relationship to the state(s) were necessarily in flux. As Pandey notes, this high political approach allows the "violence of 1947" to be treated as "someone else's history— or even, not history at all" (122). Localised as a "freak occurrence" that requires no historical explanation, transformed into merely a history of "events and causes", or declared "non-narratable," historians of South Asia have generally "consigned [violence] outside the domain of 'history'" (609), leaving a large gap between Partition as discussed in high political accounts and how the intense violence of Partition is remembered in the hearts and minds of the people.

In the past 20 years, scholars have attempted to fill this void in historical accounts by repositioning Partition at the helm. Instead of focusing on the fixed subject of the state, contemporary historians are shifting the historical paradigm to center Partition around the people, imbuing them with the historical agency they have so often been denied. This move towards "People's History" requires an expanded archive that includes the voices of "unfixed" subjects. Contemporary historians, particularly postcolonial and feminist scholars such as Urvashi Butalia, Yasmin Khan, and Alok Bhalla, have used oral histories and literary sources, two categories of historical informants typically omitted from the institutional archive, to reconstruct Partition as it was experienced by individuals. This so-called expansion of the archive has been lauded as allowing historians to "fil[l] gaps or supplemen[t] existing historical research" by fitting the emotional "underside" of history into existing historical narratives (Didur 45; Butalia 275). And yet, this history, as indicated by the hierarchy implied in "underside," much of this historical work fails to subvert the long-held hegemonic historical narratives, acting instead as bolsters to prefabricated analyses. As Alison Jill Didur notes in her book *Unsettling Partition*, this treatment of unorthodox historical sources often fails to "conside[r] how those excerpts might destabilize the concept of representation in this scholarship as a whole" (45). In other words, can we examine these noninstitutionalized archival materials without using them to fortify our preconceived paradigmatic histories? What happens when we do?

Following these questions, we must examine these new archival materials not just as evidence of our already constructed understandings, but as potential challenges and disrupters, bringing depth to high political narratives. While Didur has potently demonstrated how to perform such an "unsettling" within the context of literature more generally, the domain of the memoir as its own

genre with specific forms and functionalities remains chiefly untouched as a specific genre of its own. Memoirs have been used in the past as historical informants, but typically they are treated as mere records of "authentic" occurrences. The imagined authenticity of memoir fails to account for the nature and subjectivity of the genre, raising the question of how memoirs should be read as a potential challenge to high political histories. This paper continues this thread of inquiry to elucidate the contributions of memoirs to a more inclusive, less hegemonic vision of history. While a more extensive survey of memoir as an informant of Partition is undoubtedly needed, the scholarship of Partition still lacks an understanding of how to critically treat each memoir within this academic paradigm. Accordingly, in this paper I will perform a case study of a specific memoir in order to elucidate how a nuanced reading of memoirs and the subjectivities contained within can destabilize and challenge statist narratives of Partition.

While there are many compelling memoirs of Partition that could ostensibly be used for this case study, such as that by Shahid Ahmad Dehlavi or Kamlaben Patel, the one I have found most potent for this particular exploration is Anis Kidwai's *In Freedom's Shade*. Relying on her diaries during the years of Partition, Kidwai wrote her memoir in 1949 but did not publish it until 1974. *In Freedom's Shade* narrates social worker Kidwai's experiences working in Partition refugee camps. This memoir proves particularly useful as a case study in reconciling memory and history due not only to the liminal subject position of the narrator but also its blending of genres. A Muslim woman working for the male and Hindu-dominated Indian government, Kidwai focuses on details omitted in other memoirs by those affected by Partition and involved in the nation-building project. Kidwai thus provides a cogent entrypoint to understanding the role and treatment of marginalized groups in the construction of the Indian nation. Furthermore, the level of detail Kidwai provides has led contemporary historians to rely on it in bolstering their preconstructed histories. But, as discussed above, memoir-based evidence is often taken at face-value, without a nuanced understanding of how to treat memoirs and their figurative language as historical informants. The reading of *In Freedom's Shade* I propose in the following pages thus acts as a useful reexamination of these earlier scholarly works.

This paper will explore Anis Kidwai's *In Freedom's Shade* as a case study in understanding memoir as presenting alternative histories that destabilize currently accepted statist narratives through the relation between the subject-positions of the unfixed individuals and the narrator. First, I will broadly compare memoirs to two sources that have been promoted as being part of the new archives of Partition, fiction and oral history. Through this comparison, I will illuminate the potential benefits of integrating the memoir into the archive, and identify potential shortcomings of memoirs as sources of historical "authenticity." Then, I will utilize Anis Kidwai's *In Freedom's Shade*

to demonstrate how memoirs, when read in terms of their subjectivities, can appropriately be used to present alternative histories of the unfixed subject. After elucidating the context of the memoir and the amalgamation of genres it contains, I will discuss the author's subject-position in the novel as a female Muslim social worker. I will then explore that subject position in relation to her treatment of three unfixed or dislocated groups in the novel-- abducted women, children, and Muslims internally displaced in India-- to demonstrate how the subject-position of *In Freedom's Shade* allows it to be read as an undermining of high political histories, thus presenting an alternative history of these unfixed subjects. I will conclude by discussing the limitations to this line of inquiry as well as the ways this analysis could be expanded to other sources.

A Comparative Discussion of the Characteristics of Memoirs

As discussed above, the need to "expand" the archive to include different types of sources and thus subject positions has been well-documented amongst scholars of South Asia (Burton 143). Three forms of sources-- memoir, oral history, and fiction-- have emerged as important informants of the unfixed subjects role in history. While all three are undoubtedly important historical tools, oral history and fiction have been widely explored and understood as sources of information on Partition, following the work by scholars including Urvashi Butalia, Alok Bhalla, and Alison Jill Didur. The use of memoir, however, has been less examined, with historians often analysing it as a mere subset of either fiction or oral history. Before delving into the nuances of *In Freedom's Shade* and the subjectivity of memoir more broadly, it is imperative to explore the nature and potential uses of memoirs.

Memoirs, fiction, and oral histories have proven useful to historians to (re)construct the "human dimension" of history not included in the archives and ignored by high politics (Butalia 6). However, the means, subjectivities, and accessibilities they present differ. First, we shall explore fiction. Due to the paucity of social histories of Partition, literature, predominated by fiction, has "stepped in, at least partly, to record the full horror of Partition" (Menon 118). Fiction has proven to be a useful tool for historians for a variety of reasons. As the "greater part of which was written in the period immediately following the division of the country," fiction can be understood as "a kind of social history not only because it so approximates reality (what Alok Rai calls 'a hypnotic, fascinated but also slavish imitation of reality') but because it is the only significant non-official contemporary record we have of the time, apart from reportage" (118). Furthermore, fiction allows unfixed subjects to occupy the center stage of history as novels are often constructed around ordinary citizens, representing the lives of women, children, and other marginalized groups who are excluded from the archive. However, it is crucial to understand fiction as just that: fictionalized. While it can be understood as a mirror able to

"validat[e] historical truth precisely in its power to represent" (131), historians have been somewhat too reckless in embracing fiction as "the unmediated, reflective, and subjective 'T'ruth of partition experience" without addressing its inherently metaphorical nature (Didur 19). In this sense, fiction, as Didur cogently demonstrates, can only be used by historians with a "strategy that emphasizes the indirect, mediated, and fragmented representational practices that inform all testimony and literature" (19). Furthermore, the authorship of fiction is necessarily limited to those who have the ability to write and publish. Thus, the subject-position of the authors, and, to a lesser extent, the characters, is limited to that of the upper-class. As such, the viewpoint of fiction is necessarily restricted in who it can reinscribe into the historical archive.

Like fiction, oral history has come into vogue as a means to narrate the personal experiences of Partition of those not represented within the historical archive, with major projects "still underway" by scholars (Khan 446). Oral history consists of a trained interviewer "soliciting the memories of the living" (Hodgkin 4) and then "untangl[ing] the relationships between discourses and experience" present within such testimonies (Canning in Coslett 513). This act "turn[s] the historical lens at a somewhat different angle" as people's narratives "flow above, below, through the disciplinary narratives of history" (Butalia 10). These memories can perhaps lead to a more nuanced understanding of historical events as there is, according to oral historian Urvashi Butalia, "no way we can begin to understand what Partition was about, unless we look at how people remember it" (10). Furthermore, oral history has the added advantage of a low barrier to entry; unlike written works, which are limited to the experiences of those who are literate, the subject of oral history can be anyone with the ability-- both literal and metaphorical-- to speak with the interviewer. While this notion of speech has its own culturally inscribed limitations, scholars such as feminist historians have found oral history to be an "enormously empowering" methodological tool for recovering the accounts of persons who would not otherwise be represented in the archive or leave other forms of written accounts (Butalia 16).

However, oral history has proven to be a "deeply contested area in historical discourse" (Butalia 9). The oral history methodology "grappl[es] with the separation of subject and object, interviewer and interviewee, thought and feeling, the political and the personal" (Menon 211). While literature tends to present the author's subjective position, or at least contain a clear first-person narrative within it, oral history often obfuscates the interviewer's voice, perhaps unfairly representing the interviewee's voice as unmediated. Oral history, then, is better understood as an "intersubjective encounter" (Coslett 523) that is mediated through the subjectivity of the narrator. Furthermore, oral histories are often undertaken many years from the event in question. This disjuncture between the event and the timeframe of taking the oral history affects the veracity and

independence of the memory. As Carrie Hamilton notes of her oral histories of women involved in radical Basque nationalist politics, the "personal memories" that are presented in an oral history interview "rarely respect chronological order, and are often characterized by rupture and pause" (Hodgkins 122). These memories also tend to be collapsed into one another, or "telescoped" as Hamilton terms it, as well as conditioned by the historical narratives that have emerged (122; 130). This is not to say that oral histories are "false" or "inauthentic" accounts of history, but rather that they must be understood as "an event in itself" (Portelli in Hodgkins 120). We must take oral history for what it is: a removed reflection, or even re-creation, of an event.

Memoir, the focus of this case study, is somewhat of an amalgamation of fiction and oral history. Memoir incorporates the literary subjectivity of fiction, in that the experience narrated often is mediated through figurative or imprecise language. At the same time, like oral history, it is also a witness testimony. Memoir thus is as an "important historical tool" as it "provides the appealing voice to often otherwise missing...ordinary people" (Fass 107). This proffers a "unique individual variation on commonly depicted historical experiences" and illuminates how the "social and political are processed" (111). However, the nature of memoir must be understood as more than the sum of oral history and fiction. Memoir differs from oral history in significant ways: first, memoir, unlike oral history, is often written much closer in time to the event as issue. For example, Anis Kidwai wrote her memoir of the 1947 Partition primarily in 1949 based on diary entries she wrote during the process of Partition (xx). This is true of other important Partition memoirs, such as Shahid Ahmad Dehlavi's *Dilli ka Bipta* which was published immediately following the violence of Partition in 1949 (Dube 76). By contrast, major oral history projects regarding Partition, for example, are "still underway" decades after the event (Khan 446). The temporal proximity to events that memoirs describe allows such a source to provide commentary on historical occurrences less fettered by later-constructed societal narratives. Furthermore, in memoir the events are clearly presented through the author's own subject position, without the mediating interviewer of oral history. Moreover, while both fiction and memoir are literary representations of history, in that they use figurative language, memoir treats real people, while even the most realistic fiction still is a product of imagination. This is not to argue that memoir is more "authentic" or "historically true" than fiction or oral history, as, like all productions of knowledge, it stems from a person's own subject-position and is distorted through their ideological sieve and purpose. Nor is the memoir a completely non-hegemonic source, as the prerequisite of access to writing inherently limits who can write and thus represent the subjectivities of others. Rather, memoir emerges as means to understand the subject-positions of people in relation to historical events, making it a useful means for historians to construct a decentralized alternative history.

Watermark

The Subject-Position of Anis Kidwai's *In Freedom's Shade*

Having established the usefulness of memoir in relation to its other non-institutionalized archival counterparts, we now move onto the main object of our exploration: how to read Anis Kidwai's *In Freedom's Shade* to create an alternative understanding of the unfixed subject in history. As mentioned above, Anis Kidwai wrote *In Freedom's Shade* in the two years immediately following Partition. Kidwai had been implored by Hayatullah Ansari, editor of Qaumi Awaz, to "take all the notes that [she] used to make in copybooks or on scraps -- as memory aids or to record events that affected [her]-- and to make a book out of them and place it before the nation" (Kidwai xx). This memoir is presented, as the Translator's Introduction of the English edition notes, as a "key that frees us from the imprisonment of our popular imagining of Partition" due to "frank delineation of the violence in Delhi" and its multifaceted treatment of Partition's victims (viii). Kidwai tells her story, as is common in memoirs, through the amalgamation of different genres. She includes not only her own thoughts, but also the mediated words of those with whom she was talking, including refugees and children. While this does not amount to an "oral history," as the words are not stand-alone interviews, it does provide a glimpse into the lives of these historical actors filtered through Kidwai's own subjectivity. Moreover, the form of the memoir combines other genre features. Like fiction, it employs figurative, almost poetic, language at points, and formally alludes to literary sources by quoting artists and authors such as Mirza Ghalib, William Shakespeare, and Mohammed Iqbal as Kidwai attempts to universalize her experience. Kidwai also employs more typical "historical" sources, referencing the archival documents she used to reconstruct her memories of events. In this sense, Kidwai's memoir, as pointed to above, modulates between different source types and the benefits and drawbacks each contains.

Following Didur's entreaty to reinscribe the author's subject-position within literature, we must unravel Kidwai's own positionality within the source to understand it not merely as a record of Partition, but as an "event in itself" (Didur 51, Portelli in Hodgkin 120). To do so, I look to Kidwai's early history, using the synthesis of multiple autobiographies prepared by Ayesha Kidwai's, Anis Kidwai's granddaughter and translator. Kidwai was born in 1906 in Barabanki. Although subject to purdah, as was typical for girls of her generation, Kidwai was able to undertake a "rigorous education, learning Arabic…, Farsi and arithmetic" as well as Urdu in the same schoolroom as boys, a relative rarity during this age, until reaching a grade in which this was no longer allowed (326). In 1920, after the death of her father, Anis Kidwai moved to Masauli, her paternal village, where she married her cousin, Shafi Ahmad Kidwai. Shafi, along with his brother Rafi, was politically active in the Indian National Congress, influencing Anis, who soon gave birth to her first child, to become involved in politics. She set up a Congress Mahila Committee in Masauli, serving as its secretary

(338). In the years leading up to Partition and Independence, she was an active participant in the "liberation struggle," with her house serving as "one of the headquarters of the Congress publicity machine" (342). In 1947, Shafi, one of the only Muslims left in Mussoorie, was murdered as part of the communal violence of Partition. This event, which opens the memoir, quickly prompted Kidwai to seek advice and solace from Gandhi, who instructed her to go to a Muslim camp and serve others, effectively laying the stage for Kidwai's narrative of social work that occupies the majority of the memoir.

This role of the female social worker employed by the Indian government is a potent site for analysis of gender and political relations in the newly established Indian state. These social workers were typically middle and upper-class women, who were well educated and committed Gandhians. By and large these women were feminist activists (Menon 2302). And yet, under the thumb of the government these women "functioned very much within patriarchal structures, often displayed rather patriarchal attitudes and were influenced by urban middle-class conceptions of socially appropriate roles for women and men" (2312). The social worker thus "attempt[ed] to free women from their disability and destitution through economic sufficiency and imbu[e] them with a sense of worth, and restor[e] them to social 'acceptability' through a repetition of restrictions on sexuality and mobility" (2312). Kidwai can thus be understood as a dedicated feminist who was still under the purview of patriarchal structures.

This liminality is augmented by her identity as a Muslim employed by an Indian government, working with both Hindu and Muslim populations. Although post-Independence India ostensibly was a pluralistic and secular state according to the national government (Pandey 1878), Hinduism predominated among the Indian government. As a Muslim, Kidwai's governmental positions was thus somewhat of a rarity, and acted as a link between the state and the unfixed population of India's Muslims. As such, throughout the memoir, Kidwai advocates not only for secularism but also for for India's Muslims. This is evinced first through the memoir's personal opening. As discussed above, Kidwai opens the memoir with her husband Shafi's murder by Hindus. Kidwai's personal life is noticeably absent from the rest of the memoir, making this particularly potent. While initially Kidwai felt intense anger and a "passion for vengeance" she subsequently realizes such retaliation was futile, asking herself "Why should I be responsible for making his wife a widow, of depriving his children of their father? Why should it be I who becomes the cause of his mother's torment?" (Kidwai 17). Kidwai thus consciously sets herself up from the outset as someone who understands the plight of those who experienced Partition's violence, but also a neutral party of the supposedly "secular" Indian state who wants to end communal violence between Hindu and Muslims. As such, Kidwai's subject-position within the memoir allows us examine the relationship between the state and the unfixed subject, potentially presenting an alternative history.

Reading *In Freedom's Shade* as an Alternative Historical Archive

Taking into account Anis Kidwai's subject-position as outlined above, we can now examine how Kidwai's memoir engages with and challenges accepted statist histories. To do this, I explore Kidwai's subject-position as presented within the memoir in relation to three groups of unfixed subjects: women, children, and internally displaced Muslims within India. These three groups can be seen as unfixed in that their relationship to the Indian state was undefined and malleable. In other words, the process of Partition itself helped to construct their identity in relation to the nation-state. Because of this, they have either been excluded from high political narratives altogether or treated as historical objects (*i.e.* acted upon by the state as opposed to being understood as agents or subjects of history). Through this delineation of Kidwai's subject position in relationship to the figures she presents within the novel, *In Freedom's Shade* is thus an important source which reinscribes these unfixed subjects within the realm of history.

First, I will examine Kidwai's subject position in relation to the abducted women about whom she wrote. Following the outbreak of Partition, the "governments of Indian and Pakistan were swamped with complaints by relatives of 'missing' women" who were ostensibly abducted by those of opposing religions (Menon 793). Although the actual figure of these abducted women varies, the official number is put at "50,000 Muslim women in India and 33,000 Hindu and Sikh women in Pakistan" (820). While these figures may be "rather wild" as the Minister of Transport in charge of recovery deemed them (820), the sheer number of abducted women speaks to both the immense internal displacement of women as well as the cultural capital the phenomena of the abducted women retained. In response, the government initiated a recovery effort in hopes of "returning" the women to their "rightful" country through a 1947 Inter-Dominion agreement (Menon 796). However, the notion of who constituted an "abducted person" and what was the "rightful" country often was nebulous. India later defined in a 1949 Act, that the abducted person was a:

> male child under the age of sixteen years or a female of whatever age who is, or immediately before the 1st day of March 1947, was, a Muslim and who, on or after that day and before the 1st day of January 1949, had become separated from his or her family and is found to be living with or under the control of any other individual or family.… (839)

As such, even those women who were not "abducted" in the connotative sense of the word or who were but wanted to stay with their abducted family were not given the autonomy to make that decision.

This construction of the abducted women reveals how women were seen as unfixed figures: Although the secular state of India supposedly granted equal

rights to all, unlike men, women were denied the autonomy to choose their citizenry and were thus continually under the thumb of the Parent-Protector state, excluded from the autonomous rights inherent in citizenship. The constructed unfixed nature of the women in the eyes of the state led to their representation as historical objects, rather than subjects. During the "history-writing project [that] was commenced immediately after Independence" in both states, high political histories focused on the notion of an embodied "honor" of the abducted women, making their recovery essential (Khan 365; Didur 9). As Yasmin Khan notes of India, for example, "the idea of India had become, for many, personified in the shape of Bharat Mata or Mother India, who was both a goddess and geographical entity" (2207). By extension, the women of the nation in statist narratives became "shell-like repositories of the new national identities," in which the recovery of the women, without respect to their wants, becomes a "symbol of the nation" (Chakroborty 46). Paradoxically, then, these abducted women were presented in high political histories as essential to the nation-building project, and yet their lack of agency in terms of their recovery excludes them from being true citizens of the nation. In this sense, high political histories of Partition made women not historical subjects or actors, but rather objects of the Parent-Protector state.

The relationship between Kidwai and the abducted women presented in the memoir destabilizes the state's construction of women-as-symbol, transmuting these women into historical subjects. Kidwai, in her capacity as a social worker, worked with the Central Recovery Organization and detailed the hardships of recovery in her memoir. As a woman, Kidwai felt that she could empathize with and understand the abducted women, as, according to her, "only a woman can understand what is in another woman's heart" (149). Unlike the high political histories which construe women as wholly historical objects to be acted upon by the Parent-Protector state, Kidwai grants these women their own voices, albeit mediated through her own. In her words, Kidwai attempted to "try to understand the psychological state" of the abducted women and "why they refuse[d] to return." She writes:

> Take the young woman who had spent aller her life behind purdah, never seeing the face of any other man besides her brother or father. Today, this girl loathed herself as a wanton who had expended her dignity by being with strange men for months...A deep sense of misgiving and a fear of rejection would drive her to refuse the offer… There is no denying that there were also some girls to whose way of thinking this immodest life appealed…Also among those who refused were a few modern, educated girls who believed that the world's problems could never be solved without "international" marriages...How could social workers ever hope to reform such sophisticated sinners? And there were also some married women,

> who believed their honourable husbands to be their companions until death rendered them asunder...These feelings would shackle their feet and they would say, 'What was written as our fate has come to pass. Leave us where we are to live out the rest of our days. There were some girls whose eyes had opened in homes of great poverty...But now, they were in the keep of generous men, who brought them silken shalwars and dupattas...Why would such a girl want to leave such fine men to return to her amma and abba, to a life of rags and scraps...And for all women, there was another reason for refusal. How was she to know whether her self-possessed rescuer was friend or foe. (149-150)

Here, Kidwai attempts to explore the psychology of the abducted women, venturing to understand their reasons for refusing to return. As such, Kidwai is challenging the belief that women who are not "immoral wantons" would want to return to their families and be reintegrated into the imagined community of nationhood. As Kidwai notes, "What these varied reasons for refusal told us was that the issue was not as simple" as had been assumed. And yet, she ultimately believes that these women should be returned to their natal families, placing a positive value judgement on the "fine and sensible" girls who immediately agree to return (149). Kidwai thus represents an amalgamation between a feminist activist and government official, caught between wanting to represent the women as historical subjects in their own right as well as carry out the logic of the Parent-Protector state.

Kidwai's discussion of "the problems of abducted women" in the penultimate chapter of her memoir further destabilizes the state's historical narrative of the necessity of "recovering" women as her own ambivalence towards the state project grows. She details the view of the social worker that women should be returned, discussing the "physical and spiritual torment" that abduction would cause future children, the continued selling of girls, and harm for their children (293-295). And yet, the patriarchal structures that inscribe Kidwai become clear as she notes of an abducted girl abused by many men who was "recovered" by India,

> She sat beside me a silent question mark, her petrified eyes asking of me and every other human-- who am I? She had no words left, no ambition in her heart, no vigour in her limbs, no obstinacy of adolescence, no loveliness of youth. Can my readers tell me what transgression we committed in bringing these two back? Would leaving them there not have been a sin? (294)

As Didur notes, "[K]idwai's comments underscore her uncertainty about the stated purpose of the Recovery Operation (i.e., humanitarian). She isolates a serious contradiction in its activities; the Recovery Operation has attempted

to write the girl's identity as 'recovered,' and yet she remains as a 'silent' 'question-mark' who continues to 'call out' for answers" (53). Furthermore, the confrontational tone of the piece, in which Kidwai invokes her readers directly, points to an insecurity in Kidwai's own actions. She admits that, "In fact, I don't even know what happened to the girls we sent to Pakistan. I was always anxious for news of them" (Kidwai 295). This capitulation calls into question the entire notion of recovery itself-- are these girls truly recovered? Are they better off? Are they in their "rightful" country? Kidwai here moves from transmuting the women into historical subjects to questioning the entire "patriarchal logic of the nation-state" (Didur 52). Kidwai thus challenges high political narratives of Partition which deny women historical agency. And yet, she ultimately remains inscribed within patriarchal visions of statehood, as she leaves the "question-mark" of the girl unanswered, thus revealing the tensions inherent in the participation of social workers in the nation-building project.

This destabilization of the high political histories can also be seen in Kidwai's discussion of children of the nation. As Urvashi Butalia notes, "no history of Partition that I have seen so far has had anything to say about children" (197). This can perhaps be ascribed to the difficulty of assigning identity to these children; following Butalia, "it was the bodies and beings of abducted children that posed the greatest challenge of all" (197). Unlike the abducted women who "could be brought back into the fold of religion, and could, in a manner of speaking, be 'repurified', a child, in whom the blood of two religions was mixed in equal quantities was not so easily re-integrated" within the nation-state (197). These children can be seen as perpetually unfixed subjects, unable to be integrated into either states' self-reinforcing narrative. Following Debali Mookerjea-Leonard's analysis of the writings of Jyotirmoyee Devi, the children borne out of Partition's abductions represented tangible markers of violence that undermine the purity of the nation (40). High political histories have elided the question of children in favor of focusing on fixed subjects which bolster an imagined purity of a nation.

Kidwai's discussion of the children of abducted women complicates the imagined purity of the nation. As Kidwai notes, "Many abducted girls were no different; often, almost as soon as they arrived, they said, 'Send these children off to their fathers. We don't want them.' No doubt that behind these words lay fear of society and shame at their unwed status, but the way they spoke did not indicate that an abiding love underlay it" (293-294). Kidwai attributes this to the "intolerable situation...foisted upon" the abducted women, in that these women not only had to bear the "huge burden" of child rearing alone but also the "fear of society and shame at their unwed status" (294). It seems that Kidwai is pointing to the children's status as themselves tangible markers of the abduction. While she explicitly names the shame associated with extramarital sex, this passage can be more broadly read as categorizing the children as markers of the violence of

abduction. The children thus act as physical reminders to the nebulous nature of nationhood during this period, undermining purity presented by high political histories.

Kidwai also recounts the lives of other children affected by Partition in a means that ravels the notion that children would be rightfully accepted to whichever nation they were "recovered" to as decided by the state. While the state was focused merely on the number of "recoveries," Kidwai narrates a much more complex reality on the ground. She writes, "in October, I began visiting hospitals with Jamila to locate stray and orphaned children; otherwise, like scores of children being sent off to Pakistan, they would be too" (71). Here, Kidwai in her role as a social activist, alludes to a somewhat arbitrary nature of attaching nationhood to the children of Partition. This is anecdotally furthered by Kidwai's discussion of "Sita and Haseena," a single girl who "uttered [both] a Muslim name and a Hindu one" when asked. When Kidwai asks more questions regarding her religion, the girl likewise provides both Muslim and Hindu answers (76). Kidwai tells Gandhi that this will "cause a Hindu-Muslim quarrel" and Gandhi eventually sends her to the Kasturba Trust School. The duality of Sita/Hasina, which is presented to the government workers as a problem or dilemma to be solved, compromises high political narratives about who constitutes a nation. Children, as perhaps the ultimate unfixed subject due to their malleability and liminality, evade such categorization despite the government's and historian's best efforts.

The treatment of internally displaced Muslims within *In Freedom's Shade* further undercuts the high political histories of Partition which provide overly simplistic narratives, if any, of this unfixed group. High political histories, as discussed above, reduce the complex process of Partition to a mere set of causes. One of the most "cherished historiographical narratives of Partition," as Asim Roy notes, is the notion of "'The League for partition' and 'the Congress for unity." (Dube 58). In other words, these high political histories tended to absolve the Indian Congress, and by extension the government, from their responsibility in Partition and the violence it wrought, promoting India as an ostensibly secular state. The dislocation and migration across the newly created borders were thus seen not as forced or goaded by the Indian government, but as a personal preference or proclivity. As Gyanendra Pandey notes of Indian historical narratives, "Hindus and Sikhs were 'naturally' ours, and Muslims 'naturally' theirs" (2201). This focus on naturalism serves to obfuscate the Indian state's role in the dislocation and internal displacement of Muslims, who were, in fact, often not included in the category of "refugee" as it was assumed all refugees coming into India were non-Muslims (Daiya 1883). Such understandings of who constitutes a citizen and refugee inherently limits who can be included in high political histories which bolster statist narratives of the naturalizations of population.

Kidwai, from her subject position as a Muslim working for the Indian government, demonstrates the means by which the Indian government itself was privy to and culpable in the internal displacement of Delhi's Muslims. In the months after the implementation of Partition, Kidwai, following Gandhi's beseechment, began to work at the newly sprouted camps which aided those displaced as a result of Partition's violence. In subsequent chapters, Kidwai describes what she saw at two of these camps. Kidwai perceived the camps to be starkly different. She first worked at Purana Qila, a Muslim camp whose day-to-day operations were overseen by the Pakistani government although the "bulk of the responsibility (based on Pakistan's recommendations) for actual supplies of food and medicines as well as arrangements for train and air transport, lay with the Indian government" (38). Run by a Muslim commander who was in such a "hurry now that all he wanted to do was wind up the camp, get a certificate that he had run it and leave for Pakistan," the camp was purportedly never visited by any member of the Indian Congress (besides the disciples of Gandhi) although under its jurisdiction. The Indian government's apparent neglect had a monumental impact on the camp. According to Kidwai,

> Thirst and hunger, typhoid, cholera, dysentery, fever and many other diseases were widespread. Any shortfall in misery was made up by snakes, whose bites delivered scores from this tortured existence. The rains in September were manifestations of God's wrath and, under that roof of a grey sky, all sanctuary seekers could do was to huddle in the knee-deep mud and await death. (38)

This vivid description reveals the squalor the Kidwai saw at the camp. The figurative diction of "tortured existence" and "manifestations of God's wrath" betrays Kidwai's own shock at the conditions in the camp. Furthermore, Kidwai discusses the intense neglect faced by the injured refugees due to the lack of medical care and limited space. She writes: "[T]he hospital tents were crammed with patients. Their clothes spattered with dried blood, patients watched their injured bodies rot. For want of space, a twelve-year-old boy lay near the ration store, sidling slowly towards his grave; pus had entered the bone, all hope of recovery was lost" (49).

These horrid conditions led to intense anger towards the Indian government. Kidwai relates that "some time before [she] arrived, the inmates had been so angered by the conditions in the camp that they had surrounded Mahatmaji's car when he visited. They raised slogans against him, uttered harsh words and the situation became quite volatile" (41). This anecdote suggests a demand on the part of the Muslims for attention and care by the Indian government, a plea that, despite Kidwai's apparent efforts, went ignored as the camp lost much of its functionality as "most camp inmates who volunteered with us left for Pakistan" by the end of October (47). In this sense, the Muslim camps

were inherently "othered" by the Indian government, despite Gandhi's pleas for a secular state.

By November of 1947, after most of the denizens of Purana Qila camp left for Pakistan, Kidwai began to work at the camp at Humayun's Tomb. Although spatially not very far from Purana Qila, in nature the camps were miles apart. The Humayun's Tomb camp was established by the Indian government and included both Hindus and Muslims (53). Kidwai describes the camp as "neat" and "properly managed" as "Jamia volunteers looked after its daily functioning while the Indian government met its material needs," providing everyone with "well laid out" tents and an "adequately staffed hospital" (53). And yet, despite these better conditions afforded to the camp's mixed population, the Indian government seems to have implicitly engaged in discrimination, attempting to force Muslims out. As Kidwai notes of the Muslims in the Humayun Tomb camp, "I had gathered that the Muslims in the camp were being meted out unequal treatment compared to the refugees. While the latter were being rehabilitated, the former were being driven out of their homes" (64-65). This notion of the Muslims being driven out of their home continues throughout the memoir. Due to the vast number of Hindu refugees coming from Pakistan, the shortage of houses meant "continuing attacks on Muslim zones" --upon Muslims already forced out of their original homes-- in order to make room for refugees (201). She describes government officials as being particularly complicit in this, as they made "important people of the city intercede on their behalf and police men wielded the power of their weapons to ensure that even the most bigoted Muslim agreed to give their friends or relatives a room to stay in" (201). The comparison between the camps that Kidwai gives as well as her discussion of the houses reveals that the reality on the ground was quite different than the high political histories: the Indian government, despite the pronouncements of Gandhi of its secularity, implicitly engaged in forcing the Muslims out of India, undercutting the notion of who constitutes an Indian citizen.

And yet, while the culpability of the Indian government in this is tacitly revealed by Kidwai's memoir, her role within the Indian government limits her agency. This is poignantly revealed in her discussion of the "loyal" Indian Muslims in Delhi. Although India was imagined as a "naturally" Hindu homeland (Pandey 2201), Delhi itself was considered a "Muslim" city, in that it was "built by Muslim rulers, full of grand Mughal monuments, and dominated by the Muslim aristocracy" and was a city of Muslim elites (2267). According to the 1941 census, the Muslim population in Delhi was 33.22%. As such, many Muslims considered Delhi, more than Pakistan, their true home and refused to leave, instead being internally displaced in the violence of Partition. These "loyal" Indian Muslims, according to Kidwai, had "never gone to Pakistan, nor were they going to; yet, our democratic government continued to make such a distinction between those in distress." (274). Kidwai relates the story of

Mohammad Hossain, a government official who had "opted" for India when asked, and yet was barred from working. He appeals to Kidwai, saying "Can you please intervene. I am just stuck here. If, as you say, there is no government order that says that Muslims must not be employed, then why aren't we being called back to our jobs? Why should I have to go to Pakistan?" Yet, though Kidwai intervenes, she ultimately is unable to get him a job so that he "had to accept Pakistan" (117). Kidwai's inability to affect change for the internally displaced Muslims due to her intermediary status between government and layperson undermines high political narratives of universal Muslim "preference" for Pakistan, making the Indian government conscious actors in this subjugation of supposed citizens.

Conclusion: Dwelling in the New Archive

All history, Gyanendra Pandey argues in his historiography of Partition, "is implicated in a political project, whether consciously or unselfconsciously" (168). The high political history-writing project that began following the process of Partition has been aimed at "justifying, or eliding, what has been seen in the main as being an illegitimate outbreak of violence," making the violence of Partition someone else's history (82). And yet, when reading sources that are not included in the typical statist histories, those implicated in the violence reemerge as historical actors. Memoir, then, becomes an undeniably important source in this reconstruction of a new, alternative history in which the unfixed subject can take center stage. In this paper, I have attempted to demonstrate that when read in terms of their subject-positions, memoirs can be used to construct alternative histories. These histories cannot be relegated as the "emotional underside" of history or diminished as "micro-histories", but must be understood as histories just as those of the state. While *In Freedom's Shad*e proves to be a particularly potent example due to Kidwai's intervening subject-position, this mode of reading memoirs as not simply arbiters of "authenticity" or "truth", but rather as informants of various positionalities during a historical event allows for a deeper, less hegemonic history that is at once both more fragmented and more whole. Therefore, larger survey of Partition memoirs would prove a useful historical exercise: How do the varied subject-positions of the memoirs' authors influence what and in what manner information is presented? How are these memoirs in conversation with each other? How do they challenge one another? On what aspects of Partition are memoirs silent? By applying the methodology of this case study to a broader selection of Partition memoirs, such as those by Kamlaben Patel or Shahid Ahmad Dehlavi, among many others, we will achieve a richer archive more accurately able to reflect the way Partition was experienced by the people of South Asia than any institutionalized repository.

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Under the Post-Wounded Voice: Female Pain Within *So Sad Today*

Melissa Broder starts her essay collection *So Sad Today: Personal Essays* from, quite literally, the very beginning of her life. The introductory essay, "How to Never Be Enough," reflects upon her first day on earth: "I was born two weeks late, because I didn't want to leave the womb. When they finally kicked me out, I was like, *oh hell no*. I've been trying to get back there ever since" (1). In the very first moment of her book, Broder establishes her general aversion to life. Her trials and tribulations can all be attributed to the fact that she did not ask to be born in the first place. From the beginning, Broder was different from others, more attuned to the ever-present threat of death. She imagines that "the other babies probably seemed pretty chill about being on earth" (2), whereas she "was already thinking about death. A lot" (3). From her first moments in the bizarre experience of life, Broder knew that she could not simply ignore the inevitability of mortality like her peers. Her constant fear of death set her apart from others, made her feel strange and distant from society. This would only continue to fester in the rest of her life, and become the basis for her depression and anxiety disorder. With her characteristic tone of apathetic humour, Broder chronicles the traumatic emotional pain of disorders and other experiences in the essays which follow.

While many of the early essays of Broder's collection deal exclusively with the role of sex in her life, the majority of *So Sad Today* features anecdotal essays which discuss the many ways in which she has attempted to cope with her all-consuming anxiety. At the end of "How to Never Be Enough," Broder explains how she began attempting to cope with her existential pain by trying to literally diminish her existence by eating pieces of herself. She ate her own hair, picked her nose, and generally became infatuated with her own consumption.

In her search to gain control over her inexplicable existence, she developed an eating disorder which caused her to count every single calorie, every single day ("I Want to Be a Whole Person but Really Thin"). She eventually turned to many forms of substance addiction, namely cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol. When she sobered up from these, she continued "using people as drugs" ("One Text is Too Many and a Thousand Are Never Enough" 107). She searched for validation from sexual and romantic partners, hoping that she could find in them fulfillment and an emotional form of the high her substance abuse brought her. The Internet fueled this addiction in many ways, as she was able to attach to the idea of people without ever knowing them, a version of them "based on a distant image" ("Never Getting Over the Idea of You is Going Okay" 140). These strategies were all used by Broder to fill what she refers to as her "many insatiable internal holes" ("Never Be Enough" 3). In a period of particularly difficult anxiety, Broder began "tweeting into the void" (Broder qtd. in Fassler) about her suffering from the anonymous account @sosadtoday. After the account amassed a considerable following, Broder came forward as the woman behind it, and compiled new essays with previously published ones from her *Vice* column to create her collection of the same name.

So Sad Today, in essence, is a book about coping with pain. From addiction recovery to clinical mental health issues, Broder's essays navigate her experience of being hurt and wounded by the world. She writes about these experiences, largely, in a removed sarcastic style. This is exemplified by the first line of her essay "The Patron Saint of Nicotine Gum," which reads: "Here's why I'm afraid of life after death: What if there is no nicotine gum?" (91). Even the essay "The Terror in My Heart Says Hi," in which Broder describes her panic attacks graphically, is written in a distinctly casual language, as she begins it by speculating that "it seems like all the cool mentally ill people are on Wellbutrin" (127). Broder's overabundant use of expletives makes her writing even more crude and colloquial, such as when she writes "I'm going back on fucking Effexor" on her 12th day off the drug and "I'm not going back on fucking Effexor" on the 13th day ("Terror in My Heart" 137). In an essay which explores her existential dread in the form of instant messaging, Broder simply writes "i'm ttly scared of the infinite," favoring a sarcastic voice over visceral description in order to avoid romanticizing the trauma of her philosophical crisis ("Google Hangout with My Higher Self" 123). This use of casual vernacular, sarcasm, and crude expletives makes her discussion of intense suffering accessible for the modern reader and allows Broder to explore her pain without worshiping it. At the same time, making the anecdotes humorous and casual could be seen as trivializing her own experiences, limiting her ability to connect meaningfully with the reader. The question of to what extent Broder's style is effective in communicating her pain is thus critical to consider when reading *So Sad Today*.

Representing pain, especially female pain, is a difficult undertaking. As described by author Leslie Jamison in her essay "Grand Unified Theory of Female Pain," female pain has historically been fetishized by male authors who attempt to represent it. Many female characters in literature and other media are reduced to nothing but manifestations of their misery and strife. They are regarded as beautiful because they are hurting, not because of any of their personality traits. Thus, their pain is worshiped instead of understood, and their stories are reduced to merely an expression of woundedness. This makes the issue of discussing female pain a tricky one, as women search for a way of "representing female suffering without reifying its mythos." As women are frequently stereotyped as being sensitive and over-emotional, admitting to pain is too often perceived as attention-seeking. They are afraid to represent their suffering in fear of being perceived as obsessed with their own pain, what Jamison refers to as "wound-dwelling."

If one extreme response to pain is "wound-dwelling," the other is what Jamison describes as "post-woundedness." In light of the difficult and multifaceted emotions which surround the representation of female pain, some women develop "a stance of numbness or crutch of sarcasm that implies pain without claiming it." This persona of "numbness," or post-woundedness, comes from a desire of women to no longer be seen as melodramatic or petty. Instead of expressing their pain, post-wounded women create an air of sarcasm and apathy that distances themselves from the experience of suffering. They would rather have others believe that they are above pain than acknowledge that they experience it. Post-woundedness, essentially, is a defense mechanism against claims that women are emotional wound-dwellers. If a woman can assert that she is removed enough from her pain to make light of it, she can stave off accusations that she is obsessed with suffering. Jamison ultimately finds this strategy incomplete. Women should not want to be perceived merely as manifestations of wounds, but at the same time "we should be allowed to have them, to speak about having them, to be something more than just another girl who has one." In this way, post-woundedness is just as reductive as wound-dwelling because it ignores the harsh realities of pain which women experience.

It is clear throughout *So Sad Today* that Broder writes with a stance of post-woundedness. One essay in particular, which displays her turning to sarcasm instead of honesty, is "Help Me Not Be A Human Being." In this essay, Broder reflects on "a lifetime of fictional love stories" resulting from her feelings of insecurity and disappointment with her relationships (27). The "stories" mostly involve unrequited love. Two striking examples are "I'm in love with you and you don't want anything to do with me so I think we can make this work: a love story" (27), and "let's pretend you are capable of being who I think I need you to be: a love story" (30). She also tells the love stories: "I think it's time for you to drop back into my life, ruin it, then disappear again" (31) and "sorry you

are having a really good life and are contented by it" (30). In discussing her past relationships with sassy quips, Broder transforms heartbreak into humour. Instead of delving into the pain of feeling that lovers have been uninterested in her, have turned out to be less than what she needs, and have ruined her life, Broder moves quickly through these stories in the form of one-liners. This exemplifies the desire of the post-wounded woman to appear unaffected by past suffering. She would rather display a sarcastic, unbothered version of herself to the reader than speak about the ways this experience may still affect her. Thus, Broder makes it apparent to the reader that she has experienced pain, but makes that pain seem unimportant. She is honest in the sense that she is able to admit her suffering, but she does not effectively communicate what it was like to be hurt. Instead of representing her pain honestly, Broder shields her pain from the reader by using the post-wounded voice as a defense.

Another essay in which Broder relies on the post-wounded voice is "Never Getting Over the Fantasy of You Is Going Okay." Like its title, this essay is written in a dry, sarcastic voice. Similarly to the love stories in "Help Me Not Be A Human Being," this essay grapples with the issue of heartbreak. Specifically, Broder describes her past strategies for getting over someone she was once in love with the fantasy of. She writes that "nobody can save you from yourself. But it's easy to ignore that reality. Simply project your own romantic ideation, childhood wounding, and overactive fantasy life onto another human being" (139). In describing strategies for getting over such an idealized version of a person, she asserts that "if you really love yourself, you will block and unfollow the person on all social media. But if you really love yourself you probably aren't reading this essay" (143). In doing this Broder projects her stance of sarcasm onto the reader. On the possibility of getting over the fantasy of one person by becoming obsessed with the fantasy of another, Broder asserts, "Don't do this. But obviously you're going to do this and so am I" (148). When Broder uses this sarcastic, apathetic, and humorous tone to describe her past experiences, she develops a sense of distance between her and her pain. While still being well-developed and funny lines, these moments allow the reader to believe that heartbreak is something to laugh about instead of respect as valid pain. This implements the post-wounded mentality that pain should be discussed from a distance for fear of being seen as another woman who is nothing more than her wounds. As Jamison would argue: this style is ineffective at communicating pain in its reality because it separates the author from her experiences, thereby trivializing them.

While the post-wounded style displayed in "Help Me Not Be A Human Being" and "Never Getting Over the Fantasy of You Is Going Okay" communicates that Broder has had pain in her life, it also gives the impression that she is not currently hurt by these experiences. While Broder is being honest about the types of pain which have affected her (relationships, addiction, existential crises), she often jokes about their influence on her life. These jokes

send the message that while she may have experienced pain in the past, it is better to leave these discussions at a surface level and move past them. She is comfortable talking about her embarrassing sexual fetish ("My Vomit Fetish, Myself") and discussing her mental illness in general ("Keep Your Friends Close but Your Anxiety Closer"), but when it comes to the specifics of her pain, she favors a comical voice. This is not to say that Broder is never honest about her pain. There are moments of clarity in the text which reveal the "emotional and psychic pain that felt like it was going to kill [her]" ("Keep Your Friends Close but Your Anxiety Closer" 151). If she were to hone in on this voice instead, readers would better understand Broder's experience. The style of *So Sad Today* is effective to the degree that her anxiety and depression are very real and difficult experiences, but Broder also gives the impression that she can easily distance herself from those feelings, which she admits is not the case in her essay "Keep Your Friends Close but Your Anxiety Closer."

In this essay, Broder describes her fear of being disliked and rejected by others. She does not want people to be close to her for fear of them discovering that she is "really not okay" (151). She writes self-reflectively about her vernacular style in revealing:

> Like, right now I'm scared that I'm not being funny in this essay. I'm not wearing my mask, the one that lets you know that shit is fucked up yet also under control. The mask says: *You don't have to worry about me. I've still got it together enough to get outside the anxiety and be funny. I'm safe*. (151)

Here, Broder openly explains the function of humour and sarcasm in her writing: she actively uses it to give the impression that she is able to cope with the pain in her life. Although she admits that her post-wounded voice is a mask for real pain, she is still terrified to share too much of her real emotions. Her anxiety forces her to wonder: "what if I did tell people exactly what was going on? What if I valued my own peace of mind more than what other people think of me? Would I end up jobless, friendless, and loveless?" (153). This exposes the fear which unites post-wounded and anxiety-driven women. They are so fearful of the consequences of their true emotions, so conditioned to believe that their narratives are too intense to be liked, that they create a persona of humour and distance. This emotional distancing can also be understood in terms of Broder's desire for physical distance from herself. She confesses that "what I have sought in love is...to transcend myself and my human imperfections" ("Help Me Not Be a Human Being" 27). She wishes that she could be freed from the physical confinement of her body just as she wishes to become removed from her trauma by writing about it with dryness and apathy. Broder's tactics for escaping herself (promiscuity, addiction, eating her own hair, etc.) are to her body as her post-wounded voice is to her emotions. In both the physical diminishing of herself

and the sarcastic apathy of her writing, one sees a woman looking to isolate herself from her real trauma rather than embrace it. The mission of the post-wounded woman is precisely this disassociation, this effort to portray her experience as something removed and obscured from her own person.

An important component of this post-woundedness is that there is a conscious effort by the woman who implements it to keep up the wall of apathy. In an article from *The Guardian*, Broder admits that So Sad Today, the Twitter account and book, are "just one part of [her]," acknowledging again that her style is in many ways a "mask" which communicates only one aspect of her experience (Bromwich). This complicates the issue of how Broder communicates pain. She is clearly aware of where her apathetic tone originates from, suggesting that she would not use the post-wounded voice is she was not "scared," but it is unclear whether she realizes that this tone can send a destructive message to readers: it is better to make light of pain when possible. While the post-wounded voice may be necessary for Broder to use in order to mitigate her anxiety, her readers may still internalize the belief that the post-wounded voice should be celebrated, when in fact it is an incomplete way of grappling with female pain.

Instead of condemning the post-wounded air created by Broder's slang and vernacular, one may argue that this writing is effective in because it allows her to be relatable for the modern audience. Critics such as Haley Mlotek have praised Broder's style for its confessional tone and accessibility for modern women, women who "[feel] emotions very deeply and [are] also interested in curating a distinct expression of those emotions." Broder writes largely for the demographic of young women, who, on the whole, care about their on and offline personas. These women may appreciate the way Broder is able to discuss her emotional trauma in common vernacular, thereby relating her pain in terms they can use themselves. Mlotek sees Broder's casual, colloquial style as creating a community with other women who curate their pain stylistically. She argues that using a carefully developed tone of sarcasm is actually a way of healing, because the display of pain has become an essential part of dealing with suffering in the world of social media. Though Mlotek does not use the phrase "post-woundedness" in her article, her ideas about Broder's vernacular oppose Leslie Jamison's critique of sarcastic apathy. Mlotek asserts that the style "captures how so many of us communicate on social media...We don't always have to say precisely what we feel in order to say something true." She defends post-woundedness because while it may not be an exact representation of pain, it is founded in truth and indicative of the way women relate to each other in today's world. Mlotek's defense of Broder's humorous, colloquial persona relies on *So Sad Today*'s resonance with contemporary women and ability to work within the stylistic representation of pain found online.

Even still, the use of vernacular post-woundedness in Broder's work illuminates the pressure she feels, as other women often do, to be small and

be well-liked. While many moments of *So Sad Today*, such as Broder's vivid description of her vomit fetish and the pressure it puts on her sexual life ("My Vomit Fetish, Myself"), push the boundaries of how one must discuss the female experience, Broder's reliance on the post-wounded voice contradicts this work. As Leslie Jamison postulates, the post-wounded voice is a defense mechanism of women who minimize their experience of pain to the point of non-existence in an effort to stave off accusations of being obsessed with and defined by their trauma. Broder has the opportunity in her essays to help dismantle the schema of post-woundedness, to hone in on her raw confessional voice in order to refute the idea that pain needs to be likable, consumable, "retweet"able in order to be accepted. Unfortunately, *So Sad Today* does not follow through to this end. Broder's pain is effectively communicated to the extent that the reader understands that it exists, but she does not provide the radical representation of female suffering which is needed to dismantle stereotypes surrounding women who seek to represent their trauma. This is not to say that there is no benefit of her writing. As Haley Mlotek proposes, Broder does "provide a language for other readers, a direction for likeminded women to point themselves in." In other words, she has produced an accessible description of contemporary suffering which other women can use to begin unpacking their own. However, if the mode of communication continues to be limited to post-wounded sarcasm, it will be a long time before women are no longer trapped in the double-bind of being defined solely by their wounds or else becoming completely isolated from them. *So Sad Today* invites women to feel and express pain, but in a way that perpetuates the conception that female suffering is better accepted when wrapped in the package of humour.

The title of the last essay in *So Sad Today* is "Under The Anxiety is Sadness but Who Would Go Under There." The essay chronicles how, deep beneath her anxiety disorder, Broder is also suffering from depression. Similarly, what lies beneath the surface of her post-wounded voice is visceral emotional pain. Instead of being hesitant of "going under" that apathy and sarcasm, women must feel comfortable pushing themselves to dismantle the persona of the post-wounded woman by representing the reality of their suffering.

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Seahorses and Brick Walls: The Juxtaposition of two Worlds Through the Eyes of Mother and Daughter Narratives in Lan Cao's *Monkey Bridge*

The History of a people, a place, a war, or any event cannot be confined in a box. Narratives emerge from the telling of stories and despite how much effort is put into "accuracy," there will always be gaps and holes that need filling. This is not to say that fiction is valueless. Stories have the power to capture the essence of a person's experience and bring the reader into that experience; how the reader connects to the story is different each time the story is shared. Roland Barthes writes in "The Death of the Author," that "the reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination" (1469). This destination is often complicated because we are typically drawn to origins, accuracy and cold, hard facts. In the complications, however, we have an opportunity to learn about our humanity, as in the novel *Monkey Bridge* by Lan Cao. In her unraveling of two worlds, Cao brings to light the messiness of stories by carefully crafting opposing forces found in separate cultures, giving readers an opportunity to grapple with the histories of different countries. In her contrast of America and Vietnam, Cao does not attempt to create a history, but weaves a complex narrative intertwining contrasting landscapes in a mother/daughter relationship, capturing the essence of their individual Vietnamese experience. In *Monkey Bridge*, images of an orderly and yet confined America contrasted with a fluid and yet chaotic Vietnam complicates our understanding of Vietnamese culture and history as the reader is thrust into difficult situations that make it challenging to connect to the characters. I argue that the symbols of America in the novel juxtaposed with the symbols used to represent Vietnam, and portrayed through the mother/daughter relationship of Mai and Thanh, serve to disrupt our usually empathetic, romantic narratives of connection and

happy endings, revealing a greater sense of humanity that is more complex and must unravel to reach its destination.

Navigating Mother/Daughter Narratives

In the opening pages of the novel, memory reveals a world of chaos to the main character, Mai, when she is transported from a hospital in America to her traumatic memories of war in Vietnam. Mai's first words of narration are, "The smell of blood, warm and wet…" (1). From here, she launches into more imagery as she connects the present with the past when she writes, "A scattering of gunshots tore through the plaster walls. Everything was unfurling, everything, and I knew I was back there again, as if the tears were always pooled in readiness beneath my eyes" (1). Immediately the reader is thrust into Mai's troubled world where she must seek a new life of orderliness and form a new self. In her article, "How Memory Haunts," Michelle Satterlee argues that trauma in the novel "alters how the female protagonists remember or forget the past which forces a rearticulation of identity…" (138). This trauma is due, in part, to the challenge of relating to a new place. Immigrating to the United States has a traumatic effect on both Mai and Thanh because while they can choose to assimilate, they encounter difficulty because the memories of Vietnam impact the way they view their new landscape. As Mai seeks to reform her identity, her mother is impacted differently by memories and cannot let go of the past. For Thanh, life is governed by the inescapable presence of karma and when she calls for her father, "Baba Quan" (10) in the beginning of the novel it is a memory of fear that Mai does not yet understand. Mai assumes that her mother misses her father deeply, which causes Mai to set out on a mission to find Baba Quan and "save" her mother. Mai's so-called knowledge causes tension in her relationship with Thanh because Mai desires to assimilate, which also means that she moves away from her homeland narrative while also moving away from her mother's disjointed beliefs.

The turbulent relationship between Mai and Thanh is caused by the opposing landscapes that each one pursues. Mai is far more assimilated to American culture than Thanh because she has the power of the English language and embraces it. Mai questions others who deny themselves this power when she writes, "How did those numerous Chinatowns and Little Italys sustain the will to maintain a distance, the desire to inhabit the edge and margin of American life? A mere eight weeks into Farmington, and the American Dream was exerting a sly but seductive pull" (37). Mai recognizes a potential for greatness in America, which feeds her *desire* for assimilation because she feels power in language as "the keeper of the word." She compares herself to Adam who "had the God-given right to name all the fowls of the air and all the beasts of the field" (37). This comparison depicts her perception of the American dream and simultaneously shows a release of her Confucian roots of obedience. She becomes the authority over her mother, informing her that "Nobody believes in curses and

counter curses here" (21), when Thanh insists on a new "un-cursed" apartment. Thanh's beliefs are illogical to Mai, who presumes that her mother's sanity is at risk when her mother espouses her karmic nature. Thanh is deeply connected to her land; she keeps the fluid rice fields and sky markets in her thoughts as she mourns the loss of her daughter to American ideals.

Even though Mai wants to escape her past, she still longs to understand it and the people in it, particularly the mystery of her grandfather, Baba Quan. To delve into her mother's thoughts, Mai reads Thanh's journal where her sadness over losing her daughter is revealed:

> *She wants me to let her walk blamelessly out of one life and into another. And that was my gift to her, to allow her the satisfaction of thinking I'm unaware. Because I know the real reason she wants to leave. It's my face, the face of her mother, her very own face, from which she wants to flee. How can I teach her that the worthwhile enterprise is the enterprise of learning to live with our scars? She hates imperfection, she doesn't like to look at anything blemished.* (53)

Thanh's analysis of Mai's change in identity shows how the land influences Mai as a person who "hates imperfection," which is also a commentary on the "perfect" American culture. Mai wants to fix her mother's scars rather than learn to live with them. Satterlee describes this as the result of trauma when she writes, "Both characters have contradictory desires to remember and forget the homeland that bespeaks not only the experience of displacement and exile, but also the experience of trauma" (141). While Mai wants to *know* what happened to her grandfather and *know* her family's Vietnamese past, there is also an underlying desire to rid her mother of ties to Vietnam, so that Mai can pursue the American dream. Mai's past is full of confusion and disorder, and she longs to solve the mystery of her grandfather so that she can move on.

Thanh's disappointment with Mai's behavior is not simply a result of traumatic experiences; it is also the result of feeling displaced. According to Satterlee, "trauma disrupts one's sense of self and relation to others by undermining belief systems and notions of basic trust and safety" (141). It is clear that Thanh's traumatic past causes her displacement, or lack of relation to others in America. Claire Stocks comments on displacement through a slightly different lens in her article, "Bridging the Gaps," when she explains that the novel "focuses on the cultural negotiations Mai and Thanh must undertake in order to make a future in America" (83). Both Mai and Thanh negotiate their separate adjustments to the landscape and culture of America. At one point in the novel Thanh frustratingly reveals her displeasure with American culture when she states, "In Vietnam, the saying used to be 'Parents point, children sit.' In this country, it's become 'Children point, parents sit.' It's about time I get used to the American way, no?"(60). This reversal of roles occurs throughout the novel

as Mai negotiates her own position as caretaker of her mother and Thanh gives up her motherly authority, displacing her yet again. This is ironic because while Mai assumes a position of "knowing" and authority, she also feels silenced and displaced by her mother. Thanh on the other hand, assumes her own silent power by keeping her past from Mai. Stocks explains, "One consequence of the move to America is that Thanh attempts a containment of the Vietnamese past…While Thanh's secrecy might be understood as an attempt to make her daughter's transition easier, her silence is motivated by the shameful circumstances of her own illegitimate birth" (83). The irony is perpetuated by Thanh's silence, which silences Mai into believing that her mother is simply affected by the absence of her own father. Mai's and Thanh's silence leaves little room for healing of their traumatic past and continues to cause problems in their relationship.

Mai cannot accept Thanh's helplessness, which complicates the conflict because Mai cannot do for herself what she wants for her mother. She recalls their first night in Virginia when her mother forced "her sockless feet under my flannel pants for warmth…I could have offered her reality: a sweater, socks. It would have been as simple as that. But somehow, at that moment, my mother, imperfect and unable to adjust, died in my mind" (70). Mai constantly hides her frustration with her mother's lack of assimilation and demands that her mother "become more capable of direct and frank displays of emotion" (201). Mai's contradictory demands show that she is balancing her own sense of identity and her own inability to express her emotions to her mother. She desires to know and understand her family's past, yet, wants her mother to move on. In her article, "Guerilla Irony," Michele Janette remarks that Mai's constant *knowing* "becomes a sign of paradox and contradiction, conveying anxiety rather than clarity" (55). As Mai reflects on her memories, particularly of the war and Baba Quan, she thinks she *knows* her mother's feelings and desires, but she is just as helpless as her mother. In seeking the truth, Mai is further from the truth and further from her mother.

Geometric shapes and Sky Markets: The Narrative of the Landscape

The complicated relationship between mother and daughter is juxtaposed further with the images of the American grocery stores and the Vietnamese sky markets. The imagery of the American grocery store is one of order and geometric shapes with "Built-in metal stands" and "Columns of canned vegetables and fruits" (32), while the picture of Vietnamese shopping is "only outdoor markets. 'Sky markets,' they were called, vast, prosperous expanses in the middle of the city where barrels of live crabs and yellow carps and booths of ducks and geese would be stacked . . ." (33). Mai describes the differences not only in the stores themselves but also in the way people shop. She admires Aunt Mary's skill in coupon shopping and compares it with "Vietnamese haggling" (32), her own mother's skill. During American shopping, Mai once again notes

her mother's inability to adapt when she writes: "She preferred the improvisation of haggling to the conventional certainty of discount coupons, the primordial messiness and fishmongers' stink of the open-air market to the aroma-free odor of individually wrapped fillets" (35). Mai notes that it is up to her to teach her mother acceptable behavior in the grocery store because her mother is unable to navigate through the orderliness on her own. Within these few pages the reader experiences a striking contrast in cultures. America, in all its order and civility, does not work for everyone. The open sky market shows us that there are other worlds that do not wish to be limited to the order, which disrupts readers' view of a happy narrative where everyone lives in harmony as they assimilate to the land they live in. While Mai prefers the orderliness of the American grocery stores, Thanh finds it frustrating and confusing. These small details in setting speak volumes to the difficulties of immigration. On one side of the narrative, we witness Mai assimilating rather smoothly; Thanh's side of the narrative, however, evokes feelings of displacement. These two opposing narratives make it difficult to imagine a happy ending to the novel because Mai cannot find true connection with her mother and Thanh cannot reconcile herself to the American Dream.

The landscape of America continues to unravel for Mai when she attends her college interview and encounters more structure and rigidity, which appeals to her. Mai describes part of the campus as "Red brick dormitories and concrete buildings that rose like geometric blocks from a foundation of asphalt and cement" (132). This contrasts to the Saigon that Mai wishes to reveal to her interviewer, which is "the ordinary, restless aims of my neighborhood, one among many, composed of brick and limestone houses among an arbitrary clutter of storefronts and makeshift stands […] I wanted to tell her: It was not all about rocket fires and body bags" (128). While she still holds on to parts of her past and her homeland's fluidity, Mai longs to be a part of her new land, which is more geometric and stable. Her thoughts in the interview clearly show her understanding of American perceptions of Vietnam that she desires to dismantle because she wants to belong and does not want to be defined by the chaos. Her mother, on the other hand, wants to remain in her own fluid nature. Thanh mourns that her daughter "*has never known a rice field and the current of grace that runs through it like golden light. She has never known how it is farmed, how it is loved, how a bowl of rice is also a bowl of seat, a farmer's sweat, a mother's sweat*" (172). The landscape of Vietnam, according to Thanh, is one of peace and beauty. A Vietnam that Mai never experienced because she grew up during the war. Now that Mai is older, she cannot have the true sense of Vietnam her mother has because she is immersed in her pursuit of education and the American Dream. Mai succumbs to the idea, however, that she *knows* exactly what her mother is thinking and feeling, which keeps her from a true understanding of her landscape of origin.

Seahorses and Karma

Throughout the novel, Cao compares Vietnam to a seahorse because the curve of its shape of a seahorse. The comparison is expanded on, however, in the context of the novel. According to Britannica.com, the seahorse is a sedentary creature, is small and is successful at camouflage to capture its prey, qualities that Vietnam possesses as a culture. Thanh comments on her country by comparing it to America and describes that, "*Ours is not a nation of pioneers. I truly don't understand the American preoccupation with cowboys who win and Indians who lose. It must be the American sense of invincibility, like a child's sense that nothing she does can possibly have real consequences*" (55). It is interesting that Thanh makes this distinction between America as pioneer and Vietnam as weak. While America establishes itself as strong and unbreakable, Vietnam hides in the background, camouflaging its greatest strengths. While Thanh finds strength in subtlety and in karma, her daughter views it as a weakness. Mai describes this helplessness when she says that Vietnam was a "half-moon country shaped like a starved sea horse trapped inside the sky" (150). Had she not used the word "starved" her comparison may have had a different connotation. In this context, however, Mai sees her country as broken and defeated. She continues: "Legend had it that Vietnam was once a wild horse with a long mane and a lustrous body. Too many wars made the horse so sad that it retreated into its present shape, a long twisted peninsula hanging on to the coast of the South China Sea like a starved sea horse waiting for happier days" (150). It seems that Mai mourns the loss of her ancestral country and longs for it to be strong like America. Even though Thanh also witnessed the loss and destruction of her land, her response is still connection to the rice fields and to karma. To Mai, the seahorse represents weakness and the image of a forgotten land, which is just like Mai's mother.

Mai cannot see her mother's strength because she only sees the chaos, the insanity and the weakness. She forgets that while her mother may not fit into the American ideal, she has qualities of strength that are portrayed in her fluid crossing of the "monkey bridge." Uncle Michael explains to Mai that, "Only the least fainthearted, the most agile would think about using this unsturdy suspension they call a bridge. Your father, by the way, also told me that was where he first saw your mother […] floating with remarkable lightness across the bridge" (110). Despite hearing the story of the monkey bridge, Mai does not seem to understand just how brave her mother is because she is too detached from the Vietnam that her mother recalls so vividly. The fluid rice fields and the monkey bridge do not have meaning for Mai because she is engrossed in her own acquisition of knowledge and "rescuing" of her mother.

America's pioneering qualities and strength take root in Mai as she seeks to save her mother. It is evident that Mai sees her mother in the same way that she views Vietnam when she writes, "In the silver light, my mother's silhouette cast a faint sea-horse curve against the dark window-shine. I could almost trace

the slight bend of her back, the stillness of her posture as she sat motionless under a single unhooded bulb" (161). Once again, the imagery of a sedentary, weak creature is thrust onto Thanh. This imagery comes at a moment when Mai searches for the truth of her mother's past and Thanh retreats in fear. Mai writes, "There was something about my mother's Vietnam past that I would like to understand, the molten fluidness of the rice fields, the graceful sanctuary of a convent, and the blinding purple of bougainvilleas. I was merely a child trying to understand and save her mother. What harm could there be in that?" (168). Mai's longing for knowledge is in fact, more harmful than she thinks. Rather than taking on a humbler position as a sea horse would, Mai wants to bulldoze through her mother's history and "liberate" her from her trauma. When Mai admits to her mother that she attempted to contact Baba Quan, she is disappointed in her mother's lack of emotion: "As I lay in bed, I actually missed the overt battles of other people's families, the evident, articulated frustrations of the parent and the child. I would have gladly traded my mother's subtlety for voracious rage" (201). Her mother's subtlety is the result of her sea horse nature, which is to camouflage her emotions and to move with fluidity in the arms of karma. While Mai wants to keep "everything under control" (202), her mother resists that control and has her own internal battle that she is fighting to save Mai.

Mai's outward fight for her mother is clear while Thanh's inward fight for her daughter is never revealed until her suicide letter. This is the moment when Mai realizes that saving her mother's life was impossible. Thanh writes:

> *The silence I feigned does not mean you are not in my thoughts. What worries me perpetually is how to best love and protect you from the karma that divides and subdivides like a renegade cell in the malignant darkness of our lives. What I think about incessantly is how to shine a torch of hope through the turbulence that has settled like dust in our lives.* (229)

Thanh's sea horse-like camouflage was her silence and her best defense against her daughter. Thanh was always protecting Mai from the karma that she never escaped. Her final battle tactic was to reveal her story to Mai at a time when Mai was the most helpless to save her, therefore, winning the ultimate battle. Thanh justifies this act to Mai by writing, *"And so I can only hope that my act of sacrifice will give you the new beginning that you deserve, far from the concealing fields and free of a destiny that should never have been yours"* (253). Thanh exhibits her own belief of strength, which is that of sacrifice. She knows that she can never escape the American soil she lives upon and her final option is one that she feels at peace about because it will free her daughter from the unceasing grasp of karma. Once again, Thanh navigates instability with lightness and fluidity, camouflaging her plan and sacrificing her life, which is the most difficult bridge to cross.

Watermark

The final pages of the novel are unsettling. Mai fails in her attempt to save her mother and Thanh never has a chance to assimilate and pursue the American Dream. It is interesting that the first lines following Thanh's suicide letter come from a logical and clearly Americanized Mai: "It wasn't until years later that I learned there was a name for what my mother was – a depressive, someone not with supernatural ears but ears that heard voices of despair urging her on" (255). In one sentence, Mai derails everything that her mother believed in: her ears, her karma and her sacrifice. She desperately tries to cling to her sense of logic and control while pushing away chaos, but ultimately fails. Janette makes a convincing claim that in the final pages of the novel, it "ends not by affirming Mai's closure of adolescence and preparation for her new life, but with the ironic return to her own history" (59). Everything seems dismantled when Mai uses phrases like "I could walk right into it," and "I would follow the course of my own future." Her final observation of "a faint sliver of what only two weeks ago had been a full moon dangled like a sea horse from the sky" (260) is one final indication that she lets go of her sense of control and returns to her history. The full moon symbolizes the fullness that Mai felt pursuing the American Dream. Two weeks later, it is evident that her perception has changed and perhaps her mother's sea horse qualities will flow through her veins after all. The possibility that Mai did not choose the American Dream is unsettling because there is no guarantee of a happy ending. Her mother tragically kills herself, leaving Mai to grapple with the implications of that sacrifice and what it means for her future. Now that her mother is gone, there is no opposing force for her to push against or figure out, which means she must create a completely new identity.

Conclusion

Monkey Bridge is not a simple and romantic story of immigration, war, Vietnam or America, but a complicated mess to untangle. The ending is in no way satisfying or healing, but perplexing and disrupting. Thanh's sacrifice, while it can be understood in the context of her beliefs, is still unsettling. Mai's aggressive pursuit of saving her mother seems, at one point, noble, but becomes a source of deep pain for Thanh. Both protagonists' narratives counteract the other in a fight between landscapes that makes it difficult to empathize with either character. Any reader will be jostled by this narrative of loss and perpetual chaos. It is not a textbook on Vietnam, but a space where one can grasp a thread of truth from the juxtaposed symbols of America and Vietnam. These symbols are found within Mai and her mother, in the pages of their outward and silent battles, in the landscapes that each of them inhabits, and in the character traits that each woman possesses. There is truth in these symbols that we can learn from if we take the time to unravel each one. The destination and understanding we gain through reading, though messy, is worth the effort.

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Fragmentation and Assimilation in Louise Erdrich's *Love Medicine* and *LaRose*

As ethnic writers break into mainstream literature, so must the problems that once inhibited their inclusion. The limited demographic of the canon is due largely in part to the privileges afforded to those with power and their ability to wield it over others. As a result, classic American literature is overwrought with white, upper-class male authors and their accounts on America. Meanwhile, ethnic writers must strive to create works that break through the barriers put in place by their White counterparts. For Native American authors the barriers include government-implemented genocide, forced assimilation, and ongoing colonization that have resulted in cultural and traditional losses. Furthermore, the traditional storytelling method for most Native American tribes is the oral tradition, which until recently has not been valued in the literary community. With the inability to adequately convey Native American existence both historically and literarily to the dominant culture, Native American authors must work under revisionist rhetoric.

Revisionists seek to challenge the orthodox views held by professional scholars or introduce new evidence to reveal alternative opinions or ideas. Revisionist rhetoricians like James Berlin try to "incorporate awareness of social differences such as gender, race, [and] class," with the goal of inciting positive social change (Berlin 116). However, challenging a system that is rooted in century-old texts and measures a new literary addition by the standards of those largely non-inclusive, old texts requires some ingenuity. Ethnic authors have worked to reduce the confines by which literature is judged by incorporating a variety of non-traditional elements into their writing, including colloquial and foreign words, images, songs, and poetry. Meanwhile, some 20th-century writers have sought out a narrative form that better suits their revisionist agenda while

also allowing for a place in which written and oral storytelling can coexist. The desired cohesion resulted in the application of experimental multiperspectival narration. Initially, the form was used to convey "the world as fragmentary, disruptive, and chaotic;" however, such a limited use on multiperspectival narration only reiterates the non-inclusive nature that ethnic authors already work against (Schultz 81). Louise Erdrich, Native American author and active member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwe, offers a fictional revisionist history of Native American and Euro-American interactions in the form of a multi-narration, short story cycle. By employing this narrative form, Erdrich is able to challenge conventional methods of storytelling that are at odds with and, therefore, non-inclusive to the tribal traditions. Erdrich employs the fragmented form in both her first novel, *Love Medicine*, and her latest work, *LaRose*, to emphasize the emotionally fragmented characters as representations of a tribe working to piece together what remains of their culture after being forced to assimilate.

Erdrich's *Love Medicine* has been both celebrated as innovative and discredited as a novel due to its form. *Love Medicine* has been critiqued as a "frustrated narrative," lacking a consistent main character and a developing plotline to follow. Erdrich's writing style in *Love Medicine* challenged conventional writing methods of the 20th century, garnering a backlash from those who saw her style as confusing and even frustrating. Critics like fellow Native American author and Native American Renaissance leader Leslie Marmon Silko found her attempt to blend the historical, political, and cultural cumbersome while others "dismissed her style as intentionally confounding, privileging an academic and experimental style rather than a substantive, politically engaged and meaningful one" (Kurup 8). However, as a short story cycle, *Love Medicine* fits the genre requirement of self-standing or independent pieces compiled to tell a larger story. Both of Erdrich's novels use first and third person point of view, but that point of view shifts depending on the central character of each piece. Erdrich's stories are linked to each other in such a way that allows the book to maintain "a balance between the individuality of each of the stories and the necessities of the larger unit" (Ingram 15). The language and research for identifying short story cycles and composite novels was not widely acknowledged or known at the release of *Love Medicine* (1984), leading early critics, like *Newsweek* reviewer Gene Lyons, to discredit Erdrich's work, declaring that, "no matter what the dust jacket says, it's not a novel… her inexperience as a storyteller shows throughout," (qtd. in Schultz). However, the research that followed on multi-narration and fragmented form clarifies that it is 20th century works like *Love Medicine* that made the composite novel a mature genre that is still employed today (Dunne and Morris 1). Erdrich's latest work *LaRose* also employs the short story cycle and multi-narration form, but is devoid

of the backlash the earlier works received in veering away from the traditional novel.

Under the short story cycle, regional representations of culture thrive and, as a result, so do ethnic writers. This willingness to name and adopt a more inclusive genre also permits for texts like Erdrich's to serve as fictional revisionist history. Through this form of revision, a space in literature can be made for the oral storytelling tradition so prominent in Ojibwe culture. Oral tradition served to do more than entertain the tribe. The stories encompassed a history about the land, the people, and the relationship between the two that Euro-Americans have never been able to fully comprehend. Preserving the oral tradition greatly hindered the assimilation process because it "kept people conscious of their tribal identity, the spiritual traditions, and their connections to the land and her creatures," (qtd. in Schultz). With the dominant culture unable to understand the language and themes of Ojibwe storytelling, it is no wonder the tradition was deemed unworthy of literary recognition until the late 20th century. While the tradition has been adapted from the oral to the written, authors like Erdrich have worked to incorporate the attributes of the Ojibwe traditions in the new form. The moral teachings and self-reflective elements of Ojibwe myths and stories must be derived by the reader in the same way they would have been by the listener of an oral telling. In this cooperative style *Love Medicine's* characters share their stories,

> in the form of oral histories, local myths, and family fictions, often [creating] a contestable version of events. In order to offer a "realistic" version of Ojibwe existence… Erdrich creates a tension similar to that surrounding crisis of history and identity, a true struggle for survival that Ojibwe experienced particularly in the late nineteenth century through the twentieth and continue to feel today. (Kurup 11)

The reader has to piece together the many stories to come to a conclusion about the overall experiences of the tribe. Erdrich offers several narrators to give a broader account of Ojibwe life and dispel the U.S, government's tendency to lump together all native people.

Although *Love Medicine* and *LaRose* take place in fictional settings with fictional characters, the experiences of the characters are derived from largely subversive historical truths in dire need of a revisionist pen. Due to the lack of written reports to corroborate Native American experiences, much of the Ojibwe culture, tradition, and struggle have been lost and refashioned to be widely applicable to all Native Americans by the dominating culture. As a result of the eradication of their "Indian-ness," the generations that followed were also encouraged to assimilate, further fragmenting the cultural connections to the native traditions. However, due to the efforts of tribal elders, reparations,

and even the continuing efforts of the American government to force Native Americans out of their lands, there has been a noted effort on behalf of the new generations or second generation Native Americans to reclaim the native traditions in what has been referred to as counter-assimilation, segmented-assimilation, or the decolonize movement (Zhou 984). Segmented-assimilation is more readily found in the more modern setting of *LaRose*, but inklings of the assimilation resistance can be seen in *Love Medicine*. Lending itself to the fractured identity working towards rehabilitation, the fragmented, multi-narration form of Erdrich's novels, *LaRose* and *Love Medicine*, and the emotionally fragmented characters serve to represent a tribe working to piece together what remains of their culture after forced assimilation.

Early assimilation functioned under the guise of religion and education, but the boarding schools the young, surviving Ojibwe attended were modeled after a military regime intended to eradicate Indian behavior, customs, and appearances. These widely implemented boarding schools were another attempt to colonize the native people after genocidal efforts were abandoned (Gill). Although Erdrich employs some imagination to the Ojibwe assimilation school process, she samples from testimonies and documented historical evidence to support her dramatized depiction of the "internalized religious, educational, economic, and political means, the colonizers employed[…] to facilitate the acculturation of generations of Ojibwe" (Kurup 13). Much like other colonization efforts, it was widely and correctly perceived that separating families, especially the offspring from the parents, made both groups easier to manipulate. By capitalizing on the fear that the separation caused the parents, the colonizers ensured that the Ojibwe would not rise up against the colonizers. Meanwhile the boarding schools stripped the Ojibwe children of their native identity, promoted Euro-American traits, customs, and eventually mates. Many of Erdrich's characters are half-blooded Ojibwe "who testify to those who suffered humiliation, confusion, and psychological, emotional, spiritual fragmentation trying to balance on a cultural hinge" that made it so that they struggled to identify with either group (Kurup 13). *Love Medicine's* Marie Kashpaw is an Ojibwe and Euro-American that struggles to find her place in either culture. Marie's mixed features and family history impede her from being welcomed by the Ojibwe who instead further exclude her by lumping her in with her poorly regarded, predominately White family, calling her a "dirty Lazarre." Fueled by her desire to belong and the significance the Whites placed on religion, Marie hopes the Catholic convent will welcome her because she does not "have that much Indian blood" and the nuns "were not any lighter than [her]" (*Love Medicine* 40). The mixed-girl's desire to feel a sense of significance and belonging is so great that she is willing to endure the emotional and physical trauma of spiritual colonization. In an act of spiritual purging intended to remove the "Indian" from Marie, religious extremist Sister Leopolda scalds, beats, burns, and eventually stabs fourteen-

year-old Marie (*Love Medicine* 48). Although Erdrich is depicting the extremes of religious schooling in "Saint Marie," the schools functioned under severe military conditions because they were an "assimilation practice adopted by the U.S. government with the goal of deracination" (Kurup 14). Marie embodies the identity crisis that many Ojibwe felt and the resulting, lasting effects of forced assimilation on the tribe as a whole.

Even after returning to the tribe, the rigidity implemented in the boarding school children followed them into adulthood and manifested itself in a variety of ways. According to researcher Allison Owings, Ojibwe mothers, who had been taught by the Catholic missionaries that braided hair was the mark of the savage, undid the intricate braids that their mothers affixed to their daughters' hair because "one of the things [they taught] Native American children was to be ashamed of who they were (Owings 121). Erdrich's own grandfather attended such a boarding school and inspired the boarding school experience described in her latest novel (*LaRose* 373). Employing what Erdrich is hesitant to call magical realism, the original LaRose describes her having to "divide off [the Indian] parts of herself and let them go" in an effort to be the good, assimilated student. Erdrich adds another layer to the fragmentation idea by also partitioning up the original LaRose's story into several sections in the larger narrative. The readers work to understand the original LaRose short story and how it coincides with the primary storyline involving Dusty's death while only receiving pieces of the first story in brief, untitled snippets that must be mentally collated. According to Dunn and Morris's theories on short story cycles, readers have the story interrupted and must "make connections [that are] frustrated by a collection of unrelated stories constantly [beginning] over again, starting anew with each story" (Dunn and Morris 5). By employing this fragmented form, Erdrich causes the reader to experience some of the frustration and confusion her characters and the real people they are modeled on felt in trying to piece together their history, culture, and identity after having been colonized. Without the support or care of a family and at Wolfred's urging, the first LaRose goes willingly to boarding school as a means of survival. His motivations seem to stem from the general understanding that assimilation was the only way for natives to survive as well as his own need to have LaRose be an acceptable wife in American society. Ojibwe member and author Brenda Child provides support to the challenges a White male might have had in wanting to marry an Ojibwe woman in her book *My Father's Knocking Sticks*. The book contains a letter from Child's father to his sister. In it he discloses the challenges of wanting to marry a woman of a different race, Child's mother, and how "his situation is very unusual" in the eyes of the White members of his family (*My Father's Knocking Sticks* 70). For LaRose and Wolfred the boarding school offers a hope for their being together, but further fragments LaRose's connection to the little Ojibwe culture her mother was able to instill in her.

Early efforts to resist the boarding schools and the rift they caused the families can be seen in *Love Medicine* with Rushes Bear's struggle to part with her sons. "She had let the government put Nector in school, but hidden Eli, the one she couldn't part with...that way she gained a son on either side of the line," (*Love Medicine* 17). The author's tone and word choice reveals that not sending a boy, much like the draft, was not an option. In addition to alluding to the lines of division and a fractured identity, Erdrich's word choice in describing the division of the two Kashpaw boys echoes the front lines of war, another subject with which the Ojibwe are far too familiar. Erdrich's reference to having a Kashpaw boy on either side suggests that their loyalties would conflict due to their different upbringing, a prevailing theme in Erdrich's novels when discussing Ojibwe servicemen.

Native Americans have a long-standing relationship with the military, and the Ojibwe are no exception. Like the warriors that came before them, the Ojibwe who serve the U.S. armed forces are regarded in high esteem. At the Boise Forte Band of Ojibwe museum, servicemen photographs line the entrance to convey the fact that "Boise Forte is very proud of the fact that we are one of the bands that per capita have had more people enter the armed forces than anywhere else in the United States" (Owings 126). Ingrained patriotism was a byproduct of the military-inspired boarding schools. According to Erdrich, "much of patriotic culture is also based on the fact that boarding schools were run by the U.S. government, and so included pledges of allegiance, flags, lots of patriotic propaganda, and patriotic pageantry in the curriculum" (Kurup 14). Additionally, the military offered monetary incentives in a rapidly changing society where the traditional economic system, which centered on trade and individual skillsets, was disappearing while entering the service was being glorified. However, because of the military tactics the government implemented in its assimilation efforts, patriotism was at odds with the Ojibwe way of life and further added to the fragmented identity prominent in the "younger generations of Ojibwe [who] feel an authentic connection to both cultures" (Kurup 15). *LaRose's* characters Hollis and his estranged father Romeo convey the conflicting ideas of two generations on the subject of Ojibwe joining the military. Nonetheless, even Hollis's explanation reveals his internal conflict with his decision as he reasons, "My country has been good to me," then goes on to say, " I know, sure they wiped us out almost, But still, the freedoms, right?" (*LaRose* 214). Hollis's insecurities regarding patriotism are not unfounded. The American government made several attempts to encroach on Ojibwe land while most of the Ojibwe men were at war in the 1950s and 60s. Erdrich's own tribe, North Dakota's Turtle Mountain clan, was slated for termination until the 1970s (*Holding Our World Together* 140). In response to his son's unsteady reasoning, Romeo reveals the older generation's ongoing struggle with the effects of assimilation by bursting out, "That's called intergenerational trauma… they

savaged our culture, family structure, and most of all we need our *land* back." Romeo's character conveys an opinion held by many Native Americans in regards to serving a country that fails to act on the purported desire to make amends for past wrongs. Differing opinions on enlistment and Native American involvement in the "White man's war" efforts added to the generational gap, which contributed to the fragmented Ojibwe identity Erdrich depicts.

Despite there being a proud lineage of Ojibwe who have served in the military, including Erdrich's own ancestors, the author felt compelled to portray the hardships the Ojibwe faced once the reality of war settled. She claims Henry Lamartine's military experience and trauma in *Love Medicine* is not unique. Henry willingly enlists in the army, propelled by a blend of patriotic duty and the need for financial stability, but soon acknowledges that he is fighting for a country that decimated his people in the same way he was helping the U.S. do to the Vietnamese. Before becoming a prisoner of war, Henry is faced with the realization that he resembled the enemy more than his fellow American soldiers. While Henry interrogated a dying woman, she pointed out their similarities, "You, me same. Same. She pointed to her eyes and his. The Asian folded eyes of some Chippewas" (*Love Medicine* 138). The conflicting ideologies of American patriotism and the tactics the U.S. government used to assimilate the Ojibwe are at odds within Henry and continue to haunt him years after the war. Henry's return from war reiterates the U.S. government's exploitative tendencies even towards its veterans. Henry is riddled with shrapnel and suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of his service in Vietnam, but upon returning home there are "no Indian doctors on the reservation" and his family fears that taking him to a hospital will result in his being committed (*Love Medicine* 148). While Henry tries to work out his disjointed thoughts, Erdrich employs a jarring narrative to convey Henry's challenges. Although the chapters on Henry, "A Bridge" and "The Red Convertible," follow one another without the interruption of another short story, the narration within the two chapters is repeatedly interrupted by Henry's mental instability. In "A Bridge" Henry struggles with his hold on reality and the reader has to work to follow the scene as Henry is pulled into the war flashback, talks himself out of it partially aloud in Albertine's presence, then tries to salvage the night by talking himself down internally and feigning drunken normalcy with Albertine. "The Red Convertible" is also plagued by Henry's inability to make sense of the war and his role in it. Henry's brother, Lyman, holds the narrative together as he pulls his brother out of his mental voids time and time again. As a result the fractured narrative is again present in this chapter, but without the insight into Henry's mind, the reader is left as puzzled as Lyman is about Henry's final moments. Erdrich's choice to place these two pieces together portrays how even when applying traditional, linear storytelling to a narrative, the internal struggle of the Ojibwe character's inability to belong remains present. The jarring and hard to

follow narratives about Henry further convey the Ojibwe struggle to adequately fit into a nation that requires them to identify as a U.S. citizen for the purposes of war, but fails to recognize them once they return to the reservation.

Despite reparations and tribal recognitions, a divisive line continues to separate the U.S. government and Native Americans. The devastation caused by the government's "termination" solution to the Indian problem through aggressive land transfers and further forced assimilation in the 50s would inspire not only Erdrich's writing but also the ongoing counter-assimilation movement that she alludes to in her books. The Ojibwe have persevered as a recognized tribe despite the many attempts by the U.S. government to assimilate them. By working to hold on to and reincorporate Ojibwe traditions, new and existing generations have managed to reassert their tribal identity. The counter-assimilation movement is not radically different from the "Red Power" or American Indian Movement's of the past, only now it is made up of a new generation that has been brought up to understand and embrace, rather than reject, their "Indian-ness." The current movement is made possible by the efforts of the previous movement's exposure and dismantling of assimilation-geared schools, allowing the Ojibwe to educate their children,

> which stimulated a growing interest in Ojibwe youth to learn about a lost cultural heritage and provided an opportunity for tribal communities to restore and reinforce Ojibwe values. Erdrich explained that "now tribal cultures are finding a way to resurrect their own histories and philosophies in teaching their children." (Kurup 15)

The significance of the traditional teachings or lack thereof is present in both of Erdrich's novels; however, the character's in LaRose render modern day depictions of 21st century Native Americans working to remove the second class status once assigned to them.

The counter-assimilation movement of today is still in its early stages; however, it has gained some ground with the Trump administration and its decisions regarding reservation lands in North Dakota. With the gained consciousness of the harmful effects of assimilation, the counter-assimilation or decolonize movement works towards identifying and speaking out against common Native American stereotypes and cultural appropriation while championing tribal recognition and more-inclusive methods of gaining tribe members. *LaRose's* characters Josette and Snow positively demonstrate the hopes of the counter-assimilation movement. Rather than being quiet when a store owner follows them around expecting them to steal something, Josette declares "you don't need to follow us around either. We have money and we're not going to steal" (*LaRose* 39). Although the scene captures an uncomfortable racial tension, it is also empowering. Josette is aware of the store owner's stereotypes

and knows that only by pointing them out to her can a positive change begin to take place. Erdrich does just that with the remainder of the scene in which a harmonic balance between the cultures is depicted by having the woman empathize and then help with the Iron girls' desire to buy their mother a worthy gift. Later in the novel, Erdrich depicts the Iron girls visiting their grandmother, the fourth LaRose, to work on their beading. Again, the girls demonstrate how they manage to find the balance between their Ojibwe heritage and their American life; however, as with any merging of cultures, Erdrich emphasizes that it is not a clean seam. Josette vents her frustration at not beading as adeptly as her sister, saying, "How come I suck at this? What kind of Indian am I?" (LaRose 356). Her frustration quickly passes as her sister helps with the beadwork, but the frustration at not excelling in such a traditional area of Ojibwe culture demonstrates the struggle that the new generation feels to successfully represent both American and native cultures. Despite Josette's frustration and the implication of segmented-assimilation being challenging, Erdrich's tone is light in this scene. A sisterly teasing ensues between Josette and Snow as their grandmother looks and listens on in the background depicting a generational image of the past and present. Additionally, the evocation of humor amongst the cultural dilemma Josette's frustration represents makes light of the imperfect blend of the cultures. In an effort to reiterate that segmented-assimilation will not render equal results for each individual, but rather allows for equal space in which both of the cultures and practices can harmonically exist.

Much of what the segmented-assimilation movement is working against are the ideas put in place by the dominant culture that Erdrich's writing is working to revise. Anthropologists were acting and writing under the assumption that "these cultures [were] in the last stages of dying out, and therefore evidence of their ways of living should be protected and preserved for future study" (Stock 184). As a result, the Ojibwe of today are still working to retrieve items that were often taken from them through adverse methods. Rosemary Berens of the Bois Forte band of Ojibwe explains that even with reparations loopholes exist wherein items that are declared utilitarian by the U.S. government cannot be repatriated (Owings 112). Berens elaborates, "But for us, Native Americans, everything we use is sacred because of the process we use to go out and get these things… the whole process is very sacred. Museums don't recognize that." While most non-native people are familiar with the U.S. government's deceitful tactics to acquire Native American land, Erdrich understands that the subject of reparations may be unfamiliar to readers. To convey the Ojibwe's struggle regarding the loss of their spiritual relics, Erdrich applies the severe sense of loss when she reports the theft, withholding, and later loss of the original LaRose's bones. LaRose's family works to retrieve their ancestor's bones for the better part of century while they go on display in museums and exhibitions until finally the president of the historical society reveals they have been lost (*LaRose* 206). Erdrich's decision to

choose human remains to represent the arduous reparations efforts of the Ojibwe and other native peoples is deliberate. Knowing her audience, the author sheds light on the tribal thefts by choosing a reparation item that would resonate with her non-native readers. The frustration of Erdrich's characters as each generation tries to solve the mystery of LaRose's bones is again emulated in the reader's piecing together of the original LaRose's fragmented story. Erdrich's *LaRose* is a fictional revision that is also calling attention to the ongoing struggle of native people piecing their culture back together, and for that, the text itself is a part of the segmented-assimilation movement.

The segmented-assimilation movement of the real world has its roots planted in the past, in the efforts of people not unlike the fictional ones Erdrich depicts in her novels. In *Love Medicine* Erdrich juxtaposes those who assimilate by rejecting their Ojibwe identity and those that successfully exist in the blended community while still holding on to the Ojibwe culture. As one of the younger characters in *Love Medicine*, Lipsha demonstrates his struggle to adequately fit into both cultures while lacking a sufficient understanding of either. His unknown parentage and lack of exposure to life off of the reservation creates in him a strong attachment to the Ojibwe life. Lipsha is gifted with a spiritual healing ability that Erdrich's characters refer to as "the touch," but the knowledge of how to properly implement such a rare gift has been lost. With religious conversion being one of the strongest tools and motivations for assimilation, indigenous religion or spirituality were weeded out, leaving only fragments for those like Lipsha to implement (*My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks* 54). In a darkly humorous "commentary on how disrupted the transmittal of cultural knowledge has become," Lipsha indirectly causes his adoptive grandfather's death and loses "the touch" (Schultz 9). The revelation of his birth parents and the loss of 'the touch" forces Lipsha to reevaluate his identity. Eventually, in a conversation with his biological father Gerry, Lipsha realizes "there was good in what [June] did for [him]. The son that she acknowledged [King] suffered more…" (*Love Medicine* 273). Lipsha goes on to convey that without growing up in Marie's household he would not have acquired the understanding of the Ojibwe culture by referencing his Grandmother Marie and the knowledge she afforded him about the surrounding land. Lipsha serves to represent a developing understanding for retaining the value of Native American traditions. Similarly, Landreaux and Emmaline in *LaRose* turn to indigenous spirituality when seeking to make amends for Landreaux's having murdered Dusty. Christian religion is present in the text as well, but the Ojibwe spirituality offers the couple more comfort and takes on a greater significance in the central character LaRose, who has a spiritual "touch" of his own. While assimilation promised that the abandonment of tribal customs, appearances, and identity would make life in America easier, Erdrich's characters demonstrate that those who embrace the Ojibwe way in the modern world are better equipped to navigate it. Although

Lipsha ultimately loses "the touch," he retains an understanding of the Ojibwe culture that he carries with him as he moves through the modern world, never entirely assimilating or being destroyed by it in the way Henry was.

In the 21st century setting of *LaRose*, there is a clear effort on behalf of the characters to reintroduce the Ojibwe culture into the community. Erdrich's characters are aware of their mixed heritage but seem to have found a balance that the older generation struggles to find. In an effort to do right after the patriarch of the Iron family, Landreux, accidentally kills the Ravich boy, Dusty, the Irons give up their son LaRose to the Ravichs as Ojibwe traditions dictate. Rather than allow the tragedy to rip apart the two families, Erdrich's characters turn to the old way of making amends that offers the families an opportunity to survive. In seeking guidance Landreux and his wife evoke an Ojibwe method of spiritual meditation (LaRose 11). Initially, both families struggle to accept the exchange, but eventually find it a harmonious solution to what originally seemed an incredibly divisive plot. The initial division between the characters and their stories is made all the more apparent by the form of the book. As mentioned, multiple characters also narrate *LaRose*. Like with *Love Medicine*, the fragmented form is emulated in the characters' struggles to find their place in a blended culture; however, whereas *Love Medicine* clearly titles the change of a narrator or primary character with a name, *LaRose* does not. Instead Erdrich marks the sudden changing of a narrator or scene with the image of a small rose. Although the reader becomes familiar with the rose and eventually disregards it, its recurring is a reminder of the fragmentation and its ties to the original LaRose. The rose and the original LaRose's story appear without warning and require the reader to readjust to put together the past as it works to connect to the Ravich and Iron timeline. However, as the families become more unified and the characters more at ease with their blended culture, the interruption of the rose becomes less and less necessary as the story works towards resolution. In the final chapter "The Gathering" the rose image only appears twice to further emphasize the sense that the community and the members gathered at the celebration are more unified. Erdrich even has the original LaRose (in spirit form) predict the return of her lost remains to the family (*LaRose* 371). The stories like the cultures are coming together into a more complete piece due to the efforts of those willing to embrace the modern world without denying their Ojibwe heritage.

Love Medicine and *LaRose* may take place in fictional settings with fictional characters, but the themes and historical allusions are included as part of a revisionist history. Erdrich employs a narrative form that allows for multiple experiences to converge under one title; however, the fragmented form reminds readers that much like the form, the Ojibwe people are working towards cohesiveness. While *LaRose's* characters suggest that the Ojibwe are succeeding in their cohesion efforts, both novels are clear in that the error and damage of the past must still be contended with through the efforts of the current generation.

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"This was a Holiday:" The Caribbean Gothic and Dark Tourism in *The White Witch of Rosehall*

> "About ten miles from Montego Bay on the Main Road leading to the Capital of the Island, you come to the remains of what formerly was a magnificent Gateway. A loose wall of Stone now usurps the place that the richly carved Mahogany Gate once close; the brazen pintails are all that remain of the massive hinges; the sculpture that adorned the marble pillars on which the large gates swung to and fro is broken and defaced; while the ornaments that adorned their tops have entirely disappeared. Ruin has put her iron hand upon the place, and the Robber and Plunderer are fast completing what war and rebellion first began."
>
> -*The Legend of Rose Hall* (1-2)

INTRODUCTION

Mapping the parallels between contemporary and eighteenth-century literary attitudes towards Dark Tourism in the Caribbean offers insight of the imperialized inflections tinging romantic perceptions of *obeah*. The construction of the Caribbean Gothic novel offers pathways to discuss the intersections of Jamaican folklore and history of slavery in terms of Dark Tourism. Scholars, such as Richard King, state that colonialism "quite literally laid the foundations for tourism and, in turn, has made possible the reinvention of colonial relations in the postcolonial world" (qtd. in Edwards and Vasconcelos 89). Herbert G. de Lisser demonstrates this process enacted in his 1929 novel *The White Witch of Rosehall*, where he depicts his European narrator as a tourist of an eighteenth-century Jamaican slave plantation. As a Caribbean Gothic novel, *The White Witch of Rosehall* contains references to *obeah*, the supernatural, and the sublime

through a romanticized lens, which speaks to self-indulgent attitude of literary and actual tourists. The overall effect of this sublime experience and the drama of the gothic novel emphasizes how the literary landscape of postcolonial Jamaica serves as a vehicle for imaginative tourism, which stands as a precursor for contemporary tourism in the Caribbean in the twenty-first century.

By partaking in a twist on the European "Grand Tour," the protagonist, Robert Rutherford, engages in Dark Tourism as he navigates through life on a Caribbean slave plantation. As a tourist of the Gothic, Rutherford consumes the drama of the Gothic and of the slave rebellion, which makes him complicit in this exotification of the *obeah* ritual and the life on a plantation during the age of slavery. When considering the intersection of Dark Tourism and the Gothic in de Lisser's novel, *The White Witch of Rosehall* offers insights as to the troubling similarities between a literary and a traditional tourist in the Jamaican landscape.

TOURING THE CARIBBEAN

Tourism and international travel in the "eighteenth century witnessed a substantial increase in the number of British men and women travelling abroad for pleasure" (Black 1). In large part, critical scholars, such as Jeremy Black, speculate that part of this increase in travel correlates to "the widespread conviction that large numbers [of tourists] were travelling helped to widen the perception of the social importance of the Grand Tour. Britain was not alone in this development: the increase in tourism was a general European development" (3). Historically, British gentlemen of financial means generally carried out this tradition of the "Grand Tour" as a rite-of-passage on the premise of experiencing enlightenment and furthering their education (3). Despite these accolades of education, the European "Grand Tour" was also understood to be a period of experiencing international delights and bodily pleasures (1). A traditional itinerary for "The Grand Tour involved essentially a trip to Paris and a tour of the principal Italian cities: Rome, Venice Florence and Naples, in order of importance" (4). Despite this traditional itinerary, British tourists would break this mold in order to satisfy their particular interests and needs—a twist that occurs with "Grand Tour" of the novel's protagonist.

RUTHERFORD AS A TOURIST

Although most European tourists do not leave the continent, Rutherford extends his initial journey across the ocean to Jamaica. Despite this modification of the "Grand Tour" tradition, Rutherford fits the model of the European gentleman on tour due to his socioeconomic background and age. He "was a graduate of his father's university, an athlete; not brilliant as a scholar, though he had taken his degree, he had yet done some reading and had travelled for a year in France and Italy after his graduation" (de Lisser 10). After his tours in France and Italy, the novel implies that Rutherford departs from the regular form of

the "Grand Tour" to head towards the Caribbean. Rutherford's father decided that his son "should go to some West Indian colony to acquire the knowledge he would need for the management of a sugar plantation, whether he should afterwards decide to reside permanently on his own in Barbados or to visit it at frequent intervals" (8). Rutherford's work in Jamaica as a book-keeper will prepare him to take over the family sugar plantation in Barbados (7).

Although the Rose Hall Estate employs Rutherford as a new book-keeper, he carries himself more as a visitor than a worker. When Rutherford first arrives in Jamaica, he lingers in town to stay with the local rector for a week instead of heading straight for work (6). Just as he dresses as someone of higher social status than a bookkeeper, Rutherford "expected" a hospitable greeting from Mr. Ashman and more of a prestigious role on the plantation (7). Rutherford makes his intent to stay on temporarily at the plantation quite clear as "he would not be a book-keeper for more than a couple of years, if as long" (7). The novel's omniscient narrator notes that, "Robert did not consciously realize that, had he been an ordinary poor fellow endeavouring to make his way in the world, his feelings would probably have been very different; that instead of his present composure he would have been dreadfully depressed" (10). Just as a visitor on tour, Rutherford does not see his employment on the plantation as necessary for his survival because he comes from a family of means, which further solidifies his position as a tourist within the novel. Indeed, Rutherford suspects his time on the island would carry "a sense of adventure, an anticipation of interesting and strange experiences" (10).

Much like a traditional gentleman tourist, Rutherford does engage in the sexual promiscuity associated with traveling abroad while in Jamaica. As Black indicates, "Travel abroad provided a great opportunity for sexual adventure. Tourists were generally young, healthy, wealthy and poorly, if at all, supervised" (75). During his first few days on the island, he involves himself with intimate relations with Annie Palmer and accepts his "housekeeper" Millicent. These sexual conquests further cement Rutherford's attitude towards his stay in Jamaica as an extension of his "Grand Tour," which historically is known for providing young gentlemen with opportunities for, as Black describes, "sexual adventure" (75). Indeed, during the first portion of the novel, Rutherford engages in the lighter aspects of tourism while continually ignoring the horrors of slavery. Despite this character's endeavors to maintain his naivety and remain at a distance from the violence of slavery, his role within the novel indicates that the tourist cannot persist with being separate from the issue at hand.

INTERSECTING THE GRAND TOUR WITH DARK TOURISM

When discussing tourism in the Caribbean, most minds of the general public gravitate towards notions of island activities, and more thoughtful consumers consider the political and economic impetuses that make such generic

tourist sports possible. When bearing in mind the vast and violent history of British Slavery in the colonized Caribbean, visitors engage in what many scholars identify as Dark Tourism, which "may be defined simply and more generally as the act of travel to sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre" (Stone and Sharpley 10). Wrapped up in this notion of Dark Tourism resides various sub-genres, such as the spectacle of slavery tourism, "which includes visits to places and sites related to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This phenomenon has a geographic scope including the Caribbean, Europe, North and South America, and destinations include plantations, castles and forts, burial grounds and museums" (White 5). The devastating history of slavery left behind many historical sites of tragedy, including the infamous Rose Hall mansion in Jamaica. This location stands as the epitome of a locale associated with a richly fabricated oral tradition through the legend of Annie Palmer and her known ties to slavery. While a conscious consumer may seek sites of Dark Tourism for further enlightenment or educational purposes, others will seek it out for personal pleasure.

THE SUBLIME AND TOURIST CONSUMPTION

The consumption-based motivation for tourists flocking to these sites of the macabre and devastation relies on the principle of "thanatourism," which refers to "travel motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death" (White 29). Tourists engaging with this history of slavery through spaces associated with disaster, death, and torture also appear to be grappling with the romantic notion of the sublime. As illuminated by Edmund Burke, the romantic sublime is "whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger… whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects" (35). Discussions, sites, and tours of slavery as an institution falls under the category of what Burke describes as truly terrible. Encountering and experiencing "terror is in all cases whatsoever…the ruling principle of the sublime," but "at certain distances, and with certain modifications, [these moments of terror] may be, and they are, delightful" (49-50, 36). A tourist, whether in the eighteenth or twenty-first century, carries a certain privilege to maintain this comfortable distance while experiencing the terror and horrors of slavery as a spectator. By touring the grounds of slave-owning plantations, tourists indulge the internal drive to experience the sublime.

Indeed, the tradition of Dark Tourism draws upon the thrill-seeking tradition of the romantic sublime as outlined by Burke. By touring sites of the macabre, *specifically* sites of slavery, tourists are confronted with death in a way that invites them to "recognize the fragility of life in general, as well as [their] individual mortality and relative insignificance in the universe, an experience that…is linked with notions of the sublime" (Bowman and Pezzullo 189). Moreover, "touring sites of or about the global slave trade, assassinations, and

genocide further goads us to grapple with the human ability to act inhumanely and selfishly in seemingly unspeakable ways" (189). This tradition of touring sites of the macabre and horror clearly remains a prominent feature in contemporary tourism—ranging from ghost tours to walkthroughs of historical landmarks associated with extreme violence and trauma—but it is certainly not a new phenomenon.

THE ROSE HALL ESTATE AND LEGEND

The current site of Rose Hall still stands a significant tourist attraction in Jamaica and it still uses the legend of Annie Palmer as a method to lure prospective customers. The origins of Annie Palmer, which de Lisser's characters offer speculations of, acts as a sort of ghost story or legend framing the narrative. De Lisser's novel popularized the legend of Annie Palmer, but he was not the first to villify this historical figure. John Castello's *The Legend of Rose Hall Estate* (1868) offers a detailed speculation of Annie Palmer's role in the deaths of her three husbands and sexual relations laced with overt Gothic tones. The local lore surrounding the historical figure of Annie Palmer has cloaked her identity in mystery and mysticism. According to Jennifer Donahue, "Since the publication of James Castello's pamphlet, *Legend of Rose Hall Estate in the Parish of St. James, Jamaica*, fact and fiction has melded in the tale of eighteenth-century plantation owner Annie Palmer" (Donahue 243). The Rose Hall Estate now stands as a popular ghost-hunting tourist destination for those who find Annie Palmer's association with the occult and slavery fascinating, which makes this location a site of Dark Tourism and the Gothic (244).

In all accounts of Annie Palmer, several key traits remain the same: the untimely death of her husbands, her sexuality, and her death that was inflicted by revolting slaves (9). Both Castello and de Lisser further cement the sadistic persona surrounding the figure of Annie Palmer by describing how she "ruled her people with terror, white and black alike. She had witnessed whippings for years and years, and her appetite had grown with what it fed on" (de Lisser 76). Due to this appetite for pain and suffering, Castello suggests Annie Palmer earned her murder for "she, that had looked calmly on the sufferings of others: she that had shortened the lives of three husbands; she that had seen unmoved the agonies of her fellow-mortals while they were cruelly scourged to death, had now in her turn to behold others mock at her" (9). The actual location of the Rose Hall Estate remains tinged with memories and tales of murder, the occult, and vicious enslavement through this "ghost story" of Annie Palmer, which inspires scores of tourists to walk its grounds and seek evidence of the macabre.

The Rose Hall mansion serves as a reminder of the Gothic in de Lisser's novel and acts a conduit for the sublime due to its historical and mythic associations with the macabre. The physical descriptions of the Great House repeatedly reaffirm the novel's association of the plantation with imperial power

and force. When Rutherford first arrives in Jamaica in 1831, de Lisser lavishes attention on describing the mansion:

> White in the golden light of the sun it stood, the Great House of Rosehall. It dominated the landscape; it imposed itself upon the gaze of all who might pass along the road that ran in front of the property; it indicated opulence. Young Rutherford knew it represented the pride and arrogance of the planter caste which still ruled Jamaica, and whose word, on its own plantations, carried all the authority and sanction of an arbitrary will. (de Lisser 1)

For de Lisser, the plantation house symbolizes the imperial dominance of the plantation society in colonial Jamaica. The force of this grandeur in conjunction with the language of height and whiteness inserts the role of the Gothic in this colonial space.

The supernatural-infused narrative of Annie Palmer and the Rose Hall Estate allows for de Lisser to invoke "a productive Postcolonial Gothic framework, [which] insists that the story of the post-colonial lies in the mouths of culturally specific ghosts employed by postcolonial writers in order to speak of culturally specific histories, traumas, and locations" (Rudd 169). Primarily, because "Jamaican Obeah was the tradition that emerged most often in Anglophone Caribbean Gothic, as both a source of 'uncanny, magical practices' and the threat of 'revolutionary fervour and violence'" (Rudd 33). This interlocking of Jamaican *obeah* and revolution within the Caribbean Gothic genre speaks to the crux of the romantic captivation with violence, revolution, and the sublime. As stated in *Or, The History of Three-Fingured Jack*, "Edmund Burke had famously described the French Revolutionaries in 1790 as 'a gang of Maroon slaves suddenly broke loose from the house of bondage and therefore to be pardoned for the abuse of liberty to which [the] were not accustomed and ill-fitted'" (Earle 38). Furthermore, "the Romantic fascination with the irrational forces behind human revolutionary energies, evident in Burke's comparison, resulted in a plethora of vague references to obeah in the 1790s. Obeah became all that was mysterious, powerful, and sublime" (Earle 38). The juncture of imperial anxieties with the Jamaican supernatural culminates into a powerful postcolonial narrative regarding the problematic tradition of upholding historical sites of slavery and violence as a spectacle intended for consumption by the tourist.

RUTHERFORD AS A TOURIST OF THE GOTHIC

De Lisser exploits this interwoven legacy of horror and tourism in his novel through Rutherford's experiences with conventions of the Caribbean Gothic. When considering the Gothic nature of de Lisser's novel, it appears to offer useful ways to investigate the role of the tourist in the Caribbean due to

"the Gothic's preoccupation with the unsettling effects of the past, particularly when the present refused to acknowledge the past, is especially relevant in a postcolonial context" (Rudd 7). Just as the Gothic seems to carry an "obsession with the past, it has always been concerned with issues of the present" (10). This temporal concern arises in the treatment of Rutherford as a tourist and spectator of slavery, which gestures to the lingering remnants of slavery in Jamaica.

During Rutherford's time on the island, he witnesses key literary tropes associated with the Caribbean Gothic, including *obeah* and duppy. Although a duppy traditionally stands in for "the Jamaican word for ghosts," a duppy, which "can also be a zombie, someone physically alive, but spiritually dead; and a soucouyant (a form of vampire), or an evil spirit worked by Obeah for evil intentions" (Rudd 31-2). Through Rutherford's supernatural encounters, de Lisser's novel can be classified as a Caribbean Gothic novel. When restructuring the legend of Annie Palmer, de Lisser paints her as a white witch capable of performing *obeah* and bearing a resemblance to a soucouyant. By drawing upon these Caribbean Gothic conventions, de Lisser's novel plays into the expectation of horror often coupled with Dark Tourism.

The figure of the soucouyant, which bears a literary resemblance to the European construction of a gothic vampire, acts as a shapeshifter and practitioner of *obeah*. Despite some of a soucouyant's strict Caribbean traits, de Lisser does connect Annie Palmer's skills as a seductress to images of vampirism. When Rutherford first meets Annie Palmer, he notices her pale coloring and general youthful appearance:

> Her complexion was brilliant, her colouring indeed was part of the attractions of Annie Palmer and had not been affected by her rides in the sun of the West Indian tropics, probably because her horseback excursions were seldom taken in the bright sunlight. She sat upright on her horse; sitting thus, she appeared to be a mere girl, though her age was in reality thirty-one. (de Lisser 30)

Moreover, her alluring appearance continues to draw upon euro-centric notions of vampirism and the Gothic through her charismatic interactions with Rutherford. Throughout the novel, Rutherford experiences what can only be described as moments of hypnosis when he engages with Annie Palmer. He finds her mesmerizing and misses cues offered by the narrative, which often gestures towards her supernatural associations. For example, "she was smiling that dazzling smile of hers—what beautiful teeth she had!—and looking at him with a soft, alluring look. He had expected in his youthful ardor to find strange adventures in Jamaica; but of a surety he had expected nothing whatever like this" (32). As a seductress who is capable of making men her thralls, Annie Palmer certainly straddles the line of European constructions of vampires and the Caribbean soucouyant.

de Lisser further solidifies Annie Palmer's role as the novel's soucouyant on the night she extracts her revenge on Millicent. That night, Millicent grew gravely ill and bore a distinct mark on her chest. Millicent recounts her ordeal with an Old Hige, or soucouyant, to Rutherford: "the face [of the woman] was all like a white cloud. Her hands war stretched out towards me, and they catch and hold me—caught my throat. I couldn't scream…she bite me [on the chest]…a sharp, cruel bite—cruel. And she suck me…It was an Old Hige" (de Lisser 149). Takoo explains that:

> An Old Hige was a woman with the power to divest herself of her skin, and to render herself invisible. She sought out people whose blood she desired, babies as a rule, and sucked them to death. A grown person could not so easily and quickly be deprived of his or her blood; but to show that Millicent's death , a death by occult means, had been determined upon, Takoo added, an obeah spell, a curse, had also been put upon her the night before. (152-53)

By casting Annie Palmer in the roles of the white witch or soucouyant/ Old Hige, de Lisser plays into the literary tradition scaffolded by the Caribbean Gothic and further thrusts Rutherford into the landscape of Dark Tourism.

Although these supernatural tropes of the Caribbean Gothic certainly reaffirm Rutherford's experience with Dark Tourism in Jamaica, the primary source that solidifies this form of tourism for the protagonist is slavery itself. The plantation itself acts as an enclosed time-capsule of the full-fledged horrors of Caribbean slavery as it continues to ignore the declaration for emancipation in the British colonies. Rutherford knew that slavery was doomed. Emancipation had already been decreed; in a few years there would be a single slave in these islands…but here on this estate of Rosehall the evil, reckless spirit of former days seemed to manifest itself; the danger that threatened was ignored; here he was back in the eighteenth century instead of being in the early nineteenth. (27)

These eighteenth-century landscapes and horrors that Rutherford navigates appear to offend his romantic sensibilities as he tries repeatedly to intervene with the flogging of a young slave-girl. Nevertheless, as Burbridge notes, Rutherford's "reaction to these tropic scenes, to this exotic life, was keen; it intrigued and thrilled him; to him this was a *holiday*, and what went on around him might have been *staged* for his amusement" (18, emphasis mine). This includes encountering incidents of flogging, at least initially. When Rutherford first intervenes with the young girl's flogging, he appears to enjoy acting out the part of the hero. He categorizes the slave driver as a "brute" and himself as the "unexpected protector" (19). Indeed, he appears to not be wholly opposed to flogging, but more so with the idea that it was done "without express permission from white men" (19). As Burbridge suggests, it appears that Rutherford perceives his encounters with

slavery as staged for his benefit and personal amusement, making the horrors of plantation slavery a tourist attraction.

Yet, despite once successfully preventing the whipping of a slave-girl, Rutherford is forced to watch her beaten again, and this time is unable to halt the progression of the flogging. He attempts to do so, "forgetting that he was only an employee on the estate, and that on his father's own property in Barbados a similar scene might at that very moment be taking place, dashed swiftly up to the group," but is stopped by Ashman (26). This second flogging serves as a reminder that slavery on the Rose Hall Estate is an unyielding force and cannot be controlled by the tourist, who is expected to remain as a spectator outside of the narrative action.

THE RITUAL

Another facet of Dark Tourism that Rutherford encounters occurs during his witnessing of the *obeah* ritual performed by Takoo to save his granddaughter's life. Experiencing "ritual performance enables us to explore how people subject themselves to a process of destructuration as they separate themselves from the routines and habits of daily life and enter a liminal-like state where their identities become temporarily unfixed and where the rules of living change" (Bowman and Pezzullo 194). Within "this space, tourists [like Rutherford] can try on other positionalities and practices, and then return home changed in some way – restructuration with a difference" (194). Rutherford crosses from this safe space of a spectating tourist into the dangerous territory of a participating ritualist during the *myal*, or exorcism, ceremony conducted to save Millicent (de Lisser 183). Indeed, based on Bowman and Pezzullo's assertions, Rutherford does engage in this ritual and returns to Europe a changed man.

Initially, Rutherford approaches the exorcism with an attitude of curiosity and is accompanied by Rider, who acts as a sort of tour-guide for his companion. Both men insist upon not "being seen" by the participants of the ritual (184). As Rider explains that if the ritualists see them, they would force them engage in the ritual and then, the men "would become one of them…a devil worshipper or something very much like that" (184). Rider's and Rutherford's fear of "mingling" with the African ritual and becoming a part of that community stems from European post-emancipation anxieties. If they were to take part of the ceremony, then "no white man in Jamaica could do [it] and retain his self-respect and the respect of any other white man" (184). Becoming a part of the Jamaica community and performing the ritual "along with negro slaves" remains problematic to these men because it threatens their placement within the white, British social hierarchy (184).

The physical distance between the spectators of the ritual and the ritual participants/actors initially reinforces this supposed hierarchy, which de Lisser later collapses when Rutherford becomes swept up in the ceremony. In addition,

the physical placement of the characters that de Lisser carefully notes mimics the spatial structures traditionally seen in theatres or performances. Rider and Rutherford arrive at the site of the ritual and remain on the margins: "they stole forward quietly, until they must stop or shortly reveal their presence. Their point of vantage was good. Trees shielded them, and they stood in shadow" (205). The main attraction stands center in the narrative action of this scene where:

> about twenty yards away a concourse of people crouched upon the ground, forming a rude circle, and within this circle blazed a great fire which hissed and crackled and threw fierce sparks upwards and brought into fiery relief the strained, staring faces of men and women from whose lips streamed forth an eerie, curious sound. Bodies swayed to right and left in unison with the rhythm of that chant, and the drum-throbs marked the cadences of the hymns of exorcism. (205)

Space and performative cues become points of observation in this scene. Just as the actors of a play or performance follow a set of staged instructions, the participants of the ritual unfold a similar narrative that Rutherford, the spectator, attempts to follow. For example, when Rutherford searches for Millicent or her grandfather in the crowd, he, instead, notices their forthcoming point of entry: a spot "that at the farther opposite curve of the circle of human beings the crowd was not packed closely together" (207). At midnight, the intended climax of the ritual took place and Millicent entered, garbed in white, along with her grandfather Takoo, who dressed as "a high priest of Sassabonsum," to perform the sacrificial ritual to banish the "evil things that had taken possession of" his granddaughter (207, 210).

Upon seeing Millicent, Rutherford finds the scene too terrible and wishes to intervene. He turns to Rider and describes the ritual as "awful" and "so vilely heathenish," while indicating that they should disrupt the performance (208). Moreover, when Rider asks if he wishes to go, Rutherford "found that he did not want to leave" (208). This hypnotic fascination that Rutherford experiences here appears to act as a symptom of the sublime. Fear and anxiety fill Rutherford in this scene, but it also emerges through the narrative's presentation of sound-images. The rise and fall of voices mimics the expected oscillation between a small, finite subject, to the overwhelming and awful infinite. For instance, Takoo's "imperious dominating voice" falls to "silence…again" before sacrificing the kid, which inspires a great cry from the crowd that had "no rhythm in the sounds that came from the lips of that crowd, but fierce, delirious howls and shouts, ejaculations of frenzy, a wild medley of cries" (210). For Rutherford, this moment invokes the sublime due to the violence of the sacrificial ritual along with the dramatic chaos created by the participants.

Due to his encounter with the sublime, Rutherford becomes ensnared by the ritual and crosses the line from spectating tourist to participant. "The hypnotic influence of the scene did not leave" Rider nor Rutherford entirely unaffected because "it had an appeal to the more primitive emotions" and "stirred up something in the depths of one's being" (206). These "primitive emotions" from the "depths of one's beings" appear to describe the sublime, and these deep-seated passions and fears satisfy the basic requirement for Burke's thoughts on the sublime: they arise when the individual encounters a terrible stimulus. This theme of sublimity shatters once the specter of the bull breaks the illusion of the successfully completed ritual. Without the safe distance for both the performers and spectators, the possibility of delight when witnessing the terrible or macabre dissipates.

de Lisser captures the demolition of this theme through the "startling incongruous [noise] at such a gathering, a new cry rose upon the air and was heard about the shouting. It came from the voices of a dozen people who had leapt to their feet, and the word cried aloud was 'O Christ!'" (210). This pivotal turning point in the scene rests upon the insertion of characters invoking the name of a western deity and distancing themselves from the pagan, African religious practices they had previously been performing. This moment suggests that de Lisser is replacing the European tradition of sublimity with tropes of the Caribbean Gothic genre, which is seen as the Rolling Calf takes center-stage in this scene. Rutherford describes the Rolling Calf as "the grotesque figure of a mighty, ill-shapen bull, twice the natural size of any creature that these people had ever seen, and about its neck hung a chain that glowed as though it were of fire, and its eyes were like balls of fire as they rolled menacingly in the hideous head" (210). By re-centering a prominent trope of the Caribbean Gothic into this supernatural moment, de Lisser collapses this notion of the tourist remaining on the fringes of the spaces he or she may be visiting. When Rutherford states that, "we have been in touch with hell tonight," he further intimates that the tourist in the Caribbean landscape cannot remain at a distance and will become implicated in its colonial (or even postcolonial) narratives (211).

SLAVE REVOLT

The underlying tension running rampant across the island during Rutherford's stay is the beginning of a major slave revolt. Historically, the slave revolt de Lisser describes, known as the Great Jamaican Slave Revolt (December 27, 1831 to January 1832) occurred due to the delay in enforcing the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean colonies when it had been made official in the British-colonized Caribbean "between 1805 and 1808" (Shepherd 26, 28). Despite the official abolition of British slavery, the government "went on to allow the crew of slavers to those colonies to keep enslaved people on board and to allow a limited annual importation of enslaved Africans, under the special licenses" (26).

The emancipation war "involved close to 60,000 men and women, the majority enslaved, from 300 plantations, pens, rural settlements and urban holdings and engulfed not only the parish of St. James," but other surrounding parishes as well (33).

de Lisser's novel portrays a microcosmic take of this emancipation war through the chaos that broke out on the parish of St. James, which includes the Rose Hall Estate. The white characters in the novel began to note "the change which had come over the slaves in the parish, a change which was attributed to the influence of the missionaries, to a rumour that people had already been granted freedom but that their new rights were being withheld from them" (145-46). As the novel's naïve tourist, Rutherford did not initially notice these stirrings of a revolt until much later as the guise of Jamaica as "a land of promise, of glorious sunshine, laughing people and beckoning adventure" fell away to reveal that "that below the surface there was much about this life that was drab, unutterably coarse, grimly sinister. He feared…that he would shortly come into intimate contact with some tragedy that lay implicit in this half-somnolent, sun-suffused tropical life" (146-47). Even as a tourist or visitor of the island, Rutherford becomes complicit in the colonial framework that the slaves begin to rebel against.

This complicity crystalizes when given the choice to align himself with Takoo and the rebels or with Annie Palmer, Rutherford chooses the white European woman. Throughout the novel, the narrative often describes Annie Palmer through the language of empire (*i.e.* the imperiousness in her voice, her imperious personality) in a way that further intimates that she is imperialism personified in the text (31, 50). When Rutherford chooses Annie Palmer over the rebel slaves, despite his initial rejection of the horrors she has committed, it becomes clear that he is choosing the institution of imperialism over emancipation. In the closing chapters of the novel, de Lisser writes:

> that [Rutherford] himself had intended to report her to the authorities of Montego Bay as a murderess was forgotten by both of them. There seemed nothing incongruous in this effort of his to save her…It revolted him to see her in the rude grasp of these slaves, handled brutally by people who, a few hours ago, would not have dared to look her impudently in the face. She was a white woman, she was Rosehall's mistress, she was beautiful, she was of his own race and a member of the ruling dominant class. For these men to terrorize her, to dare to threaten her with death, was soul-sickening, revolting, incredible. It had to be prevented! (de Lisser 250-51)

When Takoo and the other rebels make Rutherford's plan to report Annie Palmer to authorities within the current system impossible, Rutherford opts to maintain the current system with Annie Palmer in power over this institutional change.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, *The White Witch of Rosehall* demonstrates how Dark Tourism is an act of colonialism. The Caribbean Gothic tropes enables de Lisser to emphasize the role of the consuming tourist in pursuit of the sublime within the tropical landscape. Just as Rose Hall still stands as a site of tourism, Rutherford's engagement with the supernatural and slavery on the plantation made him more than just a visitor. He became complicit in these horrors and in due course chose the imperial system embodied in Annie Palmer over a postcolonial society. The narrative of the rising slave revolt of 1831-1832 indicates that the history of slavery lingers beneath the surface, even in a postcolonial framework of tourism. The Caribbean Gothic insists that the past is always present. Furthermore, Rutherford's inability to distance himself from the institution of slavery indicates that tourists become complicit in the legacies of colonialism, despite their initial intentions. Whether the tourist is a nineteenth-century British gentleman on his Grand Tour or a twenty-first-century family on holiday in Jamaica, the sublime nature and allure of the gothic invites visitors to consume historical and fictional narratives of violence and catastrophe for pleasure—as seen from the popular Rose Hall Estate tourist spot that is still open for tours today.

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'Impossible Subjects' and 'Cultural Citizens': Undocumented Art, Activism, and Citizenship

Poets who write mostly about love, roses, and moonlight, sunsets and snow, must lead a very quiet life. Seldom, I imagine, does their poetry get them into difficulties. Beauty and lyricism are really related to another world, to ivory towers, to your head in the clouds, feet floating off the earth. Unfortunately having been born poor -- and also colored -- in Missouri, I was stuck in the mud from the beginning. Try as I might to float off into the clouds, poverty and Jim Crow would grab me by the heels, and right back on earth I would land.

– Langston Hughes, "My Adventures as a Social Poet"

In 2015 candidate Donald Trump launched his presidential campaign on a bed of highly controversial xenophobic rhetoric. Among the various groups and populations he targeted, focus was often on undocumented immigrants and/or DACA recipients, promising on a number of occasions to immediately end the supposedly unconstitutional program, "round 'em up," and "deport them all." In fact, all three promises were reiterated in his Republican Party nomination acceptance speech which he gave in Phoenix Arizona in July 2016. Many political pundits say that Trump's election was largely owed to his ability to exploit hateful speech. His rhetoric, however, inadvertently underscored the vulnerable positions that undocumented Americans inhabit, perhaps more effectively than any one politician has ever done. Despite the fact that nearly 12 million people were threatened by his promises, ironically these same people could not cast a single vote against Trump's menacing policy promises.

Lisa Marie Cacho's book *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected* examines the paradox of undocumented immigrants who navigate their lives as "ineligible for personhood—as

populations subjected to laws but refused the legal means to contest those laws as well as denied both the political legitimacy and moral credibility necessary to question them" (6). This, she argues, is a form of "social death." (6) In the 2004 publication of *Impossible Subjects,* Mae M. Ngai calls undocumented immigrants "impossible subjects... whose presence is a social reality but a legal impossibility" (xxiv). Cacho's and Ngai's approaches to the experiences of undocumented immigrants are derived from Spivak's interpretation of Antonin Gramsci's subaltern, a group that is distinct from the oppressed in that the subaltern is completely disconnected from access to hegemony and are incapable of expressing their desires and interests through their subjectivity. As Mary E. Odem states in her essay "Subaltern Immigrants," the issue of illegal immigration would not be the massively popular debate that it is if immigrants "stayed in their place as low-wage temporary labourers. The problems arise because they are sending their children to school, renting apartments and buying homes in neighborhoods, and seeking medical care in hospitals and clinics" (362). In other words, it is the determination to escape the subaltern that renders illegal immigration and undocumented immigrants the controversy that it is. It would appear they are not allowed to exist as anything besides the most critically isolated and disadvantaged population in the US.

While Cacho, Ngai, and Odem's theories focus on traumatic experiences of undocumented personhood and the structural, governmental violence, other researchers have offered interpretations that affirm undocumented immigrants, highlighting their agency and autonomy. William V. Flores and Rina Benmayor proposed "cultural citizenship" (specifically to the undocumented Latina/o population) and used it to examine the ways "cultural phenomena—from practices that organize the daily lives of individuals, families, and the community, to linguistic and artistic expressions—cross the political realm and contribute to the process of affirming and building an emerging Latino/a identity and political and social consciousness" (6). Even the 2014 reprint of Ngai's book features a foreword admitting that normative assumptions of immigration history in the US have, of late, "virtually collapsed in the face of alternative frameworks of analysis: transnationalism, diaspora, borderlands, colonialism and post-colonialism, and hybridity" (xxii). Sunaira Marr Maira, also a researcher of cultural citizenship, argues that the inherent "tension between the formal, legal dimensions of citizenship and the cultural practices of membership in the nation-state has driven the development of the notion of cultural citizenship" (82), and expands on the theory of cultural citizenship by examining three distinct forms that undocumented immigrant youth practice culturally: "flexible, transnational, and dissenting citizenship" (89). Running parallel to the discourse concerning oppressive judicial systems and toxic media portrayals that shape the lives of "illegal aliens," are the realities of undocumented immigrants who maximize on what little voice and mobility they *do* possess. What is usually

absent in mainstream discourse about the 12 million undocumented people in the US is their "flexible, transnational, and dissenting citizenship"; their political consciousness; and the often complete normalcy of their self-perceptions.

This essay explores the various theories of citizenship performed by undocumented Americans. Further, I will make the argument that critical works by scholars like Cacho that focus on the structural violence shaping undocumented lives should come together with works by scholars like Flores that celebrate the resilience of undocumented people. Together, those divergent readings compose the undocumented/American dialectic. Undocumented artists, I also argue, possess a unique ability to embody and portray this contradiction, making their art a key window into understanding this dialectical identity. Their works reveal the precarity of their undocumented presence, but ultimately invests in a larger understanding of humanity, regardless of legal status. Through their art, these artists reconcile the disparity between the "impossible subject" and the "cultural citizen."

A Brief History of Mobilization

2006 was a critical and pivotal year in terms of mobilization. Millions gathered in protest against HR 4437, including the previously silent body of undocumented immigrants. The bill was grounded on the criminalization of undocumented immigrants. Popular chants during protests were "Si se puede" and "Today we march; tomorrow we vote," which are both indicative of mobilizing efforts sweeping across the minority populations, most significantly, Latin Americans and undocumented immigrants.[1] The protests, comprised of 500,000 people in Los Angeles alone, ultimately led to the bill's demise.[2] Published in the same year, Monica W. Varsanyi's essay titled "'Get out the Vote' in Los Angeles: The Mobilization of Undocumented Migrants in Electoral Politics," speaks directly to the growing sense of empowerment and mobilization within the undocumented Latino population. In her essay, Varsanyi references the vigor with which undocumented workers, despite the inability to vote, "find alternative routes to political participation" and are "interested, able, and willing to participate in electoral politics" (220). This was not, of course, representative of the entire population of undocumented immigrants, which to this day remains multiply splintered. However, it marks a point in time in which the political clout of the undocumented collective began to engineer itself into a recognizable machine. The DREAM Act was introduced into Congress in 2001, but failed to pass in the Senate. Since then the DREAM Act made a number of reappearances but ultimately failed in become law. The most notable of these was a modified DREAM Act in 2010, the failing of which prompted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA for short. Under immense pressure

1 Mark Engler and Paul Engler, "The massive immigrant-rights protests of 2006 are still changing politics."
2 Glaister, Dan, "US counts cost of day without immigrants"

from immigrant advocates, President Obama signed in DACA as an executive order in 2012.

The six year window between 2006 and 2012, and more poignantly, the two year window between 2010 and 2012 brought about an explosion in terms of empowerment and mobilization in undocumented communities. The major victories of the May Day Protests against HR 4437 and DACA, although it ultimately failed to pass once again, the major global attention devoted to the DREAM Act of 2010, coaxed undocumented youth "out of the shadows" and into the public eye of the world.[3] The political landscape was forever transformed by these pivotal moments with more and more undocumented Americans exposing their status, voicing their opinions, and joining the movement.[4]

Ironically, it is under Trump's administration that the DREAM Act makes another major push through Congress amongst a number of other immigration reform bills. Still, the DREAM Act continues to be the most widely known and supported inside and outside of undocumented groups. Journalist Alvaro Huerta explains that amidst the racism and xenophobia left in the wake of Trump's campaign, election, and term, is a "growing social movement of immigrant activists, immigrant advocates and elected officials [emerging] to defend the civil and human rights of those who love and work in America's shadows." This most recent push for civil rights appears to be a pattern of mobilization resulting from a perceived urgency for these communities. For them, as with many historical examples of oppressed peoples, political turmoil provokes an even louder and swifter cry of dissent.

Expanding the definition of "citizenship" to encompass the increasing globalization of modern day and understanding undocumented immigrants in terms of different brands of citizenship are necessary to this discourse because they focus on that which is possible, that which lies within the scope of agency, and that which is actively occurring for undocumented immigrants to measure the distance remaining to their full-endowment as legal citizens. In this way, these not-yet citizens do not function on an all-or-nothing threshold principle, but exist in their own right at this present moment as legitimate practitioners of pre-legal citizenship. In other words, cultural investment and alignment becomes a valid form of "ID" for undocumented immigrants, and citizenship becomes what Flores calls "an active process of claiming rights rather than the passive acquisition of an arbitrary and limited set of rights" (87).

Art, Activism, and Citizenship

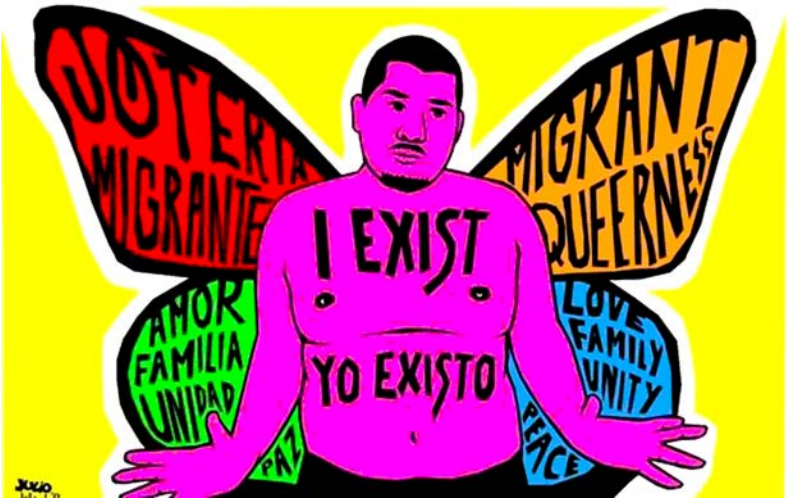
Artistic expression, I argue, is the most autonomous and intricate form of voice that undocumented Americans possess. Through it, these artists exercise various "citizenships" that speak to their present circumstances not

3 Mark Engler and Paul Engler

4 Ruth Milkman, "A New Political Generation: Millennials and the Post-2008 Wave of Protest."

only as "oppressed," "subaltern," "ineligible for personhood," or any other label deferring humanity and hope, but also as deeply sentient and intuitive beings. This essay does not seek to essentialize this subgenre,[5] but by analytically and theoretically exploring its political, social, and aesthetic dimensions, propose a working poetics, the core of which, I argue, is an assertion and/or negotiation of humanity and its fluid relationship to citizenship.

In the essay "The Responsibilities of the Poet," Robert Pinsky discusses the relationship of an artist to the world around him and theorizes a particular responsibility left in his charge: "An artist needs, not so much an audience, as to feel a need to answer, a promise to respond," he explains. Pinsky asserts that an artist, before he creates, will "see" and "transform" the subject (423), and this re-discovery or resignification of the subject can only occur when the poet looks away from society's standard representations of it (426). Building on Pinsky's idea of re-envisioning the subject by "looking away" from what society has learned to see, Michael Dowdy argues that poetry is "thoroughly countercultural and resistant to the structures of both the dominant discourse and the sociocultural norms it supports" (4).[6] Visual artist Julio Salgado felt and acted on the "need" that Pinsky theorized, and in his piece "Queer Butterfly," he answered dominant discourse and sociocultural norms with one powerful message: "I exist."



5 Art of and by undocumented artists is inherently diverse due to several critical factors including by not limited to as countries of origins, religion, political alignment, current state of residence, legal status (i.e. DACA recipients, those with pending permanent residency applications, those with criminal records, those with entry records) all of which render each case and person disparate.

6 Though Dowdy uses the word "poets" and "poetry," I expand his meaning to include "artists" and "art" more broadly.

Casual, shirtless, and depicted as a butterfly which has been metonymic of migrants, Salgado's self-portrait reveals to his audience that he has, in fact, "seen" and "transformed" himself. In an interview with online news platform Glaad, Salgado explains that undocumented immigrants are often robbed of their rights to their own narratives. He intimates a need for "three dimensional stories that show [their] beauty and imperfections," arguing that these can only come from undocumented people themselves. Over the years, the undocumented immigrant has come to evoke many tropes, a majority of which carry negative implications. "Illegals," "aliens," "trespassers," "border-crosser," "visa-violator," and "freeloaders" are all words that are still current in mainstream discourses. Salgado's self-portrait, however, resists these "renditions" of himself and others like him by reiterating the simple fact of his existence and prioritizing his humanity. In stating "I exist," he invokes a Descartian attitude, which has epitomized subjectivity in the western world. However, in many ways this reiteration of existence is a humble assertion of his humanity, one that reveals the real and palpable danger of invisibility facing undocumented immigrants.

In Salgado's self-portrait, citizenship appears to be implied in the act of simply existing. Further, art becomes a political and aesthetic tool through which undocumented artists reconcile their existence with their right to citizenship.

The assertion of humanity is not limited to the individual; collectivity and solidarity are also key characteristics of art by undocumented artists. Eunsoo Jeong, a visual artist from in South Korea, appropriated and reinterpreted the U.S. flag replacing the red and white stripes with thirteen different shades of skin color, as a representation of an " ideal America":

The piece speaks to what researcher Helge Schwiertz refers to as the ideals of "radical egalitarian citizenship" toward which undocumented youth movements aspire. Being unconventional members of U.S. society, undocumented artists are critically sensitive to racial and ethnic differences, both as perceived in themselves and from those around them. Schwiertz argues that the movement stands as a counter-hegemonic force against divide-and-conquer strategies employed by the US, for example: the "criminalization of

certain undocumented youth and the resulting 'good immigrant' versus 'bad immigrant' divide" (611). Instead, they embrace the "intersectional power relations and the demographics of the undocumented population, especially with regard to gender, origin and age" (617). In suffering through misrecognition themselves, undocumented artists push for an egalitarian collectivity by making painstakingly conscious decisions not to reproduce misrecognition and exclusion of other minorities both within and without their movement. Jeong's art also attests to Maira's theory of flexible and multi/polycultural citizenship. Flexible citizenship, Maira argues, is a "form of citizenship that responds to the conditions of globalization and U.S. domination" that "emerges in tandem with the flow of labor across national borders that benefits the U.S. economy" (101-02). on the other hand, Multi/polycultural citizenship is a " recognition of difference" (174) as well a "pluralist coexistence and a polyculturalist notion of boundary crossing and affiliation" (180). Globalization resulting from neoliberal capitalist ventures necessitates these forms of citizenship as they push out, pull in, and shuffle people from diverse parts of the world into a globalized US. Jeong's piece seems to acknowledge the various political forces drawing people to the US. Her multi-hued US flag, which embodies the nation at large, becomes a space shared by the distinct peoples inhabiting the country.

In addition to Salgado and Jeong is poet Yosimar Reyes's piece "A poem so the weight of this Country doesn't Crush you," which points to the failures of this "Country," which refuses to recognize its own. The beginning of the poem is a list of validations: "Somedays you may wake up sad / … frustrated / … tired" (1-3). The next portion of the poem is an affirmation of solidarity and support: "but just know that there are people like me / picking up the load when you can't / there are people like me pushing / so that the weight of this country does not crush you" (13-16). The speaker reveals that "this country" is not simply the geographic site of violence but the *actual* peril against which the speaker and the receiver are actively fighting:

> even if our fight is unfruitful
> we will depart
> with our dignity intact
> we will depart knowing
> that this country is losing
> a prized possession
>
> this country is losing
> the gift of our resilience

We will watch them as they tear into each others' skins
and thank the heavens
we never turned into beasts
like them. (23-34)

Herein the poem reveals a contradiction: "challenging the state while seeking inclusion within it" (Maira 201). Maira calls this an effect of "dissenting citizenship" which "engages with the role and responsibility of the nation-state and the question of belonging and rights for subjects, however marginalized" (201). The speaker refers to the relationship between the receiver and "this country," as well as himself and "this country" by employing violent images: "caged," "subjugated," and smothered (Reyes 7-9). There is an irony in the persistence to remain and to integrate themselves into a country despite claims of such brutality, or what Maira calls "ambivalence toward the United States" as "simultaneously a place invested with their parents' desires for economic advancement and security and their own hopes for belonging in a new home, and also the site of alienation, discrimination, fear, frustration, and anxiety about belonging" (202). There is also an irony in referring to the country as a place of "beasts," in the face of the speaker's and the receiver's attempts to belong in it. Striving for inclusion in a country of predators suggests that the speaker and the receiver of the poem are aware of, and furthermore, willing to join this company of beasts, which complicates the narratives of immigrants seeking a home, or a better life.

As Maira explains, "conjoining dissent and citizenship draws attention to the fact that forms of dissent represent an engagement with the state" (248). Moreover, I draw attention to the *fact* of the poem and its existence over the contradictions it presents. The artist's choice, and what's more his ability, to manifest his activism artistically gives way to what I call bargained citizenship: a dialectic process of negotiating citizenship based on elements that are conferred and selected. I argue that undocumented immigrants, and more particular to the case at hand, artists like Reyes, assess that which is conferred (i.e. the limited rights and privileges available to undocumented immigrants, or programs such as DACA and compulsory K-12 education) and "shop" for that which is selected, ultimately "bargaining" for ways of uniquely performing citizenship and "Americanness." In this way, undocumented Americans, while fighting for inclusion, may select not to reproduce the image of the American "beast" or the American imperialist. The advantage of a bargained citizenship is its ability to facilitate intersectionality, of which Salgado's "queer migrant" is a prime example. It also exponentially opens the possibilities of building the narratives of undocumented immigrants in the face of its aforementioned diversity, and justifies the ironic coupling of the term "undocumented American." But most importantly, the value of bargained citizenship is its ability to bridge the gap between a subaltern reading of "illegal aliens" with the at-once normal and

phenomenal lives of undocumented Americans as they exercise forms of citizenship. Bargaining, I think, is a dynamic minute-by-minute activity in which undocumented Americans assess opportunities and privileges both conferred and selected (given and taken). When events such as deportation, the elimination of DACA, or the expiration of a work permit occur, undocumented people are faced with the task of re-bargaining elements of their citizenship, such as their geographic, national, and economic identities.

Undocumented artists have the ability of imagining a state of being that fuses these many and diverse existences, of resisting what society and media will likely render, and of re-signifying what has been perverted. Flores's notion of cultural citizenship, Maira's expansion of flexible, multicultural, and dissenting citizenship, Schwiertz's radical egalitarian citizenship, and finally, the newer still-developing notion of bargained citizenship are all modes through which undocumented Americans engage with their world, and ideas with which undocumented artists affirm not only their individual humanity, but that of all peoples with whom they establish solidarity.

Still, the research of Cacho and Ngai are necessary as they probe the institutional disparities at play in the lives of undocumented immigrants. Though contradictory and confusing, the terms "ineligible for personhood" and "impossible subjects" must exist in tandem with the more optimistic readings of undocumented immigrants, especially the youth whose day-to-day experiences are not always unlike those of legal U.S. citizens. Scholars, like Cacho and Ngai, must fight to achieve justice for all while others attest to the beauty that persists even within "dead" spaces--there must be those who negate and those who affirm. Undocumented artists, reconcile the disparities between these two practices, and while their chief objective is to affirm, they do so by illuminating and surmounting the failures of legal systems and media. Their art speaks to the qualities of subalterneity *and* citizenship present in their lives. The fact of their lives and their day-to-day lived experiences attest to the numerous assaults on their humanity and right to exist. Politically, socially, economically, and in all other areas of their lives, their undocumented status is an inescapable factor that cages, subjugates, and smothers. Yet these areas of oppression, however closely they border the subaltern, appear as the background to the larger, richer, and perhaps even happier story of their lives in the foreground. These artists, though immeasurably affected by forces that seek to discount their humanity, choose to recount all the ways in which they have thrived and all the times in which they have survived.

A future for undocumented art

In February 2017, a month after Trump's inauguration as the 45th president of the United States of America, undocumented artists Yosimar Reyes and Alessandro Negrete hosted an event called "We Never Needed Papers to Thrive" in a small art studio in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles. The curators showcased over a dozen undocumented artists whose talents ranged from musical to visual to culinary. Though Julio Salgado was not present, Yosimar Reyes and Eunsoo Jeong were both in attendance, as curator and exhibitionist, respectively. True to the form of undocumented activism, the event took place amidst the ICE raids terrorizing the Los Angeles area, which detained about 160 undocumented immigrants in a span of five days. This show, however perilous the place and time, was about resilience, explained the curators. It was a space intended to "counter [the dominant] narrative by showcasing undocumented people using love, resistance, and humor in their work" (Rivas), a familiar echo of Flores's notion of cultural citizenship, and the "struggle for a distinct social space" in which they "are free to express themselves and feel at home" (Flores 89). Though Flores did not mention art and art shows in particular, this appears to be a unique brand of activism for undocumented artists. As the name of the art show suggests, the night was about celebrating the ways in which undocumented Americans thrived regardless of their lack of "papers," or legal documents. The show revealed the generally unknown and unacknowledged existence of undocumented artists. It was also what countless attendees, including this writer, hope would be the first of many platforms to showcase the talents of undocumented artists. These events house both protest and affirmation, achieving an amalgamation of the two that is unique to art.

The fight for legal citizenship is again currently up for negotiation as activists draw close to nearly two consecutive months of pushing for comprehensive immigration reform while Congress relents.[7] Undocumented immigrants, and artists in particular, are also mobilizing, in spite of the current presidential administration and its supporters' insistence on their "social death." Social poet Langston Hughes demonstrated that some are issues more pressing than the elegance of the clouds and the moon, and some chains more rigidly locked. But as Hughes and other poets have also realized, there is tremendous beauty in the lives of the oppressed down here on the earth below. Undocumented artists have, it appears, learned how to render beautiful the earth, and the borders, from which they cannot float off.

7 A few organizations, events, and rallies that have been mobilizing in Washington D.C. to push for the DREAM Act: https://www.facebook.com/krcla/, https://www.facebook.com/events/306504529864604/, https://www.commondreams.org/news/2017/12/06/picturesvideo-hundreds-arrested-peaceful-protest-thousands-march-demanding-clean.

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The Subjectivity of Pregnancy and the Trauma of Abortion in Alice Walker's *"The Abortion"*

Alice Walker's short story, "The Abortion," published in 1982 in the volume *You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down*, has been the subject of surprisingly little scholarly attention despite its intricate narrative fabric. This paper argues that Imani, the middle-class African American protagonist living in the South, is unable to integrate the experience of a traumatic abortion into her narrative of the self, and consequently she punishes herself through symbolic reenactments of her trauma, and deflects blame and guilt. Years after she has her first abortion during her college years in the North and suffers serious health issues as a consequence, Imani feels trapped in an emotionally unsatisfying marriage and has a child, as she puts it, just for the experience of it (Walker 67). About two years and a miscarriage later, she decides to terminate her new pregnancy, but she does not give herself time to recuperate from the procedure. Instead, she performs physically draining tasks and goes to a memorial service as if to atone. In the following, I will argue that Imani's second abortion, as well as her compulsions and choices, are indicative of her unspoken guilt and refusal or inability to reckon with her past, which is also underlined by the narrative fabric that operates with a plethora of substitutions, reversals, and deflections. My reading of "The Abortion" is based on Cathy Caruth's theory of trauma and Marya Schechtman's theory of identity and narrative self-understanding.

Basing her arguments on the work of Sigmund Freud, Caruth argues that after experiencing a traumatic event, individuals often do not comprehend its serious emotional impact as it "is experienced too soon, too unexpectedly, to be fully known" (4). It constitutes a "breach in the mind's experience of time, self, and the world" (4). Even though affected individuals cannot articulate it as it is "not available to consciousness" (4), they suffer from its reverberations. Thus,

the traumatic experience "imposes itself again, repeatedly, in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor" (4). Compulsive, symbolic reenactments that "cry out" serve to "address" the individual "in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available" (4). Caruth argues that what keeps haunting the individual is his or her inability to know and assimilate the traumatic event (4). "Knowing" a traumatic event is also crucial in philosopher Marya Schechtman's work, who argues that in order to have narrative self-understanding, we not only need mere cognitive recollection of the action or event, but we must also have "empathic access" to it (96). In other words, we must have access to our past and sympathy for the emotional states that are connected to the events that we remember. Otherwise, psychological discontinuity occurs that puts our survival at risk; a rift happens that threatens our personal development and the stability of personality (105).

A close reading of the way the protagonist of "The Abortion" relates to how her first pregnancy ends opens up the possibility to read it as a trauma narrative. Imani considers her first abortion a triumphant experience and thinks of it in mythical terms. She considers it a rite of passage and says that it allowed her to make sure that the world is not a façade (67). Thus, there are corresponding aspects between how she perceives the abortion and Caruth's definition of trauma: both are conceived as a breach that touches on time, self, and the world. Imani's definition is an inversion of the definition given by Caruth, insofar as this abortion affected her concepts of time, herself, and the world in traumatizing ways. Imani tries to distance herself from the negative aspects of the aftermath of abortion, suggesting that she does not have access to her past emotional states. This process results in what Schechtman calls a threat to our identity.

The narration is full of indications that the experience of abortion resurfaces in Imani's life. Her first abortion occurred seven years prior to the time the short story takes place. Imani seems not to regret this abortion. She does reflect on it—she considers its financial aspect, but she does not think about its emotional impact despite its far-reaching, debilitating effects on her health: after passing out on the subway, "she hemorrhaged steadily for six weeks, and was not well again for a year" presumably because she was encouraged to get up shortly after the procedure (68). Hence, one can read the multitude of references to her physical pain as indications of her trauma: her body remembers the abortion and compels her to reenact it. Imani only makes this remembrance even more pronounced when she consciously denies herself the time to recover from her second abortion and continues to make choices that serve to remind her of it, strengthening the impression that she feels she should punish herself.

Various hints are embedded in the narrative fabric that reinforce Imani's reluctance to deal with her trauma. Narratological devices such as deflections, stand-ins, reversals, irony, and symbolism underline her tendency to refuse to focalize her emotional pain and her inability to come to terms with her first

abortion. For example, there are several instances when she gets irritated because of heavy things pressing on her. After Imani and her husband, Clarence, discuss the possibility of getting a second abortion, "he placed the tea before her and rested a heavy hand on her hair. She felt the heat and pressure of his hand as she touched the cup and felt the odor and steam rise up from it. Her throat contracted" (65). Similarly, after she gets back from the procedure, she cannot bear the weight of her husband and daughter: "Imani was in her rocker, Clarice dozing on her lap. Clarence sank to the floor and rested his head against her knees. (…) She felt the two of them, Clarence and Clarice, clinging to her, using her. (…) She suffered the pressure of his head as long as she could." (71)

She is even obsessed and irritated by the sight of a man's hand when she is on the plane to have her second abortion: the "fat hairy wrist" of the "cigarette-smoking white man" is all she "could bear to see out of the corner of her eye" (67). On the one hand, being irritated by the touch of her husband might be due to the fact that having a family makes Imani unhappy, in part because she is an independent spirit who never intended to marry but have lovers instead (73). Also, being irritated by the heavy hand of the man on the plane might be natural due to the stress she is experiencing on the way to New York before the abortion, or it might remind her of the touch of the male doctor who performed the first abortion. On the other hand, this irritation is an outlet for her pain she feels toward herself: she feels justified in getting angry at the weight pressing on her or surrounding her, while refusing to focus on her own emotional burden.

Similarly, the resentment directed toward her husband is an example of transferring either blame or the underlying cause of it. She resents him for not making an effort to prevent her from having an abortion (65), and she is furious with him when he discusses politics with the first black mayor of the town instead of attending the memorial service held in honor of Holly Monroe, a young woman shot by the police years earlier (75-76). Critic Jane A. Rinehart argues that Imani is mad at Clarence because he does not care about Holly and does not pay respects to her (25). However, the negative emotions Imani feels toward her husband are stronger when it comes to not honoring a deceased community member than when it comes to a decision that deeply affects Imani's life and health, which suggests that in the heightened emotional state she experiences at the memorial, she transfers her guilt for the abortion onto her husband. Furthermore, Clarence advises the mayor on legislative issues, which might also be a source of frustration for Imani. Earlier, she notices that the legal status of abortion has changed since her first procedure—"an abortion law now made it possible to make an appointment at a clinic,"—which has made it cheap and quick to get one (69) so much so that it has now "entered the age of the assembly line" (69). Thus, she might be angry at her husband not (only) because he behaves in a disrespectful manner during the service, but because

he represents male authority and legislation, that is, he might stand for the machinery that has made abortion legal and accessible.

Apart from transferring her frustration with herself to Clarence, Imani's rage also targets white people in general. In her feverish state before the memorial, she reminds her two-year-old daughter of the horrible things white people have done: "you're going to remember as long as you live what kind of people they are" because they have appropriated black music and "they think they can kill a continent—people, trees, buffalo—and then fly off to the moon and just forget about it" (72), pointing out their hypocrisy. During the memorial, she muses over the way white authority defends officers in cases of racially motivated police brutality, and she cynically remarks that Holly's murder was an assassination (71). She likens abortions to such murders, yet, she expresses her anger only at the police without ever admitting that she feels guilty about the abortion: she feels that she, like a murderer, took somebody's life. While she might maintain her opinions about injustice surrounding race later, the fact that her fury reaches its peak in her post-abortion state implies that she deflects her guilt and looks for targets to stand in for the blame.

Holly, the young woman whose memorial service Imani goes to, is a stand-in for multiple people. First of all, Imani identifies with her: "Holly Monroe was herself. Herself shot down, aborted on the eve of becoming herself" (73), which expresses Imani's lack of fulfillment with married life and motherhood. Holly also represents all black girls who are defenseless against violence: "to her, every black girl of a certain vulnerable age *was* Holly Monroe" (73, emphasis original). Most importantly, Holly is a stand-in for a fetus or a newborn. During the service, Holly's friend gives a speech about her and includes specific details of her weight and height (74), which is evocative not only of police records, but also of how a newborn's measurements are announced and recorded. These data can even allude to a fetus: a doctor might note down its size in order to estimate its weight, and, more importantly, age. The association between a baby and Holly is reinforced when Imani thinks that Holly was aborted on the eve of growing up (73), and also by the fact that a memorial is a ritual intended to help survivors cope with loss and it is a part of the mourning process—in fact, Imani "was prepared to cry and to so with abandon" during the service (73). Another instance when somebody else is a stand-in for a child is tied to Clarence and the mayor. After Imani is hurt when Clarence discusses politics with the mayor instead of offering her emotional support, Clarence says in self-defense: "it was so important that I help the mayor!" because "he was our first [black mayor]" (76), making it sound as if the mayor was their child. Allusions to newborns and children, then, crop up in Imani's life, offering "cries" in the sense the word has in Caruth's terminology: reminders of the wound.

There are several instances of reversals in the narrative which highlight Imani's tendency to evade her issues. Her first abortion takes place at a small

clinic whose legality is suspect to Imani. There is no nurse; a woman who Imani assumes is the doctor's wife encourages her to get up and start physical activity only a few hours after the procedure. Imani complies, but soon realizes that inadequate rest causes bleeding and later results in permanent health issues (68). Thus, she suffers from the consequences of an expensive and dangerously performed procedure, which is exacerbated by the fact that the abortion providers rush her recovery to mask its illegality. Years later, she realizes that abortion has become a quick, commercialized, normalized procedure in New York, as the narrator comments using language reminiscent of that of an advertisement: "for seventy-five dollars a safe, quick, painless abortion was yours" (69). In this mechanized yet significantly safer environment the nurse warns Imani that she should rest for a week in order to let her body recuperate. Still, Imani ignores this advice even though this clinic seems more professional and more trustworthy than the first, and she is fully aware of the danger of resuming her normal daily routine after an abortion. This reversal of the two pieces of advice is symptomatic of Imani's dissonant state of mind and hints at her subconscious wish to punish herself.

A further reversal is the way Imani integrates motherhood and abortion into her narrative of the self. Various cultures have seen pregnancy and childbirth as momentous stages in a woman's life (Selin xvi). They are rites of passage, transformative events since they can be the facilitators or catalysts of the coming-of-age process. According to motherhood scholar Myra Leifer, "the emotional turbulence of pregnancy may be a positive phenomenon when viewed within a developmental perspective" as the expectant mother's personality is reorganized (42). Becoming a mother can also be a life-altering experience since it entails entering a new status within the family and the society, that is, apart from the physiological aspects, it has culturally specific social ones as well (Starr Sered 72?81). For Imani, nevertheless, becoming a mother is an item on a to-do list or a compulsory exercise in gender: "having a child is a good experience to *have had*, like graduate school. But if you've had one, you've had the experience and that's enough" (Walker 65, emphasis original). The importance traditionally given to childbirth is assigned by Imani to her abortion. She maintains that it is a life-changing event and a thrilling ritual that thrust her into adulthood: "her first abortion, when she was still in college, she frequently remembered as wonderful, bearing as it had all the marks of a supreme coming of age and a seizing of the direction of her own life" (67). I read her insistence on the positive aspects of the abortion coupled with her refusal to assign any significance to having a child as repression: a refusal to acknowledge the toll the abortion takes on her.

Furthermore, the atmosphere of irony lingers throughout the short story, which intensifies the underlying irony of the fact that despite being intelligent, Imani is ignorant about the repercussions of her abortion and deflects her pain. Imani remarks that, ironically, the room where the second abortion

takes place looks like a nursery (69), which hints at her unresolved guilt. She also notes that Holly's classmates look just like Holly during the memorial service (73). This subconscious transferal of Holly's image onto everyone else speaks to the perceived ubiquity of her abortion. Tragic irony lies in the fact that Imani's mother, who dies of cancer triggered by asbestos in the school building where she works for decades, is an environmentalist (65-66). There is an ironic connection between Imani's husband and mother that sheds light on gender inequality. Clarence advises the new black mayor regarding the chaos at the newly racially integrated schools. Both Clarence and the mayor infantilize Imani and disregard both her plight and her opinion as she is a woman. There is something cynical in the way these men discuss issues that primarily affect students—that is, children—and female teachers, while being indifferent toward Imani as she prepares for her second abortion. This discrepancy between the public, important, male sphere and the private, peripheral, female sphere is highlighted by the fact that Imani's mother used to be a teacher, which is a traditionally pink collar job, and since she was also a woman, her voice was not heard regarding issues that she had first-hand experience with. Finally, the fact that a witty, highly intelligent protagonist with a lot of apparent self-reflection cannot face and understand the consequences of her abortion is ironic in itself.

Color symbolism is recurrent throughout the story and is indicative of Imani's trauma as well. Before she starts bleeding as an aftermath of her first abortion, only the color brown is referenced: the New York City clinic is surrounded with brownstones (69), and she lies down on a brown sofa after the procedure (68). Shortly after, she begins bleeding, which is the first instance of intense colors in the short story. Later, suddenly there are numerous conspicuous mentions of vibrant colors. The room where her second abortion takes place is decorated by cheerful primary colors (69), a speech at the memorial refers to multiple colors (74), the members of the choir wear "vivid green" (74) and their movement creates a "brilliant, swaying color" (75). More importantly, there are numerous references to the solid, vivid colors with which Imani decorates her house: the hall is adorned with "bright prints" (65), the tea pot is bright yellow (65), her clothes are "pert green" and "sea green" (73); even the bile she vomits is "yellowish" (67). The inclusion of these strong colors is a narrative device that alludes back to the instant when Imani first started hemorrhaging and thus can be considered a sign of trauma as delayed experience (Caruth 114). The vibrant quality of these colors also stands in contrast with how Imani perceives herself as she feels weakened and anemic (66) before the second abortion, and is alarmed by how grey she looks after it (Walker 69).

Imani's compulsion to exert herself and her decision to go to the memorial service also suggest her difficulty to come to terms with both abortions. Even before the second abortion, her trauma is mapped onto her body, which is a site for constant pain. The narration is candid and explicit about the toll motherhood

might take on the female body. The physical effects of being pregnant (nausea, vomiting, hormonal changes that cause emotional instability) and having been pregnant (anemia, dental issues) are referred to multiple times (64-66). After the second abortion, she is not only adamant on going to the service in spite of the physical pain she feels, but she insists on bathing and dressing her two-year-old daughter beforehand (72). Earlier in the short story, the narrator explains that Imani wanted air conditioning installed in their home because she was very emphatic about not being able to stand physical discomfort, which stands in stark opposition with how she disregards the signals of her body. Altered self-experience, being out of touch with one's body and being immune to its sensations is another bodily sign of a traumatic experience (van der Kolk 93).

Furthermore, there are hints in the text that suggest her need to remember or pay respects to her unborn child. She remarks that "she liked the reassurance that her people had long memories, and that those people who fell in struggle or innocence were not forgotten" (71). Moreover, the preparation for the memorial is also what triggers her bleeding, bringing about a situation strikingly similar to how her body reacted after the first abortion. Remembrance is important for her; as a result, she wants her body to remember and to keep the memory of the aborted fetus alive. She might also want to keep the memory of the pregnancy itself alive and capture permanently what Julia Kristeva has referred to as a monumental moment of women's time (Kristeva 17) and what Iris Young theorized as having its own peculiar time, stretching into the past and the future as well (Young 160).

Thus, Imani is in a peculiar position because while she terminates the pregnancy, she behaves similarly to those women who, according to some phenomenologist thinkers, accept and carry to term their pregnancies. Phenomenologists have described wanted pregnancies in terms of how pregnant women experience their splitting subjectivities. According to Julia Kristeva and Iris Marion Young—theoreticians coming from diverse analytical backgrounds—the unity of the subject is disrupted by pregnancy (Kristeva 31, Young 160). Initially, women describe bodily changes brought about by pregnancy as happening to their own body. Though some disruption is experienced, it does not yet split the perceived unity of the subject. Later, however, a unique perception of the self develops when the woman starts registering fetal movement. She might be overcome with the uncanny feeling that the movements happening inside of her body belong to her while simultaneously being the movements of another being (Young 48-49). These feelings do not necessarily hinder maternal identification in the case of willing mothers; however, they do create a unique subject position. On the other hand, according to philosopher Caroline Lundquist, women who reject their pregnancies often perceive the embryo/fetus as "some unwanted or menacing object" that can even be conceived of as a "less than human, perhaps monstrous creature" (141).

Accordingly, there are discrepancies in Imani's behavior that suggest that a rift has threatened the stability of her personality. As theorized by Myra Leifer, there are three patterns of maternal attachment during pregnancy. The first one is characterized by early attachment to the fetus, and the second by attachment that forms in the second trimester, that is, when the processes caused by fetal movements make the woman aware of her split subjectivity. Women in the third category experience the weakest emotional bonds with the fetus, even to the extent that they recognize it as an intrusion (447). These women often refuse to recognize the subjectivity of the fetus. They do not engage in what scholar Karyn Valerius calls "performative discursive acts": those practices that are indicative of the social relationship between the pregnant woman and the fetus and through which the former posits the latter as a subject. Such practices might be naming or talking to the fetus, and even recognizing its rights (Valerius 29).

Imani's behavior suggests that the way she perceives her pregnancy aligns her with women whom phenomenologists associate with wanted pregnancies, which adds another layer of meaning to her decision to abort. She does not conceive of the fetus as some mysterious, horrific "alien teleology" that causes her body to suffer from noncontrolled processes (Beauvoir quoted in Lundquist 143); quite the opposite: she discursively constitutes the fetus as a person. She cannot bear calling it anything else but a child (Walker 70), that is, she seems to be strongly attached to it. This would put her in Leifer's first category: the one in which the pregnant woman experiences an almost immediate, strong, continued bond to the fetus. This attachment is even more pronounced after the abortion when Imani laments on what happens to the body of her aborted future child and thinks about the life experiences it will now miss out on: its body "was being flushed down a sewer. Gone all her or his chances to see sunlight, savor a fig" (70). Yet, while she does admit that abortion is a difficult choice for her and wishes that her husband would care enough to try stop her, she also maintains that it is a clear-cut choice because she wants a life without another child more than she wants the birth of that child (66) probably because she is not satisfied with being the mother of one either. Nevertheless, her unrelenting attachment to the fetus and especially the fact that it continues after the abortion, suggests that the second abortion can be read as the consequence of the first, a rewriting of it. This way, it becomes its ultimate reenactment and a substitute for the reckoning with the first one.

The title of the story, then, refers not to the second, but to the first abortion since while Imani seems to be preoccupied only with the former while brushing aside the latter, it is indeed the first that has a lasting, inescapable effect on her. It remains an unclaimed experience, an unacknowledged trauma the effects of which keep resurfacing in her life. She surrounds herself with color when she feels grey as if to remind herself of the aftermath of the procedure, and has another termination as if to punish herself. Haunting reenactments like these

are, according to Caruth, remainders of a traumatic event the self has been unable to come to terms with. Concurrently, irony and the many substitutions and reversals that the short story operates with reinforce Imani's unwillingness to confront her issues. They indicate that a rift has occurred, making her unable to integrate the abortion into the image she has of herself. Her denial, which starts out as a defense mechanism, turns out to be destructive and becomes a form of self-punishment, especially when she does not allow herself the chance to rest either emotionally or physically after the second abortion. The period after her second abortion also marks a period of marital trouble; she feels she is estranged and uncoupled from Clarence because of his insensitivity (76) even though he agrees to a vasectomy (71), and leaves him two years later (76), thus leaving behind her burden. By this time, she also regains her health and gets a divorce, which, within the economy of the text, indicates that some reckoning might have taken place and the healing process might have begun.

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Trauma: The Effect of Systematic "Ghettoization" in Ann Petry's *The Street*

Despite the imbalance between white and black characters in *The Street*, Petry utilizes this inequality to compel readers to observe not a single oppressor but rather a patriarchal system of oppression that violently manipulates and subjugates black bodies. Carol Henderson builds on this to write: "[the body] is marked…by the prejudices of race, class, and gender, and bruised by the many systems of oppression that relegate them to poverty, obscurity, and even death" (850). In connection with Henderson's argument, I find it mentionable that Petry's observation of patriarchal power surveys the ways in which it subsequently results in the "ghettoization"[1] and oppression of the novel's black characters. Because of this, it is necessary to view "the ghetto" as a planned product of patriarchal control that systematically classifies and restricts black bodies, and despite the differences between Mrs. Hedges, Boots, and Lutie Johnson, Petry's black characters are scarred by it. As the title of her novel suggests, Petry utilizes the concept of the street to illustrate how its systematic relegation and its limitation of black bodies instills notions of separation and segregation, which not only embodies the violence and racist gaze of the patriarchy but also showcases its resulting mental and physical traumas on people of color. However, as Mrs. Hedges, Boots, and Lutie traverse "the ghetto" and attempt to cope with and subvert their individual traumas, they remain victims of systematic "ghettoization."

Patriarchally, there is a distinction between masculinity and femininity, and considering that these terms are socially contrived, there are social standards and expectations. In other words, to be a woman means falling within the expectations of womanhood. In the book *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, and Network*, Caroline Levine introduces this theory:

1 Ghettoization: the segregation or isolation of a group and placement of that group in little power.

> While the masculine West understands the world through and as constraining singular form…woman's sexuality offers an emancipatory alternative because it is diffuse and plural. For Irigaray and many others, the trouble with form is precisely its embrace of unified wholeness: its willingness to impose boundaries, to imprison, to create inclusions and exclusions. (25)

In discussing gender limitations, Levine is also pointing to notions of bounded gender wholes, and as the word "form" denotes, there is an apparent code or behavior that is standard. However, Levine's word "imprison" clarifies the purpose of the gender whole: it separates and then identifies bodies. Fundamentally, these gendered wholes work in "ghettoizing" or segregating the female in order to control femininity. Additionally, the words "inclusions and exclusions" support this claim in connoting restrictions, while "masculine West" implies the patriarchy. Therefore, while Levine's claim focuses on gender as a whole it raises important issues of patriarchal control and hints at the subsequent consequence of a liminal existence.

In *The Street*, Mrs. Hedges' monstrous body simultaneously grants her a liminal identity while pushing against the stereotypical and hyper sexualized black female identity. Which Petry illustrates in writing: "Lutie's mouth closed. She had never seen Mrs. Hedges outside of her apartment and looked at closely she was awe-inspiring. She was almost as tall as the [Mr. Jones], but where he was thin, gaunt, she was all hard, firm flesh—a mountain of a woman" (237). While her identity must conform to a gender whole, Mrs. Hedges' body complicates her identity within the patriarchy. Rather, her body's power symbolizes the inability to be controlled or dominated. Moreover, Petry's juxtaposition of Mrs. Hedges and Mr. Jones displays Mrs. Hedges' body as threatening, which Petry further emphasizes in the physical confrontation between Mrs. Hedges and Mr. Jones. Their altercation is described as: "A pair of powerful hands gripped her by the shoulder, wrenched her violently out of the Super's arms…The same powerful hands shot out and thrust the Super hard against the cellar door" (236). Here, Mrs. Hedges' body empowers her with the capacity to outdo, overcome, and exert power over Mr. Jones. Petry further uses such descriptions as - "she wore discarded men's shoes on her feet. The shoes were too small…"(242) to build on Mrs. Hedges' gender defying physicality. By drawing parallels between Mrs. Hedges and men, by having her wear their shoes, Petry characterizes Mrs. Hedges' identity as threatening to masculinity and beyond the notion of a gendered whole.

While this reading of Mrs. Hedges is reactionary, it allows for a more nuanced understanding of her purpose within the novel: a figure whose existence traces various forms of physical and mental traumas. "The more we understand about the body" Carol Henderson writes, "…the more we understand about the role it plays as object of and vehicle for the social construction of reality"

(850). Yet, while spectators' observations of the body construct reality this reality is coupled with how the spectated body sees itself through those observations. After the old apartment complex burns down and Mrs. Hedges recuperates, the nurses "couldn't conceal the expression on their faces. Sometimes it was only a flicker of dismay, and then again it was sheer horror, plain for anyone to see—undisguised, uncontrollable" (246-47). Mrs. Hedges responds to the nurses by thinking that, "she never intended to reveal the extent of her disfigurement to anyone" (253). While appearing as an Other, her experience on the street ultimately brands her through her "burn, bruised body" (253). But in doing so, it induces Mrs. Hedges to recognize her own monstrosity. With a headscarf and her clothing, Mrs. Hedges conceals her scars, obstructs her physical appearance, and confines herself to the apartment complex. Through this, the street operates in two ways: its nature as a ghetto compels Mrs. Hedges to separate herself from the white people who ostracize her, thus causing her to understand her difference; and, it creates within in her a void where she is unable to meet her own expectations of femininity, which Petry notes in: "Scarred like this, hair burned off her head like this, she would never have any man's love" (246). Loïc Wacquant clarifies this process in depicting the ghetto as a system that strategically "encages a dishonoured category and severely curtails the life chances of its members…" (51). While Wacquant understands the ghetto as a tactic to separate undesirables, it also shows how the very process of demarcating people of color compels them to view themselves as inferior. In being barred from "material good or opportunities," Mrs. Hedges sees herself as damaged, and the street marks her body as "dishounoured."

Interestingly, the concept of "demarcation" does not exist solely through the lives of Petry's black female characters but also in her black male characters. While the text introduces Boots through images of grandeur, Petry reveals that Boots' success is conditionally based on his service to the novel's white male character, Old Man Junto. In juxtaposing Boots and Junto, Petry emphasizes the idea that "ghettoization" is more than location, but it is a social and psychological concept that constantly reinforces a patriarchally racialized hierarchy. Through Boots, Petry underscores this analysis in articulating how Boots' relationship to Old Man Junto foregrounds his lack of agency and even his masculinity. When referring to Lutie, Junto states "That girl—Lutie Johnson… You're to keep your hands off her. I've got other plans for her" (262), in which Boots responds with:

> But this one—this Lutie Johnson—was the first one he'd seen in a long time that he really wanted. He had even thought that if he couldn't get her any other way, he'd marry her. He watched Junto roll the soda around on his tongue and was surprised to discover that the thought of Lutie, with her long legs, straight back, smooth

> brown skin, and smiling eyes, sleeping with Old Man Junto wasn't a pleasant one. (263)

Despite the male characters' problematic objectification of black women, Junto's position as an obstacle between Boots' and his desire for Lutie is complicated in that the relationship between Junto and Boots revolves around allegiance and demands. Junto blocks Boots from being able to, not just acquire but, pursue Lutie, and given that Junto is a representation of the patriarchy within Petry's text, Boots' relationship to Junto suggests that he is a victim of patriarchal oppression. Interestingly, when Boots drives Lutie home she notices that he no longer makes advances towards her he, as the text mentions: "[On] that first night she had met him, 'The only thing [he was] interested in is [her].' When he drove her home last night, he had scarcely spoken. He had made no effort to touch her" (310). It is necessary to view Boots' transformation from pursuing Lutie to restraint as a response to him being in the center of an incessant white patriarchal gaze. As evidenced by Junto's demand, readers can infer that Boots' actions are reactions not only to being observed by Junto but to the idea that there are consequences for his disobedience to Junto. In Michel Foucault's "Panopticism," his observation on how experimental laboratories of power in which behavior can be modified which corresponds to the notion of surveillance in Petry's text where he states: "On the whole," Foucault writes, "one can speak of the formation of a disciplinary society in this movement that stretches from the enclosed disciplines, a sort of social 'quarantine,' to an indefinitely generalizable mechanism of 'panopticism'" (206). While Foucault centers his claim on specialized institutions that act to police and monitor bodies, his theory is attributable to the system of "enclosed disciplines" that limits Boots' movement in the novel; he is working under and within Junto's watch and, as indicated by Petry's text, his movements are relegated to the scope of a white patriarchal figure who operates as both spectator and, given Junto's command, disciplinarian. From this, the relationship between Junto and Boots nearly resembles a master and slave dynamic, which Boots refers to when recollecting how his past experience as a servile hotel worker parallels his current connection to Junto as mentioned in the quote:

> …those 'Yes sirs' and 'No sirs' that he said week in and week out. He paused on the stairs thinking that he ought to go back up and finish the job, because leaving it like this left him less than a half man, because he didn't even have a woman of his own, because he not only had to say 'Yes sir,' he had to stand by and take it while some white man grabbed off what belonged to him. (270)

In light of the phrase "less than a half man," Boots views his own position in society as inferior, but it is apparent that his inferiority is connected to a lack of masculinity. Unlike Junto, Boots operates on the outside of the patriarchy,

and instead, his existence is centered on notions of subservience and obedience. Nonetheless, it is this servility that induces Boots to explore various modes of empowerment to reinforce his masculinity, which the text highlights in mentioning: "He wasn't just a black man driving a car at a pell-mell pace. He had lost all sense of time and space as the car plunged forward into the cold, white night" (157). Petry utilizes metaphor to represent Boots' car as a phallus, and the word "plunged" reduces the motion of the car to a sexual thrust. Additionally, Petry's characterization of "night" as "white" grants an interesting image, that while the car is in motion, Boots uses it to pierce or penetrate the concept of whiteness. Petry substantiates this claim in the later passage: "Because they sensed that the black men had to roar past them, had for a brief moment to feel equal, feel superior; had to take reckless chances going around curves, passing on hills, so that they would be better able to face a world that took pains to make them feel that they didn't belong, that they were inferior" (158). Similarly to Mrs. Hedges, Boots lives under the impression that his life is not his own but it is dependent on how white men perceive him. Therefore, like Mrs. Hedges Boots' actively works to fill a void, here represented as a lack of masculinity and the agency that accompanies it, and as evidenced by the quote, Boots must rely on brief moments of empowerment to feel equal with the same patriarchy that oppresses, observes, and contains him. In observation of Boots' experiences and actions, readers could characterize Boots as an amalgam of past and current psychological traumas. In "Material Resistance and the Agency of the Boy in Ann Petry's The *Street*," William Scott builds on this analysis in asserting: "Torture systematically prevents the prisoner from being the agent of anything and simultaneously pretends that he is the agent of some things…[I]n reality he has been deprived of all control over, and therefore all responsibility for, his world, his words, and his body" (90). The notion of "torture" and "agency" fully depicts Boots' sense of, and the need to conform to patriarchal expectations gives rise to his unfulfilled desires. Thus, while the car scene connotes a sense of empowerment, it also points to the idea that Boots' existence is rooted in various deficiencies, and while his actions were meant to simultaneously subvert his own inferiority they can also be interpreted as responses to a series of traumatic experiences.

While Mrs. Hedges and Boots serve as representations of trauma, Lutie Johnson's position in the novel reveals the various modes and the extent of systematic oppression. While she does attempt to escape the ghetto in struggling for progress, her observations and experiences allow readers to see the process of systematic ghettoization. In contrast to the other black individuals in the ghetto, Lutie is aware of how the ghetto effects people of color, which is especially evident when she notices how people of color respond to a murder scene in the quote: "Lutie got that same jolting sense of shock and then of rage, because these people, all of them—the girl, the crowd in back of her—showed no horror, no

surprise, no dismay. They had expected this. They were used to it. And they had become resigned to it" (205). As shown by the phrase "all of them—the girl, the crowd in back of her," black individuals are expected to face various forms of trauma. However, it is necessary to note that this process of trauma is progressive, and as Lutie Johnson observes Mrs. Hedges and the other black characters within the text, she interprets their traumatic experiences as side effects of "ghettoization" in the quote:

> Yes, she thought, she and Bub had to get out of 116th Street. It was a bad street. And then she thought about the other streets. It wasn't just this street that she was afraid of or that was bad. It was any street where people were packed together like sardines in a can. And it wasn't just this city. It was any city where they set up a line and say black folks stay on this side and white folks on this side, so that the black folks were crammed on top of each other—jammed and packed and forced into the smallest possible space until they were completely cut off from light and air. (205-206)

Here, Petry reveals through Lutie the true nature of the street. Her phrase "any city" illustrates how the street is a piece of an overarching system of control that not only marginalizes people of color but, as the quote suggests, it perpetuates a devalued and dishonored identity through a divisive process of categorization and racialization. In "From Slavery to Mass Incarceration," Loic Wacquant refers to this in stating: "Slavery, the Jim Crow system and the ghetto are 'race making' institutions, which is to say that they do not simply process an ethnoracial division that would somehow exist outside of and independently from them. Rather, each *produces* (or co-produces) this division (anew) out of inherited demarcations and disparities of group power" (54). Wacquant's juxtaposition of slavery, Jim Crow, and the ghetto is significant in that showcases the ghetto through a historical context. Given that each of these concepts are race-making institutions, Wacquant understands the ghetto as an extension of enslavement that not only deprives people of color of valuable resources—evident in the Petry's quote, "jammed and packed and forced into the smallest possible space until they were completely cut off from light and air" (206)—but is also racially motivated. Principally, this observation better explains Lutie's own social reality which Petry states: "Her thoughts returned to Junto, and the bitterness and the hardness increased. In every direction, anywhere one turned, there was always the implacable figure of a white man blocking the way, so that it was impossible to escape" (315). Lutie sees that her fate is dependent on white patriarchal figures.

Here, we begin to interpret success as a racialized concept where advancement is connected to white men. In "The Quest for the American Dream in Three Afro-American Novels: *If He Hollers Let Him Go*, *The Street*,

and *Invisible Man*," Richard Yarborough discusses how having the aptitude for success does not equate to prosperity for Lutie in the statement:

> In her novel, *The Street*, Ann Petry demonstrated that for Lutie Johnson, an industrious, intelligent, sensitive, and idealistic young black woman, the American Dream is impossible. J.D. Rockefeller once remarked: "They have but to master the knack of economy, thrift, and perseverance and success is theirs." In *The Street*, Lutie displays the necessary "economy, thrift, and perseverance"; however, her path leads not to prosperity but to murder, despair, and the abandonment of her every aspiration, including her dreams for her son. (41)

Given this, it is clear that systematic ghettoization makes Lutie's goal to obtain the American Dream nothing short of impossible. Throughout the novel, Petry traces Lutie's fate in a parabola. She begins with little but the drive for success, and as the novel progresses, the possibility of a singing career and the vision of leaving the ghetto causes Lutie to see a small glimmer of hope. Yet, as Lutie faces various obstacles from her decision to kill Boots, to leaving her son, and then attempting to escape the ghetto by train, she contests at the novel's end that, "It was that street. It was that god-damned street" (436) that served as a catalyst for her misfortunes.

What can be said Lutie, Boots, or Mrs. Hedges? While my argument aims to highlight how ghettoization has affected Petry's black characters, it is difficult to understand this and not align this novel with the series of protest and political literature that was prevalent during the early and mid-twentieth century. As evidenced in Richard Wright's *Native Son* and Chester Himes' *If He Hollers Let Him Go*, patriarchal forms of power constantly police and relegate black bodies in order to reinforce a patriarchally racialized hegemony which simultaneously compels people of color to view themselves as both inferior and as existing outside of society. Thus, as we read these texts it is imperative to understand that these authors are more than detailing the struggles of black individuals but also gesturing towards the many physical and psychological traumas that result from systematic forms of oppression and segregation. From this, I project that we must not observe Petry's text singularly or spectacular but general in that her characters represent more than themselves but serve as a microcosm for the pervading sociopolitical issues of her time. While Petry traces her characters movements throughout the street, she is simultaneously tracing the many stories and fates of people of color who retaliated against the very limitations that society had imposed. And while this tale does focus on the ghetto, Wacquant's connection between slavery, the ghetto, the hyperghetto, and mass incarceration induces modern readers to see how Petry's text proves relevant to today thus forcing us to examine the issues with our current social ideologies.

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Within and Without: The Writing Instructor's Stake in the Educational Institution

Allow me to start by sharing two stories from my undergraduate experience. In my freshman year of college, I wrote an inappropriate comment in a paper for Psychology 101 and was soundly reprimanded for it. I had previously believed, through some confused blend of arrogance and naivety, that I could simply say anything I wanted in a college paper; my professor disabused me of this belief. Years later, I enrolled in an upper division class with Retha Warnicke, a scholar of the Tudor Monarchy. Dr. Warnicke assigned one of her own books and asked students to write about it. After some deliberation, I wrote that the book, while informative, had attempted to prove a thesis that was ultimately indefensible, and that the author—my professor—had failed to accomplish her purpose. I received an A. Making no assumptions about the motives of these two instructors, I see in our exchange a commentary on the power structure of the university. In both instances, I wrote boldly: one could almost say "defiantly." However, in the first case I was punished, and in the second, rewarded. What had changed was my credibility. I wrote the first paper as an outsider: a child, unfamiliar with academic expectations. The second paper was written from a place of knowledge. I had learned to temper my mode of expression: to share my opinions appropriately by speaking my mind in the language of my discipline.

The above are two examples of what Robert Brooke calls "underlife," defined as "those behaviors which undercut the roles expected of participants in a situation" (721). Underlife is manifested in various ways and to varying degrees, but always acts as a cry for independence. It occurs when an individual attempts to insert his or her original voice into an existing dialogue. It is participatory, yet rebellious. It is the individual's resistance or rejection, at least in part, of a system that threatens to swallow him or her up: that seeks, in Foucault's words,

"to brand him and to alter him" (5). A person's natural impulse is to resist such branding and alteration, even while participating within a system—such as a school or workplace—in which classification and transformation are inevitable. Evolution is both natural and painful in creating conflict in individuals and in the institutions that govern them. At the heart of this conflict lies a question of identity: to what extent are individuals defined by their roles in society, and to what extent can they distance themselves from those roles or exercise power over them? For those within the institution of higher education, the question becomes an ethical one: to what extent, if any, should rebellion or defiance—what Brooke calls underlife—be encouraged within a discipline? How can English departments stay true to their vocation of molding and transforming an individual while at the same time respecting or encouraging that individual's autonomy? Here I am supposed to suggest that instructors should find a balance between their responsibilities, but that would be incorrect, as the word "balance" implies stability and stagnation. This is not a balance at all; it upholds the power of the current institution. Rather, instructors must lean slightly on the side of liberty—of acceptance and change—while only partially conforming to the more conventional values of the discipline. Likewise, they must foster students who can speak boldly, but appropriately: who can wield their insider academic voices in the cause of outsider concepts and dialogues. By empowering students to use their own voices, ideas, and methods, English departments not only promote evolution, but participate in it. They open themselves to change. Instructors and students must not neglect to evaluate and reevaluate their expectations of standard practice, nor neglect to partake in underlife activities that challenge accepted knowledge and cause ripples in their field.

For Foucault, the institution's ultimate form is the Panopticon. In it, Foucault recognizes "the diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form" (9). By "power," he refers not to violence or force, but to the internalization of proper behavioral norms by the subjects of a discipline. This is achieved through the threefold policy of surveillance, classification, and characterization. Foucault saw the uses of the Panopticon as extending well beyond that of the prison and into the realm of (re)education: "the Panopticon was also a laboratory; it could be used as a machine to carry out experiments, to alter behavior, to train or correct individuals" (8). While the university and the English department are imperfect manifestations of this ideal, they nevertheless carry its defining traits. Surveillance is achieved through constant assessment and reassessment: grades, assignments, and standardized tests. Classification is a simpler matter: everyone is either "student" or "faculty," and subdivisions are based on department and year. Characterization, finally, is a compilation of information from the first two categories; for students, this includes GPA, academic record, and university standing. Each element of this triad is a defining function of the higher education institution. It would be impossible, not to mention

irresponsible, to suddenly do away with them. Yet in clinging too tightly to the institutionalization of education, we become agents of conformity: of a supposed "normal" discourse that is really, as Asao Inoue states, "usually a white, middle class, academic one" (85). The nature of an institution is to resist change, yet an educator's goal cannot be simply the perpetuation of a status quo. To produce free thinkers, it is necessary to allow some freedom. To this end, Inoue and others have found ways to undermine institutional expectation. They have acted out, done the unexpected, gotten ahead of the Panopticon. They cannot destroy their disciplines completely—nor, I hope, would they attempt to. Rather, they have learned to work within their abilities, within the English discipline, to break down some barriers and to see what can happen. In pushing the boundaries, they remind us that change is real, and evolution is natural, and that progress is born not out of convention but out of taking risks.

For Inoue, progress means moving away from tired methods of product-based grading and focusing instead on the labor that goes into that product. Inoue argues that at best, grades are poor motivators that guarantee mediocre papers; at worst, they are oppressive tools used to silence outside voices and discourse. He explains:

> Scholarship on grading is almost unanimous about the unreliability (inconsistency) and subjectivity (in the bad sense) of grades… research shows how grades and other kinds of rewards and punishments de-motivate and harm students, hampering their abilities to learn anything… In fact, using grades based on judgments of quality (or comparisons to expected, dominant academic discourse) usually devalues the students' labor, and therefore devalues students' *writing* as experience. (80)

Grading from a place of privilege is simply one way in which the dominant discourse of the university attempts to perpetuate itself. Students write to please rather than to learn, thus internalizing the goals of their overseers as their own. To work around this, Inoue has taken the radical step of creating a "gradeless" course, operating much like a pass/fail in which every student receives a B grade simply for putting in the work. Inoue admits that some students take issue with this approach, since they have been trained to work for a grade: they want an A (91-92). They have become accustomed to the approval of their superiors. This, of course, is exactly the mindset Inoue is pushing back against. Those students who take the plunge, who learn to trust in their own skills rather than to obsess over assessment, report high satisfaction with the course. Inoue describes the course's success through a quote from one of his students:

> This class is different. With this class I was able to write more freely because what is important in this class is the time and effort that we put into our project. I'm not a very good writer, so my biggest

> challenge at the beginning of the class was being afraid I wasn't going to meet the expectations of this class. I learned that when you're not judged by how good you write, you're able to do more with your writing. (82)

And this is the point. The gradeless course liberates students to write freely, messily, boldly. They are not held to the biased standards of an instructor: not bound by his vague, idealistic image of some perfect paper. Instead, they are turned loose. They are given rein to test what is possible: to search for what does or does not work. Inoue recognizes underlife's potential for good, and he allows his students to exploit their individuality within the contained, but liberal, confines of his course. By going against the grain, Inoue empowers students to do likewise.

It is important to note that what Inoue is suggesting is not a free-for-all. Guidelines are still laid out and revisions are demanded. The student who fails to put in adequate work will fail the course. Nobody is attempting to upend the institution, only to poke and prod—to perhaps expand the opportunities and possibilities. Just as students are allowed to retain their identities while pressing forward in education, so too is the English discipline able to hold onto its core components even while its adherents expand or amend their practices. All Inoue has done is to critique one facet of his institution's power structure—that is, product-based assessment—and in doing so, he has troubled the university's ability to characterize its students. His course is both innovative and risky: a departure from the norm that is nevertheless tolerated within that norm. This is how evolution begins.

Unconventional practices rarely endear instructors to the institution, and they are often rejected outright. Every institution, though, will at some point be confronted by an outside discourse, and the institution's future depends on how it responds to such challenges. Kenneth Bruffee documents the gradual process by which fringe ideas move into the mainstream, acknowledging that many such ideas are crushed along the way. For Bruffee, like Inoue, the answer is to encourage such discourse even while guiding it. Bruffee uses the terms "normal discourse" and "abnormal discourse," coined by Richard Rorty, to explore the relationship between insider and outsider practices. "Normal" discourse is the dominant voice or practice in any field; it is seen in one's ability to contextualize, to act appropriately, and to hold one's own in conversation. Bruffee explains that "the one thing college teachers in most fields commonly want students to acquire, and what teachers in most fields consistently reward students for, is the ability to carry on in speech and writing the normal discourse of the field in question" (552). However, no field exists in a vacuum. "Abnormal" discourse occurs when an outsider, or an outside notion, tries to break into normal discourse. If normal discourse upholds a status quo, then abnormal discourse seeks to critique or change it; as Bruffee explains, "the discourse involved in generating knowledge

cannot be normal discourse, since normal discourse maintains knowledge. It is inadequate for generating new knowledge. Knowledge-generating discourse is discourse of quite another kind. It is, to use Rorty's phrase, abnormal discourse" (556). By definition, this discourse is unconventional. It is controversial, disputed, and often rejected—yet it is necessary for growth. It "sniffs out stale, unproductive knowledge and challenges its authority" (Bruffee 556). Such discourse is threatening, yet valuable; it questions our conventionality by looking for holes and weaknesses in the normal discourse, thus opening doors to experimentation and progress.

Evolution is natural; it is also generational. If English departments would foster inclusivity, diversity, and individuality, then they must learn to temper traditional expectations with a respect for abnormal discourse and for underlife. Instructors must act as agents of an institution while recognizing the changing nature of that and every institution. Robert Brooke sees value in students who can push boundaries without breaking them. Asao Inoue is on the outskirts of normal discourse but is not excluded from it. The goal, for students and instructors alike, is to work abnormal discourses into the context of the discipline. In stretching the bounds of acceptable practice, in expanding the realm of tolerated discourse, it is possible to create a space for future generations to improve upon the institution of higher education. In Bruffee's words, "The continued vitality of the knowledge communities we value—in particular the community of liberally educated people and its sub-communities, the scholarly and professional disciplines—depend on both these needs being met: to maintain established knowledge and to challenge and change it" (558).

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The Battle for Los Angeles: Countering the Narrative of Spatial Violence in Helena Maria Viramontes' *Their Dogs Came with Them* and Karen Tei Yamashita's *Tropic of Orange*

The construction and expansion of the freeways in the 1950s and 1960s was not simply a move to change the geographic makeup of the city of Los Angeles in the name of progress. It was also a political and socioeconomic act of violence and oppression. This planned act of spatial violence led to the subsequent physical and figurative erasure of low-income communities and communities of color. In order to deconstruct how exactly the construction of the freeways became an act of violence, I draw heavily on Laura Pulido's informative study on environmental racism and white privilege and on Eric Avila's study on the "Folklore of the Freeways" in Los Angeles. Laura Pulido argues that one of the key problems in considering environmental racism lies in the fact that most people consider racism only a "discrete act that *may* be spatially expressed," and in doing so, they limit the "spatiality of racism" (13). For Pulido, one easy way to study environmental racism is by looking at white privilege and the benefits that white people receive by not being subject to the "industrialization, decentralization, and residential segregation" that communities of color must endure (13). She argues that with spatial discrimination there is a "pay off" in white privilege that translates into benefits like "higher property values [or] better schools" and not having to worry about noise pollution, environmental contamination by polluters, and higher rates of crime (Pulido 16). White privilege in socio-spatial terms then allows for a privileging of one land over another, where an area of land is not subject to the same degradation that a more *undesirable* plot of land may have. Furthermore, this degradation can take on many forms, including the construction of freeways. The history of Los Angeles is one of suburbanization dependent on racial segregation, with people of color living in the central and heavily industrialized area of the city and primarily white communities living in

periphery neighborhoods, such as Pasadena, Bel Aire, Rancho Palos Verdes, and Beverly Hills (Pulido 27). In this process of suburbanization, then, we can see a distinct racial privileging of spatial zones within Los Angeles.

The construction of the freeways in Los Angeles further intensified the racial divide by promoting a lack of visibility for communities of color. Eric Avila describes the aftereffects of the suburbanization process as creating "isolated pockets of race and class" (16). The construction of the freeways aided this process directly. Millions of dollars were funneled to the construction and the expansion of the freeways around central Los Angeles, in order to continue a radial movement of development that "sharpen[ed] the contrast between white space and non-white space" (Avila 16). This movement incited the construction of a mythical Los Angeles that was a "centerless city, despite the thousands of [black and brown] people that actually lived in that center" (Avila 17). In this myth of the centerless city, the centrally-located businesses of low-income communities and communities of color lost economic revenue and visibility as more and more shopping malls and shopping centers were moved toward the suburbs. Like the myth of the American dream, a rhetoric of progress was pushed onto the public. Thus, to try to limit the "progress" of the construction of the freeways was tantamount to being "unAmerican," since progress has always been defined by a racialized contrast (Avila 19-21). In fact, even as the construction of the highways decimated communities in East and Central Los Angeles, officials pushed a campaign that justified the physical erasure of these communities, applauding the supposed "willingness" of the communities to cooperate (Avila 19). Helena Maria Viramontes' *Their Dogs Came with Them* and Karen Tei Yamashita's *Tropic of Orange* address this act of violence, showing how the freeways act as physical borders that affect visibility for working-class people while serving to reinforce oppressive authority. In Viramontes' novel, the freeways manage to divide, displace, and immobilize the characters. Moreover, these communities, much like the characters, have been affected by the imposing structure of the freeway physically breaking the community apart and disorienting a sense of place and belonging for members of the community. Communities are likened to corpses littering the neighborhoods in the aftermath of the razing nature of postwar freeway construction. Likewise, in Yamashita's novel, the amalgamation of homeless and the construction of a new community on the freeway itself serves as an act of resistance that counters the narrative of division and immobility. Homeless people take over the freeways, enacting not violence but the building of a new community that counters the dominant discourse of invisibility.

Raul Homero Villa describes the development of Los Angeles as a "juggernaut" and a "voracious growth engine" that "affected its devastations upon a wide cross of Chicano community" (113). Viramontes does not shy away from relating the destruction and havoc that freeway expansion created for the

communities represented in her novel. One of the first images in *Their Dogs Came with Them* is that of the elderly Chavela moving around her house in the 1960s. We are dropped directly into the violence of the encroaching decimation of a row of homes in this East LA *barrio,* and Viramontes ensures that we understand that *lives*, not just geographic spaces on a map, have been affected in a violent manner.

Chavela's home has been selected for the widening of the freeway and the almost-empty house gives a glimpse of the future for many other abandoned LA neighborhood plots. The collection of discarded scraps of paper and "Scotch-taped reminders" (Viramontes 1) on the floor, and the walls are constant reminders of the established lives that have been cut short by the coming construction of the freeway. Furthermore, the fact that Chavela has "scribbled instructions all over the house," as varied as reminders to "smoke outside" and even her own social security number, show this forced eviction has truncated her life in this community (6). Chavela's activities have been severed in the same way that the encroaching freeway has red-lined her house for demolition and separated her from the rest of the community.

Rather than lifting up the purported idea of families willing to move away from their homes, Viramontes gives us the opposite image. Villa states how, "freeway boosters and urban developers, [...] promoted their projects as monuments to Southern California's celebrated 'goodlife'" (137), the opening scene of Viramontes' novel counters that argument of a "good life" and shows a situation that is more akin to a rushed evacuation. Chavela's belongings are packed in "bulk filled pillow cases" (5), and Viramontes presents this scene showing how even the "rooster clock still on the wall" (7) is testament to the fact that Chavela is still not finished with packing. Some weeks after Chavela's eviction, Ermilia looks at Chavela's house and thinks it looks "as empty as a toothless mouth" (9). The homes are likened to not just empty buildings but almost abandoned people in the aftermath of a war against the construction of the freeways:

> The rows of vacant houses were missing things. Without hinged doors, the four frames invited games. Shattered windows had been used as targets. Chavela never would have allowed yard to weed wild, never allowed cans of trash to be scattered by the street dogs or left to the crows who pecked at coffee grinds and cucumber peelings. (9)

Ermilia notes how there is a space for "saved houses" and then there is the "dead side of the street" (12). And, on this dead side of the street, the empty rows of homes take on the image of abandonment and of images of violence. Their windows are "shattered" and have been used as "targets," in much the same way that central Los Angeles was targeted for freeway construction. By relating the empty homes to empty carcasses left for scavenger animals to "peck

at," Viramontes transforms this image of violence from violence on spaces, to violence on bodies within these spaces. There is an added dimension of internal violence in these scenes. The "toothlessness" of the house becomes an image of domestic violence precisely because it has occurred within the "domestic" space of the neighborhood. The domestic violence on space is advanced further as the eviction is an act of violence against minority communities in the United States.

In effect, this forced eviction of Chicano families in the 1960s is a repetition of the manifestations of power and violence shown in the deterritorialization of Mexicans in the mid-nineteenth century (Villa 2). And, as Chavela repeats the phrase, "it just wasn't right," Viramontes reminds us how the destruction of the communities happens not in predominantly white communities, but in communities of color, since "space is a resource in the production of white privilege" (Pulido 30). This act is "just not right" precisely because it privileges the rights of one group of people over another and participates in the displacement of this disadvantaged group. As Chavela demands Ermilia to pay attention to the fact that "displacement will always come down to two things: earthquakes or earthmovers," the name Chavela gives to bulldozers, Ermilia imagines the "ruins of the pyramids" below "the swallowed earth" (8). The subtle mention of these ruins provides an image of the Mesoamerican history that has already been erased by European colonialism and conquest, further reminding readers that the expansion of the freeways is once again mirroring a racialized violence against people of color in order to capitalize on space.

We can further see how the freeways act as a disorienting force as characters are constricted by their previous understanding of the groundwork of their communities and the new reality offered to them after the construction of the freeway. Turtle, the androgynous Gamboa sibling, tries to avoid detection of the fictional Quarantine Authority and the two neighborhood gangs. Throughout the neighborhood, the freeway is there as an oppressive authority that both hampers Turtle's movements or acts as an apathetic force as she faces danger from the community itself. As a child, Turtle is molested by a bagman after she is caught stealing from his grocery store. In this moment, the apathetic and visibility-reducing nature of the freeway is revealed:

> The bagman groped her body under the draping wool coat again to make sure they weren't stolen produce and then he slowly dug his metal-cold fingers between her thighs again this time pressing harder, palming her buttocks, swirling his two hands much slower and slower to make himself believe [...] Not one driver from all those cars zooming on the new freeway bridge, not one driver driving the overpass of the 710 freeway construction, not one stopped to protest, to scream, What the hell do you think you're doing, motherfucker, pinche puto, get your fingers of her tits baboso! Turtle had closed her

> eyes to shut out the cry as the swift wind of the cars bathed her face. (Viramontes 24)

This act of violation occurs on the street, and yet, as Turtle notes, no one says anything. Turtle is a member of the community, and she is attacked by another member of the community, and Viramontes does "not shy away from casting [her] critical gaze at the internal ravages of a community eating away at itself under the pressures of life in the second-city cordoned zones" (Villa 137). The spatial oppression has its effect not only on communities but also within the community. Even as the freeways enact their violence of invisibility on these communities, intra-community violence also exists. Despite the proximity of the 710 freeway offering hundreds of witnesses to this crime on Turtle, that same freeway allows people to no longer see the acts of bodily violence on the people below. Turtle hears the protest she should be hearing to the crime of sexual assault in her mind, but instead all she gets is the apathetic wind in her face from the passing cars. Consequently, her molestation is just one more act of violence on one more body of color.

As Turtle progresses through the neighborhood, intersections become areas of warfare and of the oppressive force of containment that works in conjunction with the fictional Quarantine Authority to maintain control over the people of the community. Ermilia recognizes the Quarantine Authority as "invading engines" (12) in the same way that the bulldozers that have decimated her neighborhood are invaders. Again, the language here is racialized, recalling the colonial invaders coming into Mesoamerica and invading the land. Furthermore, both the Quarantine Authority and the freeways maintain oppressive violence and surveillance. At each intersection she reaches, Turtle is constantly on edge waiting for an attack. Escape is hindered by the physicality of the freeways and the change that it has caused in the landscape of the communities, creating new physical borders. Escape can only happen past the oppressive constraints of the freeway, and as Luis tells Turtle, "to escape, all them two had to do was bulldoze a tunnel through the hill on Eastern Street" "to reach a place called New Mexico" (25). Here, we see how the freeways are part of the containment process begun by the postwar development efforts. Freeways contain the members of the community economically and physically eliminating the opportunity of escape.

Other characters are also disoriented by the freeway and the destruction it has made of the community. When Tranquilina, the missionary daughter, comes back with her parents to the Eastside they find the city "hardly recognizable," and like Turtle, the intersections on the street become areas of anxiety and fear (33). Both Tranquilina and her mother traverse a land of empty buildings, "abandoned tires", "broken amber shards of glass, hypodermic needles, frajo butts, and gum wrappers on soil as muddled as a swamp" (32). It is a neighborhood abandoned to the ravages of waste and time. Although they are able to name the intersections of the street (Humphreys street and Floral street), Tranquilina and her mother

soon find themselves lost in "the city of Tranquilina's birth," seeing only "the solid slab of endless cement" of the freeway walls (33). Even the weather attacks the unprotected women as they try to reorient themselves to the changing geography of the neighborhood. And the traffic on the street becomes a threatening force that seeks to enact violence on the bodies of these women as Tranquilina is almost hit by the "bumpers of speeding cars" as she steps of the street curb. Like Turtle, Tranquilina is also just one other body made invisible by the freeway.

Likewise, in Yamashita's novel the constructions of the freeways enact a form of spatial violence on working-class communities. The freeways participate in the erasure of communities of color, and Buzzworm, the novel's "walking social services," is one of the first to point out this historical fact (26). He goes on the Harbor freeway and realizes that "you could just skip out over his house, his streets, his parts of town" in South Central Los Angeles (33). However, Buzzworm counters this narrative that would seek to eschew his community by pointing out that the palm trees, the ubiquitous image of the California myth, "make out the place where he lived. To make sure that people noticed" (33). The palm trees become physical markers, pointing out the location of communities of color that would otherwise be invisible to the drivers on the freeway overpass. These palm trees jut out from the visible panorama offered by the height of the freeways and counter the horizontal movement of the panoramic view by directing the vision vertically to these formerly invisible communities of Los Angeles. For Buzzworm, these palm trees become points of reference that connect his communities to the history of Los Angeles, and thus disavow the physical and historical erasure that the construction of freeways created.

The homeless people of Los Angeles also work to enact a counter-narrative to the displacement offered by the freeway. As Manzanar, the elderly homeless man suffering from amnesia and dementia, directs the chaos begun by a single orange on the 710 freeway, he also witnesses the exact moment when the homeless take over the freeway filled with immobilized cars and trucks:

> Manzanar continued to conduct, watching the fire engulf the slope. Even he, who knew the dense hidden community living on the no-man's land of public property, was surprised by the numbers of people who descended the slope. Men, women, children, their dogs and even cats, [...] sidling along the lines of abandoned cars, gawking into windows and kicking tires, remarking on the models, ages, and colors, as if at a great used car dealership. (121)

Yamashita's writing takes on the language of warfare. These previously unseen people "descend" down the slope of the hills to the freeway. They is a literal army of people, animals, and objects crossing unwanted land and invading the space of the freeway. And, in this invasion they serve to counter the narrative

of invisibility and disorientation brought on by the freeway. The freeway is no longer transforming their communities and enacting new borders and walls, rather, *they* become the enactors of change: "In a matter of minutes, life filled a vacuum, reorganizing itself in predictable and unpredictable ways" (121). The homeless transform the freeway from the "greatest used car dealership" into a new community and one that allows them to be front and center, rather than invisible, by permitting them to be on a symbol of widespread visibility: the television screen.

The visibility of the displaced community on top of the freeways is further expanded by the aid of the television and how every aspect of this moment of transformation is captured by the media. Manzanar notes how "everything was for a brief moment fixed," (170) and "only the NewsNow van caught in the middle of this sig disaster anxiously pondered [...] the demise of its minicam batteries [...] to lose even a minute of this event would be tantamount to a transmission failure during crucial testimony in the O.J. or Menendez trials" (169). The reference to the highly televised OJ and Menendez trials demonstrates how much the homeless community has countered the narrative of invisibility. The homeless people are the new show and, just like these famous trials, they now direct the attention of all viewers as they witness the transformation. Everyone is looking at the television screen and seeing "the dignity despite the indignity" (43). Sarah Wald writes how this narrative of visibility "appears to breed momentary compassion" (86), and though it is short lived, it still allows for a momentary counter-narrative to the narrative of oppression, invisibility, and immobility.

Critics like Avila, Villa, and Pulido all demonstrate how the construction of the freeways in postwar Los Angeles was an act of spatial violence instigated by a racialized discrimination of space. The privileging of one space over others allowed for the geographic and economic makeup of 1960s Los Angeles to be radically changed by these racialized terms. In Viramontes's *Their Dogs Came with Them*, the freeways divide communities and truncate the lives of the members of their community. Freeways contribute to a domestic culture of anxiety, fear, and violence that is analogous to a culture of war. Likewise, the construction of the 710 freeway in Yamashita's *Tropic of Orange* also enacts violence by limiting the visibility of disadvantaged communities. The subsequent creation of a freeway community of people, animals, and objects that overtakes this "juggernaut" of oppression and division allows the previously unseen to be seen prominently and defiantly. Rather than allowing for a narrative that justified the construction of the freeways, Yamashita and Viramontes disavow the erasure of disadvantaged communities and instead lay bare the narrative of socio-spatial discrimination and violence on racialized bodies and spaces.

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"Whether You Act It…Or Like It…Or Not": Traumatic Performance in Cherríe Moraga's *Giving Up The Ghost*

The stage in Cherríe Moraga's *Giving Up The Ghost* is a place for performance. It is a fluid, shifting realm for fluid, shifting characters. The performances that occur in the play transcend those of actor and character to a layer beyond the stage. Moraga utilizes her characters to explore gender performance, or performativity, a concept first legitimized by notable theorist Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble.* Butler postulates that gender is not a "stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow [but rather] an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts" (2552). She ascribes the very idea of gender to an unstable and temporal identity: one that is learned, acted upon, and displayed. Masculinity and femininity are not ontological categories, but rather, social and cultural constructs that are learned and perpetuated via performance. The layered performances of Marisa—and Corky, her younger self—and Amalia, Marisa's lover, a "soft," artistic spirit, take place in front of an audience identified by Moraga simply as 'The People.' She describes this audience as "those viewing the performance or reading the play"; they operate as an external gaze, the spectators to the artist's spectacle. 'The People' represent the very institutions that frame and confine gender, but these institutions are ultimately challenged and disrupted when performance works alongside the trauma also present on Moraga's stage. *Giving Up The Ghost* "addresses the painful experience of border crossings, exile, dislocation, and re-location, as well as the mental, psychological effects these traumas exert on personal and collective identity" (Németh). Thus, both a multi-layered performance and a multi-layered trauma function on Moraga's fluid stage to destabilize, if not traumatize, a compulsory-heterosexual norm. *Giving Up the Ghost* succeeds as queer theatre because it focalizes and

venerates the oppressed and marginalized experience of queerness to challenge and confront heteronormative patriarchal institutions.

Recalling Butler's *Gender Trouble,* it is important to examine how gender functions as a learned concept to see how Moraga demonstrates gender performativity through the framing of her characters onstage. As posited by Butler, gender as a social construction is understood through exposure, absorption, and reenactment. In *Giving Up the Ghost*, Corky—Marisa in adolescence—speaks to her audience, 'The People,' narrating how she came to understand gender and gender roles:

> when I was a real little kid I useta love the movies
> every Saturday you could find me there
> my eyeballs glued to the screen
> then later my friend Arturo 'n' me
> we'd make up our own movies
> one was where we'd be out in the desert
> 'n' we'd capture these chicks 'n' hold 'em up for ransom
> we'd string 'em up 'n' make 'em take their clothes off
> "strip" we'd say to the wall all cool-like
> funny. . .now when I think about how little I was at the time
> and a girl but in my mind I was big 'n' tough 'n' a dude
> in my *mind* I had all their freedom
> the freedom to see a girl kina
> the way you see
> an animal you know? (7-8)

Corky's exposure to gender performance occurs through film, and she, alongside her friend, attempts to emulate this performance. Moraga's diction conveys a sense of eager entrapment. Her eyes are "glued" to the screen, and she regurgitates an understanding that "girls" should be associated with inferiority. The "chicks" are the ones that are strung up and held for ransom. They are objects, "animals." The men have "freedom" to view the women through a lens of objectification, and it is them who have the role with which Corky associates. There is a binary at work, even in the realm of the pre-adolescent imaginary. It is a binary that is witnessed and then reinforced through performance.

Adrienne Rich highlights this phenomenon in "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." The concept of 'compulsory heterosexuality,' as conflated with heterosexualization, was popularized by Rich, who posited that heterosexuality is an institution that functions to marginalize any and all individuals who differ from it. Simply rendered, queerness is deemed "deviant," "abhorrent," or "invisible" (1593). In analyzing how subjects of the institution—notably female subjects—are exposed to it, she states that the ideology is "beamed at [young girls] from childhood out of fairy tales, television,

films, advertising, popular songs, wedding pageantry" (1600). She argues that it is a "tool ready to the procurer's hand, and one which he does not hesitate to use" (1600). This power system threads its way through all aspects of culture, most effectively, it seems, in entertainment. Moraga exemplifies this phenomenon through Corky's monologue. Her diction conveys entertainment and excitement. She readily receives the gendered performance through televised film—a Spaghetti Western comprising sexism and heterosexualization—and she recycles it, perpetuates it further. There is an evident anomaly at work here, however. Corky's association with the masculine role of power, despite her being a female, challenges that very same binary.

Corky knows that she is different, but that is not to say that she is deviant. She understands that she has been labeled as female, despite her identification with the masculine role:

> always knew I was a girl
> deep down inside
> no matter how I tried to pull the other off
> […]
> I knew
> always knew
> I was an animal that kicked back. . . (8)

Corky accepts her label as female, but it is one with which she does not identify. Her gendered, objectifying language in ascribing females to another species—"like imagining / they got a difernt [sic] set / of blood vessels or somet'ing"—frames her as classically male in the context of the play and in the context of patriarchal gender roles (8). Thus, Corky embodies an inversion and is established as queer. She becomes, as Melissa Fitch Lockhart describes in "Queer Representations in Latino Theatre," a "representation of gender disruption" that does not adhere "to a model of compulsory heterosexuality" (68). The very notion of queer identity can then be understood to function as a mechanism both within and beyond the realm of theatre that "disrupts" the institution of heterosexualization. To echo Moraga's diction, Corky propels *Giving Up The Ghost* forward as a device that "kicks back" against compulsory heterosexuality. As posited earlier, however, it is Corky's trauma of rape coupled with her queerness that will allow this mechanism to work more effectively.

It is interesting to note how Moraga not only frames Corky as queer, but Marisa as well. Corky's queerness is exemplified through her understanding of gender and gender roles, and her emulation of said constructs. She then grows into Marisa who often shares the stage with her; two versions of one character occupying a space of temporal ambiguity. Moraga describes Marisa's physicality at different points throughout *Giving Up the Ghost,* using terms like "classically androgynous." For instance, Marisa's wardrobe in one scene is described as

being similar to "a man's suit jacket" (20). These descriptions do not have her standing as an embodiment of what is socially-recognizable as feminine. She has a "hardness" to her (8). In her dialogue, Marisa says, "It's odd being queer. It's not that you don't want a man, you just don't want a man in a man. You want a man in a woman. The woman part goes without saying" (21). Notions of desire are inverted: Moraga has created an upended character around whom the play revolves. This character can be deconstructed, per the play's language, as a man within a woman who seeks a man within a woman, and Marisa embodies what is perceived to be maleness, claiming to yearn for a man "in a woman." The duality of this identity and subsequent desire encapsulates pure inversion. Moraga traverses and blurs the border between the male-female binary. The labels "man" and "woman" are present, but switched. Keeping these claims and inversions in mind, it is important to also understand the functionality of another core character: Amalia, the woman with whom Marisa ultimately shares a romantic affair.

Amalia functions as the antithesis to Marisa's hardness. Moreover, Moraga's language when approaching her physicality is much different. Amalia selects her clothing "with an artist's eye for color and placement," and her hair is "long and worn down or loosely braided" (8). Her character is associated with color and artistry, attributes often associated with women in Western, gendered society. She wears long, classically-feminine clothing, and she has an evident emotional presence. She is framed female. In "Bridging Sexualities: Cherríe Moraga's 'Giving Up the Ghost' and Alma López's Digital Art" Sarah Cooper describes Amalia as the "femme to Marisa's butch […] a poet and spiritual being […] a fleshy, sexual yet shy, and emotionally strong woman" (71). On the surface, Amalia does not stand as the "man within a woman" whom Marisa claims to desire, but is understood as *feminine.* In her analysis of Amalia's functionality, however, Cooper writes that she is a "bridge character, both in her hybrid identity and in her unwithering love for a man she left behind in Mexico" (71). It is Amalia's connection with this indirectly-present man that allows Moraga's audience to better understand the tertiary level of inversion at play here.

Despite the physical absence of male characters in *Giving Up The Ghost*, it is their indirect presence that has a very critical effect on the play's epistemological functionality. Amalia's connection to Alejandro, her lover in Mexico, allows her to be placed in the gendered role of male. In the play's second act, Amalia recalls her relationship with Alejandro:

> Once we took a drive out of the small town he lived in, and he was terrified, like a baby. I'm driving through the mountains and he's squirming in his seat […] I was so amused to see this big macho break out into a cold sweat just from going no more than twenty miles from his home town. Pero ¡Ay, Dios! How I loved that man! I still ask myself what I saw in him, really. […] He was one of the

> cleanest people I had ever met. Took two, three baths a day. […] He was that clean. I always loved knowing that when I touched him I would find him like a saint. Pure, somehow. […] He was soft. An inside softness. (18-19)

Moraga describes Alejandro has someone embodying tenderness and purity. His fearfulness about their drive characterizes him as meek, vulnerable, and it contrasts with Amalia's as dominant. Moraga's allusions to virgin imagery, as Amalia compares Alejandro to a "saint," are classically reserved for femaleness. The binary is reversed: Alejandro is pure, while Amalia describes herself as "not clean," someone who possesses "el olor del suelo," the *smell of soil* (19). This inverted dynamic establishes Amalia's male to Alejandro's female, an inversion that Moraga utilizes to validate Amalia's role in her forthcoming relationship with Marisa. There is fluidity to her performance. She, alongside Alejandro, is queered in a context that disrupts gender norms. She is framed as feminine in one context—her relationship with Marisa—but masculine in another.

Moraga utilizes these shifts to demonstrate how *Giving Up The Ghost*, as a work of queer theatre, functions to destabilize, or traumatize, normative institutions. Character and narrative function alongside trauma, most notably the trauma surrounding Corky's rape. At the onset of the play's narrative climax, Marisa, in a faux-dialogue with her younger self, recalls the event. Corky is in seventh grade when she is lured into a classroom by the school's janitor. After a number of directives and threats by the janitor, Corky is lured into a physically-compromising position that leaves her vulnerable to sexual abuse. She describes the event unfolding:

> there is no surprise
> 'n' I open my legs wide wide open
> for the angry animal that springs outta the opening in his pants
> 'n' all I wanna do is have it over so I can go back to being myself
> 'n' a kid again (28)

In the moments before her rape, Moraga's language employs a meaning that differs from its use earlier in the play. The phallic "animal" is attributed to the male, while the very same word had been used by Corky to specify femaleness in her emulation of gender performance in the play's first act. It is just before the penetration takes place that Corky shows a desire to return to her pre-adolescence, during which she imagined herself to be in the dominant role. The inversion she lived out is, in essence, corrected through her sexual trauma, in the context of the compulsory-heterosexuality institution:

> Then he hit me with it
> […]
> 'n' I saw myself down there like a face with no opening

a face with no features
no eyes no nose no mouth
only little lines where they shoulda been
so I dint cry
I never cried as he shoved the thing
into what was supposed to be a mouth
with no teeth
with no hate
with no voice
only a hole
a hole!
[…]
He made me a hole! (29)

Corky's confessions assert that she has been forced into the role of receptacle. "The hole" is created, and her female body is realized. Marisa, in reliving the scene through Corky's monologue, concludes the scene by stating, "He only convinced me of my own name. From an early age you learn to live with it, being a woman. I just got a head start over some" (29). This observation is key in a few ways. Firstly, Marisa is reasserting that the trauma destabilized her unique and inverted role. She is forced to assume an institutionalized identity, convinced of her own name as "woman." Her understanding of women "learning to live with" their roles in society revisits what Sandra K. Soto describes in "Cherríe Moraga's Going Brown: 'Reading Like a Queer" as "insidious pervasiveness […] the exploitable fragility and illogic of heteronormativity" and patriarchal institutions that were discussed earlier (240). In recalling Rich's dissection of compulsory heterosexuality as an omnipresent, self-empowering system, Corky's assertion that her rape was merely a tool that provided her with a "head start" of understanding her confined place in society, wholly demonstrates how traumatizing these institutions really are. A heterosexual rape functions to correct queer inversion, and Marisa's understanding of this trauma as expected or, perhaps, something normalizing, conveys a dismal flaw in the oppressive apparatus that marginalizes these characters.

Physical and sexual traumas are not the only ones to exist on Moraga's stage. In "Haunted Borders, Nostalgia, and Narration: Cherríe Moraga's 'Giving Up The Ghost': A Stage Play in Three Portraits," Lenke Németh discusses the trauma that can accompany the occupation of a new physical space and, by extent, one's removal from the home. Amalia struggles with the loss of her connection to her homeland, Mexico. Alejandro, the only man she ever loved, was from Mexico, and she conflates the two: "I was crazy about [him]. But what I loved was not so much him. . .[…] I loved the way he had made Mexico my home again" (19). Similarly, it is reasonable to assume that her attraction to Marisa can also be seen as one that stems from this conflation. Marisa reminds

Amalia of her home. When they first meet, Amalia notes, through Marisa's art, that she had a pervasive "nostalgia for the land she had never seen […] In her face, her drawings, her love of the hottest sand by the sea" (17). Her strong desire for her homeland rings heavily in her emotive words. When Amalia finally does have the opportunity to return to Mexico—crossing the borderlands—in the hopes of finding revitalization, she discovers that Alejandro had died in her long absence. The emotional trauma she feels manifests itself physically. Amalia says:

> When I learned of Alejandro's death, I died too. I just started bleeding and the blood wouldn't stop, not until his ghost had passed through me or was born in me. […] Lying there in the cool dampness of my own blood, I felt my womanhood leave me. And it was Alejandro being born in me. […] And coming from my mouth was his voice. (24)

The physical and emotional trauma that Amalia experiences in this scene stem not only from the loss of her love, but of her home, and it is through these traumas that Moraga plays with gendered identity again. While Amalia bleeds, she claims that Alejandro is born in her, their identities merge and she gives him voice: "'¡Ay mi Marisa! ¡Te deseo! ¡Te deseo!' […] Marisa!" Moraga is crafting the feminine male. This inversion is empowered through the trauma of separation, but it is also amplified. Moraga is, perhaps, positing that trauma is necessary for the legitimization of disruptive mechanisms. Just as Corky's rape conveys that the institutions abound are traumatizing to the queer experience, Amalia's traumas allow for changes that could then, in turn, dismantle these institutions. Trauma functions as a tool of inversion, and Moraga is demonstrating how it can be used against the very powers that employ it.

One must then consider the role of 'The People' in Moraga's *Giving Up the Ghost*. They are an audience, a readership, and an inclusive gaze. They may be people of varying genders or identities, but they may also be the embodiment of the institutions pervading Moraga's stage: compulsory heterosexuality and patriarchy. Quite literally, they are the male gaze, or the manifestation of the self-propelling system. In "Crossing Yet Another Border: The Critique of Compulsory Heterosexuality in the Novels of Julia Álvarez," Cherie Meacham utilizes Butler's assertion that "heterosexualization"—compulsory heterosexuality—requires and thus enforces the creation of a male-female binary: "the expressive attributes of [what is] 'male' and 'female'" (136). This requirement, and by extent this institutionalization of the male-female binary, is an example of a power system that is self-perpetuating. It requires specification—that is, an othering of queer individuals through marginalization and labeling—in order to then police them. The creation of a male and female label thus allows for an opportunity to identify heterosexuality as normal, and, as such, these institutions, through exposure and performance, are indefinitely

self-sustaining. Conclusively, Moraga's inclusion of 'The People' as a character(s) in *Giving Up The Ghost* is important because the gaze must be identified in order to be confronted. The inversion of gender roles and the mechanism of trauma cultivate an awareness that the systems in place are damaging and constraining.

Such is the intention of queer theatre. Moraga's *Giving Up The Ghost,* through its understanding of gender performativity and use of traumatic events operates within the institutions that define and confine queerness in order to challenge them. It is Corky's queerness that foundationally destabilizes the gender roles at play, and it is the inversion of male and female representation, a pervasive fluidity between character, time, and space, that confuse and blur the figurative borders between both labels and lands. Moraga's use of the traumatic mechanism to demonstrate the toxicity of the compulsory-heterosexual patriarchy help shape an awareness for the necessity of change in her spectators, her people. She creates a performance to inhibit the further perpetuating of gender performance and exposes trauma to ultimately traumatize and destabilize an oppressive institution.

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Food for Thought: How Sustenance Acts as Symbol in Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*

The consumption of food, though required to sustain human life, is often culturally and societally dictated. We eat at times deemed appropriate, consume certain foods at those particular times, and, often, eat specific amounts of food thought to be suitable. The whole of our eating is regulatory and emblematic of our adherence to behavioral norms. What's more, our eating is also dictated by class and subsequently becomes representative of one's stature in society; what one can afford to eat creates the standard, an invisible societal division. Therefore, when one strays from these norms and standards, it showcases a deviance, a resistance, a rebellion—both mental and physical. In her critical essay, Caroline J. Smith appropriately asserts, "Consistently in *The Bell Jar*, Plath expresses Esther's anxiety through food moments" (4). It is in these "food moments" that Plath covertly—or perhaps very obviously—presents to the reader Esther's perceptions. I will argue, then, that Plath uses food in order to track and illuminate Esther's ambivalence toward the gender expectations and contradictions of 1950s America—expectations and contradictions that ultimately manifest themselves, within Esther, as mental illness throughout the novel.

Esther references food within the very first page of *The Bell Jar*, situating its significance at the forefront of the novel. Esther states that her obsession with the execution of the Rosenbergs is reminiscent of a prior infatuation she had upon seeing a cadaver for the first time, and that "for weeks afterward, the cadaver's head—or what there was left of it—floated up behind [her] eggs and bacon at breakfast" (1). Here, a fragmented dead body infiltrates her first meal of the day. Where Esther is meant to be fueling herself for the day's ventures,

instead she is envisioning an inedible and undesirable entity alongside her sustenance. As Diane S. Bonds suggests,

> In the first half of Plath's novel, both commitment to the separative self and the effects of that commitment are woven into the text through the pervasive imagery of dismemberment. This imagery suggests Esther's alienation and fragmentation as well as a thwarted longing for relatedness with others and for a reconnection of dismembered part to whole. (50)

This food moment sets the stage for what will be Esther's main dilemma throughout the novel, and in this way, food and Esther's relation to it become wildly demonstrative of her mental state. As Bonds contends, Esther is fragmented, and she sees that fragmentation mirrored back at her as the body parts float up behind her breakfast. But, I'd argue it is no accident that Plath couples this scene of fragmentation with food; the two work in conjunction, because Esther's relationship to food is quite revelatory as it tracks and illuminates her idiosyncrasies in 1950s America. In fact, Marilyn Boyer argues that:

> because the novel deals with Esther Greenwood's life in the 1950s, it is not too difficult to comprehend that before feminism's heyday… Plath was assessing the plight of the young woman artist at mid-century who was attempting to overcome the values of domesticity in a uni-polar milieu. (200)

Plath's utilization of food, then, seems even more purposeful in that, not only does it highlight human behavior and showcase transformation it also foregrounds domesticity. Esther is at odds with the idea of cooking—a stereotypical domestic and female duty—yet she loves to eat. I'd argue, then, that Plath strategically uses food to yet again represent one of the contradictions that so perturbs Esther.

Shortly after relaying the information about the floating body parts, Esther admits, in parentheticals, that it is around this time that she knew "something was wrong with [her]" (2). Esther realizes that envisioning the cadaver alongside her breakfast is off, and she comprehends that she is not acting as expected. What's more, Esther's interest in death is highlighted in this scene, as it couples itself with the thing—food—which is required to sustain life. Esther's curiosity when it comes to executions and cadavers contradicts the societally established "normal" behavior for a woman in the 1950s, and Esther deems it as being emblematic of a problem within her. It is here, in the very first pages of the novel, that the reader is able to see how the expectations of the times, and their subsequent contradictions, force Esther to perceive herself as different, to strive to act "normal." Smith asserts that "[t]hroughout *The Bell Jar*, Esther preoccupies herself with performing 'appropriately.' For Esther, the only way to be accepted

by others is to conform to what society thinks a woman in the 1950s should be" (10). Esther's performance begins immediately, and it showcases itself through the various "food moments"—moments that if not carefully considered might be passed over.

Next, we encounter Esther out on the town with Doreen, ordering drinks. She states, "ordering drinks always floored me, I didn't know whiskey from gin and never managed to get anything I really liked the taste of" (10). Though not technically considered food, drinks, like food, are consumed, and thus have the ability to reveal behavioral consistencies/inconsistencies. In this particular situation, Esther finds herself constantly dissatisfied. She orders a vodka plain on the basis of an ad she'd seen once before wherein the vodka appeared "clear and pure as water" (10). Esther's beverage choice and reasoning is representative of her initial desire to conform. She chooses the drink because if she orders anything that strays away from the advertisement, she fears she "might make a fool of [her]self" (10). Here, we see how the ideals of 1950s America both encourage agency, but promote a feeling of foolishness if/when that agency is "improperly" enacted; ironically, there is a looming sense of pseudo-freedom in a country that so fervently promotes the ideal, and this contradiction is what, time and time again, forms the bell jar under which Esther ultimately finds herself.

Esther also wants to appear both knowledgeable and decisive when choosing her drink, but when she finds herself constantly discontented with her choices, we gauge a disconnect between Esther's longings and what's expected of her. As Smith states:

> Esther may not be the most reliable of narrators. Rather, however, than reading [her] inconsistencies as a flaw in Plath's text, I believe that these contradictions point directly to the conflicted nature of Esther's character. . . domesticity in post-war America was never 'prescribed and stable,' and we begin to also see the ways in which Esther herself is never 'consistent' or 'monolithic;' rather, her conflicted identity is a product of her social and historical circumstances. (14)

With that said, Esther, I'd argue, exists in a constant state of contradiction that is characteristic of the times, and we, as readers, are able to see that more vividly through her consumption. And, what's more, the fact that Esther chooses her drink on the basis of an advertisement she'd seen calls attention to the idea of consumer culture, the ways in which consumption seeks to define the individual, and the contradictions that it manifests while doing so; these contradictions often result in a loss of self, not a gaining of one, and the reader begins to see Esther's gradual fragmentation turned insanity due to these incongruities. Smith continues her argument by stating,

> It is advertisements like those for L'Aiglon clothing that seemingly haunt Plath's protagonist. Though the advertisement ostensibly promises readers 'the absolute anything, the totally everything' that they want, the photograph seems to contradict that promise. The juxtaposition of the woman's clothing. . . and the egg, egg beater, and mixing bowl seems almost ridiculous. The subtext of the advertisement, then, is that such an achievement is not easy; in fact, it's almost absurd. (9)

The vodka ad from which Esther takes her beverage inspiration encourages her to consume; it presents to her a solitary drink "standing in the middle of a snowdrift, in a blue light" (12). The glass of vodka in the ad, in its solitary stature, suggests a sense of self-awareness, a sureness in one's individuality, and subsequently the ad boasts a certain level of accompanied confidence upon consumption. The glass of vodka is positioned in the middle of a mound of snow, "standing," as though personified and prevailing. Yet the subtext of the ad also suggests that a full glass will inevitably be empty, a snowdrift will inevitably melt, and a blue light (if we interpret that light as suggesting nightfall) will eventually turn black. So, when Esther begins to drink the vodka, and she admits "[it] made me feel powerful and godlike" (12), we, the reader, know these feelings are only temporary and subsequently absurd. The promise of the advertisement is inconsistent, fleeting, a paradox, and again we see Esther fall prey to the contradictions of 1950s America.

Following the drink scene, we get what is arguably the most poignant "food moment" within the text, wherein Esther binges at the *Ladies' Day* banquet, and subsequently purges shortly thereafter. This portion of the novel is heavily laden with food imagery and sustenance symbolism. Therefore, I will work my way through the scene chronologically, beginning with Esther's description of the food available at the banquet, which suitably commences chapter three of the novel (Plath's tendency to place food at the forefront of several of the novel's chapters further justifies my argument). Esther professes to be in a state of starvation as she describes the "yellow-green avocado pear halves stuffed with crabmeat and mayonnaise, and platters of rare roast beef and cold chicken, and every so often a cut-glass bowl heaped with black caviar" (24). Her use of hyperbolic language, such as "stuffed" and "heaped" (as opposed to "filled;" the point is, for example, "avocado pear halves with crabmeat and mayonnaise" would have sufficed. The inflated language is intentional on Plath's part in order to showcase Esther's skewed perception; the larger-than-life descriptions of food are a projection of Esther's psyche), is representative of the intensity of Esther's cravings. She sees the food as exaggerated and thus misconstrues its capacity to fulfill her. Here, we as readers see both Esther's affinity for food and how it powerfully links itself to her mental state.

Next, Esther states that, though she's unsure why, she "love[s] food more than just about anything else" and "no matter how much [she] eat[s], [she] never puts on any weight," save one instance (24). As Renee Dowbnia states, "Esther cannot fully conceal her differences from the other contest winners. Unlike all the other girls who are trying to 'reduce,' Esther is unable to gain weight" (573). In the 1950s, much like now, the feminine body was associated with petiteness and fragility, and women strived to both obtain and maintain such a figure. Therefore, for Esther not to possess this same concern dissociates her from her peers and thus others her. So, while Esther naturally adheres to the societal expectations of her body, she is still disconnected from her surroundings in that she doesn't take interest or necessity in "reducing" like the majority of her counterparts; in fact, it would seem that Esther is constantly and consciously doing the converse. Here, quite blatantly, the gender expectations and contradictions of 1950s America manifest themselves through Esther's relationship to food.

Shortly thereafter, Esther begins to assess the various locations of the caviar bowls, calculating ways in which she can hoard the majority for herself. She then piles her plate with chicken and caviar, making sure to eat at a pace that will align her finishing time with those of the other girls eating only salads and grapefruit juice, and finally she eats the avocado and crabmeat concoction. As Smith asserts:

> Esther's desperation in this scene to feed herself is reminiscent of her earlier fear in the fig tree passage; it is as if fearing starvation, Esther attempts to procure any means of sustenance possible, attempting to disguise her unusual eating habits so as not to draw attention to herself. (15)

In this scene, Esther is quite conscious of her otherness. Earlier in the text, she professes to not knowing why she loves food so much and, inherent in that statement, is a recognition of one's own peculiarity. Then, we see that her eating patterns are vastly different from those of the girls around her, and simultaneously Esther begins to realize that she is at odds with what is expected of her. Dowbnia proclaims that:

> [Esther's] violent and uncontrollable behavior toward food, which she sees as something to 'lay out' and 'tackle,' places her outside the traditional gender role of femininity, further alienating her from the other girls and the popular image of domestic housewife. After she 'licked her plate clean,' Esther then finished both her own and Betsy's dessert . . . From the heaping helping of caviar to the double desserts, Esther's binge demonstrates . . . her lack of self-worth. (574)

It is this lack of self-worth, I'd argue, that is directly linked to the gender expectations and contradictions of 1950s America, wherein Esther is unable to adhere to the expectations and befuddled by the contradictions. She longs for fulfillment, often pseudo "filling" herself with food, yet battles with America's desire to pigeonhole her. This confusion, then, begins to manifest itself as mental illness. With no desire to be just one thing, yet without the ability to be all things, Esther becomes numb and unfulfillable.

Following the scene in which Esther binge eats, she, like all the other girls present at the *Ladies' Day* banquet, becomes ill. She vomits violently and "[r]ather than being angry about her food poisoning by *Ladies' Day* . . . Esther enjoys the bliss of her purge and she exclaims, 'I felt purged and holy and ready for a new life'" (Dowbnia 575). It would seem odd, at first, that Esther would feel pure after vomiting, an act often associated with a messy trajectory. However, her feeling of purity is derived from her knowing that her overindulgences were impure or, more appropriately, not "normal." Smith argues in the same vein, stating, "To Esther, purging seems to be the necessary and inevitable result of her disordered eating . . . [h]aving stepped outside of the boundaries of society, Esther must now be punished for her transgression" (16). What's more, Esther's propensity to purge is emblematic of insatiability, and I would argue that this insatiability is more mental than physical. 1950s America is unable to fulfill Esther's desires for her future, it possesses no flexibility whereby Esther might stretch beyond its expectations, and subsequently Esther becomes stuck, in both a pattern of binging and purging and a bell jar, her mind.

Several more "food moments" occur throughout the novel, but they deal less with Esther's urges to consume, and more with her inability to do so. When Esther invokes the image of the fig tree with all its fruits representing various opportunities to her, she starves to death per her unwillingness or inability to choose just one fig. The figs subsequently rot and Esther dies, unfulfilled. This scene is wildly emblematic—perhaps too much so—of the gender expectations and contradictions of 1950s. On the one hand, a woman was expected to marry, make children, cook, clean, and uphold the "angel of the house" ideal. On the other hand, however, if a woman was to choose an alternate path, say, her career, she was extremely limited in her options. Magazines of the time "subtly discouraged women's navigation beyond the private sphere of the home," yet possessed taglines, like that of *Mademoiselle* magazine, "The magazine for smart young women" (4). For Esther, picking any fig would have been a loss, equating the choosing of a particular fig to her subsequent starvation regardless.

Later in the novel, Esther cooks a hot dog to perfection by observing those around her, but instead of eating it, she buries it. This scene can be interpreted as a metaphor for the stifling of Esther's appetite for life. She no longer craves sustenance, but she continues to adhere to societal norms so as not to reveal her crumbling disposition. As Smith aptly asserts, "Plath uses Esther's interactions

with her food to not only signify her severe psychological distress but to also emphasize how ingrained her compulsion to mimic expected behavior actually is" (17).

Additionally, as Esther looks out at the ocean in this scene, she describes the water as being a "bright blue plate" and she sees in the distance "a big round gray rock, like the upper half of an egg" (155). She later swims out to the rock, intending to drown herself. Here, food acts as a beacon of relief for Esther, if she can only make it to the "egg," she'll finally have peace; Esther craves the rock, longs to consume the "egg," so that the ocean might also consume her. Esther also becomes sustenance in this scene as she is laid out on the "bright blue plate" that is the sea, and in this way, we see a food chain begin to form. As Esther is consumed by the expectations and contradictions of 1950s America, so too is she constantly consuming—whether it be the physical consumption of food, consumption of commodities, or the propensity to envision her world as food, as something to be consumed.

Once under the care of Doctor Nolan, Esther begins to plump up from the insulin injections, and her appetite returns. She associates receiving breakfast with not having to undergo electroshock therapy, and thus food becomes associated with "wellness." Even here, when it would seem that Esther is "recovering," Plath employs food in order to convey to the reader Esther's skewed perception. Upon realizing that her breakfast hasn't been delivered, Esther inquires about the "mix-up," and, when she sees the lineup of food trays, states, "[a]ll I had to do was reach out and claim my tray, and the world would be perfectly normal" (210). Esther's idea of normalcy is directly linked to her relationship with food, and it's in this scene that we see how food functions as a symbol for Esther's potential insanity. If, as Esther claims, obtaining her food tray has the potential to return things to normal, then we also see how Esther's idea of normal has been effected. She is in a sanitarium, is receiving electroshock therapy, and has suicidal proclivities, yet it is the food that has the power to restore order to her world. Therefore, if food equals order, then starvation equals chaos. Subsequently, I'd argue that Esther is figuratively starving from her inability to be fulfilled by 1950s America, and thus her psyche is in a state of total pandemonium.

There are various other references to food made throughout the novel, and they all seem to function similarly, as flavorsome representations of what 1950s America expected of women, and how these particular expectations often presented confusing contradictions that both stifled and unhinged many women. Smith suggests that we should read Esther as:

> a woman with a confused sense of identity, informed by the conflicted, historically rooted messages she encounters, overcome by a tremendous fear of losing all the opportunities that 'beckoned and winked' and ultimately starving to death. (21)

While I do agree with Smith, I suggest that we read Esther as merely a woman, both consuming and consumed. As Linda W. Wagner contends, "*The Bell Jar* must be read as the story of that inevitable clash, a dulled and dulling repetition. . . a testimony to the repressive cultural mold. . . *The Bell Jar* moves far beyond being Sylvia Plath's autobiography" (67).

However, I believe Plath's food-play is much deeper than this essay or the essays it's informed by suggest. That's to say, although *The Bell Jar* might go beyond autobiography, let's not forget that Sylvia Plath killed herself in an oven, only after having put out milk and bread for her kids.

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Those Who Play With Axes Will Beheaded for an Accident: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the Dangers of Romanticizing

Sir Gawain has become a central character in medieval literature as well as in the Arthurian Legend. In texts that feature Gawain as the main protagonist, such as *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight,* Gawain displays characteristics that allow him to cultivate an essentially unblemished repertoire as a knight that surpasses those of other members in King Arthur's court. Mark Miller argues that Gawain's positive identity stems from "his courage and self-control in the face of danger and death, his commitment to his *trawthe* (oath), and his commitment to Arthur to stand for him, and in so doing to stand for the virtue of Camelot" (216). Carl Martin builds on the list of Gawain's accomplishments by calling him the "quintessential courtier" and stating, "Gawain alone demonstrates that, despite the court's initial lapses, Arthur's following can sustain and reproduce true courtly ideals" (318, 313). In accordance with Martin and Miller, Richard J. Moll explains that none of the Arthurian knights is so set in his role as the "courteous and amorous" Sir Gawain, who repeatedly excels in courtesy and in avoiding sexual temptation (793-794). Similarly, Amy Ingram agrees that one of Gawain's prominent depictions is as a hero that is worthy of emulation (215). While Gawain is often the model for other characters in the text, scholarship often neglects how the characterization of Arthur within Gawain romances reveals information about proper behavior. Through the characterization of Arthur and his court, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* reveals the dangers of romanticizing because it focuses on entertainment at the expense of other important aspects in the narrative.[1]

SGGK romanticizes violence and the beheading game[2] at the expense of the Green Knight's positive attributes. Throughout the narrative, King Arthur

1 Henceforth, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is abbreviated as *SGGK.*

2 In short, the "beheading game" refers to a common plot in a select group of medieval texts where characters

is depicted as enjoying pointless violence and engaging in excessive behaviors. Arthur will not begin the feast until he has been told a tale about some "perilous thing", diction that connotes a negative and dangerous feat (93). The Green Knight enters and appears to be the solution to Arthur's boredom. However, the Green Knight makes it exceedingly clear that he is not seeking a fight when he speaks "… I approach you in peace, seeking no battle" (295). Despite his declaration, Arthur still attempts to promote violence and responds, "'If you seek courteous knight,/ A combat without armor,/ You will not lack a fight'" (276-278). Can readers blame Arthur for expecting the Green Knight to pursue a battle? Based on the romance tradition, readers are positioned to speculate that the Green Knight will demand a fight in Arthur's court. Additionally, the narrator romanticizes the Green Knight and accentuates his monstrous and violent characteristics. Despite his lack of armor and his holly branch, which Carl Martin views as a symbol of life and peace (311-312), the main focus resides on the Green Knights "monstrously huge" axe (208). His lack of armor and the holly branch are mentioned in a total of five lines,[3] but Kathryn Walls notes that the axe is "elaborated upon, and is described in great detail" (13). The narrator takes thirteen lines[4] to describe the axe and characterizes the Green Knight in a dangerous manner that yields support for Arthur's assumptions. Yet, at the same time, the narrator's presentation strips the Green Knight of his dynamic role as both a protagonist and an antagonist by romanticizing his dangerous features rather than his declaration for peace. The narrator's unbalanced description of the Green Knight makes his danger appealing to both Arthur and the reader and traps him in an inescapable role as the antagonist.

The text soon romanticizes Gawain's axe to reveal Arthur's irrational desire for an amusing fight. After the beheading game is over, Arthur tells Gawain to hang up his axe where "… it was hung above the dais, on a piece of tapestry,/ Where everyone might gaze on it as a wonder,/ And the living proof of this marvelous tale" (478-480). Walls notes that Arthur seems to want the grotesque object removed from the scene (13); however, I vehemently disagree with Walls and believe that Arthur is literally and metaphorically placing violence on a pedestal by appreciating the axe. The previous passage depicts how Arthur romanticizes the axe and presents no hints that Arthur would wish to remove it due to danger. On the contrary, Arthur is actively seeking trouble in the poem. He absurdly requests that the axe, which just drew blood and beheaded the Green Knight, be placed above the dais for the whole court to admire. The diction of "wonder" glorifies the abhorrent beheading and memorializes it as a "marvelous tale". Arthur strips the beheading of its violence and glamorizes the deed by deliberately placing the weapon in a location where it can be appreciated

compete to behead one another; however, often times, one character manages to survive the beheading with the aid of supernatural forces thus driving the action of the rest of the text.

3 Lines 203-207.

4 Lines 208-220.

by himself and his entire court regardless of the axe's gruesome function as a successful decapitation weapon.

Arthur's action of romanticizing the axe and beheading game transforms both into nothing more than a memorable account and corresponds with the conclusion of the poem when Gawain's righteous journey devolves into nothing more than a mere entertaining story. After traveling to the Green Chapel and undergoing experiences that teach him the importance of acting chivalric and avoiding excess, Gawain returns to Arthur's court to have his personal accomplishments discredited. The narrator describes Gawain's recounting as "a marvelous story" (2494). The narrator does not recognize Gawain's growth as a knight nor understand the importance of overcoming the "cowardice and covetousness" that Gawain clearly acknowledges he learns as a result of his quest (2508). Arthur and his court's actions parallel the narrator's beliefs, "The king consoles the knight, and the whole court/ Laughs loudly about it…" (2513-2514). Laughter seems like an inappropriate response after hearing about a metamorphosing story and aligns Arthur and the court's beliefs with the narrator's claim that Gawain is telling them an enjoyable story that is nothing more than a pleasurable account. Arthur, his court, and the narrator deprive Gawain of his growth as a knight by appreciating his journey for its entertainment value instead of as a life altering experience.

The end of the text destroys the meaningful symbolism of the green girdle by changing it into an identifying marker. The girdle, a symbol of Gawain's lessons, achievements, and future self becomes a glamorous fashion accessory for Arthur and his court when Arthur proclaims that "Each member of the brotherhood, should wear such a belt,/ A baldric sign of bright green crosswise on the body,/ Similar to Sir Gawain's and worn for his sake" (2516-2518). The court adopts the girdle as a fashion statement that draws attention to the wearer's status as a member of the knightly brotherhood because of its "bright green" appearance. The fact that the girdle is "similar" to Gawain's girdle suggests the manipulation of its appearance and thus demonstrates that the court altered the girdle to adhere to their desires. The item that once symbolized Gawain's achievements and internal growth now serves as a new gaudy fashion trend for the knight's brotherhood. Bonnie Lander accurately summarizes the misconstruing of Gawain's personal attachment to the girdle when she argues that "Arthur and his courtiers dismiss Gawain's moral seriousness – a quality unfamiliar to court protocol – and playfully adopt the girdle themselves, as part of the court's dress to be worn in his name" (42). Continuing on this point, the text finally exhausts the girdle's meaning by detaching it completely from Gawain. The poem focuses on how other knights continue to wear the piece, "And whoever afterwards wore it was always honored,/ As is set down in the most reputable books of romance" (2520-2521). The girdle no longer provides honor for Gawain, but instead provides honor to any knight that wears it despite

their absence in Gawain's journey and experiences. The girdle becomes associated with romances rather than a particular character, thus highlighting the court's preference for entertainment rather than Gawain's personal achievements.

The poem utilizes the foundation story of Britain to demonstrate the flawed cycle that results from romanticizing. From the beginning, the poem describes the foundation stories of many nations, including Brutus' establishment of Britain, in order to entertain the reader and institute a grandiose tone. The poem ends with the creation story of Britain again and brings the text full circle. Sir Gawain's journey becomes trapped in between the romanticized story of Britain's establishment, solidifying a cyclical pattern that leads from once romance to the other and back again. While texts often progress in a linear movement that shows the development of characters as they overcome tasks, *SGGK* robs Gawain of his achievements as a result of Arthur and his court. Arthur and his court pay no attention to Gawain's personal achievements or growth and instead romanticize his entire adventure and focus on their own amusement. The cyclical form of the poem warns that over-romanticizing leads to a trap and repetitive cycle that fixates on entertainment and bereaves characters of their growth. The repetitive cycle suggests stagnant movement and no forward progress in the narrative for Arthur and his court, who strip the girdle of meaning as well as divorce Gawain from his accomplishments.

In *SGGK*, Arthur and his court's characterization reveal that romanticizing fixates on entertainment at the cost of other aspects in the poem. Arthur and the narrator romanticize violence and the beheading game by focusing on the Green Knight's presumed desire for a fight and his deadly axe. While Arthur focuses on these aspects for the sake of his own entertainment before dinner, he ignores the Green Knight's positive characteristics, including his suggestion for peace. Arthur continues to romanticize violence when he orders Gawain's axe to be raised above the dais. This action demonstrates his appreciation for violence as entertainment and separates decapitation from its gruesome and deadly nature. The beheading game becomes a fantastic story where violence is valued for its amusement, not questioned for its futility. Similarly, Arthur and the court laugh when Gawain shares his story about his journey, revealing that they only appreciate Gawain's adventure for its entertainment. Arthur and the court continue on to destroy the meaningful symbolism of the green girdle that depicts Gawain's achievements and growth. They manipulate it by transforming it into an amusing fashion statement that marks the wearer's identity as a knight. They discredit Gawain by earning honor from simply wearing the girdle instead of participating in Gawain's achievements that originally provided the girdle with symbolic meaning. The poem associates the girdle with romances and stresses its entertainment over Gawain's achievements. Additionally, the poem begins and ends with the story of Britain's founding in order to reveal the poem's cyclical nature and portrays how romanticizing traps texts in a cycle that renders

a character's progress irrelevant to the narrative. While Gawain does have a successful journey, Arthur and the court divorce Gawain's accomplishments from him by concentrating on their own merriment. They display no growth because they, along with the narrator, remain caught in the negative cycle propagated by romanticizing. *SGGK* reveals the danger of romanticizing various situations for the sake of entertainment and exhibits how dynamic aspects of narratives often remain overlooked as a result.

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Like Watching Neural Machinery: William Faulkner's Literary Redress of Trauma in *As I Lay Dying*, or The Autophenomenological Achievement of Darl Bundren's Consciousness

Defined by its notable form, fifty-nine sections by fifteen different first-person narrators, William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* is a literary pilgrimage through the subtleties of consciousness and the conscious perceptions of consciousnesses, prompting the reader to discern objective phenomena through various subjective lenses. The second child of the Bundrens and most prominent narrator of the novel, Darl, presents the most compelling trajectory within a philosophy of mind context insofar as the idiosyncrasies of his being are determined by the dexterity with which he navigates spheres of consciousness. Darl's trajectory throughout the novel is commonly characterized as a descent into madness, as a tragic downfall toward self-estrangement induced by some form of mental disruption, perhaps schizophrenia, caused by post-traumatic stress disorder, but although Darl is trapped in a labyrinthine world of consciousness he fails to escape, his evolution is not marked solely by failure. Indeed, his eventual ability to perceive himself from a first and third-person point of view demonstrates an ascent into expertise of his own mind, a movement toward an understanding of his mind's operation beyond the finitude of a first-person perception of oneself. This achievement allows Darl to accept his mental and physical confinement through a newfound apprehension of the humor inherent in life and humanity, and in so doing he exemplifies the existentialist plane of tragicomedy the novel operates in, the whole character arc manifesting, in the end, Faulkner's expressed interest in redressing the seemingly hapless condition of a mind burdened by trauma.

In order to comprehend the distinctive development of a character characterized by a vigorous connection with his mind and that of others, it shall be sensible to delineate what manner of being Darl is–what are his problems,

his goals? His preoccupation with modes of perception is evident at the very outset of the novel as he says, "anyone watching us from the cottonhouse can see Jewel's frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own" (3). This opening displays an economy of words, but it is replete with philosophical insight, establishing not only the tension between the siblings but the phenomenological layers, the experiences of consciousness, the novel will go on to engage with. It is clear that the first section is a first-person account of Darl's experience, yet he is immediately concerned with the third-person view, the view "from the cottonhouse." Daniel Dennett believes it is prudent to scientifically study consciousness by focusing on both the phenomenology of one's own experience, what he calls *autophenomenology,* and the third-person perception of the phenomenology of another person, what he calls *heterophenomenology* (351). Darl, then, is a character concerned with this plurality of phenomenological perspectives, a concern that goes on to shape his trajectory in the novel as he seeks to supersede human limits of consciousness comprehension.

Besides the mystifying effect of the literary style in which Darl narrates, evidence that he may be afflicted with a mental condition, a feature that renders him unique among the characters, appears early in the novel. In his third section, he speaks of voices he hears and compares them to the motion of the wind: "they sound as though they were speaking out of the air about your head" (13). The hearing of voices in one's head is a prevalent enough phenomenon in any normally conscious person that it may not seem alarming, simply a feature of the first-person perception of oneself, but what sets Darl apart from a normally conscious person is the actuality that is revealed as the novel progresses– the voices Darl hears are the authentic consciousnesses of other characters. A standard feature of schizophrenia is the afflicted person's sensation of having thoughts in her head that are not her own thoughts, not of her making and with unknown origins. William Seager reports accounts of patients that claim to feel that their minds are being used as a medium for the thoughts of a third party (152). Faulkner does not plainly reveal to the reader that Darl is a World War I veteran until the last few pages of the novel, but Susan Scott Parrish points out that Anse's first section contains a subtle affirmation of the fact: "Anse tells us, his eyes were 'full of the land all the time.' Darl 'was alright' because the 'the land laid up-and-down ways then' but once 'that ere road came and switched the land around longways' and the law 'threaten[ed] me out of him,' Darl acquired a pair of eyes that nature had 'run out of'" (79). Anse, therefore, blames the drafting of Darl and his traumatic experience in the war for his current mental condition, meaning that Darl did not always hear voices and browse through the minds of others. This is evident when Darl thinks back to his childhood and the time he and Cash wondered what Jewel was up to when disappearing at night: "I wondered who the girl was. I thought of all I knew that it might be, but I couldn't say for sure" (75). There was, of course, no girl involved, only

a horse, and one can imagine that the later extrasensory Darl would not have the same trouble working out the mystery. Thus, it is established early in the novel that Darl exhibits symptoms of schizophrenia probably brought about by post-traumatic stress disorder; therefore, any analysis of his consciousness must grapple with the anomalies this condition might produce, especially the effects on Darl's existential search for himself.

Faulkner, in fact, voiced interest in redressing trauma and in what is possible in a fictional depiction of a traumatized mind affected by what a "healthy" or "normal" person might deem a disorder. In a class conference at the University of Virginia, Faulkner was asked how it was possible for Darl to narrate Addie's death while he was away with Jewel. Faulkner responded, "who can say just how much of super-perceptivity the–a mad person might not have? It may not be so, but it's nice to think that there is some compensation for madness. . . He has something of clairvoyance, maybe, a capacity for telepathy" (192). Faulkner goes on to call his bequeathing Darl with clairvoyance "a trick. . . a permissible trick" (193). A fiction author's use of a clairvoyance trick–especially in a novel with a multifaceted concern with perception–is highly appropriate because the theory that the first-person perception of oneself is a trick, a user-illusion, has become instrumental among philosophy of mind scholars. We need not veer toward the nebulous terrains of mysticism or psychical occultism to untangle Darl's phenomenology, for the philosophical and neuroscientific inquiries of consciousness are sufficiently riddled with enigmatic notions. Dennett believes that the user-illusion of consciousness in both auto and heterophenomenology works much the same way that a computer or smartphone does, presenting the user with an interface that facilitates the use of the device, the interface being only a designed illusion that hides the convoluted binary details taking place behind-the-scenes (341).

Darl's trajectory in the novel displays an increasing concern for the background process of the mind, the one not accessible to the conscious person. Since his mental condition has supplied him with a heightened awareness of the nature of being, his objective becomes the advancement from the heterophenomenological understanding of other minds to the understanding of his own mind, an understanding that can only be made possible by procuring a coherent impression of the mind's inner workings, a form of omniscience. The ability to apprehend other minds in order to, as it were, run their software through his hardware, comes easy and early for Darl. His narration of Addie's death while not present is a spectacular performance in heterophenomenology, a special clairvoyant phenomenology, for he is capable of a third-person perception from a distance without any direct experience of the subjects he describes. The entire repertoire of an omniscient narrator's diegetic implements for handling the physical and mental proceedings of a scene are displayed here. Darl details the death scene deed by deed, shifts back to describe the scenery around him

and Jewel, returns to the actions back at home, sneaks into Dewey Dell's mind to explain her anxieties around Peabody, quotes Anse about his orthodontic ambitions, and finally tells the ever recalcitrant Jewel, who stands beside him, that his mother is dead. Darl does not display the same finesse, however, with autophenomenology, with the interpretation and definition of himself; instead, when introspectively exploring for selfhood, he combats and recalibrates language, shuffling through various tenses of the verb *to be* in an attempt to force himself, layer by layer, into a fathomable existence:

> I don't know what I am. I don't know if I am or not. . . . since sleep is is-not and rain and wind are *was*, it is not. Yet the wagon *is*, because when the wagon is *was*, Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel *is*, so Addie Bundren must be. And then I must be, or I could not empty myself for sleep in a strange room. And so if I am not emptied yet, I am *is*. (47)

For Stephen Ross, this passage validates the claim that Darl ultimately fails to comprehend himself and is "left with only the despair of not knowing the true nature of his existence" (45). He interprets Darl's last section which includes a shift to a third-person point of view as the final defeat of a being whose sanity was already slipping when he tried to reason his existence. For Michel Delville, this passage epitomizes the theory of skepticism toward language that Addie outlines in her section, "words being destructive entities depriving life of substance and motion" (65-6), and thus Darl's failure is rooted in his insistence to use an inadequate medium to make existential progress. Delville believes that "all of the Bundren characters except Darl seem to be relatively successful in dealing with Addie's absence" (62). These conclusions are shortsighted for three reasons. First, they disregard how it could be that Faulkner's intention to redress trauma develops throughout the entire novel and not just through the heterophenomenological narration in Darl's early sections. Second, they fail to recognize how the "I am *is*" speech compares to Darl's later existential speeches that demonstrate a formal and conceptual progress in the desire to understand himself. Third, they assume that Darl's madness can only be perceived as an incapacitation when, in reality, the insight into consciousness that he gains by the end allows him to perceive the world from a more elevated stratum of self-knowledge, where the triteness the other characters concern themselves with reveals itself as humorous and whimsical.

Inasmuch as the prose of the "I am *is*" speech implements a form suitable to how a traumatized or schizophrenic mind may be perceived by an unafflicted onlooker, it represents Darl's lowest point in the novel, one he can only move forward from. Whatever the empirical merits of the eccentric psychiatrist/poet R.D. Laing, he does provide a compelling combination of literature and mental disruption with poems seeking to represent the confusion

of words within a schizophrenic mind, a confusion that usually manifests itself in a perplexing circularity:

> I am not entitled to what I have
> *therefore* everything I have is stolen.
> If I've got it,
> and I'm not entitled to it,
> I *must* have stolen it,
> because I am not entitled to it. (34)

Laing sometimes takes sections of poems and diagrams them to more conspicuously exhibit the linguistic loop that can occur in the mind of a schizophrenia patient. The same can be done for Darl's speech:

After the "I am *is*" speech fails to provide Darl with the existential self-assertion he seeks to achieve, the handful of subsequent existentially charged excerpts from Darl reveal breakthroughs in his desire to untangle the knot that is his existence. The "I am *is*" speech does, at least, succeed in highlighting the nature of his existential quandary: if Darl is to become a being at peace with his existence, he needs to move away from circumlocutory discourse and onto a clearer vision of what it is that must occur for him. At the end of the river-crossing sequence, Darl sees Jewel and Vernon back in the river and gets significantly closer to the vision of harmony as a clairvoyant being of the mind. Roundabout and fallacious dialectic gives way to a figurative lucidity:

> From here they do not appear to violate the surface at all; it is as though [the river] had severed them both at a single blow, the two torsos moving with the infinitesimal and ludicrous care upon the surface. It looks peaceful, like machinery does after you have watched it and listened to it for a long time. As though the clotting which is you had dissolved into the myriad original motion, and seeing and hearing in themselves blind and deaf; fury in itself quiet with stagnation. (94)

The unimpeded flow of the river, the way it seamlessly severs the torsos and runs around them simultaneously, the coexisting duality of depth and surface, and the dissolution into a peaceful motion are all metaphorical musings on Darl's aims for his existence in spheres of consciousness. To a being increasingly withdrawing from physical action, the movement of the river is more appealing than the actions of people who remain a clotting that swivels and writhes and becomes more congested by always looking to be in motion yet remaining stagnant, the physical world becoming more and more inessential. Darl is evolving here, learning that he is to become a being that not only encapsulates the minds of others but also advances beyond the illusion of the first-person perception in the physical world. When the watching of a river that represents

a process of mind resembles watching machinery, the question of what it is that the machinery represents arises. Dennett's description of what a conscious person amounts to provides an answer:

Curiously, then, our *first-person* point of view of our own minds is not so different from our *second-person* point of view of others' minds: we don't see, or hear, or feel, the complicated neural machinery churning away in our brains but have to settle for an interpreted, digested version, a user-illusion that is so familiar to us that we take it not just for reality but also for the most indubitable and intimately known reality of all. (345)

Through the observation of the river's flow around carefully moving bodies, and through the association of the river with his heterophenomenological abilities, Darl's clairvoyance has reached a level where what he believed to be a "known reality" has become exposed as an illusory phenomenon to keep people sane even while existing as a clotting that he deems meaningless. So what does this loftier Darl covet? He wants to watch the machinery, the "complicated neural machinery" that is his most authentic being. And where did Darl literally watch machinery for a long time? It must have been during his time in Europe for the war. And now with a more fully developed clairvoyant mind, he is able to connect his traumatic experience with his newfound growth in autophenomenological awareness. Faulkner's literary redress of trauma, therefore, extends all the way to the end of the novel, even when Darl is carried off to Jackson. Self-representational theories of consciousness posit that consciousness consists of phenomenological representation plus a presence of mind, a promising idea, but a problem lies in the fact that no account of the presence is given that does not resort to a verbally expressed account of the representation (Seager 153). That elusive presence and its inner machinations is what Darl desires to behold and control, the pinnacle of self-awareness, the mental topography from where no activity of the illusory representation can have any bearing on his well-being.

Two existential asides that plot Darl's evolution are further conveyed in the forty-sixth section of the novel: his narration of the cement application over Cash's leg. He first poses a type of question subordinated with value judgements on what it is to be a mortal person: "How do our lives ravel out into the no-wind, no-sound, the weary gestures wearily recapitulant: echoes of old compulsions with no-hand on no-strings: in sunset we fall into furious attitudes, dead gestures of dolls" (120). Then, he expresses a concern with temporality: "If you could just ravel out into time. That would be nice. It would be nice if you could just ravel out into time" (121). As Darl gets closer to a complete picture of his mental processes, he broods over the deterministic series of causes and effects, or "echoes of old compulsions," that lead to a death or fall "in sunset," to a darkness that was predetermined for mechanistic beings, "dolls," with a false sense of free

will which, as Dennett agrees, is a fiction created by the mind's user-illusion (368), and hence Darl can now begin to perceive the form that procedure takes.

Darl's interest in mortality and temporality as an undivided concern renders him an exemplary Heideggerian existentialist model. Martin Heidegger posited that conscious beings are temporal in the sense that they are "thrown-ahead" into existence as a possibility. That is, consciousness provides persons with a means to become aware of themselves as an entity with myriad possibilities, but the feeling is always ahead of what the entity already is. Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* is commonly misconceived as the idea of the self as a "being-there" when it should instead be thought of as an "openness," the temporal existence of being as a possibility. The temporality of being lies in the concept that you "are-always-already-becoming what you always-already-are" (Sheehan 176), so Darl's desire to "ravel out into time" is to get back to the real and authentic self, to disentangle the thrown-aheadness in time by seeing the full gamut of himself as a possibility. If, for Heidegger, a person is always already her essence and can only arrive at the real/authentic self by reverting to it in the timeline of a lifetime, Darl's development toward a being with extraordinary awareness of his mental apparatus in time gives him a distinct advantage. Indeed, Darl takes the first step–the personal anticipation of death, or the falling into "dead gestures"– to take over himself as the mortal possibility that he is, and he is aware that his ontological mastery requires a temporal structure. While Darl has shown omniscience over the phenomenology of others earlier in the novel, it is at this point, when being and time consolidate, that he commences to place his autophenomenology within the landscape he exerts omniscience over.

Darl's attempt to destroy Addie's body and end the Bundrens' journey to Jefferson by burning the barn is his final bid to declare himself in the physical world. His act is unsurprisingly upstaged by the impetuous, action-driven Jewel because the world of physical activity as part of the representation of consciousness is his domain, but Darl comes to reaffirm his vision of an existence of mind through the process. As he watches the flames, he says, "The sound of it has become quite peaceful now, like the sound of the river did" and he becomes ready to fully solve his existential quandary (127). The shift to third-person narration in the final section is natural for a being now attuned to his "neural machinery," for he is now the presence that can narrate what the user-illusion of consciousness is representing in the physical world. Darl's own manifest image of himself has been added to the autophenomenological accounts he can perceive in the same way he managed to narrate Addie's death while not present, and the struggles of the physical Darl the other characters can perceive can no longer affect the newly formed, authentic Darl in a meaningful way.

Why, then, is laughter a prominent feature of the fully realized Darl? As a being capable of perceiving the behind-the-scenes, deterministic processes of mind, Darl personifies the tragicomic design of the novel, where a farcical yet

somehow august journey takes place, with characters trying to find themselves within the journey even though they are always acting out within the restraints of the user-illusion. An important part of Darl's achievement in consciousness is his ability to laugh at the tragic elements of the novel instead of remaining within the novel's category of characters that can be laughed at. After all, the Greek masks of tragedy and comedy only differ by slight alterations in the schematic lines that trace emotion in the human face, tragedy and comedy being two fundamental ways of seeing one human condition. Ancient Greek playwrights would stage a series of tragedies to be followed by a tragicomic satyr play and a series of comedies in an attempt to depict the full spectrum the human condition comprises. While tragedy deals with the possibility of human strength under conditions of strife, war, and death, it is a circumscribed view of life, overly planned and sometimes difficult to discern as comprehensive. Comedy, on the other hand, can be a more versatile means for representing the complete range of human behavior, by taking a nuanced view of human insignificance, our decentered position in the cosmos, our mistakes, and our commitment to austerity when a salubrious levity may be more constructive. The comic can strip the veneer of civilization and demonstrate how absurd humanity can be, sanity and insanity being less of a binary than we might imagine. *As I Lay Dying* proposes a comprehensive view of the world where tragedy and comedy intertwine to present human life as a grave yet laughable affair. Even the title itself suggests paltriness in the face of mortality, for regardless of all our preoccupations in everyday life, we are nightly lying to get closer to dying, and Darl stands as the only character with metafictional awareness of this construct. Cash expresses precisely what Darl, the clairvoyant humorist, laughs at when he says, "I be durn if I could see anything to laugh at. Because there just aint nothing justifies the deliberate destruction of what a man has built with his own sweat and stored the fruit of his sweat into" (137). This identification with labor cannot mean anything important to Darl, who is no longer bound by an illusory representation of himself and can perceive deterministic mechanisms, and thus he laughs.

In the end, Darl is deemed dangerous and taken away to an asylum because his mental evolution can only be thought of as insane by "normal" humans who cannot fathom the ontological plane he advanced into. But the novel does provide enough content for the reader to view and understand Darl's trajectory as the grandest achievement within the context of consciousness and Faulkner's literary compensation for a traumatized character. The rest of the Bundrens may succeed in supplanting the loss of the mother in their own sane worlds of deceptive physical representation, but Darl, a being of consummate existential authenticity, gets the last laugh, the deepest laugh, "yes yes yes yes yes yes yes yes" (146).

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Beyond This Place: A New World for Women in Valerie Martinez's *Each and Her*

Valerie Martinez begins *Each and Her* with an epigraph quoting Adrienne Rich. It reads, "Nothing less than the most radical imagination will carry us beyond this place." This place that Martinez refers to is Juarez, Mexico where 1500 women have been murdered since 1993. Martinez has created a collage of texts that include statistical data, newspaper quotations, excerpts from literary and religious works, and some of her own original lyrics. The collection is organized in fragmented yet connected poems numbered 1-74. Rich's quotation serves as a framework for the collection, a sort of thesis. In Mexican Catholicism, the Virgen de Guadalupe is the sacred and esteemed mother, the ideal woman. Yet, in spite of their honor for the Virgen, men in Juarez continue to torture and murder women. The Virgen represents one side of the dichotomy that women are either virtuous virgens or worthless putas. This narrow and inhumane way of seeing women leads to violence. With Juarez being a city where many women migrate in order to work and gain independence, the maquiladoras symbolize the feminization of a traditionally male workspace and a place of possible emancipation from male dominance (Dowdy 219). The working women are breaking out of their domestic space, and men have reacted in an attempt to restore the natural order of the patriarchy (Dowdy 219). Yet, even as women and men hope for a new life through working at the maquiladoras, their labor is exploited, reinforcing the power dynamic where the global North rules the global South (Dowdy 217). To go beyond this place of violence and inequality requires radical imagination. In this essay, I will examine how Martinez, through her criticisms of capitalist exploitation and her rewriting of the Virgen de Guadalupe and other religious texts, imagines a world where women are empowered and equal to men.

Feminicide and Globalization

Martinez opens her collection with an introduction stating, "Since 1993, over 450 girls and women have been murdered in or around the border cities of Juarez and Chihuahua, Mexico, along the U.S.-Mexican border." Most of the victims are women employed by U.S. owned maquiladoras. Many of the women go missing while traveling to and from work. Although the homicide rates for men are high, the murders of women are particularly sexual in nature (Fregoso 4). This is why Linda Rosa Fregoso calls these murders feminicide, or a killing of femininity (Fregoso 3). In poem nine, the brutality of the murders is described: "Raped, strangled, beaten, shot, burned, right breast severed, left nipple bitten off" (Martinez 13). Many of the bodies of women are never found, and those that are found are buried in the desert after being tortured.

Fregoso cautions against cultural explanations of the violence as a product of machismo hypermasculinity. This logic reproduces colonial stereotypes that the problem is inherent to Latin Americans (Fregoso 4). Instead, the violence in Juarez must be seen in the context of free-trade between the U.S. and Mexico. The U.S. benefits from free trade through cheap labor, and the state of Chihuahua benefits from the capital they produced by maquiladoras. As Martinez records, "40% of Mexico's exports were generated by the maquiladora sector along the U.S.-Mexico border" (14). Then she continues, "On average, companies save as much as 75 percent on labor costs by operating in Mexico" (14). Along with that, Juarez is home to the largest drug cartel in Mexico. The cartel ships drugs to the U.S., where their biggest customer base exists (Martinez 14). Juarez sits on the edge of the global north, yet it is a city full of exploited workers and vast inequality. As Dowdy argues, capital rules Juarez, and the maquiladoras are the center of capital.

Therefore, this explains in part why, as Martinez says, "More than fifty suspects in custody with no effect on the murder activity" (47). Although women often disappear going to and from work, the government of Chihuahua, Mexico has been complicit in the murder of these women through their inefficient and inadequate investigations. Capitalism, though it promises freedom and independence, instead produces violence, exploitation, and inequality. The murder rates in Juarez, of both men and women, are equal to that of war zones (Dowdy 218). The violence is unique to Juarez because of its position in the world both geographically and industrially. It is a gateway between North and South, the two worlds colliding. Since many of the murders happen within the maquiladoras system, there is little incentive to investigate the problem for fear of lost profits.

Throughout the collection, Martinez incorporates the metaphor of roses to talk about the commodification of women. She recognizes her own use of a cliché by saying, "Is there no way to avoid the clichés// women-flower// man-monger" (Martinez 42). Yet, the way she uses the metaphor is new. In poem 20, Martinez

gives a history of roses and how they began in China, and then were transported to the Roman Empire and used for "perfume, confetti, and tincture" (Martinez 20). Throughout the collection, Martinez quotes from different sources about how to protect her roses from getting fungi and other diseases. She has to prune them, as she quotes, "Keep cutting to keep them blooming!" (Martinez 51). If they don't bloom, then they can't be sold. Martinez connects the rose as a species for commodification to the commodification of female working bodies. She writes, "What is a domesticated woman? A female of the species? The one is as good as another. A woman is a woman" (Martinez 35). To add to this disturbing idea, Martinez describes how many women, during interviews are asked "if they are pregnant or sexually active" (Martinez 38). They are also asked to share when they had their last menstrual cycle. Martinez shows that these women workers are seen as objects for production or sex. The women are not viewed as individuals or even as human beings. In a capitalistic system, laborers are easily replaceable, and lives are not valued. This explains the government's response to the murders. Officials blamed parents by saying the parents were, "Raising up daughters whose conduct does not conform to the moral order" (Martinez 39). Then officials set curfews for women, recommending that they don't go out at night. However, many laborers work night or early morning shifts, so they cannot avoid travel during those times. So, instead of demanding that men stop murdering women, officials blamed the victims and put the responsibility on them.

The gender-based violence in Juarez is an epidemic in the city, yet it points a larger global problem, resulting from "sexism, discrimination, and misogyny" (Fregoso 6). The global problem of sexism and misogyny comes down to a power dynamic between males and females, where men are deemed more valuable and powerful. This view of women is reinforced through religion, workplaces, familial relationships, and other systems. In her research, Susan Berg surveyed over one thousand women in New York City to study the relationship between the experience of everyday sexism and how those experiences correlate with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. She writes, "...All females live in an environment that distorts a woman's personality, limits her potential, and threatens her physical and psychological well-being" (Berg 970). Her research shows that there is a strong correlation between everyday sexism--in workplaces, relationships, and in the public sphere--and PTSD (Berg 970). The subjects of her study were mainly middle class white women which is quite a different demographic than the female maqui workers in Juarez. However, her study further proves, as Fregoso asserts, that the problem is global. One can imagine that women in Juarez, living in threat of murder every day, would experience greater amounts of trauma than those in Berg's study. Yet even in cases when violence is *not* carried out, the effects of sexism on the female psyche causes trauma.

Martinez points to the everyday forms of sexism through the poems about the speaker's troubled sister. In poem 41, the sisters wait in the car after their caretaker, Amalia, tells them to "lock the doors" (Martinez 41). Then the girls huddle tight, sweating in the heat, and the speaker describes, "Crush of men// fingers through window cracks//their smears on the glass" (Martinez 41). The use of the word "crush" suggests an overpowering weight. The men with their fingers clawing and smearing the glass put the women in the position of being gazed upon like objects or animals. A few poems later, the speaker describes her sister leaving a bar, and the poem ends with "he pulled his fist back // slammed it into // your face" (46). This image of male dominance, subtle in the first poem and overtly violent in the second, reveals some of the background of the troubled sister and the trauma she experienced because of sexism. Although the speaker does not explicitly give cause and effect reasoning, later in the collection, the sister becomes suicidal. There are three instances where the speaker describes her sister attempting suicide. She first plans to jump off a bridge (53), and then she tries to step in front of a moving car (54). In poem 62, the speaker describes "The bedroom//scatter of pills//stone-curled clutch of your palm" (62). This poem points to the sister's death, as the next page, while numbered 63, is simply blank, white space serving as a moment of silence to honor all the dead in the book. The sister's depression and eventual suicide appear linked to the previous descriptions of her life and the abuse she faced. Sexism, discrimination, and misogyny can begin subtly, yet when the thought process is carried out, violence will occur. Feminicide results from a distorted and sexist way of thinking about women. Given the fact that Juarez is a capitalistic warzone, the violence against women is a concentrated form of the global problem of sexism.

Violence of the Virgen/Puta Dichotomy

Catholicism and its legacy have also left traumatic effects on women, as both the religion of the colonizing Spanish, but also as a stronghold of the patriarchy. Catholicism is embedded in Mexican culture, particularly in the Virgen de Guadalupe who is a symbol of true womanhood, revered for her purity, motherhood, and submissive nature. On the other hand, La Malinche is the mother of the half-breed race and the mistress of the Spanish conquistador, Hernan Cortez (Lara 99). She is viewed as a whore and after the Mexican Revolution was referred to as "la chingada" or the fucked (Lara 99). These two mothers are on opposite spectrums, one is treated with goddess-like respect, while the other is looked at as a defiled woman. The Virgen and La Malinche in Mexican culture are new faces of an older dichotomy seen in Christianity/ Catholicism through the Virgin Mary and Eve (Lara 99). Eve is also a betrayer, the mother of Fallen world, while Mary is the pure and holy mother of Christ. The work of many Chicana feminists is to rewrite this dichotomy and show its negative impacts on female subjectivity in Mexican culture. As Cherrie Moraga

wrote, "If sexuality and spirituality have been combined for our oppression, then obviously they have to be combined for our liberation" (Lara 106).

Martinez follows in the footsteps of other Chicana feminist writers by pointing out the hypocrisy of Catholicism through this dichotomy between Mary and Eve. She shows how the split view of women has caused violence. The government official's response to the murders was placing the blame on the parents "Raising up daughters whose conduct does not conform to the moral order" (Martinez 39). Instead of demanding that men stop murdering women, officials called them immoral women, blaming the victims and placing them into the puta category. In poem 60, Martinez uses an excerpt from "The Veneration of Mary." The writer equates Adam and Mary, because Eve came from Adam through the Spirit, and through Mary came Christ from the Spirit. Hence, both men and women came from each other without the work of the other sex, and all humans are from the Spirit. Eve is seen as the lesser of Adam because she was created second, and she brought the Fall upon the world. This excerpt shows that Mary is a new Eve in the same way Christ is considered a new Adam, and both are redeemed and interconnected. It also shows that Mary and Eve are alike, rather than opposite sides of womanhood. This passage is striking in contrast to the subsequent three-page list of victims named Maria. The juxtaposition of these two poems shows the hypocrisy of the murders. Mary is revered as the Holy Mother, but her namesakes are brutally abused, tortured, and murdered. The murdered women, being mostly poor, working, young women, are treated as defiled putas. The violence of the Virgen/Puta dichotomy is disturbingly seen here.

Roses in Bloom/Remaking the World

Martinez shows the horrific context of capitalism and patriarchal Catholicism, where women are dehumanized and commodified. Yet she does not end here. Martinez continues to complicate her metaphor of the rose. The rose begins to bloom, the speaker's gentle tending producing life again. "In the cool dark I find it: one new cane, caterpillar-green, stunned with two pale pink blooms" (56). Though the bloom is just a small sprig, it is the beginning of what Adrienne Rich's quotation, moving from this place of trauma, oppression, abuse, and inequality. The following page is just two words, "I refuse" (57). This comes after previous poems where a voice says, "This way," "Follow me," "Sigame", "No sigame" (13, 27, 50, 55). The voice echoes the abusers who kidnapped women by demanding they go with them. By saying, "I refuse," the speaker is now given an assertive voice and a way to say no more. Furthermore, the collection changes directions when Martinez quotes from Ultima, describing the presence of a river: "The presence was immense, lifeless, yet throbbing with a secret message" (64). The river stands in contrast with the desert that serves as a burial ground for so many of the murdered woman. The desert is a place of death and dryness,

whereas the river gives the possibility of growth, and a potential for power, especially with the words "immense" and "throbbing."

Part of remaking the world is remaking myths. As previously mentioned, Chicana feminists often refashion religious myths and figures into more empowering, female-centric images. All cultures have religions and myths of some sort, but the overwhelming majority, especially in western traditions, have been male-dominated. In Christianity andCatholicism, God is represented as male, leaving the Virgin Mary as the only divine-like woman in their religious imagery. Wioleta Polinska argues, "Visual images of God that represent women's subjectivity could become powerful allies in our attempt to create a tradition that is inclusive to both genders" (43). If women have no way to imagine their origins as female, or any sort of female divinity, then the implication is that women are less powerful than men. Therefore, the work of Chicana feminists in creating a more empowered Virgen de Guadalupe, as well as resurrecting or creating other female goddess figures, is vital to recreating the world.

Martinez then crowns of the indigenous Nuestra Señora de Los Iguanas as the creator of the world. In the famous photo by Manuel Alvarez Bravo, the viewer sees the woman from below, and her gaze is up rather than down like the Virgen's eyes usually are (Iturbide). Martinez describes her: "[She] wears a crown of many, live iguanas--a steely gaze--" (67). The woman in the image is from Juchitán, Mexico and is part of the Zapotec people. In this culture, the women dominate all areas of life, including religious rituals (Iturbide). Through choosing the image of an indigenous woman, Martinez rebels against the domination of the global north and the religion they have passed down. The iguanas are personified as, "--the Babcas [Mayan gods], immense iguanas, each sit at the corner of the world and hold up the sky" (Martinez 69). Martinez positions the woman as a world on whom the Mayan gods sit. The speaker describes the Señora as having "maternal, considerable, roundness" (68). So, although she is a mother, she is not the meek, domesticated Virgen mother. The Señora is a creator who, "represent[s] the repeated attempt--after many failures--" (70) "to remake the world" (72). She is an indigenous, empowered, female creator.

Moving from this place requires radical imagination. It requires writing new origin myths that are empowering to women, tearing down of false dichotomies about female identity, and ending the exploitation of laborers through the system of global capitalism. It seems like an overwhelming task, perhaps too much. Yet, Martinez recognizes the complexity of change by adding in the line "after many failure." She recognizes that change will not happen immediately, and she does not give a clear-cut answer or call to revolution. Rather, through honoring the women and identifying the problems in both Mexico and in the world that have caused violence against women, she begins the first step beyond.

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David Lurie's Endangered Imperial Perspective: The Intersection of Gender, Generation, Race, and Imperialism in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

J.M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace* is thematically focalized around acts of rape in two South African communities. Coetzee utilizes and manipulates the act of rape, encompassing multiple definitions of the term, to examine the problematic relationship between race, gender, and generations in South Africa. The problematic intersection of these three categories function in relation to the historical ramifications of imperialism. I argue that in *Disgrace* it is the female body that uncovers the protagonist's, David Lurie's, racism and that it is the female body that resists Lurie's antiquated imperialist perspective. By utilizing the post-colonial theories of Anne McClintock and David Spurr, I argues that the physical female body functions in post-colonial literature as a significant symbol of European imperial domination through eroticization and exoticization. Building on their post-colonial theories I argue that Coetzee intentionally writes two contrasting rape scenes, one of a young black woman by Lurie, an old white man, and one of a white woman, Lurie's daughter Lucy, by a group of young black men, to demonstrate the ways in which Lurie's imperialistic perspective is becoming unproductive and antiquated in the modern communities of South Africa. The women's reactions to the rapes are contrasted with Lurie's reactions, which creates the tension in the text between the intersecting categories of race, gender, and generation. Ultimately, it is Lurie's daughter, Lucy, and her refusal to allow the misrepresentation of her body that reveals the impotency of Lurie's imperialist world view.

In his book chapter "Eroticization," David Spurr argues that there is a "notion of a rhetorically constructed body for that strain of discourse which represents the colonized world as the feminine and which assigns to subject nations those qualities conventionally assigned to the female body" in colonial

writings (170). In "Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest," Anne McClintock corroborates this idea by explaining that women were used as boundary markers of the empire, that "the world is feminized and spatially spread for male exploration, then reassembled and deployed in the interests of massive imperial power" (24; 23). In *Disgrace* this imperial tradition is inverted; it is a physical female body that reveals the imperial perspective and not the imperial perspective that invokes a rhetorically constructed female body. David Lurie is introduced as "a man of his age, fifty-two, divorced, he has, to his mind, solved the problem of sex," yet *Disgrace* repeatedly presents Lurie's relationships with women as lacking in consensual desire (1). Lurie's sexual proclivity requires the object of his desire to be exoticized. The prostitute Soraya is selected by Lurie because "she was on their books under 'Exotic'" (7). To increase the sexual desirability of one of his female students, Lurie thinks of her as "Melanie – melody: a meretricious rhyme. Not a good name for her. Shift the accent. Meláni: the dark one" (18). Lurie is sexually attracted to Otherness, which reveals his need to be the dominant member in the relationship. It is significant that Soraya is a prostitute and Melanie is one of Lurie's undergraduate students, for even without considering a historical racial hierarchy the two women are socially inferior to Lurie. His relationships with Soraya and Melanie reveal his need for personal and social dominance.

Even his daughter Lucy, a lesbian, does not escape Lurie's eroticization of women through exoticization. Lurie thinks of Lucy as "Attractive …yet lost to men" (76). He at times fantasizes about whether two women make the bed creak during sex, before weakly professing that, "The truth is, he does not like to think of his daughter in the throes of passion with another woman, and a plain one at that" (86). The truth of this statement is belied by his continuing to fantasize about Lucy's sexuality and sexual relationships. Lurie is disturbed by Lucy's homosexuality because Lucy's sexual relationships with women deny men's right to the female body. Lurie reinforces his belief in the right of a man to possess a woman's body by stating that "a woman's beauty does not belong to her alone. It is part of the bounty she brings into the world. She has a duty to share it… She [woman] does not own herself. Beauty does not own itself" (16). Like the lands conquered by European imperial powers, Lurie views women as the property of men, to be used for pleasure and power. Lucy's homosexuality rejects the idea of male dominance over the female body.

Soraya, Melanie, and Lucy are subjected to Lurie's attempts at "male penetration and exposure of [their] veiled, female interior" (McClintock 23). Lurie's failure to expose a female interior, of any of the women, that begins to expose Lurie's masculine and racial anxiety. McClintock argues that the "scene of discovery becomes a scene of ambivalence, suspended between an imperial megalomania, with its fantasy of unstoppable rapine – and a contradictory fear of engulfment, with its fantasy of dismemberment and emasculation. The scene,

like many imperial scenes, is a document both of paranoia and megalomania" (26-7). McClintock's claims of the empire of rhetoric are corroborated by Spurr, who argues that "the dynamic of unveiling that gives form to the colonizer's desire, the 'colossal body' of the wilderness is symbolically bound to the body of woman, while the impotency of the gaze amounts to a kind of castration" (178). Each of the women further emasculate Lurie once he "discovers" or attempts to "unveil" their bodies. Lurie's stalking of Soraya outside of the Discreet Escorts ruins his restrained and scheduled sexual encounters, while once Lurie fulfills his sexual fantasies of a sexual affair with Melanie he loses his career and social position in Cape Town. Finally, his sexual fantasies of his daughter's sex life lead to his obsession with imagining the details of her rape, which in turn leads to the tension in their relationship. Each failed sexual relationship exponentially damages Lurie's antiquated world perspective. Carine Mardorossian refers to him as a "white anachronism of the colonial era" (80), and her description encapsulates the way *Disgrace* simultaneously reveals Lurie's racism and sexism through his relationships with the women, as well as the ways in which his racism and sexism are no longer productive or beneficial in South Africa.

Mardorossian further argues in "Rape and the Violence of Representation in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*" that *Disgrace* "expose[s] the workings of racist ideologies and their inextricable link to gender" (73). Mardorossian's astute observation of *Disgrace is essential to understanding the link between Lurie and imperialism. Her argument provides a direct link to Spurr and McClintock›s observations of how gender played into colonial discourse.* Mardorossian argues that Lurie's racism is revealed through his reactions to the rapes. Lurie describe one of his sexual encounters with Melanie as "not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core" (Coetzee 25). Lurie does not categorize his sexual encounters with Melanie as rape despite his acknowledgement that she does not desire them; instead, Mardorossian claims that Lurie "can only see rape as what black men do to white women" (80). Melanie's body is eroticized by Lurie, and this eroticization of Melanie as an exotic Other legitimizes, in his mind, his right of access to her body. Lurie exoticizes women to not only make them desirable to him, but to place himself in a perceived position of gendered and racial power. Lurie's sexual encounters with Melanie reflect the imperial tradition that "Africa and the Americas had become what can be called a porno-tropics for the European imagination – a fantastic magic lantern of the mind onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears" (McClintock 22). This exoticism allows Lurie's perceptual discrepancy between the rapes of Melanie and Lucy, and it allows him to claim his actions are guided by Eros, while proving to himself that he is still desirable to younger women (Coetzee 89). Lurie's rapes of Melanie soothe his anxiety about his aging body, his sexual prowess, and his racial superiority, while Lucy's rape reinforces the reality that has caused Lurie's anxiety.

However, as Lucy Valerie Graham notes in "Reading the Unspeakable: Rape in J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," the rape of Melanie and even the sexual exploitation of Soraya are portrayed differently than the rape of Lucy (256). Graham argues that *Disgrace* does not represent "black peril," but is subversively scripting "white peril" (256) by juxtaposing the rapes of Melanie and Lucy. Unlike Melanie's rape, Lucy's rape is not narratively described, since Lurie is locked in the bathroom while the rape is occurring. In the immediate aftermath of the attack, Lurie ruminates that "It happened every day, every hour, every minute, he tells himself, in every quarter of the country. Count yourself lucky to have escaped with your life… Count Lucy lucky too" (Coetzee 98). He rationalizes the attack by thinking, "Too many people, too few things. What there is must go into circulation, so that everyone can have a chance to be happy for a day …Cars, shoes; women too. There must be some niche in the system for women and what happens to them" (98). Lurie believes that white Africans, particularly women, are in constant danger from violence perpetrated by black Africans. Women are characterized as objects to be circulated to provide men with happiness in Lurie's mind. Deirdre Coleman argues in "The 'Dog-Man': Race, Sex, Species, and Lineage in Coetzee's *Disgrace*" that "Lurie's concept of a conflict between different sides is racially inflected: symbolically, the rape signals for him a transference of supremacy from one side to the other" (603). To Lurie, rape is not a gendered crime, but a racially motivated one. Mardorossian notes that "It is through the second rape that Coetzee retroactively exposes the masculinist and racist bias through which the first one is represented and naturalized. Indeed, in light of his own abuse of a student, Lurie's violent hatred towards his daughter's rapists functions as a double standard" (80). The double standard that is created by his interpretations of the rapes reflects the historical discounting of white males of European descent violating women of color.

Lurie's double standard is also revealed in his consideration for the physical state of the female body. McClintock explains that "Central to the idea of degeneration was the idea of *contagion* (the communication of disease, by touching, from body to body)" (47). Graham argues that "one may contrast Lurie's concern for Lucy's body after she is raped (he wants her to have HIV and pregnancy tests) to his lack of concern for Melanie… upon whom he forces himself after he has had sex with Soraya, a prostitute" (259). Graham cites Barry Smart as emphasizing "that the physical consequences of sexual relationships…. prioritises moral issues and encompasses relations of self and other'" (259). The discrepancy between Lurie's concern over the physical body and the consequences for the physical bodies of the raped women in this case is informed by Smart's idea of relations between the self and other, not just in an individual sense, but in a racial sense. Coleman argues that Lurie's language reveals Lurie's perspective of an interracial, intergenerational, and intersexual struggle taking place in South Africa (599). Lurie frequently uses oppositional

terms such as "we" opposed to "them" or "our people" versus "their people." Lurie does not have concern for Melanie's body because she is a racialized Other. By exoticizing her and viewing her as a racial Other, she becomes an object to be explored and used for his benefit and pleasure. Lucy, on the other hand, not only as his daughter, but as a white woman, is connected to the idea of empire and white racial supremacy. McClintock argues that "Increasingly vigilant efforts to control women's bodies, especially in the face of feminist resistance, were suffused with acute anxiety about the desecration of sexual boundaries and the consequences that racial contamination had for white male control of progeny, property and power" (47). In Lurie's racist imperial perspective, Melanie cannot be contaminated through sexual contact with him because she is already of a degenerated race, while Lucy's sexual contact with black African men threatens the purity of the white race.

Lurie's exoticization of the women allows him to Other them, or, in Lucy's case, reveal an anxiety about her domestic role. The means by which the weakness of Lurie's imperial perspective becomes apparent are revealed through his use of negation to attempt to control the female interior and female body. Spurr argues that there is a "rhetorical strategy of negation by which Western writing conceives of the Other as absence, emptiness, nothingness, or death" and that "negation acts as a kind of provisional erasure, clearing a space for the expansion of the colonial imagination and for the pursuit of desire" (90-1). The conception of the Other as absence or emptiness that is filled by colonial imagination is the method Lurie uses to eroticize the women. By Othering them, Lurie is able to assert his ideological perspective of the world. His contractual relationship with Soraya hints at this tendency in Lurie when he describes their sexual intercourse as "mak[ing] love," and when he asserts that "at the level of temperament her affinity with him can surely not be feigned" (Coetzee 1; 3). Lurie capitalizes on Soraya's passiveness to project onto her his sexual fantasies. Ignoring the fact that she is paid to act in whatever way he pleases, Lurie believes that he has a connection with her and that their relationship is more than just a business contract. After Soraya breaks off their weekly meetings, Lurie hires another exotic Soraya, noting that "Soraya has become, it seems, a popular *nom de commerce*," directly pointing to the idea that the first Soraya's interiority and identity are absent, and that Soraya is just an identity that she uses with clients (8). Soraya and the other prostitute create an intentional emptiness of identity that allows men such as Lurie to fill in with their exoticized fantasies.

In Lurie's illicit liaison with Melanie, Spurr's theory of negation is the mechanism that allows Lurie to claim it is "not rape, not quite that" (25). Despite recognizing that his sexual encounters with Melanie are "undesired to the core," Lurie consistently refers to their relationship as a passionate love affair (25). Like his encounters with the Sorayas, Lurie classifies his acts with Melanie as "make[ing] love to her," and he describes one encounter further as "she is quick,

and greedy for experience. If he does not sense in her a fully sexual appetite, that is only because she is still young" (29). What Lurie perceives as a lack of a "fully sexual appetite" is imagined as a result of her youth and inexperience. Yet, the use of the words "quick" and "greedy" describes urgent physical actions of Melanie. Knowing that Lurie is reinterpreting Melanie's words and actions, the presence of these words in his description can be read as Melanie physically resisting his sexual advances and Lurie refusing to recognize her words or actions as resistance or lack of consent. At another point during the relationship Melanie vocalizes "No, not now!" but Lurie's response is that "nothing will stop him" (35). The narrator states "she does not resist. All she does is avert herself: avert her lips, avert her eyes. She lets him lay her out on the bed and undress her: she even helps him, raising her arms and then her hips" (25). Lurie uses the absence of physical resistance in this instance to continue to use her body for his own sexual gratification, where in the prior example Lurie uses the lack of vocalized dissent to continue his behavior regardless of her physical resistance. Lurie manipulates Melanie's words and actions to create an absence that allows him to continue to act in ways that fulfill his sexual fantasies regardless of Melanie's consent or desire.

Lucy's rape and Lurie's use of negation in regard to Lucy represent a significant moment of revelation, simultaneously uncovering Lurie's racism and the extent of his masculine anxiety. Bev and Lucy continually say to Lurie "*You weren't there. You don't know what happened*," which makes Lurie "outraged at being treated like an outsider" (140-1). M. Van Wyk Smith notes that since the rape of Lucy is never narrated in the novel, Lurie's and the reader's conception of the event is "an illusion, moreover, dependent on and exploiting centuries' worth of the discursive, social, ethical and indeed mythic approaches to rape and our culturally and historically conditioned responses to it" (15). The absence of Lucy's story is filled in with Lurie's negations that uphold the racist imperial perspective of Africa that has led to the proliferation of the 'black peril' stories to which Graham refers. After the event, the relationship between Lucy and Lurie becomes strained, with Lurie confiding in Bev that they "are not getting on" (Coetzee 139). This inability to effectively communicate with Lucy is compounded by Lucy's active resistance to Lurie's version of her rape, and, specifically, Lucy's refusal to racialize it (159). "She confronts him" and refuses to either fill in the narrative silence or let him fill it in by saying such things as "I don't need to defend myself before you. *You don't know what happened*," or "You keep misreading me" (105; 134; 112). Her active resistance leaves Lurie feeling that "Never yet have they been so far and so bitterly apart" and wondering if "she and he on the same side?" (112; 159). The extent to which Lucy denies his dominance as her father, and as a man, makes Lurie resort to dreaming that Lucy urgently calls to him for protection (103). Where his negation is ineffectual

in reality, Lurie creates a fantasy. In the case of Lucy, however even his fantasies are rebuked, for Lucy clearly states that she "wasn't [calling him]" (103).

Another character in *Disgrace* that is able to resist Lurie's attempt to project a simplified and imperialistic reading, like Lucy does, is Petrus, Lucy's black South African neighbor. After returning to the farm following the attack, Lurie notes that "of Petrus there is no sign," and, after the police leave, the narrator notes "of the absent Petrus, Ettinger remarks darkly, 'Not one of them you can trust'" (108; 109). The physical absence of Petrus allows Lurie and Ettinger to immediately suspect Petrus to be an enemy rather than a neighbor. Lurie's suspicion begins with questions to Lucy: "Why didn't he tell you he was going away? Doesn't it strike you as fishy that he should disappear at precisely this time?" to which she responds "I can't order Petrus about. He is his own master" (114). In his thoughts, Lurie thinks that Lucy's response is "a non sequitur, but he lets it pass" (114). Lucy's response is aimed at the racist assumption that Lurie makes about the business relationship between Lucy and Petrus. Lurie chooses to ignore the implications of Lucy's response, which is not a non sequitur at all. Lucy and Petrus' business relationship troubles Lurie because unlike,

> In the old days one could have had it out with Petrus. In the old days one could have had it out to the extent of losing one's temper and sending him packing and hiring someone in his place. But though Petrus is a paid wage, Petrus no longer, strictly speaking, hired help. It is hard to say what Petrus is, strictly speaking. The word that seems to serve best, however, is *neighbor.* (116)

Lurie's racism makes him uncomfortable with calling Petrus a neighbor rather than "the help." The distinction that Lurie makes in the two terms is that a neighbor implies equality, whereas "the help" means that Lurie has power over Petrus's language and actions.

Lucy's body is the theoretical site of Petrus' resistance to Lurie and Lurie's imperial perspective. Despite the racial divide between the two men, Lurie does not have an overt problem with Petrus until Lucy is raped. The violation of Lucy's body, a white woman's body, unleashes Lurie's clandestine racism. Lurie, used to a position of racial authority, is enraged by Petrus' perceived evasive responses to Lurie's questions and Petrus' refusal to turn over Pollux, one of Petrus' relatives and one of Lucy's attackers, to Lurie's vengeance. Lurie's negation is as ineffective with Petrus as it is with Lucy. The fact that Petrus is not silent ruins Lurie's ability to exert dominance by imagining the situation in a way that corresponds to his imperialist world view. Petrus' replies to Lurie's questioning with responses like "Lucy is safe" and "He is not guilty…I know" challenges Lurie's authority to dominate the narrative of Lucy's rape and Lucy's future (138; 139). The conversations between the two men frequently include such broodings from Lurie as,

> He does not care how he gets the words out of Petrus now, he just wants to hear them... at this moment he would like to take Petrus by the throat. *If it had been your wife instead of my daughter,* he would like to say to Petrus, *you would not be tapping your pipe and weighting your words so judiciously. Violation:* that is the word he would like to force out of Petrus. *Yes, it was a violation,* he would like to hear Petrus say; *yes, it was an outrage.* (119)

Lurie wants to script the language of Petrus to reflect the scenario of Lucy's rape that Lurie has created in his mind. The italics in the last sentence of this passage represent the imagined conversation between Petrus and Lurie that reflects the way Lurie desires the conversation to take place. The fact that he cannot script or control Petrus is a source of anguish and anger for Lurie. He would like to physically force Petrus or launch a direct verbal challenge to Petrus, but Lurie does not have the physical strength or authority to dominate Petrus like he does women of color. Unlike his negations with Soraya and Melanie, the resistance from Lucy and Petrus threatens Lurie's imperialistic ideology by demonstrating his powerlessness despite his race and gender.

The crisis of Lurie's ideological perspective arises from Lucy's rape and the resistance of Petrus and Lucy to Lurie's negations is demonstrated through Lurie's growing disconnection to the English language. After Lucy's rape Lurie remarks that English is "like a dinosaur expiring and settling in the mud" (117), and when he is unable to control or direct conversations with Petrus to coincide with his imagined scenario, he thinks "The language [Petrus] draws on with such aplomb is, if he only knew it, tired, friable, eaten from the inside as if by termites. Only monosyllables can still be relied on, and not even all of them" (129). The destabilization of the English language is an indication that Lurie's belief in a Eurocentric and imperialistic perspective is losing authority. Spurr explains that "A developed language… is external to nature and supplementary to the original human condition, the degree of development marking how far a people has come from its primitive being" (103). The loss of language's power means that the "primitive," or in Lurie's view, the African, is gaining control of the civilization or South African community. In a novel where rape and its effects are omnipresent, Lurie's moments of anxiety and vulnerability take on the characteristics of a rape victim. Graham explains that "In canonical literary narratives of the West, rape is often depicted as 'unspeakable', as severed from articulation, and literary references to hidden rape stories have always brought into relief the complex relationship between literary silences and the aftermath of actual violation" (262). Lurie's feelings that the English language is "an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa" reflects the vulnerability that he feels (Coetzee 117). Lucy's attack proved that not just women or racial Others need to fear violence, but white men also. Following the attack, Lucy "is all strength, all purposefulness, whereas the trembling seems to have spread to his whole body"

(101). The physical manifestation of the trembling emasculates him when he compares his reaction to the shock to Lucy's reaction, who was the one actually physically violated. Yet Lurie does not articulate his perceived ideological violation, instead he latches on to the physical violation of his daughter's body and the feelings that the English language is no longer sufficient as a means of communication.

The *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* defines rape as "The act of taking something by force; *esp. the seizure of property by violent* means; robbery, plundering" ("Rape"). What Lurie loses by force is nothing tangible, but rather an ideological world perspective that is challenged through the loss of his job, Lucy's resistance to recounting her rape, and Petrus' refusal to admit his guilt of which Lurie is certain or deliver Pollux to Lurie's vengeance. The resistance that Lurie faces from the school board, Lucy, and Petrus denies Lurie the authority and racial dominance that he feels entitled to. The *OED's* second entry for rape, "the act or crime, committed by a man, of forcing a woman to have sexual intercourse with him against her will," implies a penetration of the female body ("Rape"). For Lurie, the penetration is mental, and his receptivity to being penetrated feminizes him. He views the physical manifestations of his perceived violation as "Just an after-effect, he tells himself, an after-effect of the invasion. In a while the organism will repair itself, and I, the ghost within it, will be my old self again. But the truth, he knows, is otherwise. His pleasure in living has been snuffed out" (Coetzee 107). He feels the attack is a mental "invasion" or penetration and believes that he "understand[s] all too well" what happened to Lucy (157). However, Lurie cannot truly emphasize with Lucy, especially when he thinks that "if he concentrates, if he loses himself, be there, be the men, inhabit them, fill them with the ghost of himself. The question is, does he have it in him to be the woman?" (160). Lurie feels the effects of the violation but resists the feminized perspective which obstructs him from reaching a true understanding of Lucy's situation, as well as the harmful effects of his treatment of Melanie.

In "'Your Stay Must Be a Becoming': Ageing and Desire in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," Billy Gray argues that male characters such as Lurie "envisage the ageing process as a threat, not only to their psychological health, but also their concept of self worth" (22). Lurie's age and his anxiety about his sexual performance demonstrates his masculine anxiety in *Disgrace*. Lurie describes South Africa as "No country, this, for old men" (Coetzee 190). The trauma of having been unable to stop Lucy's rape and of being set on fire by one of the assailants causes Lurie to reflect that "for the first time he has a taste of what it will be like to be an old man, tired to the bone, without hopes, without desires, indifferent to the future" (107). The violence that Lurie perceives as racial violence brings to light Lurie's weakness in a way that threatens his masculinity. Lurie can defend neither his daughter nor himself. After the physical act reveals

his ideological weakness, Lurie connects it back to sexual prowess by claiming that he is,

> On trial for his way of life. For unnatural acts: for broadcasting old seed, tired seed, seed that does not quicken, *contra naturam*. If the old men hog the young women, what will be the future of the species? That, at bottom, was the case for the prosecution. Half of literature is about it: young women struggling to escape from under the weight of old men, for the sake of the species. (190)

Lurie equates his physical weakness and romantic undesirability to a biological necessity to procreate. However, it is not just a physical oldness that Lurie represents, but also an antiquated perspective. To Bev, Lurie says "I don't know what the question is any more. Between Lucy's generation and mine a curtain seems to have fallen. I didn't even notice when it fell" (210). To some extent, Lurie recognizes that his perspective is no longer relevant or useful to the social demographic or reality of South Africa.

Disgrace supports the reading of Lurie as ideologically antiquated in more ways than physical weakness, age, or perceived victimization. Coleman makes the argument that Lurie is a marginalized character in a number of fashions. Her argument is made within the context of Darwinian principles that she argues pervade the novel. The change in the university system, Lurie's change from a Romantics scholar to a Communications professor, and Lurie's inability to inspire students with romantic literature, demonstrates a loss of cultural authority (Coleman 606). Along with Lurie's aging, his loss of authority, as demonstrated through the decision of the school board and the resistance of Lucy and Petrus, creates the effect of Lurie as an endangered species in the environment of South Africa. Coleman argues that this prompts a change in perspective in Lurie that amounts to an ideological shift away from anthropocentrism, as demonstrated through his changing behavior and thoughts towards the dogs in *Disgrace*. Coleman's conclusion is that Lurie "now accepts the animality of human life" (614), and this change in perspective is manifested in the idea that "Incinerating the dead dogs respectfully constitutes a part of Lurie's atonement for this anthropocentric logic" (615). However, what Coleman's argument fails to address is that a shift from an anthropocentric perspective does not correct, nor even address, Lurie's imperialistic perspective at the heart of his racism and his sexism. If Lurie's perspective incorporated new elements in regard to non-human life, it is still essentially imperialistic towards human life. Lurie projects his beliefs onto others, claiming that "Petrus has a vision of the future in which people like Lucy have no place. But that need not make an enemy of Petrus" (Coetzee 118). Essentially, Lurie never abdicates his desire for a future with segregation of races. It is not Petrus, but Lurie, that believes Lucy, or white people, have no place in the Eastern Cape.

Disgrace's resolution respecting Melanie's and Lucy's narratives never offers a sincere apology or change in perspective in Lurie, further evidencing his lack of change in perspective towards humans. While Lurie *does* return to Cape Town to apologize to Melanie's father (and not Melanie), his apology lacks understanding of what he is apologizing for. Lurie tells Mr. Isaacs, "It could have turned out differently, I believe between the two of us, despite our ages…I manage love too well. Even when I burn I don't sing" (171). At this expected moment of redemption, Lurie hangs on to the belief that his and Melanie's relationship was a love affair, never recognizing that he raped her multiple times. Lurie continues to uphold the fantasy that he created through negation and the exoticization of Melanie. The last time Lurie sees Melanie "he cannot resist a flush of pride. *Mine!* he would like to say, turning to them, as if she were his daughter" (191). To the last moment, Lurie wants to claim ownership of Melanie. Even though he says, "as if she were his daughter," his further ruminations belie the truth of that characterization. After being confronted by Melanie's boyfriend for being at the play, Lurie mentally justifies his actions as "the seed of generation, driven to perfect itself, driving deep into the woman's body, driving to bring the future into being" (194). This rumination is echoed later in Lurie's thoughts after learning that Lucy is pregnant. He thinks "They were not raping, they were mating. It was not the pleasure principle that ran the show but the testicles, sacs bulging with seed aching to perfect itself" (199). At this moment, Lurie aligns himself with Lucy's rapists and reveals that his belief that women do not own themselves is still a belief that he sincerely holds.

In M. Van Wyk Smith's "Rape and the Foundation of Nations in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*," he argues that "at a more profound level *Disgrace* is, despite its pessimistic cast and minimalist affirmations, a parable of redemption, a harsh re-invention of what it is (or costs) to be human" (33). Redemption, it is argued, is available for Lurie, but the female body is still an object to be used by men to create a new male-centered perspective. Van Wyk Smith explains that "throughout classical mythology there seems to be an inescapable figural connection between sexual violence and the founding traumas of nationhood" and that "Lurie *does* suddenly recognize Lucy as a founding figure of a South Africa that might be painfully coming into existence" as he looks upon her gardening at the end of the novel (19; 31). However, his vision of Lucy as implying a "profound historical change, of the coming-into-being of a new nation" does not take into account the ardent resistance to the normalization of sexual violence in *Disgrace* (31). As Coleman pointed out, classic literary traditions have lost cultural authority, which does not allow for rape to function in the novel in the classical sense of a foundation of nations. Lucy's known assailant, Pollux, is named for a mythological figure that is the son of Leda and Zeus (Bulfinch 151). The sexual union between Leda and Zeus is categorized as a rape in such literary works as William Butler Yeats' "Leda and the Swan"

(Yeats 1125). In European art, Pollux is depicted as a rapist as well in Peter Paul Rubens' *The Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus*. This classical lineage of rape that Lucy is narratively placed within seems to support Van Wyk Smith's argument. However, Lucy's choice to marry Petrus will make Lucy's "child [become] his too. The child becomes a part of his family" (204). This decision to make Lucy's child Petrus' son or daughter is an act of resistance to the classical rape narrative, as they are effectively breaking the cycle. The child will not grow up recognizing his or her birth as a product of rape, but merely as an interracial product of Petrus' and Lucy's relationship. The child is also not fated to found a new nation; instead, the decision of Lucy and Petrus is a "sacrifice, for the sake of peace" (Coetzee 208).

Lucy's decision to keep the child, marry Petrus, and stay on the farm in the Eastern Cape is interpreted by Lurie to be the greatest act of resistance from Lucy. Lurie wants Lucy to have an abortion, but when she refuses, he wonders "what kind of child can seed like that give life to, seed driven into the woman not in love but in hatred, mixed chaotically, meant to soil her, to mark her, like dog's urine?" (198). After, Lucy rebukes Lurie with her most straightforward condemnation of his behavior, saying:

> You behave as if everything I do is part of the story of your life. You are the main character, I am a minor character who doesn't make an appearance until halfway through. Well, contrary to what you think, people are not divided into major or minor. I am not minor. I have a life of my own, just as important to me as yours is to you, and in my life I am the one who makes the decisions. (198)

This moment in the narrative is the culmination of the tension in their relationship, resulting in Lurie "hiding his face in his hands, he heaves and heaves and finally cries" (198). The complete loss of Lucy and her future in this moment is the death blow to Lurie's antiquated imperial perspective.

Disgrace offers no redemption for Lurie and does not present a clear alternative to his imperialistic perspective. The female body, specifically Lucy's body, uncovers the remnants of the imperial perspective in Lurie and offers the most resilient resistance to it. The final image of Lucy in *Disgrace* is of her gardening alone, "Of Petrus there is no sign," she is "the picture of health" and she "smiles" at Lurie's approach (217). The image of her inspires Lurie to contemplate that "from within her will have issued another existence, that with luck will be just as solid, just as long lasting. So it will go on, a line of existences in which his share, his gift, will grow inexorably less and less, till it may as well be forgotten" (217). At last, Lurie is resigned to his loss of authority, recognizing that not only will his genetic contribution to the future be diluted, but also his ideological perspective. The absence of Petrus is not menacing in this passage and Lucy's appearance and occupation implies that a new and prosperous future is obtainable for her despite her past sexual violation.

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